

Easter Sunday – Year A: Acts 10:34a, 37–43; Col 3:1–4; Jn 20:1–9: “From the Empty Tomb to Living Hope”

Happy Easter! Alleluia! Today, the Church proclaims the greatest news the world has ever heard: **Jesus Christ is risen from the dead!** This is not just a beautiful religious idea. This is not just a comforting story. This is the **foundation of our faith**. As St. Paul tells us elsewhere: if Christ has not been raised, then our faith is in vain. But because **Christ is risen**, everything changes — our sin, our suffering, our death, our future. Easter is the day that gave birth to Christianity. The Catechism says, “*It is in regard to death that the human condition is most shrouded in doubt*” (CCC 1006).

And that is true. Human beings fear many things — sickness, failure, rejection, loneliness — but underneath all these fears lies the great mystery and fear of **death**. And Easter is God’s answer to that fear.

The resurrection of Jesus tells us that **death does not have the last word**. Sin does not have the last word. Darkness does not have the last word. The tomb is not the end. And that is why Easter is such good news: **because Christ rose, we too shall rise**.

In today’s second reading, St. Paul tells us: “**If you were raised with Christ, seek what is above.**” In other words, Easter is not only about what happened to Jesus; it is also about what must happen **in us**. Yes, we care for our bodies in this life. Yes, we try to live well and stay healthy. But many people spend more time worrying about having the perfect body now than preparing for the **glorified body** God wants to give them in eternity. Only God can give us that perfect life — a life without pain, decay, tears, or death. And the resurrection of Jesus is the **pledge** that this promise is real. But something very important appears in today’s Gospel: **even the first disciples did not immediately believe**. We often imagine that on Easter morning everyone was shouting “Alleluia!” and dancing with joy. No. That is not what happened.

Mary Magdalene went to the tomb not expecting resurrection, but to complete the burial customs. She went with grief, not hope. When she found the tomb empty, her first thought was not, “Jesus is risen!” Her first thought was: “**They have taken the Lord from the tomb.**” Even Peter and John, when they ran to the tomb, were not running with Easter faith. They were running in confusion. This is very important for us. Because sometimes we think, “If I still struggle with doubt, maybe I don’t have faith.” “If I still feel afraid, maybe I am failing God.” “If I still have questions, maybe I am far from the Lord.” But Easter tells us something consoling: **faith often**

grows gradually. Mary believed gradually. Peter believed gradually. John believed gradually. The disciples believed gradually. God is patient with us.

In the Gospel, John tells us that he entered the tomb, saw, and believed. What did he see? He saw not chaos, not robbery, not panic. He saw the burial cloths lying there in a mysterious order. And something began to dawn in his heart: **this was not the work of grave robbers.** Something divine had happened. At that moment, faith began to awaken. Brothers and sisters, that is often how the Lord works in our lives too. He does not always overwhelm us in one dramatic moment. Sometimes He leads us step by step: through an empty tomb, through tears, through confusion, through silence, through little signs, through prayer, through the witness of others. And slowly, our hearts begin to understand: **He is alive.**

That is why today's first reading is so beautiful. Peter, who once was afraid, confused, and weak, now stands up boldly and proclaims: **"They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised on the third day."** What happened to Peter? Easter happened to Peter. The frightened disciple became a fearless witness. The man who denied Jesus became the man who preached Jesus. The one who once hid behind locked doors now stood before the world and said: **He is risen!** That is what the resurrection does. It does not simply give us information. It gives us **transformation.** So today, Easter asks each of us a simple but powerful question: **Do I live like someone who believes that Jesus is alive?** If Christ is risen, then: despair should not rule us, sin should not define us, fear should not imprison us, and death should not terrify us. If Christ is risen, then we must stop living as though the tomb is still full.

Maybe some of us come to church today like Mary Magdalene — carrying sorrow. Maybe some of us come like Peter — carrying guilt. Maybe some of us come like John — searching for understanding. Maybe some of us come with faith, but fragile faith. That is okay. Because the risen Jesus meets us exactly there. And just as He patiently led His first disciples from fear to faith, He will also lead us. So on this Easter morning, let us ask for one grace: **Lord Jesus, move me from fear to faith, from sorrow to hope, from doubt to trust, from silence to joyful witness.** Because the tomb is empty. Christ is risen. And our future is no longer death — our future is **life. Happy Easter! Alleluia! Amen**