



Bringing Home the Word

Easter Sunday (A)

April 9, 2023

With Mouths Wide Open

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

We normally speak of “eyes wide open,” an experience of seeing and understanding. However, Easter is a time of total astonishment, of standing before mystery with our mouths wide open and not understanding. Even the closest followers of Jesus were dumbfounded. Mary Magdalene didn’t expect to find an empty tomb. Upon seeing it, she presumed that the body had been stolen. The Gospel says that “they did not yet understand” (John 20:9). How could they? The magnitude of the mystery was overwhelming.

When did they finally understand? Actually, it’s more a question of believing than understanding. The Gospel tells us they *came* to believe. They came to believe in him—not that he would conquer death by not dying, but that he would conquer it by dying and then being transformed into a new kind of life, a kind of living that isn’t subject to death. They came to believe this through an experience of him.

We might envy the early followers who had Easter experiences of Jesus. But if we look carefully, we will see that they experienced him in their everyday lives—in community gatherings, in the breaking of the bread. These are the very places where we can experience him in our own lives. The good news of Jesus’ resurrection isn’t just that we shall die and go home with him, but that he is risen and comes home with us. †

Sunday Readings

Acts 10:34a, 37–43

This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible... to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance.

**Colossians 3:1–4 or
1 Corinthians 5:6b–8**

Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

John 20:1–9

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed.

**The Gospel says that
“they did not yet
understand” (John 20:9).**

**How could they?
The magnitude of the
mystery was overwhelming.**

A Word from Pope Francis

Let the Easter truce begin. But not to reload the weapons and pick up the fighting again—no!—a truce that will lead to peace, through real negotiation that is also willing to make some sacrifice for the good of the people. Indeed, what victory is there in planting a flag on a pile of rubble?

ANGELUS, ROME, APRIL 10, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I notice the signs of new life all around me?
- Do I thank God for simple moments of grace?

Glory and Power—Sing Out!

By Fr. Paul Turner

Beatrice took ill after conducting the music for the Palm Sunday Masses. By Tuesday of Holy Week she was in the hospital, supported by her loving husband and two teenage children. By Wednesday it had become apparent she was in grave danger. She was only in her fifties, but the infection had afflicted her internal organs.

Beatrice directed one of the most professional church choirs in the city. Music at that parish was performed with living faith and excellent musicianship. She had the skills to interpret music and to manage the diverse egos that filled the choir loft—and the pews—of her parish church.

After she lost consciousness, members of the choir gathered at her hospital room to sing. The nursing staff shared their faith and welcomed any attempt at healing. It was all happening too quickly.

She died on Good Friday. It was uncanny. Good Friday. This was a woman who loved the Easter Triduum and helped the community celebrate it with beauty. If there's a beautiful day for someone like that to die, let it be Good Friday.

The night after Easter, mourners gathered for her wake. On Easter Tuesday, 800 people filled the church to celebrate the Mass of Christian burial. The choir sang.

No one likes to “celebrate” a funeral Mass. Yet as the pastor pointed out, the community had experienced Easter twice.

Once on Sunday, and again on Tuesday—when everyone showed that their faith in the resurrection was real enough to touch.

As the Mass drew to a close, the procession formed to leave the church. The choir sang one last anthem: the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s *Messiah*. Still shedding tears of sorrow, the choir was so filled with faith they had to sing what they believed.

On Easter we celebrate the resurrection of Christ. We also profess the belief that he offers us a share in his resurrection. We have all lost people we loved. We have all wondered how we would carry on when someone special has died. Yet somehow we have received the Spirit we

needed to remain faithful to our path.

In spite of our sorrow, we praise the glory and power of God. Perhaps because of our sorrow we praise the glory and power of God. That is the way of Christians. †



The resurrection does not solve our problems about dying and death. It is not the happy ending to our life's struggle, nor is it the big surprise that God has kept in store for us. No, the resurrection is the expression of God's faithfulness to Jesus and to all God's children. Through the resurrection, God has said to Jesus, "You are indeed my beloved Son, and my love is everlasting," and to us God has said, "You indeed are my beloved children, and my love is everlasting." The resurrection is God's way of revealing to us that nothing that belongs to God will ever go to waste.

Henri Nouwen

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, call us out of the darkness and rise in us, that we may be saved and witness to your glory, we pray. Amen! Alleluia!

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

April 10–15

Monday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 2:14, 22–33 / Mt 28:8–15

Tuesday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 2:36–41 / Jn 20:11–18

Wednesday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 3:1–10 / Lk 24:13–35

Thursday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 3:11–26 / Lk 24:35–48

Friday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 4:1–12 / Jn 21:1–14

Saturday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 4:13–21 / Mk 16:9–15

Bringing Home
the Word 

April 9, 2023

© 2023 Liguori Publications, a ministry of the Redemptorists. One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057. Scripture quotations in this publication are from the *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC. The Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2023 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*. All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.