



EASTER SUNDAY



Accounts of the first Easter are found in all four Gospels (Matthew 28:1–10, Mark 16:1–8, Luke 24:1–49, John 20:1–23). Each account differs, sometimes slightly and sometimes significantly. Regardless of the differences in detail, the hope of Jesus' resurrection after his crucifixion is at the heart of Christian belief and Easter Sunday is the principal celebration of the resurrection. The hope and promise of new life is welcomed with bells, flowers, and joyful shouts of "Alleluia, Christ is Risen!" to which one responds, "The Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia!" Easter Sunday begins the joyful season of Easter, which includes Easter Sunday and the "Great 50 Days" that follow. The Easter story reminds us over and over again that our God makes all things new. Over and over again, we are invited to be surprised by Love.

READ

Mathew 28:1-10: After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."





WONDER

On Easter Sunday, we are invited to experience joy where there had only been grief; new life where we had thought there was only emptiness. We declare death does not have the last word, and that despite everything, love is alive. Celebrate with abandon this morning! Get dressed up in your finest. Make a joyful noise. Ring bells. Sing an Alleluia or shout Christ is Risen! Share the gift of love by writing a note or calling someone you have not talked to in a little while. Share where life has surprised you with joy. Share the gift of new life by making an Easter-inspired donation to an organization that is meaningful to you. Take a walk or look out your window for signs that **Love is alive!**

PRAY

O God of New Life, on this day when the veil of darkness is transformed to the brightest light and the end becomes the beginning, may the depths of all despair rise to meet hope everlasting. On this day when love overcame, emerging from a cold tomb with all the warmth, majesty, and creativity of a living God, may we too come to know a gravestone rolled away; may our own hearts rise and emerge in transformation. May we be a living example of the power of redemption and love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Julie Palmer (adapted). <https://www.prayerscapes.com/blog/author/juliemhaydockhotmail-co-uk/>

FOR MORE ON EASTER

- *Holy Week: An Emotions Primer* by Danielle Hitchen & Jessica Blanchard, Harvest House Publishers, 2019. (Board book)
- *This is the Mystery of Easter* by Amelia Richardson Dress & Lilly J. Moore, Amelia Dress, 2020. (Picture book)

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