

# EASTER SUNDAY 2020

*Reflection*  
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## **Gospel: John 20:1-9**

*The empty tomb seen by Peter and the Beloved Disciple is a sign of the resurrection of Jesus*

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

## **REFLECTION**

Sometimes, in the Gospel, there is a single detail that tells the whole story. There is such a detail in this Gospel reading that goes to the very heart of Easter. They came to the tomb and the stone was rolled away. The stone was rolled away!

The Gospel today is from Saint John. This is the witness of Saint John. The men who were followers of Jesus were totally undone by His death and sort of stuck together, bemoaning the death of Jesus, but not doing much more. Instead, the women went to the tomb and found it empty. The women then return and tell the men, who ran to the tomb—believing that the body of Jesus had been stolen. They did not yet believe in the Resurrection.

The Resurrection means that the huge stone that separated the human race from God, the stone that stood like a wall between human race and God was rolled away and now in Jesus Christ, the way to the Father is now wide-open. It is as though a room was shrouded in darkness and Jesus rises to pull aside the curtain and flood the room with God’s light. Through the Resurrection of Jesus, God’s own life floods back into the world. Now, eternal life and eternal happiness are possible for all of us.

John gets to the tomb first but does not go in. Instead he waits for Peter to go in. They both see the same thing: “the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place.” The empty tomb, and the neatly folded cloths, were signs that led the Beloved Disciple to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. Peter does not yet believe but John believes. John tells us in this Gospel: “they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.”

Slowly, ever so slowly, the followers begin to receive reports that Jesus is alive and speaking with various followers and that these followers begin to believe that it is really Jesus, now risen from the dead. Alleluia!

The witness of the disciples, and the faithfulness, courage and love of our fellow Christians, we too have powerful signs that Christ is risen and lives among us. Observing them, our faith cries out: ‘Alleluia!’

The empty tomb points beyond itself to new life. A person once received an Easter card which had written on the front, “May you always find empty tombs in your life,” and on the inside were the words, “and may you live a new life of resurrection as Jesus did.” The card was saying that in the darkness moments of a person’s life, the resurrected Christ will always be present to help us, because Jesus is not in the tomb. Rather, Jesus’ mission continues in the world.

Easter is a time to discover a personal relationship with the Risen Christ within the life of the Church. It is a relationship that no one can ever take away from us. It will make us better and greater than we are and will never end.

We will come to see that all the promises of Christ and all the parables of Christ for us and about us. What happened to the first disciples who experienced a re-creation and came to know new life powered by the Holy Spirit can happen to us.

Because of the Resurrection of Jesus, Easter is the Sunday, the season, when the stone in our life will roll away. This is the Sunday and the season of the second chance for all of us.

"Christ is risen." The resurrection of Christ is a pledge of our own resurrection. It is the foundation upon which our faith rests. It is the guarantee of our redemption and God's assurance that our sins are forgiven and that we are called to eternal life. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice therein. Give praise to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever. Alleluia." Amen.

***Happy Easter to You and your Family!***