



Celebrate

Resurrection of Our Lord / Easter Day

April 9, 2023

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34): Christ’s resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God’s faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God’s endless love.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Acts 10:34-43

Peter’s sermon, delivered at the home of Cornelius, a Roman army officer, is a summary of the essential message of Christianity: Everyone who believes in Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection fulfilled the words of the prophets, “receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Peter began to speak to [the people]: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹We are

witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

or Jeremiah 31:1-6 [not printed]

God’s final word is always “Yes.” Because God’s love is everlasting, God always remains faithful. Ancient Israel is assured that it will be rebuilt and have plentiful crops. The people of God too will ultimately be reunited.



This is the day that the LORD has made;



let us re-joice and be glad in it.

Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good;
God's mercy endures forever.

²Let Israel now declare,
"God's mercy endures forever."

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my song,
and has become my salvation.

¹⁵Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:
"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD is exalted!
The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷I shall not die, but live,
and declare the works of the LORD. **R**

¹⁸The LORD indeed punished me sorely,
but did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹Open for me the gates of righteousness;
I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰"This is the gate of the LORD;
here the righteous may enter."

²¹I give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and you have become my salvation. **R**

²²The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

²³By the LORD has this been done;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

²⁴This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. **R**

Easter means new life for us as it first meant new life for Christ. His resurrection reshapes the entire focus and motivation for our lives since we are now hidden with the risen Christ in God.

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for

you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

or Acts 10:34-43 [see p. 1]

Gospel

Matthew 28:1-10

Sorrow gives way to "fear and great joy" when two women are sent by an angel to proclaim the good news: Jesus is risen!

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And 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. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he

said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then 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." ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

or John 20:1-18 [not printed]

John's gospel describes the confusion and excitement of the first Easter: the stone is moved, disciples race back and forth, and angels speak to a weeping woman. Then, Jesus himself appears.

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

You call your church to witness to your salvation. We give thanks for (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer and*) all theologians, preachers, and teachers who proclaim your gospel. Equip all the baptized to share the joy of the resurrection in all we say and do. Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You bring abundant life throughout creation. The green blade rises, and all creation greets the resurrection dawn. Preserve vineyards and orchards and those who tend to them. Feed us with the fruits of creation. Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You show your steadfast love without regard to borders, barriers, or human-made divisions. Infuse your justice in every nation of the world (*places of concern or conflict may be named*) that all experience the peace that only you can give. Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You anointed your Son with the Holy Spirit and with power. Encourage us by his example in our ministries of healing, care, and outreach. We pray for all who are sick or hospitalized (*especially*) and for all health care workers who care for them. Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You have put gladness in our hearts. Inspire musicians and dancers to rejoice with songs of victory. Bless the music ministries of this congregation and all who foster our assembly's song. Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

As you have raised Jesus from the dead, you show us your resurrection promise. With your holy ones who have sung your praise (*especially*), free us from fear and empower us to go and tell the good news. Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

LECTIONARY READINGS

Monday (commemoration of Mikael Agricola, Bishop of Turku, died 1557) Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24. **Tuesday** Colossians 3:12-17. **Wednesday** Matthew 28:1-10. **Thursday** Psalm 16. **Friday** 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. **Saturday** Song of Solomon 8:6-7. **Second Sunday of Easter** Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31.

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