

Devotion for Easter Wednesday

Psalm 145:8-16

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

The Lord is good to all; He has compassion on all He has made.

All you made will praise you, O Lord; your saints will extol you.

They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might

So that all men may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations.

The Lord is faithful to all His promises and loving toward all He has made.

The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.

You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 16:13-35 *Israel fed with bread from heaven*

New Testament Reading: Luke 24:1-49 *Jesus rises and appears to the disciples*

Devotion: Why do you seek the living among the dead?

The woman who went to visit Jesus' grave Easter morning did not expect to find the living among the dead. They sought the dead among the dead. Who goes to a cemetery thinking they might find that the dead have become alive? The dead don't become alive. That's the way of the world as we know it. They were amazed, astounded and somewhat terrified, when they encountered the heavenly beings who told them, "*He is not here, but has risen.*" What would you and I think, if we were in their position? When they returned and told the disciples, the disciples thought they were out of their minds. Not even the reminder of Jesus' own words could convince them that the woman had found the living among the dead. Jesus' resurrection challenges our ability to believe, because it is absolutely contrary to our experience of life in this world.

Eventually fear and trembling gave way to the joy of believing. When they believed, Jesus' resurrection made such an impression on the disciples that they became completely changed persons. His resurrection convinced them that He truly is the Son of God; and they ordered their lives accordingly. With great boldness and courage, they told the good news of His resurrection and called others to faith in His holy name. Not even the threat of death, could cause them to change their tune. The resurrection of Jesus was so shocking, so spectacular that it convinced them beyond any doubt that He is Lord, that there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved, and that everyone who calls on His name will be saved in time and for eternity!

We do not experience Jesus' resurrection in the same way as the disciples and women who went to His tomb Easter morning. But nevertheless we do experience His resurrection in their words of witness, in the water of our baptism and through the forgiveness of His body and blood in communion. Jesus' resurrection is the most remarkable event. It shows us that He truly is the Son of God and that the Father accepted His sacrifice to take away the sin of the world. Jesus' resurrection changed the lives of the first believers. Jesus' resurrection has changed countless lives over the ages. Jesus' resurrection changes our lives too!

I Know that My Redeemer Lives (Public Domain)

I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives my ever living head!

He lives triumphant from the grave;
He lives eternally to save;
He lives exalted, throned above;
He lives to rule his Church in love.

He lives to grant me rich supply;
He lives to guide me with his eye;
He lives to comfort me when faint;
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears;
He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart;
He lives all blessings to impart.

He lives and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives my mansion to prepare;
He lives to bring me safely there.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, by the death of your Son Jesus, you took away death's power through the atonement of sin. In His glorious resurrection you destroyed death, releasing Him from its grip. In our Baptism into Christ's death and resurrection you wash away our sin in forgiveness, bless us with your Holy Spirit and promise us a share in His resurrection to a life without sin or death. Bless us this Easter season to contemplate and appreciate more fully the saving power of Christ in our lives. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Benediction

Isaiah 52:12

“For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go out in flight, for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”