

BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

March 31, 2024 • Easter Sunday • John 20:1–9

God Is With Us

On Easter, we celebrate the greatest event in the history of the world. Jesus rose from the dead. The battered body of the dead Jesus had been hastily laid to rest in a tomb. The final anointing and dressing of the body had to wait a day because of the Sabbath, and when the women came to the place where Jesus was laid, they found the tomb empty.

Jesus is handed over to his persecutors and the paschal mystery begins. Jesus takes on our suffering, our hurts, and our sins every time he falls to the ground and every time the strap bites into his back. With his death and resurrection, our pain and punishment are taken away. Jesus' new life becomes our new life. We are redeemed, saved, set free.

Jesus didn't have to be God to know what would happen to him if he kept preaching. He knew how the world treated those who stood for truth when the world did not want to hear it. But he spoke out anyway, because he knew his truth would set us free. The Son of God came in truth and love to set us free so that we can reclaim our place as children of God.

The word "paschal" is related to the word Passover. Like Moses during the first Passover in Egypt, Jesus brings his people from slavery to freedom. We are free when we really accept and truly believe Jesus' words, "I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). Jesus is our brother, not only on his mother's side, but on his Father's side too. He shared our humanity so that we could share in his divinity. Jesus died for this truth, rose in this truth, and lives in this truth in each of us today.

Nothing has power over us—not even death. Jesus our brother showed us this truth when he died. This is the paschal mystery; with every death we are promised new life.

Does this mean we won't suffer or get hurt? Of course not, but we know that no matter what happens, God is with us and in us. What a message of hope to bring to a world full of all sorts of hurtful things. Share this message with your children, and celebrate your new life in Christ this Easter.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Have a party and celebrate the special day when Jesus rose from the dead.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Concentrate on the power of God through Jesus Christ. Can you allow yourself to rest in the comfort of knowing all will be well? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?