

## **Easter in the Holy Night B2021**

When Mary Magdalene and the other women went to the tomb that early morning, they had no idea of what was waiting for them there. As friends of Jesus, their hearts were full of sadness and grief because of his death. They wanted just to show their love by embalming the body with spices and oil, according to the Jewish custom. Only one preoccupation was in their mind: "Who will roll back the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"

By seeing the tomb wide open and the stone removed from the entrance, they were taken by surprise, but they understood that something had happened: Jesus was not there. What was a simple apprehension became certitude when the angel told them: "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here."

Since that day, the news has travelled throughout the whole world. That news, spread by the eyes witnesses of that great event, has come to us. That news conveys just one and simple message: Jesus Christ is alive; he is not in the tomb. The grave was not strong enough to keep him imprisoned in its abyss. That news is what we celebrate. Tonight we proclaim that Jesus Christ is alive; God raised him from the dead; he lives forever. He is victorious over human demise and death. God has given him life back.

Luke says that at the death of Jesus, darkness came all over the whole land until three in the afternoon and the curtain of the temple was torn in two (Luke 23: 24). At the resurrection of Jesus, light came back and what was torn was whole again. Easter reminds us that the darkness of evil and hatred will never have the last word. For the resurrection of Jesus proclaims the ultimate triumph of light over darkness and goodness over evil, both in us and in our world. Today is the dawn of a new day and a new light.

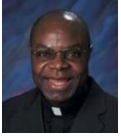
So we celebrate his resurrection today by rising from darkness and death ourselves. The Risen Lord himself, represented here by this beautiful Easter candle burning in our midst, is asking us to leave behind the works of darkness, to renounce and reject anything and everything in our lives which is dark, sinister and evil, dark thoughts and secrets, and to 'walk always as children of the light', following in his footsteps.

What we celebrate tonight is the gift of life, because God is life. Those who hope in him will understand that they did not run in vain. Those who trust in him will enjoy the gift of an unending happiness as they will live with him forever. As St Paul says, "If we have grown into union with him through death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection."

The resurrection of Jesus comforts us in our own suffering because if we suffer with him, with him we shall live; if we persevere in him, with him we shall reign. The resurrection is the gift that God keeps in store for us when we obey him until the end of journey. He wants us to live and share in the resurrection of Jesus.

The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, there would not be faith in him. Perhaps, we would admire him as someone extraordinary who did great miracles in his life, but that would be just a chapter in the books of history. We are here tonight because Jesus alive. As Jesus became man for our sake, so he is risen for our sake so that we share in his life. May Jesus bless all of you who join us tonight for the celebration of light! May he bless all your beloved ones and bring you peace!

**Exodus 14: 15-15: 1; Romans 6: 3-11; Mark 16: 1-7**



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