

The Tomb Is Empty!

Jesus Christ is risen today! What an astounding thing to believe! Outrageous! Incredible to imagine! Jesus has risen to life!

This is incomprehensible! And Jesus knows full well that it will take some getting used to; he is pushing the limits of what any reasonable person could believe. So, in John's gospel, he tries to prepare us for this startling experience with these words: *In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me because I live . . . I will reveal myself to you . . . I have told you this before it happens so that when it happens you may believe.*

On Easter, it happens! The stone is rolled back not so that Jesus can get out but so that we can see in! The lifeless body of Jesus is no longer in the tomb! The tomb is empty! Jesus has come to life!

Early on Easter morning, Jesus begins revealing himself, his risen self, to those he loves. We are among those Jesus loves. We are no different from the people we hear about in scripture today and all during the Easter season.

Mary Magdalene mistakes Jesus for the gardener. When we don't find Jesus exactly where we expect to see him, just like Mary Magdalene, we too can miss him right before our eyes.

When Peter and John look inside the tomb, they believe but they don't yet understand. Don't we have to admit that this is true: we say we believe, but do we understand?

Then Thomas, he demands to be able to touch Jesus' wounds before he will believe. Like him, we can refuse to accept the witness of others until we have had a personal experience of our own.

Later, can't we see ourselves in Peter and his friends when faced with the mind-boggling impact of the resurrection? What do they decide to do—go fishing! And, don't we too retreat into the comfort of our familiar routines. Like those fishermen who continued putting their nets into the sea all night long, we repeat old patterns over and over even though they prove to be useless. But as Jesus invited the fishermen, he invites us to change our ways and to come share his meal.



As Jesus gently reveals himself in those scripture stories, he can reveal himself in our lives: where we aren't expecting to find him, in the stranger, in the wounded, in our hearts burning within us, in the sharing of a meal, in the breaking of the bread! When that happens, we believe!

Today the sound of eggshells cracking can remind us that on the first Easter Jesus shattered our world by coming to life. That is what we celebrate today and every day because Easter never ends—ever! Yes, the tomb is empty and Jesus is alive!

He is risen...
Alleluia!

Happy Easter!