

Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Easter Sunday Year A

A resource for personal, family
and community prayer.

“Rise from the Dead”

Gospel: John 20:1-9

¹It was very early on the first day of the week, and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb ²and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,” she said, “and we don’t know where they have put him.”

³So Peter set out with the other disciple to go the tomb. ⁴They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; ⁵he saw the linen cloths on the ground but did not go in.

⁶Simon Peter who was following now came

You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.



up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground ⁷and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself.

⁸Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed.

⁹Till that moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

Reading

On Easter Sunday morning we are celebrating the power of love, God's love. All his earthly life Jesus put his trust in that love, in good times and bad – even on the cross he trusted in the Father's love when he could not see it, nor feel it. Courageously trusting in that love, he continued to embody it for those around him, showing gentleness, compassion, forgiveness, patience and love to the end. This "light of love" – a light that continued to glow in the darkness of Good Friday – has been raised up by the Father and fanned into a flame of new and risen life on Easter morning.

Recognising

You are invited to meditate on the passage, or any part of it, by letting it speak to your life experience until you feel to say "I recognise this passage."

v1. "She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb"

Can you enter into the experience of Mary by remembering an occasion of apparent setback or disappointment that gave rise to huge uncertainty or confusion and compelled you to look for help?

v4. "They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first"

Can you enter into the experience of Peter

and the beloved disciple by remembering a time when your heart quickened at the prospect of good news- (the birth of a child, a loved one returning home, a sick person coming home from hospital, a visit by a highly respected world leader) and you were restless and excited until you could see this for yourself?



Who are the Jesus people who help to "roll away the stone" and bring light and life to the tombs of darkness and despair in our world today.

v5. "he saw the linen cloths on the ground but did not go in"

Can you enter the experience of the beloved disciple by remembering a time when you were confident and enthusiastic about a project or relationship but you were hesitant and holding back in taking the final steps in that commitment?

v6. "saw the linen cloths on the ground"
Can you remember the experience of little

signs of resurrection in nature and in human relations that have nurtured new life, new joy and new hope for the future?

v9. “He must rise from the dead”

Who are the Jesus people who help to “roll away the stone” and bring light and life to the tombs of darkness and despair in our world today- tombs in our personal lives, society or world- at times of loneliness, abandonment, loss, grief, times of famine, war, natural disasters, etc?

Responding

Having recognised God’s presence in life, you are invited to **respond** in your own words, in prayer (thanksgiving, repentance and petition).

I thank you, Father, for the experiences when I have witnessed the power of love to raise me up from the darkness of the tomb. I have encountered this love in family and friends who have “moved the stone away” and unbound me of fears and anxieties and helped me experience “the dawn of a new day.”

Father, I ask forgiveness for the times I have chosen to remain in the bondage of the tomb with the “linen cloths” tightly wrapped around my eyes and ears and resisted the call to freedom and new life.

Father, may this Easter morning be the dawn of a new day where I might leave behind the old linen cloths of fear and guilt that have held me in bondage for so long and rise to a new life of joy, hope and trust in your love.

Resting

You are invited to enter deep prayer by simply **resting** your heart in God’s presence (Contemplative moment). The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage might help you on this journey into greater silence and stillness, e.g. “**Rise from the dead**”.

Reflecting

From your journey with this passage, you are now invited to **reflect**, and put into your own words, any new insights or understanding that you have received (Wisdom moment).

From your journey with this passage, what new insight has been given to you into the meaning of resurrection or new hope or new joy.

Resurrection experiences in nature and in human relationships inspire us to go forward with new hope.



Children

Reading

Jesus' good friend, Mary, visits his tomb when it is still dark on the Sunday morning after his death. She is stunned when she sees the stone moved away from the entrance. Mary then runs to share this news with Peter and the other beloved disciple in the hope of some answers. Peter and the beloved disciple immediately sprint with hope to the tomb. They find that it is empty and the linen cloths that were used on Jesus' body are on the ground. They believe that Jesus is not dead and is risen.

Recognising

Can you remember a time of darkness in your life and something unexpected happened that turned your sadness into hope, like when Mary saw the stone moved away from the tomb?

Can you remember meeting a person who was filled with energy, enthusiasm and life, and who encouraged you to be hopeful, like Peter and the other disciple who sprinted to see the empty tomb? to give thanks to God?

Responding

Father, I thank You for the experiences and memories of hope in my life which filled me with new enthusiasm and helped me to rise from times of darkness.

Father, I am sorry for the times that I was blind to the hope of new life presented by the empty tomb and unable to see the presence of the risen Jesus on the face of others.

Father, I ask that I may be filled with the energy of Peter and the beloved disciple this Easter so to sprint with new hope to spread the good news that Jesus is alive.

Resting

Rest in the life-giving presence of the Father by repeating "I see and I believe" for as long as it is possible. May you be filled with new life as you are drawn deeper into the light of the Father's presence.

Reflecting

Hope fills a person with the fresh energy and enthusiasm to experience and recognise new life.

Lenten Lectio Series - Lectio Booklet-Journeying with the Gospels of Lent- Year A (Now available). Meditate on the Way- Living the Word Podcast accompanies the series (Available on all podcast platforms). Further resources: lectio.newrydominican.com

A simple summary of Lectio steps can be found in the porch of the church.