



Call: Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!! Alleluia!!

O Lord our God, our Lenten journey is complete. Let joy take root. Let life burst forth. Alleluia! Amen

Song: See what a morning STF 309

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Rs529D0HQU>

See what a morning, gloriously bright
with the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;
folded the graveclothes, tomb filled with light
as the angels announce Christ is risen!
See God's salvation plan,
wrought in love, borne in pain, paid in sacrifice,
fulfilled in Christ the man,
for he lives; Christ is risen from the dead.

See Mary weeping, 'Where is he laid!'
as in sorrow she turns from the empty tomb;
hears a voice speaking, calling her name;
it's the Master, the Lord raised to life again!
The voice that spans the years,

speaking life, stirring hope, bringing peace to us,
will sound till he appears,
for he lives; Christ is risen from the dead.

One with the Father, Ancient of Days,
through the Spirit who clothes faith with
certainty,
honour and blessing, glory and praise
to the King crowned with power and authority!
And we are raised with him,
death is dead, love has won, Christ has
conquered;
and we shall reign with him,
for he lives; Christ is risen from the dead.

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The greatest day in history S of F 2046

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoPAYosw4AU>

The greatest day in history,
death is beaten, you have rescued me.
Sing it out, Jesus is alive.
The empty cross and the empty grave,
life eternal, you have won the day.
Shout it out: Jesus is alive,
he's alive.
*And oh, happy day, happy day,
you washed my sin away.
Oh, happy day, happy day,
I'll never be the same.
Forever I am changed.*

When I stand in that place,
free at last, meeting face to face,
I am yours, Jesus, you are mine.
Endless joy, perfect peace,
earthly pain finally will cease.
Celebrate, Jesus is alive,
he's alive.
Chorus

Oh, what a glorious day,
what a glorious way
that you have saved me.
And oh, what a glorious day,
what a glorious name,
yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
Chorus

(Last time) I'll never be the same

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Prayer: Living and risen Christ, we thank you for this day of praise and celebration – a day of hope after despair, joy after sorrow, life after death – a day to lift up our hearts and to offer you our praise and adoration!

Loving and risen Christ, we remember today all that you have done for us and for all the world – your great victory over death, your triumph over everything that keeps us far from you and prevents us living the life you want us to lead.

Saving and risen Christ, we come today to bring you our Easter worship and to acknowledge your love and power, and to welcome you as our living Lord. Forgive us when we become disheartened, or lose sight of all you have done for each of us. Forgive us for the times when we have doubted your love for us, or been feeble in our response to your love. Breathe new life into our hearts today. Fill us with your resurrection power, that we may have renewed confidence and enthusiasm to meet and walk with you this and every day. Amen

Reading – Matthew 28:1-10 Jesus Has Risen

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.” So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Talk “Reasons to be cheerful”

What are the most memorable events in your life? Can you remember where you were when....? How did you feel? The most recent memorable event in my life was when my first grandchild was born. With the connectivity of things like mobile phones and WhatsApp I had a blow-by-blow account leading up to the moment she was born. In that 24 hours I went through a whole series of emotions, from excitement, to anxiety and apprehension, impatience even, and elation at the news of a new life safely delivered. The Easter story is an even more momentous event. Nothing like it had happened before. It was, according to Matthew’s account, groundbreaking, earth shattering; an event so staggering it was almost beyond belief.

Each of the gospels is slightly different in the description of this pivotal event, but the basic facts are all the same. Three days after Jesus had died on the cross and been placed in a tomb, whose only opening was sealed by a heavy stone, women (or in the case of John’s account one woman – Mary Magdalene) were the first to witness the empty tomb. Jesus appeared to several different people including Mary and other women, Peter and John, two disciples in the road to Emmaus, seven of the disciples who were out fishing, the disciples including Thomas in a closed and locked upper room. Matthew’s account is particularly dramatic, including an earthquake, an angel as bright as lightning and white as snow, Roman guards swooning as they stood guard over the tomb. This was truly a momentous event, something that would stay with everyone who witnessed it for the rest of their lives. None of the other gospels have such a dramatic description which has led to some scholarly debate as to whether this is an accurate description of events. Whether Matthew’s description is literal or metaphorical, he does clearly make the point that this was a momentous, groundbreaking, life changing event.

This event, the resurrection; Jesus risen from death is the central point of our Christian faith. It is not resuscitation – Jesus brought back to life, the same old life, rather it is Jesus going through death to a completely new life.

And this REALLY is exciting!

Jesus has done exactly what he said he would do, something that was impossible to understand, and difficult to explain, and quite frightening to think about. After the events leading up to the crucifixion, and the despair and real fear after Jesus had died, the women were tearful and grieving, the men were fearful and hiding away. But then they witness the risen and living Jesus, walking and talking, eating and holding his hands out to be touched. He has done exactly what he said he would do – he would die and then 3 days later come back from death to new life. This is the key to our Christian faith. So how do we respond to this momentous event?

Going back to my most recent memorable event – the birth of my granddaughter. How did I respond? Well, I wanted to go out and tell everyone the great news.

In Matthew's account of the Resurrection, and angel gives Mary four messages. "Do not be afraid." "He is not here." "Come and see." "Go and tell."

"Do not be afraid" is a phrase often used in the Bible when someone is faced with difficulties or struggles. The reality of the Resurrection helps us to move from fear to real joy. When we are afraid, we can remember the empty tomb. "He is not here. Come and see" The stone had been rolled away not to let Jesus out, (he had already risen), rather to allow others to be true witnesses to the miracle of the Risen Lord. The tomb was empty, and is still empty.

Jesus was and is the Risen Lord. The cross is empty and we see new life in its place.

After the silence and darkness of Good Friday, we see God in action, starting something new, the beginning of new life. The women and the disciples would remember the momentous events of that first Easter morning for the rest of their lives, they were first hand witnesses, they saw and felt the emotions of that event. But they didn't just see, they responded, they went out and told others, both near and far. This was truly an event that changed lives and changed the whole world forever.

Let us pray: Risen Christ, thank you for the cross, thank you for your sacrifice, for paying the price for our wrongdoings. But thank you most that you conquered death and rose to new life, so that we can know that death is not the end, and that you promise us new life through you. Amen

Song: Jesus Christ STF 274

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewlpRdDU9Q8>

Jesus Christ, I think upon Your sacrifice,
you became nothing, poured out to death.
Many times I've wondered at Your gift of life,
and I'm in that place once again.
And I'm in that place once again.
*And once again I look upon
the cross where You died,
I'm humbled by Your mercy
and I'm broken inside.
Once again I thank You,
once again I pour out my life.*

Now You are exalted to the highest place,
King of the heavens, where one day I'll bow.
But for now, I marvel at this saving grace,
and I'm full of praise once again.
I'm full of praise once again.
Refrain

Thank You for the cross,
thank You for the cross,
thank You for the cross, my Friend.
(Repeat)

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Prayers of Intercession:

As we celebrate the new life of Resurrection, let us pray to the one true God, who brings us all to life.

Living God, we pray that the Church may proclaim with joy your message of hope for the world; may our lives, as well as our worship, testify to the truth of the Resurrection; broaden our vision of what is possible through new life in you.

Merciful God, we pray for the world we inhabit; were religious intolerance sparks discord and hatred. We pray for the leaders of the world, who have the opportunity to make important decisions that affect us all. We pray for mercy and justice, compassion and integrity. We pray for protection against evil and strengthening of good.

Loving God, we pray for new life throughout your creation, for those yet unborn, that they will be born into a world of love and acceptance. We pray for those who have be born to new life in you, and for others that they, too, may be born again into a new life through you.

Compassionate God, we pray for those who cannot think, for the pain and anguish which engulfs them; for all whose lives are troubled and insecure; for those who have little energy left to rejoice. Bring healing, and the resources to cope with suffering and grant us the grace to carry one another's burdens in love.

Living and Risen Lord, we thank you for the precious gift of new life; may we never again take it for granted, but live each moment in the fullness of life that Jesus has gained for us. We ask these and all our prayers in the name of Jesus, our risen and Living Lord. Amen

Lord's Prayer : Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: Thine be the glory STF313

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXzmjNE-yLA>

Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave clothes where thy body lay.

*Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son:
Endless is the victory, thou o'er death hast won.*

Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom.
Let his church with gladness, hymns of triumph

sing;
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.
Refrain

No more we doubt thee, glorious prince of life!
Life is nought without thee; aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through thy
deathless love:
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.
Refrain

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Blessing: May we be excited at the good news of the risen Lord. May Christ who died and rose again give us all hope. May his Holy Spirit empower each one us to experience new and vibrant life through Jesus Christ who died and rose in glory. Amen