



# UNITED IN PRAYER

A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES, HOUSEHOLDS, & INDIVIDUALS

## EASTER SUNDAY

(YEAR A)

12 April 2020



### GATHER

BE IN THE PRESENT MOMENT, RECONISING GOD IN OUR MIDST

#### SET UP A PRAYER SPACE

Gather what you can from around your house to create a prayer space or focus for the time of prayer.

To celebrate Easter Sunday you might like to include a candle (representative of the Paschal candle), flowers, a bowl of water (recalling our baptism) and any white and gold cloths you may have in the house.

#### SING OR LISTEN TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING HYMNS

Christ is Risen – Matt Maher

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBqPXvP6aso>

Jesus Christ is Risen Today

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9a41CvVEHw>

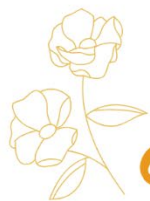
#### OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,

We celebrate this day of gladness and rejoicing,  
basking in the depth of your love  
revealed in an empty tomb.

May we, like the disciples, make haste  
to share the news of Resurrection with everyone we  
encounter.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.



WE ARE AN  
*Easter people*  
AND ALLELUIA IS OUR SONG.



# PROCLAIM

TIME TO READ THE SCRIPTURES

Here you will find references for this weekend's readings. While we cannot physically gather for Mass, the Word of God is what can nourish us.

## THIS WEEKS READINGS

Open a Bible or visit [universalis.com](http://universalis.com) to find the readings.

### FIRST READING: ACTS 10:3-4a, 37-43

*We ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.*

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

*This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.*

You can pray the Psalm by listening along to it sung [here](#).

### SECOND READING: Colossians 3:1-4

*Seek what is above, where Christ is.*



*Resurrection by Eginò G Weinert*

## GOSPEL: JOHN 20:1-9

*He had to rise from the dead.*

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him."

So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in.

When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place.

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed.

For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.



# BREAK

REFLECT ON THE SCRIPTURES

This section of the prayer resource is designed to be adapted for people depending on how they are gathering to pray. There are options for praying as families or in households and for those praying as individuals.

1. FOR CHILDREN
2. FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
3. FOR EVERYONE

## 1. FOR CHILDREN

**What do you remember from the reading that you have just heard?**

Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb where Jesus has been buried, but when she gets there the body has gone. **How do you think she felt when she realised this?**

She goes to get Simon Peter and John and tells them that Jesus has gone. They reach the tomb and see that it is empty. The disciples finally realise that Jesus has risen from the dead and they believe in him. They know that he is the Son of God.

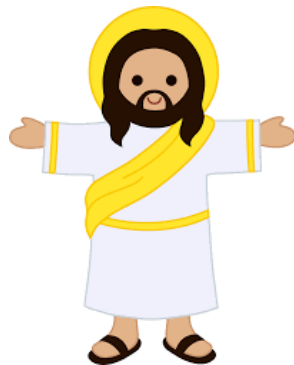
Jesus is risen from the dead, giving new life to us all. **How does that make you feel?**

Easter is a time of joy and celebration. **How will you celebrate Easter today?**

We are filled with hope today because Jesus' resurrection shows us that nothing is impossible for God.

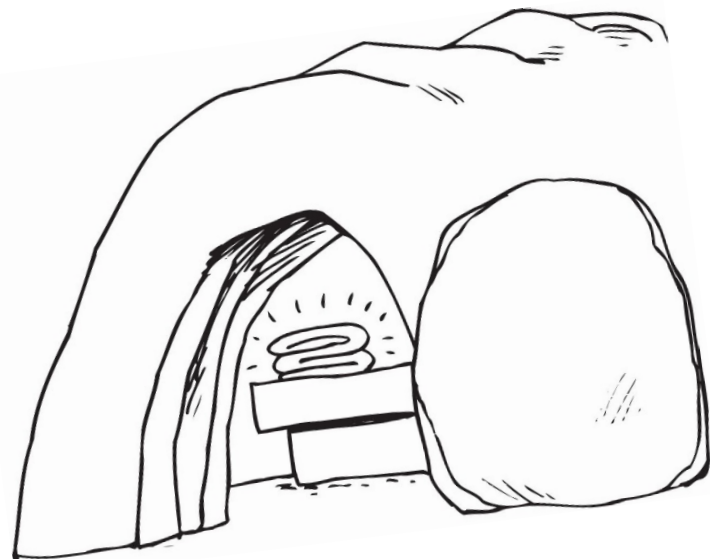
We hope we can help each other to be the best people we can be and to live full and happy lives, wherever we are in the world.

We pray that through God's grace we can care for one another



and work together to make the world a better place for us all, and especially for those of us who are poor.

**What is your hope for the world this Easter? How can we make it happen?**



*Discuss as a family all that you have heard and thought about during the liturgy. Ask the children to look out for signs of hope and new life in the week ahead and to do one thing to try and make their hope for the world a reality.*

*Adapted From CAFOD UK's Children's Liturgy Reflection*

Click [here](#) for a printable download activity sheet with colouring, craft activity and recipe.



# BREAK

## 2. FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

### The Empty Tomb – It Matters!

Nick Wilson

I was born on Easter Sunday morning in 1978. New life on such an auspicious day – on that day, things began to matter.

The Easter morning story holds a special place in human history; the empty tomb – it matters. Have you ever noticed that the first person to be revealed the Resurrection was a woman? Pretty significant in a time when women were considered as property! And it was this same woman who announced the Resurrection first! These facts matter to the Christian world and to those who believe, but why should the empty tomb, the first to see it and the result of it matter to YOU?

Today in the modern world, there is a crisis of mattering. Recently in our country, we have had a good hard looking at mattering. Do unborn babies matter? Are our elderly and critically ill – do they matter?

The empty tomb is the result of an act of great love because we matter to God! Pope Francis in his recent document to all young people *Christus Vivit!* reminds us of 3 great truths – Christ is alive, Christ saves us and God loves us – Jesus in the act of surrendering His life substitutes those things that we do, say and think that damage others and our world. And why? Because we matter!

In fact, anyone that tells you that you don't matter couldn't be more wrong! How can you not matter when you are infinitely lovable and infinitely loved?!

The Bible passage from today tell us that *“the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed”* (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) (v8-9).

This disciple saw and believed the truth of Jesus. This wasn't an academic exercise! Is it so difficult for you to see the truth of Jesus and dare to believe that you matter? This is your empty tomb too, and it is empty because you matter to Jesus.

### Pause for Reflection

**Who Jesus is to you?**

**Do you have trouble believing that you matter? What stops you?**

**Who is the one you can talk to about your relationship with God? When was the last time you chatted to them?**

## 3. FOR EVERYONE

As you enter into prayer today on this Easter day, take a moment to look back over the last few weeks and months. This has been a difficult time of many changes to day to day life for everyone around the world.

*Pause for a moment, and consider the moments God has been working in your life... Does a particular moment stand out to you? A moment where the light of the Resurrected Christ was present and active?*

That same light is present with you now. Right here, right now, the Risen Christ, who triumphs over sin and death sanctifies this ordinary place, and these ordinary people, and makes them holy.

Today's reading is from the Gospel of John. This is the gospel that you would have heard had you been able to attend Mass on this Easter Sunday morning.

**How does this passage speak to you today?**

**Does it have anything to do with how you are to cope with our “lockdown”?**

**Did you notice there is quite a lot of “running” in this story; what does this signify to you?**

**“He saw and he believed”: what did the disciple believe? Does this “belief” make any difference to the way you are reacting with the effects of the Coronavirus?**

You may like to go back and read the story once more, and notice particularly what the evangelist says at the end: “they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead”.

On this Easter Sunday, we can experience the fullness of joy in the Resurrection, no matter how fiercely the virus rages. Bring all your thoughts and feelings together and turn them into a prayer to the Risen Christ, and to the God who raised him from the dead.

*We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by Your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

*Adapted from: Pray as You Go. Full recording [here](#).*





# RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

SENT TO LIVE WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED

The prayer below is an adapted version of the Baptismal promises that we traditionally renew during Easter Mass. We invite you to pray these together with those you have gathered with or as an individual.

If you have included a bowl of water as part of your prayer space, at the end of this prayer you might like to invite each person to use the water to make the Sign of the Cross, recalling the waters of our Baptism.

## PRAY

**LEADER:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

**RESPONSE:** I do.

**LEADER:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

**RESPONSE:** I do.

**LEADER:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**RESPONSE:** I do.

**LEADER:** Lord our God, We have made the pilgrim journey of the passion of Your Son and have kept watch for his resurrection. We recall the wondrous work of our creation and the still greater work of our redemption.

**ALL:** Having been buried in baptism into the passion, death and resurrection of your Son, may our celebration of Easter keep us ever close to you, our source of life and hope, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

*This prayer has come from a resource called 'Holy Week at Home' by Be a Heart. You can find the full version [here](#).*



# SEND

SENT TO LIVE WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED

## CLOSING PRAYER

Look upon your family, the Church, O Lord,  
with unfailing love and care,  
so that, renewed by this Easter celebration,  
our hope may be restored  
and we may come to the glory of the resurrection.  
Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

*From the Archdiocese of Wellington "Suggestions for Prayer at Home over Holy Week"*

## SING OR LISTEN TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING HYMNS

Christ be our Light – Bernadette Farrell

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0\\_3FdJDrTYI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_3FdJDrTYI)

Because He Lives – Matt Maher

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBvU7arNhQs>

## WAYS TO LIVE THIS PRAYER THROUGH THE WEEK

- ✓ Do things that are fun, give you joy or connect you with people you love.
- ✓ Call family and friends.
- ✓ If possible, take a walk (while respecting physical distancing).
- ✓ Play songs that bring you joy and feel celebratory for you (and your family).
- ✓ Have an Easter meal. If you are sharing this with others in your household, ask each person to say one thing that they are grateful for.
- ✓ Practice gratitude for this Easter season. Share with someone each day something you are grateful for, or write it in a journal, or start a gratitude group chat with friends or family. This is a great practice for us during this season as we continue to make our way through the Covid-19 pandemic.



This resource has been developed during the Covid-19 pandemic to assist families, households and individuals to pray together. Our church buildings may be closed, but the Church is still open. In our current circumstance, the domestic Church becomes our primary way of being able to recognise Christ in our midst.

To stay up to date with resources, make sure you sign up to our weekly e-newsletter at <http://pndiocese.org.nz/newsletter> and visit <https://pndiocese.org.nz/covid19-united/>