

He is Risen! He is truly Risen! Four Minute Retreat for April, 2025

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Reflection:

In the Eastern Rite Churches, the Easter greeting of the priest to the people is: "He is risen!" The congregation responds: "He is truly risen!" This greeting continues throughout the Easter Season because it takes time to fathom what Jesus' rising from the dead means. The resurrection is what happened to Jesus, but it also happens to us now in the present and fully in the future. Obviously, nobody witnessed the resurrection, but the tomb was empty. Fr. Donald Senior explains: "The most radical and most fundamental of Christian beliefs is that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified under the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, rose from the dead, body and spirit. But Christians affirm the tomb was empty. The bones of Jesus exist but now are part of a transformed bodily being whose beauty, mobility, connection to the universe and to the God of the universe is beyond our ken and only imaginable in small part through the eyes of faith." For us we get glimpses of dying and rising during our lifetime: a mother with breast cancer experiences a dying through chemo and rising to a new appreciation of life; a person loses a job, a dying and a rising with another job that is a better fit; a student does not make the baseball team but rises to become a track star. These are signs that point to our future: the fulfillment of Jesus' promise that our bodies like his will be transformed.

Scripture:

"The angel said to the women at the tomb, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified, he is not here for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has been raised from the dead." Matthew. 28.5-7

"On the evening of the first day of the week when the doors were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hand and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord." John 20.19-20

Questions for Reflection:

- 1) What have been some of the dying and rising experiences in your life?
- 2) In rising from the dead, Jesus speaks loudly and clearly, that death does not have the final word. Does the resurrection calm some of your fears about death?

Action:

When you experience darkness and feeling of being hopeless in chaotic situations, invite Jesus to speak this promise to your heart, "I am the resurrection and the life, everyone who believes in me, even if one dies, the person will live."