

# SAID ED April 16, 2017

## Easter Sunday 2017

Jesus Christ is risen, alleluia! Welcome to all those who join us today as we celebrate this great feast. Thank you for being with us and helping us to recognize the presence of the Risen Lord in our midst.

St. Mark's Gospel opens with a victory cry: "The Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God!" "Good News!" was a catch phrase in the Greco-Roman world in which Mark lived. It meant that the enemy had been defeated, the city was safe and that the people would live.

Mark's Gospel has sometimes been described as "A Passion account with a long introduction." Mark's opening words however, point to the true purpose of his Gospel. The "Good News" is not simply that Christ suffered and died for us, but most especially that he rose for us. It is the Risen Christ that Mark salutes as "Lord" – the title the Scriptures reserve for God alone, but the Romans used to denote "Caesar."

If "Good News!" is indeed a victory cry, what victory are we talking about?

It is this: Jesus, Son of God and Lord, has overcome death; and in doing so, he has transformed human life. His triumph, therefore, is ours as well. Paul makes this point when he says that the Risen Jesus is the first born of the dead. By his passion, death and resurrection, Christ has reconfigured death for the entire race, making it something utterly new. We are no longer destined to crash on the shoals of our mortality and disappear. Christ has made death a birthing into a new and eternal life. Doing this, he has also transformed human life, infusing it with a shining hope that not even death can darken.

Death, the greatest of our enemies, is a symbol for all the other foes ("sins") that besiege the human heart: fear, war, terrorism, hatred, racism, violence, poverty and oppression. The Risen Christ assures us that none of these enemies will write the final word in our personal histories or in the history of our human race. His Rising means that the tide has been turned and that ultimate victory is assured. Yes, the struggle goes on within us and within our world. But we are no longer alone. The Living Christ is in our midst, healing and transforming us. That he will continue to do so is our prayer for you on this Easter Sunday.

On behalf of all of our parish staff, I wish you a Happy Easter and a wonderful and grace filled Easter season. If you are visiting us today, please come again!!

Jesus Christ is risen today – Alleluia!

Happy Easter!

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