

Easter Day, Year C  
The Reverend D. S. Mote, PhD  
St Paul's Episcopal Church, Key West, FL  
April 17, 2022  
Acts 10:34-43  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
1 Corinthians 15:19-26  
John 20:1-18

## **Resurrection Is the Reason**

Happy Easter! I love Mary Magdalene: the apostles to the apostles. Where would we be without Mary Magdalene? Not here. If she hadn't gone and told what she had seen for herself—Jesus the Christ, resurrected, alive again! If she hadn't seen and gone and told, the Jesus Movement would have stopped.

But she not only went to the tomb, she not only looked into the tomb, not once, but twice—second time seeing angels, heavenly messengers—not only all that, but she stayed on a while, standing, outside the tomb, weeping. She lingered longer.

Peter and the other disciple, whom we guess was probably John, came, saw, went home. She lingered longer in a place that had been a place of death. And by lingering longer she found out the greatest news of all time. Death has been destroyed in the resurrection of Jesus the Christ! Somebody say amen.

Dear Friends, we are here today not because of bunnies or flowers or springtime or egg hunts or Easter eggs or deviled eggs or egg salad; not even for champagne or because of sparkling water. Please don't misunderstand me. We love all those things, and we will enjoy all of those things in celebration of the reason we are here.

And what is that? Christ is risen!

The reason we are here is the message of this Resurrection Day. And that message is: God is Love. And God loves us, every single one of us. And we know that this is true because of all that has been done for us by the God who is Love. The ministry, the teaching, the cross, the tomb, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus the Christ means that death is destroyed, and our death has been taken into God's own self and annihilated.

We are here because God is love; God loves us; and Love always wins.

God's love, God's saving grace, God's health and healing, God's joy and peace: these are for real; they are eternal; and they are for everyone. Unkillable. Unstoppable. Ultimately victorious.

This is the healing and liberating and empowering message of Easter, of the Resurrection: Life is bigger than death! Love is bigger than death! Love wins!

And if that message is good news for you, you've come to the right place.

Even when we think it can't possibly be true, in the end, Love wins!

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I will let a poet have the last say in this sermon, a poet, a monk, a mystic by the name of Thomas Merton.

Hear now the last stanza of his poem entitled "The Victory":

*Look up, you captives, crowding to the water,  
Look up, Ezechiel, and see the open heavens  
Salute you with the vision of the winged Evangelists.  
You with your ankles in the water and your garments white,  
Lift up your heads, begin to sing:  
And let your sights, exulting, rise and meet  
The miracle of living creatures  
In their burning, frowning flight.  
The message of their lamps and fires  
Warns you: make ready for the Face that speaks like lightning,  
Sets free the song of everlasting glory  
That now sleeps, in your paper flesh, like dynamite.*

Christ is risen! Alleluia!