

## He Is Risen: Easter Sunday Eucharist & Reflection

Bible Verses Mentioned: Isaiah 65:17–25, Acts 10:34–43, Luke 24:1–12

And you know then I had to tell him and I said, you know because he's a very encouraging person. And I was like, okay, you know as much as you're encouraging me, and I appreciate that, it would be a little bit tough. Yeah And he was. And he did what I asked. It was good, but it was going to be difficult to ask. We're going to try to make transportation.

I'm like, I don't even do well with anything. So yeah, so let's go take a piece. Let's try this stuff. Yeah, I think it's just a good balance. I really love the undergrad. It was a good school, but I was sort of aware of out there. And it just completely inflated my ego.

And that sounds successful. It's inevitable that I'm going to end up being successful. And I think that that is also there's an ego to that conversation. Yeah, it cannot. You have to feel like oh yeah.

No, yeah. There is that turning point. I'm always kind of person. It's like, you know if I'm too much high on that thing, it's like, hey man, let's be real. But you know that's just how it works. I think there's so many answers.

Well, not just being anything. This is so important. It felt like playing with relevant people in the beginning. Let me show up.

Wow. Yeah. Stay here. Yeah, yeah. My second year earlier, right now, this stress comes forward and also just like criticism.

It was just like I was skipping this question. Which is great for us. But then towards the end, yeah. She was.

Oh, okay. So you guys did meet any program on it? First of all, yeah, I mean, you know that was the thing. You know Coming out of bamboo, these questions. But at UNF, that's when I was going to ask you to study.

I was just saying, I'm all students. They're probably more students students at this time. Hey, good morning. Are you about to start? Yes. I played pretty by myself. I'm just going to get a drink. Yeah, totally fine. Games.

I'm just saying his friends, but it's not perfect.

It's a similar setup, but it's a different one. It goes under the stairs.

Hallelujah. Christ is risen. The Lord is risen indeed. Hallelujah.

Almighty God, to you, all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, Lord of God.

You take away the sin over the right hand of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray. O God, who, for our redemption, gave Your only begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by His glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy.

Grant us so to die daily to sin that we may ever more live with Him in the joy of His resurrection through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

"I'm about to create new heavens and a new earth. The former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating, for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people. No more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress.

No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days or an old person who does not live out a lifetime or one who dies at 100 years will be considered a youth and one who falls short of 100 will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit. They shall not plant and another eat.

For like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the works of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity. For they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord and their descendants as well. Before they call, I will answer. While they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together.

The lion shall eat straw like the ox. But the serpent, its food shall be dust. They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain," says the Lord. The Word of the Lord.

His mercy endures for my song, And he has become my salvation.

There is a sound of exaltation of victory,

But He did not hand me open to death, Open for the gates of righteousness, I will offer thanks to the Lord. This is the fate of the Lord, Hebrews.

And have become my salvation.

A reading from the Act of the Apostles. Peter began to speak to Cornelius and the other Gentiles. I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation, anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ.

He is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did, both in Judea and Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.

But God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear. Not at all, not to all people, but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead.

All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name. The Word of the Lord.

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

On the first day of the week at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?

He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He told you while He was still in Galilee that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again?" Then they remembered His words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. That was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles.

But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb, stooping and looking in. He saw the linen clothes by themselves. Then he went home amazed at what had happened. The gospel of the Lord.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank You for the love that You showed to us.

And chiefly in that love is a demonstration of that on the cross and in the resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, where you illumine our hearts and minds with the knowledge and love of Your Word, and the love of Your Son, Jesus. May the preaching of Your Word be Your Word for His sake and glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. Now the children are going out there to do what is called digging up the hallelujahs. We tried to do this last year, but I messed it up.

But they're going to dig up the hallelujahs that they buried at the beginning of Lent, and they're going to yell, "Hallelujah," and our job is to answer them. I don't know exactly when it will happen. One thing I want to confess to you is, and I don't know, I can't remember all the things I've told you about myself, but at one point I was an atheist. I didn't believe that there was a God.

And this was during my high school years, actually was going to Episcopal High School, which is probably not the place where you would think that you would become an atheist. But I was listening to actually religious people who didn't believe in the historicity or the historical reality is a better way to maybe say that, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

They would teach things like Jesus didn't raise Lazarus from the dead. They just discovered that he was buried alive. And when I listened and heard this kind of teaching that was basically taking the stories of the New Testament and essentially saying that they were mythological.

Maybe having a moral point or making a good thing or making something that maybe Jesus did, like shared his lunch, and so everybody kind of shared their lunch, and that was the feeding of the 5,000. Maybe you've heard something like that before. But I would go home and argue with my mother with things that I had learned from religious leaders. I would say, "How can you believe in this stuff, Mom?" It's a bunch of made-up stories.

You know, it's just myth. I didn't really come to a faith until I was in college when I really started to hear the Lord speaking to me through the power of His Holy Spirit, and through the testimony of people that actually believed in the story of Jesus Christ and not only believed it with their message and their teaching, but also believed it in the way that they manifest it in the testimony of their lives.

And I actually kind of got upset about that, that why hadn't I been shown and given this kind of authentic representation of the Christian faith when I was a young person. And when I really began to dig into the Bible for the first time, I realized how profoundly true it is on all levels, not just good moral ways of living. Like if you followed the Bible, there would actually be most of the problems of the world would be gone.

You know that, right? I mean, the Scriptures reveal to us what it truly means to be a human being, and if we will just follow it, almost 99% of the world's problems would disappear overnight. But more than that, the historic realities and claims of the gospel are true and based in history, and in fact. But they are at times very hard to believe.

And even on the day of Jesus' resurrection, there was a perplexity that was manifest both in those who first went to the tomb, the women that had gone with all of their preparatory spices to anoint the body of Jesus and to help prepare His decay in the tomb.

We would put a body into a rolling stone tomb, and essentially, over time, it would decay, and then eventually you'd go back and gather the bones and put them in what was called an ossuary. And so they were preparing all of that for that process to happen in its Jewish burial customs. And so they were very surprised and perplexed to find an empty tomb.

And then when they went and told the disciples, their experience at first was one of thinking that they were telling in the words of our gospel today, idle tales. I've often thought about some of the-- Are they finding the hallelujahs? I'm kind of wondering about no sign of them. Are there any out there? Do you know what Hallelujah means, by the way?

It comes from the Hebrew word "Halel," which we actually get the letter "H" from that, it's the praise, and "ya" is the Hebrew word for "Yahweh." And so, "Hallelujah" is "Praise Yahweh," "Praise the Lord." And so, we praise the Lord. And every time you see an H now, I want you to just think about that. Praise the Lord. They can't find them. You know, these kids, they bury them, and then they can't find them.

So, basically, over the years, I've been very interested in skeptical scholars, and I actually had an opportunity to discuss the resurrection with a New Testament scholar who didn't believe in the historicity of the resurrection. His name's Marcus Borg. I've told you about this before.

And Marcus basically believed that the stories of the New Testament were meaningful and had truthful morals to them, but they were more like parables, and he described it as being a parabolic reading of Scripture, that these aren't actual history. And as I was in the discussion with him, one of the things that I was trying to press him on and get him to say out loud, was what was the presupposition that led him to that type of skepticism?

What was it that was the underlying doubt that was preventing him from accepting and receiving the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And you know on the face he would give intellectual objections like, "Well, you know virgins don't give birth to babies and dead people don't rise from the dead." There's no scientific proof. Two minutes?

They must have dug them deep. So, you know, the scientific excuses for this. But when it really came down to it, and I actually felt successful in the discussion, even though I was probably hitting above my skis on that. But he said, "I can't bring myself to believe in a God who intervenes for some and not for others.

I can't bring myself to believe in a God who intervenes for some and not for others." And his basic problem was that he did not believe in a God who actually can change things in time and in space that God wants to actively interact with our-- Here we go.

Hallelujah! I think the kids were a little louder than us. So, you know, over the years, there have been other scholars. There was a Bishop Spong that didn't believe in the resurrection.

And I actually had a chance to interact with him once, and we asked him, "you know What was behind your rejection of the historicity of these things?" And what he said was, "I have an atheist daughter who is an MIT professor, and I want to create a Christianity that she can accept." Wow. And this is what we do in our brains.

You know, we have a hard time allowing God's truth to penetrate into our hearts and into our minds such that He intervenes in us. And the resistance is that fundamentally we simply don't want to have to change. I like my atheist daughter exactly the way she is. Thank you very much.

Let me change Christianity to make it more palatable to her. I don't believe in a God who would intervene for some and therefore others. Therefore, I'm going to change Christianity in order to make it more palatable for my intellectual satisfaction.

And I could list on and on and on the ways in which we water down and adjust the faith in order to prevent it, actually, from impacting the reality of our lives and laying claim to us that Jesus Christ is Lord, and His lordship will not leave us unchanged.

It has tremendous implications for every single thing about us, from the way that we think about things, to our emotional state, to the ways that we relate to one another, to the way that we have a sense of vocation and calling in this world and in this life.

In fact, what the gospels reveal, and this was our passage for this morning as well, is while we have this perplexity about God and the things of God, it's actually the Lord who has a certain perplexity at why we keep doing the things that we do. And here these women come to the tomb expecting to find a dead Jesus. And there are the angels of the Lord sitting on the stone waiting for them to arrive.

And they asked them a question, which is not just a question for the ladies of that day, but a question for us to wrestle with. Why are you seeking the living among the dead? Why is it that you are pursuing life here in a place that is manifesting an empty tomb to you? Well, that is a good question to ask, isn't it?

Why are you seeking the living among the dead? I'll confess another thing to you since I'm in a confessional mode. I was an atheist. I also have a record, a criminal record. I didn't tell him this in the

interviewing process. But I'm revealing it now. I'll just go ahead and come clean on all my sins today. I actually was arrested at Disney World when I was a kid. Yes, it's true.

I was with my cousins. We were on the sky ride and we were doing something that I would never endorse. Do not do it if you're a young person. I think we ended the sky ride after they arrested us. I don't think they have it anymore. But we were throwing pennies off the skyride. And I actually threw a dime off. But we were met at the end of the Skyride ride, and there was the Disney Police.

And did you know Disney World has police? They do. I've met them, and they were so upset with us as young kids, and they took us back to what I affectionately call the dark side of Disney World. There's a whole thing behind Disney World, and that's back where the police station is, and the characters are back there walking around with their heads off, smoking cigarettes.

I mean, it's bad. It's a dark, dark place. That's not true. It's not true. Didn't see any headless people or characters. But one of the things about a place like Disney World is that it is presenting itself as the happiest place on earth. And the reality of it is it's all a facade.

In fact, every employee at Disney World is called cast. Did you know that? You don't go and interview for a job. You rehearse for an acting role in order to be on the staff at Disney World. Because Disney World is one big giant act. It's one big giant hypocrisy.

And even there are trees at Disney World that are made out of plastic and vinyl. The Swiss Family Robinson tree is all concrete. I hope I'm not destroying things for you that you really have faith in. But this is the mentality of so many in our world, and if we're honest ourselves, that we are constantly searching for life among things that really actually have no life.

And that may be in the form of relationships where we think, "Well, if I could just meet the right person, my soulmate, and Mr. or Mrs. Wonderful, then my life will be filled and I will be so fulfilled and rich." And you know marriage is great. I don't want to tell you that it's not, but it's not going to fulfill every longing and desperation of your heart, is it?

I mean, those who are married, am I right about that? I mean, it's good. It's great. It's wonderful. It's a blessing. It is a thing of beauty that the Lord has given to us, but it's not the end-all-be-all of our life. And if we put too much pressure on things like relationships, or we nurse old wounds, or old shames that we have in our life, or we try to create that Disney world-like life, the beautiful, wrinkle-free life.

And we find that ultimately all of these things fall short. And I think at some point or another, we become disillusioned with the things that we think have life. I got disillusioned with Disney World that day. But I can tell you when I was a young kid, I used to think it was the most magical place on earth. Now I don't like to go there.

And I'm sure I'll like it when I have my grandkids and all of that. I'll like going there again. I'm not knocking Disney World too much. But that's not where we'll find life. And this is what the angel of the Lord says to the women. "Why do you look for life among that which is dead?" It's a deep question for us to wrestle with on this Easter morning.

And I want to encourage you to take that question to heart because it's in the reorientation of our hearts and our minds and our lives to setting the risen Lord Jesus Christ at the heart of who we are and the heart of our being that we actually find the source of life. I was so grateful back in my college days that I met some people that had done that for themselves.

Marcus Borg would have said, "You know, science could never prove the resurrection of Jesus." And I think, generally speaking, that's probably true. Science deals with repeatable things where you can't take Jesus and put them back in the grave and then bring them out again and measure them and get proof of life. I mean, there's no instruments that day, and we didn't have instruments back then to measure that.

But in another way, there is a certain proof to the Christian faith and the Christian life, and that's the testimony of those who believe. And it started that day with those women who ran from the empty tomb and

shared the message of Jesus Christ and His resurrection with the disciples. And at first it was met with skepticism. They're speaking idle tales.

But then, one by one, those disciples would make their way to that empty tomb beginning with Peter and come to a place of belief and amazement and the power of the resurrection. And none of them remained the same. And it was from that seed of the testimony of those believers that the proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ remains as valid then as it is today.

And it's a belief that is manifest in the testimony of your life and my life as we take that proclamation that Jesus Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. And what do we say? Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Amen.

Please stand and let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed. We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made. Of one being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, He came down from heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit, He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary and was made man.

For our sake, He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day, He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son, He is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen. The prayers of the people will follow Form 3. Father, we pray for Your Holy Catholic Church.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you. We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons. We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world. Give us grace to do your will and all that we undertake.

We pray for healing in the lives of Ken Ray, Anna Fordham, Annie McAfee, Carol Bowling Merritt, Denise Hudman, Joan Haskell, Sandy Clark, Sarah McCarty, Walden Pope, Jackie Walker, and George Ellis. Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble. Gracious God, our strength and consolation be present with all students, faculty, and staff that are part of the Florida State University community and their families.

Dispatch your angels to any families whose loved ones have been affected. Help them to feel your love and care even at this dark hour. Heal those who have been hospitalized through the care of skilled professionals and restore them to health. Bless the first responders and law enforcement officers who run towards danger on our behalf. And finally, we pray for the one who committed this violence that they would repent and live the rest of their days as your healing instrument. This we pray in the name of Jesus, Lord and friend.

Give to the departed eternal rest. We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy. Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation. Hear the prayers of your people, and grant that all who are reborn into the fellowship of Christ's body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

Amen. The peace of the Lord be always with you. Peace. Peace to the lungs.

Welcome, everyone.

Very blessed to see everyone here. Wonderful, glorious day. We had a sunrise service out there and it was just so nice to see the sunrise over the river and praising the Lord. It's just a beautiful thing. But this is beautiful as well. Thank you for all the musicians and the glorious work that has been put into praising the Lord and giving Him our hearts and our worship as rightly He deserves.

I want to, one, welcome. If you're new to St. Mark's today, we're really blessed to have you here. If you're looking for a new church home, come on down. Perfect timing. Yes. No, we won't make new people get out of their chairs, but if you're looking for a new church home, we would be glad to have you here. We would love to have this be a place of worship and community and fellowship.

It's wonderful people, and we would be delighted to be that for you. One of the things that you'll find in your bulletin is the insert. That shares a little bit about some of the things that we'll be working on in the Easter season. Today is just the beginning, actually, of what is called the Great Fifty Days, where over this period of fifty days, we are going to be exploring what it means to walk in the newness of life.

And so, as you're leaving today as a gift, we have a book called The Resurrected Life. It's a book that I wrote, but it has these topics which we will be preaching through over the course of the great fifty days. New life, new temple, new body, new covenant, new creation, and new day. Jesus says, "Behold, I make all things new." And He wants to do that in your lives.

And so, I hope that you'll grab one of these and work through the resurrected life as we're going through the Easter season. Walk in love as Christ loved us as He gave Himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

Christ is risen from the dead.

The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. But chiefly are we bound to praise You for the glorious resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

For He is the true Pascal Lamb who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By His death, He has destroyed death, and by His rising to life again, He has won for us everlasting life. Therefore, we praise You, joining our voices with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your name.

Holy and gracious Father, in Your infinite love You made us for Yourself.

And when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, You and Your mercy sent Jesus Christ, Your only an eternal Son to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out His arms upon the cross, and offered Himself an obedience to Your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death. Our Lord Jesus Christ took bread. And when He had given thanks to You, Father, He broke it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper, he took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and said, "Drink this, all of you.

This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of Me." Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith. Christ is dying. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. And we celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Recalling Christ's death, resurrection, and dissension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by Your Holy Spirit to be for Your people the body and blood of Your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in Him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy sacrament and serve You in unity, constancy and peace. And at the last day, bring us with all Your saints into the joys of Your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through Your Son, Jesus Christ, by Him and with Him and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory is Yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come; thy 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 Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.  
Hallelujah.

We're going to sing it.

The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on Him in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving.

King

The duels of death are gathering Upon the cross thy falls have found thee My strength is gone My strength is gone

in thy majesty Robin hands supreme as splendor But in weakness and sorrow

can be like me Pilot high in Zion welling Throne with arms a world compelling

thy weakness fallen kingly in the weakness

glory and honour Let the world divide and take them Crown its monarchs and unmake them But

is wrong and bleeding

Now what's blocking

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness Even so must the Son of man

That so ever

believed

Let us pray Almighty and ever-living God, we thank You for feeding us with the spiritual food of His precious body and blood of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the body of Your Son and heirs of Your eternal kingdom.

And now, Fathers, send us out to do the work You have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To Him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit. Be honor and glory now and forever.  
Amen.

I think we can applaud. Glorious. And now may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you, and remain with you now and always.

Amen.

Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah.