

**“Christ is Risen”**  
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**Readings:**

**Mark 16:1-8**

- On the morning of the first day of the week, everything seemed lost.
  - The women walked towards the tomb carrying spices, but also carrying the weight of grief, frustration, and the end of their expectations.
    - Jesus had died.
    - The dream seemed buried with Him.
    - The question that echoed in their hearts was simple and agonizing:
- and now?
- And perhaps that is also our question.
  - And now, after the loss?
  - And now, after the disappointment?
  - And now, after all that seemed promising, but ended in silence?
- Women go to the grave expecting to find a body.
  - They expect to find death.
  - They expect to find the end.

- But when they get there, everything changes.
  - The stone was removed.
  - The tomb is open.
  - And a voice announces something that no one expected to hear:
    - "He's not here."
- This short phrase is the heart of the Christian faith.
  - This is not just information,
    - it's a revolution.
- "He is not here" means that death did not have the last word.
  - It means that God's love was not overcome by human violence.
  - It means that what seemed like the end, was only the beginning.
- This phrase reveals the core of our hope:
  - the resurrection is not just an extraordinary event,
  - it is the confirmation of who Jesus is.
    - He is not just a teacher,
    - not just a prophet,
    - not just a moral example.
    - He is the Son of God,
- who conquered sin,
- conquered death,

- and inaugurated a new reality.
- The empty tomb is God's answer to everything that seems irreversible.
- But there is something even deeper.
  - The angel says, "He is not here"
  - and then immediately afterwards,
    - "He is going ahead of you."
- Jesus not only left the tomb, He is on the move.
  - He's in the lead. ○ He is alive ○ and well.
- The resurrection is not just about the past:
  - it's about the present and the future.
- This speaks directly to our lives.
- Because many of us still visit "graves".
  - Tombs of broken relationships.
  - Tombs of abandoned dreams.
  - Tombs of guilt that we can't leave behind.
  - Tombs of fear that paralyze us.
  - Tombs of disease that destroy us.
  - Tombs of anguish and bitterness over unresolved situations.
- We return to these places expecting to find only pain, only silence, only absence.
- But the message of Easter finds us precisely there and tells us:
  - "He's not here."

- You don't need to remain attached to what is dead.
  - You don't have to live as if all hope has been lost.
  - You don't need to define your life by your failures or your losses.
- Because Christ is not in the tomb, and if He is not there, then death is not your final destiny, neither spiritual nor existential.
- But the text ends in a curious way.
  - The women leave, scared and trembling.
  - They don't yet know how to process it.
- Resurrection doesn't automatically eliminate fear,
  - but it transforms it.
  - It invites us to walk even without understanding everything.
  - It calls us to trust before controlling,
    - and sends us forth even when we are still trembling.
- The joy of Easter is neither superficial nor a denial of pain.
  - It is joy that is born in the midst of pain and transcends it.

- Because the resurrected Christ bears the marks of the cross.
  - Victory doesn't erase suffering, it redeems it.
- Therefore, gathered here before us are the elements that have guided us throughout this Holy Week.
  - We have the palm leaves from Sunday
    - When Jesus entered Jerusalem as a humble king.
  - We see the trees we built on Monday, reminding us of Jesus' call to a faith that bears leaves and fruit;
    - a day when Jesus found the fig tree without fruit and cleansed the temple.
  - We see the candles we lit on Tuesday, symbols of deep commitment to Christ: material, emotional, and spiritual;
    - a day marked by the offering of the poor widow and the loving devotion of Mary, who anointed Jesus' feet.
  - We see the boxes and the board from Wednesday, carrying the words of our

expectations and the truth of who Jesus revealed himself to be;

- a day shadowed by Judas' betrayal, born from disappointed expectations.
- We see the table of the Last Supper from Thursday, the day Jesus spent with his disciples and spoke words of hope, promised the Holy Spirit, shared that he would prepare a place for us with the Father, and prayed for us in love.
  - It was the day Jesus sat at the table in communion with the one who betrayed him and the one who would deny him, and thus taught us that we should love our enemies.
- From Friday, we see the cross, the crown of thorns, the red robe, the sign, the nails, the sponge, and the spear:
  - silent witnesses to the suffering, humiliation, and death of Christ.
- And today, we bring what cannot be seen but is deeply felt:
  - the silence, the fear, and the quiet hope of the Saturday, as we wait, and as we move toward the empty tomb.

- Today we celebrate with joy:
  - deep, rooted, real joy.
- A joy that says:
  - God entered our story.
  - God faced death.
  - And God won.
- “He is not here” means that God is not confined to the past.
  - He is not bound to a tomb.
  - He is not limited by our expectations.
- He is alive.
  - He is present.
  - He's in the lead.
- And perhaps today you came here like those women:
  - carrying weight, doubts, weariness.
  - Perhaps you are only hoping to “fulfill a ritual,” visit a symbolic tomb, deal with yet another Sunday.
- But Easter interrupts that expectation.
- It says:
  - Lift your eyes.
  - The stone was removed.
  - The tomb is empty.
  - And Christ is alive.
- Because He lives, there is hope for you.

- There is a new beginning.
- There is forgiveness.
- There is new life.
- There is unconditional love.
- "He's not here":
  - and that's the second best news we could receive.
- Because the best news we can receive today is:
  - "He is here. Christ is risen!"
- Amen.