

Keeping the Easter Feast

*Christ is risen from the dead
Trampling down Death by death
And upon those in the tombs
Bestowing life!*



KEEPING THE EASTER FEAST

“This holy and most blessed Day is the first day of the week, the chief and head of all days, the Day of days and the week of weeks. On this Day we glorify Christ forever and ever”!

St. John Chrysostom

Jesus’ glorious death and resurrection for us conquers sin, death and the grave and replaces that burden with life, salvation and resurrection from the dead. On this Day we shout our glad Alleluias and songs of praise.

On the days following the Easter celebration, our Alleluias continue to ring as we rejoice in the blessings of that glorious Day. Each Sunday in the Easter season continues the celebration. And each day at home we offer quieter Alleluias as we begin our day with the remembrance of our Lord’s saving work. In celebrating and remembering, our lives may become active “Alleluias” of service to our families, our communities, and our world.

This book of days is designed to keep the Easter Alleluias before us as we keep the feast throughout this joyful season. As we celebrate, meditate, and offer prayers and joyful praise, may we experience the blessing of life restored and life renewed.

We wish you a blessed Easter season!

The Evergreen Spiritual Life Committee
Easter, 2022

Resurrection of the Lord

Sunday, April 17, 2022 Luke 24:1-10

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 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. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles.

Monday, April 18

It is right and proper that we celebrate the days of Easter. I will admit to having kept my children out of school on Easter Monday for years. The days before Easter were steeped in preparation and anticipation. Now we needed time for rejoicing. I think the children liked that Monday Holiday especially; it was so unlike us to take a “well day” off work and school.

Gertrude Mueller Nelson

Tuesday, April 19

Christ is risen from the grave's dark prison; we now rejoice with gladness, Christ will end all sadness. Alleluia! Now let our joy rise full and free; Christ our comfort true will be. Alleluia! German hymn, c1000

Wednesday, April 20

Why do we retain the word Alleluia from the Hebrew language of prayer to express our Easter jubilation? I think we mean to say: "In the presence of the mystery that we celebrate on Easter, our usual intelligible vocabulary is inadequate; when faced with the super abundant mercy of God we can only stammer in amazement like children."

Balthasar Fischer (adapted)

Thursday, April 21

Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered! Let those who hate him flee before him! As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God. But let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy!

Psalm 68:1-3

Friday, April 22

The Foe was triumphant when on Calvary the Lord of creation was nailed to the tree. But short was his triumph, the Savior arose, and Death, hell, and Satan he vanquished, his foes! The conquering Lord lifts his banner on high. He lives, yes, he lives, and will nevermore die.

C.F.W. Walther

Saturday, April 23

Sunrise is an event that calls forth solemn music in the very depths of human nature, as if one's whole being had to attune itself to the cosmos and praise God for the new day. I look at the rising sun and feel that now upon me falls the responsibility of seeing what all my ancestors have seen: when the sun rises each one of us is summoned by the living and the dead to praise God. Thomas Merton

Second Sunday of Easter, April 24 John 20: 19-29

When it was evening of that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked..., Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you". After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord...

But Thomas (who was also called Didymus, The Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord". But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger into the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe".

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you". Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

Monday, April 25

The witnesses report an important detail: the risen Jesus bears the marks of the wounds in his hands, feet and side. These wounds are the everlasting seal of his love for us. All those who experience a painful trial in body or spirit can find refuge in these wounds and, through them, receive the grace of hope that does not disappoint...Amid the many hardships we are enduring, let us never forget that we have been healed by the wounds of Christ. Pope Francis, Easter message 2021

Tuesday, April 26

Loving God, you fill all things with a fullness and hope that we can never comprehend. We pray that you will take away our natural temptation for cynicism, denial, fear and despair. Help us have the courage to awaken to greater truth, greater humility, and greater care for one another. May we place our hope in what matters and what lasts, trusting in your eternal Presence and Love. Listen to our hearts' longing for the healing of our suffering world, through Christ our Risen Lord.

Richard Rohr (adapted)

Wednesday, April 27

I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. / Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure. / For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit. / You show me the path of life. In your Presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:8-11

Thursday, April 28

Those dear tokens of his Passion Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exaltation To his ransomed worshippers.
With what rapture gaze we on those glorious scars! Charles Wesley

Friday, April 29

This festive time is full of the Lord's marvelous promises of life everlasting that we can celebrate every day. The unavoidable aggravations of old age don't really count much and to us are just a reminder that Christ will make us new. Guenter and Hildegard Petermann

Saturday, April 30

Because we have been gifted with God's peace in the risen Christ, we are called to our own peace and to the making of peace in our world. As disciples and as children

of God it is our task to seek ways in which to make the forgiveness, justice, mercy and love of God visible in a world where violence and enmity are too often the norm.

Challenge of Peace

Third Sunday of Easter, May 1 John 21:1-14

After these things, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias... Just after daybreak Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No”. He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some”. So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish... When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught”. Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish... and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast”. Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Monday, May 2

The table fellowship of Christians implies obligation. It is our daily bread that we eat, not my own. We share our bread. Thus we are firmly bound to one another not only in the Spirit but in our whole physical being. The one bread that is given to our fellowship links us together in a firm covenant. Now none should go hungry as long as another has bread, and anyone who breaks this fellowship of the physical life also breaks the fellowship of the Spirit.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Tuesday, May 3

One is the table that is prepared for rich and poor alike. And though a person may be rich, yet to this table the rich can give nothing. And should another be poor, this one shall have no less honor... For this favor is from God, and what wonder that it should be for the poor and rich alike? For the same is the table that is prepared for the poor person as for the emperor. Such are the gifts of God who gives, not according to dignity, but according to the will and mind of each. Leo the Great

Wednesday, May 4

At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to our victorious king, Who has washed us in the tide Flowing from his pierc-ed side. Alleluia! / Now no more can death appall, Now no more the grave enthrall: You have opened paradise, And your saints in you shall rise. Alleluia! Office Hymn 17th Century

Thursday, May 5

I will extoll you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up and did not let my foes rejoice over me. / O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. / You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, / So that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

Psalm 30:1-2, 11-12

Friday, May 6

At the end of our life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have, how much money we have, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by “I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was naked , and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.” // Your true character is most accurately measured by how you treat those who can do “nothing” for you.

Mother Teresa

Saturday , May 7

O Christ the same, the friend of sinners sharing Our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide; Still as of old upon your body bearing The marks of love in triumph glorified. O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heaven- O Prince of life, in all your saving power; O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are given: We bring our thanks for this the present hour.

Timothy Dudley-Smith

Fourth Sunday of Easter, May 8 John 10:11-16

(Jesus said,) "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away ---and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because the hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know my Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."

Monday, May 9

By the cross death was slain and Adam was restored to life. The cross is the glory of all the apostles, the crown of the martyrs, the sanctification of the saints. By the cross we put on Christ and cast aside our former self. By the cross we, the sheep of Christ, have been gathered into one flock, destined for the sheep-folds of heaven. Theodore, 8th century

Tuesday, May 10

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie In pastures green; He leadeth me The quiet waters by. / My soul he doth restore again, And me to walk doth make Within the paths of righteousness, E'en for his own name's sake. / Goodness and mercy all my life Shall surely follow me, And in God's house forevermore My dwelling place shall be.

Psalter, Edinburgh, 1650

Wednesday, May 11

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness...I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak...I will feed them with justice...You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, says the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 31

Thursday, May 12

What are the pastures of these sheep if they are not the deepest joys of the everlasting fresh pastures of paradise? For the pastures of the saints are to see God face to face; when the vision of God never fails, the soul receives its fill of the food of life forever. And, dear brothers and sisters, let us seek these pastures and there join in the joy of the celebrations of so many citizens of heaven. Let their happiness and rejoicing be an invitation to us. Let our hearts grow warm, let our faith be rekindled, let our desires for heavenly things grow warm; for to love like this is to be on the way. Gregory the Great, 6th century

Friday, May 13

For those who follow Jesus, authentic sacrifice does not involve the publicly sanctioned snatching of the life of another to protect my life. It is not a matter of “someone else must die so that I can live”. Sacrifice is rather the gift of my life for the life of the world. Sacrifice in the model Jesus proposes means, “I spend myself so that others may live”.

Mary Collins

Saturday, May 14

(Jesus) told them this parable: “What person among you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost. Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance’.” Luke 15:3-7

Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 15

John 13:34-35, 14:8-14

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” // Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been

with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father... Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me... I will do whatever ever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

Monday, May 16

God is shown to be eminently a God who answers prayer by his giving such free access to him in prayer. God in his word manifests himself ready at all times to allow us this privilege. He sits on a throne of grace, and there is no veil to hide his throne and keep us from it. The veil is rent from top to the bottom; the way is open at all times, and we may go to God as often as we please. Jonathan Edwards, 18th century

Tuesday, May 17

If you look back, do so forgivingly. If you look forward, do so prayerfully. But the wisest course would be to be present in the present gratefully. // If you are going down a road and don't like what's in front of you, and look behind and don't like what you see, get off the road. Create a new path! !

Maya Angelou

Wednesday, May 18

I call upon you, O LORD; come to me quickly; give ear to my voice when I call to you. Let my prayer arise before you as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.. Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD, and watch over the door of my lips. Let my heart not incline towards any evil thing. Let me not be occupied in wickedness with evildoers. But my eyes are turned to you, O LORD; in you I take refuge. Do not leave me defenseless.

Psalm 141:1-4, 8

Thursday, May 19

“Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own. In my love’s baptismal river I have made you mine forever. Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own. / I the Lord will bless and keep you, and give you peace. I the Lord will smile upon you, and give you peace. I the Lord will be your Father, Savior, Comforter and Brother. Go, my children, I will keep you, and give give you peace”.

Jaroslav Vajda

Friday, May 20

O my God, only your kindness and compassion can restore my wholeness. My poverty nothing can enrich but your gentleness and goodness. Only grace from you can calm my agitation. For you are the utmost hope of the hopeful, the goal of the quest of the questioners, the ultimate that petitioners seek, the crown of all that we desire. On you I call, O most merciful and gracious!

Munajat Zayn al-Abidin

Saturday, May 21

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure because we look not to things that are seen but to the things which are unseen...For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 4: 16 –5:1

Sixth Sunday Easter, May 22

John 14: 23-27

Jesus answered, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them...But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave you...Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid”.

Monday, May 23

A person dies when she refuses to stand up for that which is right. A person dies when he refuses to stand up for justice. A person dies when she refuses to take a stand for that which is true. // Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hatred cannot drive out hatred; only love can do that.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Tuesday, May 24

What I love about the ministry of Jesus is that he identified the poor as blessed and the rich as needy—and then he went and ministered to them both. This, I think, is the difference between charity and justice. Justice means moving beyond the dichotomy between those who need and those who supply and confronting the frightening and beautiful reality that we desperately need one another.

Rachel Held Evans

Wednesday, May 25

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech you, O LORD! O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!

Psalm 118: 21-25

Acension Day of the Lord,

Thursday, May 26

Luke 24: 48-53

(Jesus said to them): “You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Then he led them out as far as Bethany and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Friday, May 27

Christ, while in heaven, is also with us; and we, while on earth, are also with him. He is with us in his godhead and his power and his love; and we, though we cannot be with him in godhead as he is with us, can be with him in our love, our love for him.

St. Augustine

Saturday, May 28

The Head that once was crowned with thorns is Crowned with glory now; a royal diadem adorns the mighty Victor's brow. / The highest place that heaven affords is his by sov'reign might, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and heaven's eternal Light. / The joy of all who dwell above, The joy of all below to whom he manifests his love, And grants his name to know.

Thomas Kelly

Seventh Sunday After Easter,

Sunday, May 29

John 17:17-26

(Jesus prayed): "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world...The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one...Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Monday, May 30

We are made for goodness, We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome... all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God's family. Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Tuesday, May 31

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together in the Spirit into a dwelling place for God. Ephesians 2: 19-22

Wednesday, June 1

(In John 20:17) The risen Christ instructs Mary to "Go and tell my brothers". The Lord employs the most affectionate and glorious name possible and calls (the apostles) his "brothers". How could it ever have entered their hearts that Christ would send such an affectionate greeting and such a kind good morning to them who had been so disloyal and denied him, and would not only forgive everything, but also call them his dear brothers? Or who can believe or grasp it today? ... Rich and blessed indeed must be the

brothers and sisters who can boast of this Brother, not hanging now upon the cross, not lying in the grave under the power of death, but a mighty Lord over sin, death, hell and the devil.

Martin Luther, Easter Sermon, 1538

Thursday, June 2

Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark. In effect, the people who change our lives the most begin to sing to us while we are still in darkness. If we listen to their song, we will see the dawning of a new part of ourselves.

Rabindranath Tagore

Friday, June 3

Before his death, our Lord always promised peace to his disciples; before and after the Resurrection he did so. And yet they never obtained an outward peace. Nonetheless, they found peace in sorrow, and joy in tribulation. In death they found life, and to be judged, sentenced and condemned was for them a joyous victory. They were God's witnesses.

Johannes Tauler, 14th century

Saturday, June 4 Eve of Pentecost

The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, He came in mighty fullness then; His witness through believers won the lost, And multitudes were born again. / The early Christians scattered o'er the world, They preached the Gospel fearlessly; Tho' some were martyred and to lions hurled, They marched along in victory!

Sunday, June 5 The Day of Pentecost
Acts 2:1-13

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each... All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

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For Christ bore our sins and not his own, When he
on the cross was hanging; And then he arose and
removed the stone, That we, unto him belonging,
might join with angelic hosts to raise Our voices in
endless singing.

God came to us at Pentecost, His Spirit new life
revealing, That we might no more from him be lost,
All darkness for us dispelling. His flame will the
mark of sin efface And bring to us all his healing.

When we on that final journey go That Christ
is for us preparing, We'll gather in song, our hearts
aglow, All joy of the heavens sharing, And walk in
the light of God's own place, With angels his name
adoring.

Nikolai F.S. Grundtvig

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May the God of hope fill you with all joy and
peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

2022

Evergreen

Oshkosh, Wisconsin