

2026 HOLY WEEK IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL



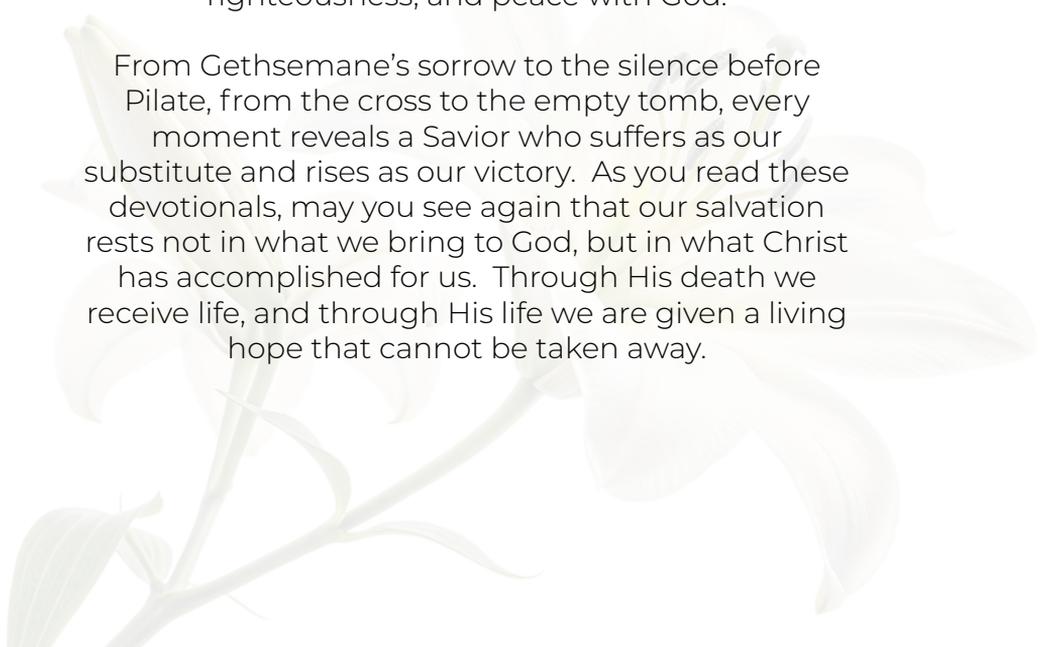
FROM  
DEATH TO  
LIFE

# *Happy Easter* **from Coral Ridge**

Holy Week invites us to walk slowly through the most sacred events in human history, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Matthew's Gospel we see that Christ's suffering was not accidental, nor merely an example of courage or sacrifice, but the saving work of God on behalf of sinners. Jesus stands in the place of the guilty, bears the judgment we deserve, and willingly gives His life so that we might receive forgiveness, righteousness, and peace with God.

From Gethsemane's sorrow to the silence before Pilate, from the cross to the empty tomb, every moment reveals a Savior who suffers as our substitute and rises as our victory. As you read these devotionals, may you see again that our salvation rests not in what we bring to God, but in what Christ has accomplished for us. Through His death we receive life, and through His life we are given a living hope that cannot be taken away.



# Tips for families

## STEP 1

### GATHER TOGETHER

Set aside a dedicated time each day for your family to come together to read God's Word. The best time is usually right after breakfast or dinner.

## STEP 2

### READ THE SCRIPTURE

Start each devotional by reading the designated Scripture passages aloud. Encourage each family member to take turns reading.

## STEP 3

### READ THE DEVOTIONAL

Recommended for parents with older children. For those with younger children, use for personal study.

## STEP 4

### REFLECT & DISCUSS

Use the questions provided to guide your family's discussion as you look to Christ and apply God's Word to your life.

## STEP 5

### PRAY & SING TOGETHER

Conclude each devotional with the provided prayer and worship song.



# *Palm Sunday* **GETHSEMANE**

Matthew 26:36-46 | Written by: Rev. Andrew Siegenthaler

One of the early arguments against Christianity by Jewish and pagan critics focused on this passage. If Jesus was the true Messiah, they argued, if he really was the Son of God, then he would not have responded as he did to his approaching crucifixion. They claimed that a real Messiah would have faced the threat of death calmly.

By contrast, Jesus was shaken deeply. His emotional agony was so extreme it felt like it was killing him. “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.” He begged his disciples to stay with him, fell on the ground in extreme distress, and pleaded with his Father to take away his suffering if possible. History is filled with stories of people who faced gruesome deaths more calmly than Christ. So what explains his extreme emotion?

The Bible gives us the answer. The death he anticipated was a death like no other. In Gethsemane Jesus began to bear the weight of human sin and divine judgment. That is why his suffering was so terrible. This comes into sharper focus with the application of two important truths.

First, Jesus was sinless. We cannot fully understand his sinlessness because we are not sinless. We live in sin so constantly that we grow numb to it. We wake up sinning, breathe it like air, and even love it. Jesus did not. Though he had always seen sin and understood it, that night he felt it for the first time. He felt the guilt, the shame, the pollution, the condemnation of every human sin pressing into his soul. He felt as though he had committed them all.

Think how guilt can crush a person, even a bad person. Judas, evil and selfish as he was, took his own life under the weight of guilt. Now multiply that by every sinner who has ever lived and pour it into the soul of the only truly good man. That is what Jesus began to feel in Gethsemane. The sinless Son of God felt the sinfulness of the world and his suffering was terrible.

Second, Jesus was our substitute. He suffered and died as the representative man, the second Adam, the head of a redeemed humanity. Many martyrs have faced death calmly, even joyfully. They were able to do so because Christ had already faced death in their place. He removed its terror for them. But when Jesus stood before death, there was no one to lean on. He had to face it with full knowledge, no refuge, and no

borrowed courage. He had to choose it, knowing it meant judgment for sin. And still he drank the cup to the last drop.

This is holy ground. But here is the question. Have you taken this trembling Savior into your heart? Do you believe he endured this agony for your sins?

If so, your future, no matter how dark your present, belongs to light and courage. But if you think your sins are small and God will overlook them, look again at Jesus in Gethsemane. You cannot save yourself. You cannot bear divine judgment. You cannot change your heart. Only Jesus can. Trust him today.

## Family DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus took God's wrath against sin so we could experience the Father's mercy and love.**

When you feel scared or sad, what do you usually do?

What do you think the "cup" Jesus prayed about means?

Why did Jesus pray "Your will be done" even when it was hard?

How does knowing that Jesus experienced deep sorrow help you in hard moments?

### CHALLENGE

Find one way you can demonstrate God's mercy to someone today.

### PRAYER

Jesus, You have "borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Is. 53:4). You suffered God's wrath against sin so we could have mercy instead. When we feel scared or pressures weigh on us, let Your Spirit remind us that You carried the heaviest burden already. Amen.

### SONG

*Man of Sorrows*

Reminds us that Jesus carried our sadness and sin for us.

MARCH 30

# Monday **BETRAYAL**

Matthew 26:47-56 | Written by: Dr. Tim Sansbury

In this passage, we see Christ suffering in the betrayal by his friends. At first, this may seem to be largely in the actions of Judas. I am sure that hurt, but the most significant betrayal here was not Judas but the disciples. His friends—the ones who had stayed with him, seen his miracles, performed miracles in his name, heard his teaching, been warned he would be betrayed, promised their support, all left. Every one.

Betrayal brings a special kind of suffering, and betrayal in the midst of suffering even more. This is where Christ was, abandoned by everyone as he knew he was walking towards the agony of the cross.

I think it is important to reflect on the reality that all of the disciples fled. It is tempting to think of ourselves as stronger than we are. Maybe we tell ourselves that we would have stood firm with Jesus. If even one of the disciples had stayed, we could even put ourselves in his shoes. “I would have been just like . . .”

But none of them stayed. Every one of them ran away. In Mark’s gospel, we even hear of one young follower who, when grabbed, left even his clothes to sprint away naked.

The disciples didn’t just leave. They fled. They ran. They left their Lord and their teacher and their friend and ran.

We would do the same.

This is dreadful, but like all of the dreadful events in the crucifixion, it also reveals the altogether more incredible beauty and love of Christ’s willingness to die. He was about to be killed by his own creation, those who had hated and abused him, and he was walking alone to the cross without even those who were his. Yet he was still willing to go. He did not die for those who stood firm. He did not die for those who persevered. He did not die for those who maintained their faith until the end. . .he died for betrayers and cowards.

We want to be strong and say we would have stayed. But sometimes we really know we are weak and unworthy, cowards and betrayers. In those moments, a Gospel for the good and strong and faithful would not help. We need a Gospel for the weak, for the broken, for the ones who run away. And that is exactly what Luke tells us we have.

# Family DEVOTION

## GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus willingly surrendered Himself so we would have freedom.**

Why didn't Jesus fight back when the soldiers came?

What does His willingness to surrender show about His love?

How does knowing Jesus is in control help us trust Him?

## CHALLENGE

Pick one part of your day where you normally want things "your way," and instead say, "Let's do what you want," as a way to practice trusting God more than your own plans.

## PRAYER

Jesus, You allowed Yourself to be taken, even though You had all power to stop it. Thank You for surrendering Yourself so we could be set free from the power and penalty of sin. When we want our own way, help us choose God's way with trust and obedience. By Your Spirit, make us more like You.  
Amen.

## SONG

*What Wondrous Love Is This*

Helps us think about the love that made Jesus give Himself up for us.

MARCH 31

# Tuesday **THE SANHEDRIN**

Matthew 26:57-68 | Written by: Dr. Sam Lamerson

**D**o you ever say a familiar phrase without really thinking about what it means? The Apostle's Creed that we say every Sunday has a very unusual statement about Jesus. We repeat "... born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate ..." In other words, we go from the birth of Jesus right to his suffering with no mention of his life. Why was the early church so interested in the suffering of Jesus? This raises two questions: "What was the suffering?"; and "Why so much suffering?"

We see the start of this suffering in today's reading. Matthew goes into detail to show us the suffering that started when Jesus was dragged into a hearing by the Sanhedrin. This Jewish court was set to convict Jesus even if it meant falsifying the evidence. After convicting him, they were set to give him the death penalty. Both the outcome of the trial and the punishment were already decided before it had even started. Matthew speaks very directly of the suffering of Jesus.

To the first question, "What were the sufferings?" There are a variety of pains that Jesus feels during this time. He was abandoned by his friends. The only person mentioned here is Peter and he was "following him at a distance." This is a fulfillment of Psalm 41:9 where it is written "Even my close friend whom I trusted ... has lifted up his heel against me."

More suffering is pointed out by Matthew in 26:68 where Jesus is spit upon, hit with fists, and slapped. This is in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 50:6 where the prophet says of the Messiah "I did not hide my face from mockery and spitting." Thus, even before the crucifixion (and before Pilate), Jesus was suffering. He was mocked, lied about by false witnesses, and accused of blasphemy. No one who reads the passion narratives in the Gospels can deny that Jesus faced a terrible time of suffering before the end of his life.

The second question, and perhaps a more important one is "Why so much suffering?" Why do the writers and the early church (who formulated the Apostle's Creed) speak so much about suffering? As the few examples cited above show, this suffering was prophesied about the Messiah and identifies Jesus as the true Messiah. The God/man was identified by his suffering. The narrative in Isaiah 53 (sometimes called the "suffering servant") shows the readers that they should not expect a messiah who comes in power, but a God/man who comes in suffering.

Not only does suffering identify the Messiah, but it should also identify us as the Messiah's true people. John (15:18) reminds us that Jesus said, "If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first." Part of being a member of the Kingdom of Heaven is an acceptance that we may be called to suffer. For some the suffering may be personal, for others familial, or financial. Matthew is reminding us here that our Lord suffered and since we are a part of his kingdom, we should expect no better.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor who was executed by Hitler in April of 1945 near the end of the war. In his wonderful book *The Cost of Discipleship*, he writes that suffering is the badge of the true Christian. A badge is something we wear to indicate the society or group that we belong to. The badge of the Kingdom, says Bonhoeffer, is suffering. Don't let it discourage you; we are following our Lord.

## Family DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus exchanged His true, perfect life for our sinful wrongdoings.**

Have you ever been blamed for something you didn't do?

How did Jesus respond when people lied about Him?

How does Jesus help us when life feels unfair?

### CHALLENGE

Encourage someone today who is going through something unfair.

### PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You stood firm while lies and unfair words were spoken against You. Thank You for taking our sin and guilt upon Yourself and giving us Your life of perfect righteousness. When we feel misunderstood or treated unfairly, send Your Spirit to comfort and keep us faithful to what You say is true. Amen.

### SONG

*O Sacred Head Now Wounded*  
Helps us remember Jesus suffered unfairly to save us.

APRIL 1

# Wednesday **PETER & JUDAS**

Matthew 26:69-27:10 | Written by: Dr. Carlos Salabarría

**W**ho are we, when confronted with the Grace of Jesus Christ? How do we comport, react, or believe? Matthew gives us three distinct examples of men who believed themselves better than what they ended up demonstrating.

**Peter:** Energetic, muscular, successful, brotherly, committed. Peter sits by a campfire, steps from rooms housing his master. He could hear the twisted arguments the wealthy, powerful and religious were proposing to condemn and kill Jesus. He was within earshot of the yelling, the blasphemies and lies falling upon his friend. Who had called him away from his father's nets to follow him. But now, Peter mustered only denials. Peter denied the years together. He denied the salt air of the boats. He denied even the dialect of their shared tone. To this very moment he had relied on personal strength and character. And now the man he believed he was had failed him. You could almost hear Peter cry out, "How could I be so weak?" "How could I deny you if I am so strong?" "Who am I?"

**Judas:** Exacting, meticulous, religious, righteous. The report stated that Jesus was found guilty, of course, since he betrayed not only his body, but information used against Jesus in the cleverly drawn-out traps. Judas betrayed for all the "right reasons." Surely, Jesus was not "the" Messiah; surely only "a" messiah that the Law of Moses could be manipulated to imprison. Manacled and chained, surely but never, ever, put to death. If put to death, then the Law would be misused on Jesus but fully applied to Judas. Every penny paid for information and treason would be used against him, Judas. Deuteronomy condemned, not Jesus; Moses condemned him, Judas. Every coin in the bag sang out the dirge of his death for condemning Jesus to death on false pretense. There was no legal way out. He was damned. Judas was damned because he trusted the Law in order to ingratiate and enrich himself. Blood money. He could throw the coins back, but all 30 pieces would sound out the gavel's verdict of eternal, unredeemable and legal hell. You could almost hear him cry out, "This is not me," "I am a thinker," "How could I end up this way?" "I am so sorry I got caught!" "Who am I?"

**Matthew:** redeemed and reformed thief and traitor. Matthew is the man writing the ending to this gospel. His words depict him in this moment, too. Did Jesus not ask him to follow and leave behind his table upon which were lists of names, documented taxes and Capernaum's hatred? Did Jesus not enter his "defiled" house and eat with him and his loathed friends who pillaged Israel with taxes, thievery and intimidation?

Was not Jesus the one who restored Mathew's dignity as a Jew and child of God? Yes, it was Jesus who did all this for him, but now only silence from Matthew. He only disappears in the night with the rest of the disciples. You could almost hear him ask, "How could I be so ungrateful?" "How could I stoop so low from the place He raised me to?" "Why would I leave him when He sought me out so many years ago?" "Who am I?"

If we rely on what we bring Jesus, be it personal strength or religious interpretation or satisfied personas, we end up short. When we accept there is only the Lord's extended gift of GRACE can we answer, "Who am I?" with "I AM YOURS!"

## *family* DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus was betrayed so we could be forever accepted as friends of God.**

How did Peter fail Jesus, and how did Judas fail Him?

What's the difference between feeling sorry and turning back to Jesus?

Why is Jesus' forgiveness such good news?

### CHALLENGE

Confess your sin to God today and thank Him for His free gift of forgiveness through Jesus.

### PRAYER

Jesus, You felt the deep hurt of being denied and betrayed by those closest to You. Thank You that even when we fail, you are ready to offer us forgiveness and still call us friends. When we stumble or are tempted to reject what is true, turn our hearts back to You. We love You because You first loved us. Amen.

### SONG

*Come Ye Sinners*

Reminds us Jesus welcomes us back when we fail.

APRIL 2

# *Maundy Thursday* **PONTIUS PILATE**

Matthew 27:11-26 | Written by: Rev. Caleb Koornneef

In this passage, we witness a unique dimension of our Lord's suffering—His willing submission to human judgment. Earlier in the Passion narrative, Jesus endures betrayal, abandonment, and the agony of Gethsemane. Soon, He will endure the physical torment of the cross. But here, before Pontius Pilate, Jesus bears a different sorrow: the grief of being unjustly condemned by the very authorities He upholds and sustains.

Jesus stands before Pilate as the true Judge of all the earth, yet He allows Himself to be judged. He who will one day separate the sheep from the goats now receives a verdict from a fearful, conflicted Roman governor. The One whose voice spoke creation into being now remains largely silent as false accusations swirl around Him. This silence is not weakness; it is obedience. It is the quiet strength of the Servant who “opened not his mouth” that fulfills the Old Testament prophecy from Isaiah 53:7.

What distinguishes this moment is not merely the injustice of the trial, but the substitution at its heart. Barabbas, a violent rebel, guilty beyond dispute, is released. Jesus, the innocent One, is condemned. The crowd chooses the criminal over the Christ. And Pilate, though convinced of Jesus' innocence, washes his hands and hands Him over.

This exchange is not an accident of history; it is a picture of the Gospel. Jesus takes the place of the guilty so the guilty may go free. He stands silent so sinners may be spoken for. He is condemned so that we, like Barabbas, might walk out of the courtroom unshackled.

The sorrow Jesus bears here is the sorrow of being declared guilty when He is righteous. It is the grief of absorbing the world's twisted judgments, the weight of every unjust verdict, every false accusation, every moment when truth is trampled for convenience or fear. He bears the crushing burden of human injustice so that God's justice might be satisfied in Him and mercy might flow to us.

His substitutionary work in this passage is especially precious because it reveals not only that Jesus dies for sinners, but that He willingly enters the very machinery of human corruption to redeem us from it. He is not only our sacrifice; He is our representative. He stands where we should stand. He receives the sentence we

deserve. And He does so without protest, without defense, without resistance, because His purpose is not to escape judgment but to bear it.

As we meditate on this scene, we see the gospel enacted before the cross itself: the innocent condemned, the guilty released, and the silent Savior embracing the verdict that brings us peace.

## family DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus was condemned so we could be declared innocent.**

Why did the crowd choose Barabbas instead of Jesus?

How are you like Barabbas?

What does it mean that Jesus took your place?

### CHALLENGE

Give someone a second chance today in the same way Jesus did for you.

### PRAYER

Jesus, You took the punishment that should have been ours. Thank You for giving us Your innocence and making us right with God. When we feel guilty or ashamed, help us repent and turn to You with faith. By Your Spirit, remind us of how we stand totally forgiven and loved in You. Amen.

### SONG

*Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery*  
Shows how Jesus took our place to make us right with God.

APRIL 3

# Good Friday GOLGOTHA

Matthew 27:27–49 | Written by: Rev. Andrew Siegenthaler

**W**hen we moved to Ft. Lauderdale five years ago I couldn't resist returning to a familiar spot, my grandparents' home off Riverland Road. I had not seen the old homeplace in almost two decades and it's changed hands many times, but there it was, strangely familiar. The owner came to the door and I said, "I know this is an unusual request, but my grandfather built this house in 1952. May I come in and look around?"

Followers of Jesus Christ must, from time to time, return to a familiar place, a hill called Golgotha, the Place of the Skull. Matthew 27:27–49 brings us to the pinnacle of Christ's suffering. Matthew is restrained in his description, almost stark. He does not dwell on the mechanics of crucifixion. He simply writes, "When they had crucified him . . ." and moves on. Matthew's emphasis is not on the physical details, but on the curse Christ bore for us.

First, we see **shame**. The soldiers stripped him and divided his garments. Crucifixion meant public nakedness. In Scripture, nakedness is bound up with the shame of sin. Adam and Eve hid their nakedness after they ate the forbidden fruit. But when Christ, the Second Adam, hung on the cross, he was exposed before heaven and earth. The One who knew no sin bore the disgrace that belongs to us.

Second, we see **hostility**. The soldiers mocked him. Passersby hurled insults. Religious leaders sneered. Even the thieves joined in their contempt. From every direction came scorn. The curse of sin fractured humanity into suspicion and cruelty. Jesus stood at the center of it, absorbing it all. He suffered not sympathy but rejection.

Third, and most terrible, we see **wrath**. After three hours of darkness, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" He did not cry out when beaten, mocked, or nailed to the cross. But when the warmth of the Father's comforting presence was withdrawn, when he bore the unmitigated wrath against sin, he roared in agony. He became a curse for us. He became the scapegoat led into the wilderness of judgment.

When should you return to Golgotha? Go there when you have achieved something great. The cross will keep your success from becoming your savior. Christ emptied himself and died with nothing. Your accomplishments are gifts for this life, not foundations for your identity.

Go there when you suffer loss or tragedy. The worst pain is often the feeling of abandonment. But because Christ truly endured God's forsaking under wrath, you never will. Even if you feel alone, you are not. He has secured the Father's merciful presence for you forever.

Go there when tempted. Your imagination is powerful. If sin's promise fills your mind, it will win. But if you see again the shame, hostility, and wrath Christ endured for that very sin, temptation loses its glamor.

And go there when called to make sacrifices for other people. Love is stirred not by duty alone but by sight, by beholding Christ stripped of everything for you. As you look at Him crucified, the barriers of selfishness begin to fall. Return often to Golgotha. What looks like utter defeat is the source of eternal life.

## family DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus suffered shame so we could be welcomed with honor.**

Why is it hurtful when people make fun of us?

How was Jesus treated on the way to the cross?

How does His love comfort us when others are unkind?

### CHALLENGE

Say something kind today to someone who might feel left out or ashamed.

### PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You endured mocking and shame that should have fallen on us. Because of Your love, we stand in God's family with honor instead of disgrace. When we are stung by hurtful words, let Your Spirit remind us that our identity is safe in You. May that same Spirit produce the fruit of kindness in our lives as we live for You. Amen.

### SONG

*How Deep the Father's Love for Us*

Helps us see how much love Jesus showed by taking our shame.

APRIL 4

# *Saturday* **DEATH & BURIAL**

Matthew 27:50-66 | Written by: Dr. Joel Satterly

**J**ust a few days before his crucifixion, Jesus and his disciples traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover. The Triumphal Entry marks the beginning of Holy Week. That day stands in stark contrast to the one which ends in Jesus' atoning death.

A crowd greeted them as they entered the city shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" In response, the Pharisees demanded that Jesus silence them. Jesus tells them that if the people fell silent, the very stones would cry out. At the end of that week, however, there was no adoring crowd, and in fact, the stones did cry out.

Sometimes it takes several readings of a passage of Scripture to find the key verse. That is not the case with this section of Matthew 27. Verse 50, the opening line, carries most important idea, "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit." Two things stand out in verse 50, Jesus cried out again and yielded up his spirit.

At about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?" Just a few moments later, the last gasp, he cried out again. I don't think "cried out" captures what is happening here. Instead think of an agony stricken, grief filled shriek because for the first time in eternity, the Godhead was splintered — cosmic separation. The second part of the verse is also critical. Jesus yielded his spirit. It was not taken from him. He willingly and consciously surrendered it, perfect obedience and ultimate sacrifice as payment for sin.

After that final act of his death, darkness fell, the temple curtain tore from top to bottom, rocks were split, tombs opened and dead were raised, and Roman soldiers stated an obvious conclusion, Jesus was the Son of God. Notice that these things did not happen during the betrayal, trial, or torture of Jesus. They were not caused by Peter's denial or the disciples failures. Jesus' death, the cosmic separation of the Godhead, impacted the created order. The very rocks cried out.

In John 1 we read that "in Him were made all things that were made." When Jesus surrendered His spirit, the very fabric of the universe gave witness to the significance of the Cosmic Separation. This was all necessary because of the depth of our sin. Our salvation requires a perfect life and an atoning death. Jesus provided it willingly. The suffering and grief of that cosmic separation is beyond our ability to feel or know. The

curtain torn in two, an earthquake, and dead people walking around give us a hint. Ultimately Jesus bore that pain for us too.

Sadly, not all will recognize these events for what they are, like the Roman Centurion did. Pilate certainly did not. His response to all this, stationing a guard and putting a seal on the tomb, is a bit comical — as if either of those could stand in the way of Redemption. But all who see and call on the name of the Lord will be saved. Thanks be to God.

## Family DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus' death opened the way for us to come close to God.**

What happened when Jesus died?

What did the torn curtain mean?

Why is it important that Jesus really died?

### CHALLENGE

Sit quietly for one minute today and thank Jesus for His sacrifice for you.

### PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for going all the way to the cross us. Your death opened the way to God so we never have to be alone. When we feel far from God, remind us through Your Holy Spirit that You are close to those who trust in You.  
Amen.

### SONG

*Were You There*

Helps us slow down and think about Jesus' death for us.

APRIL 5

# Easter Sunday **RISEN**

Matthew 28:1–20 | Written by: Dr. Rob Pacienza

**E**arly on the first day of the week, while the city still slept, the Lord turned mourning into astonishment.

The women came to the tomb carrying spices and sorrow. They expected a sealed grave and a finished story. Instead, the ground shook, the stone was rolled away, and heaven spoke: “He is not here, for He has risen, as He said.” Indeed, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a happy ending we add to the Gospel; it is God’s public declaration that the cross has accomplished what Jesus promised. Our sin is paid for, death is defeated, and a new creation has been initiated.

Notice that Matthew is careful to show this was not some sort of private comfort for a few disciples. The guards trembled. The authorities scrambled. A false story was purchased for 30 pieces of silver! But make no mistake, truth cannot be bribed away. The risen Christ appeared alive, victorious, unmistakably real, and the first response of the faithful was simple and fitting: “They came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him.”

Jesus’ bodily resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith. If Jesus had stayed in the tomb, then our sins would still stand between God and us. But because He was raised, we have solid ground under our feet. Christ’s sacrifice has been accepted, and all who trust in Him are forgiven and counted righteous before God. In other words, the empty tomb is heaven’s “Amen” to Christ’s “It is finished.”

Yet Matthew 28 does not end at the empty tomb. It ends on a mountain, with a majestic mission. The risen Jesus gathers His disciples and speaks with divine authority: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Then He sends them, and by extension, us, out into the world: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” Resurrection hope is never meant to be hoarded. Because Jesus lives and reigns, His church goes with confidence, speaking the Gospel, baptizing, and teaching obedience to His Word.

And notice the tenderness in the final promise. Matthew tells us that even as they worshiped, “*some doubted.*” Jesus does not dismiss the weak or wait for us to achieve perfect faith. Instead, He anchors us in His presence: “And behold, I am with you always,

to the end of the age.” The resurrection assures us not only of Christ’s power, but of His nearness. The risen Lord is with His people—strengthening, forgiving, and sustaining—until the day faith becomes sight.

So whatever fear you carry this Holy Week, remember: the tomb is empty. Christ is risen. And His resurrection life is already at work in all who belong to Him.

## family DEVOTION

### GOSPEL TAKEAWAY

**Jesus conquered death to give us everlasting life!**

What surprised the women at the tomb?

What does the resurrection show us about Jesus?

How can we share this good news with others?

### CHALLENGE

Tell one person today, “Jesus is alive!”

### PRAYER

Jesus, You rose from the dead, and You are alive forever! Thank You for giving us a living hope that never ends. When we feel weak, fill us with Your Spirit so that our sorrow turns into joy. Help us to always remember who You are and what You have done for us at Easter. Amen.

### SONG

*Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

Celebrates that Jesus is alive and stronger than sin and death!



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