



Station XV: NEW LIFE & A NEW BEGINNING

The Resurrection of Jesus

SCRIPTURE

Take some time to read and reflect on this week's passage: Mark 16:1-6.

REFLECTION FOR ADULTS

Peter Marshall, the great Presbyterian preacher of the 20th century, once wrote, "The glorious fact that the empty tomb proclaims to us is that life for us does not stop when death comes. Death is not a wall, but a door."⁵ Francis, the great Roman Catholic pope of the 21st century, preached that "Jesus no longer belongs to the past but lives in the present and is projected toward the future; Jesus is the everlasting 'today' of God."⁶ On Easter Sunday, many Christians will sing the familiar words of Psalm 118: "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!" The witness of scripture, and the witness of over two thousand years of Christian faith, is that on that very first First Day of the Week, God did something extraordinary by raising Jesus to new life and giving all humanity a new beginning.

Many people have a tradition throughout the year of visiting the graves of their loved ones. On Memorial Day, they may spend time at the cemetery cleaning the tombstone and planting flowers. At Christmastime, they may bring an evergreen wreath and holly. And on their loved ones' birthday, they may place a memento on the edge of the tomb. All of this is admirable, and may help us cope with our loss and grief. But the message of this last station is that life does not end at the tomb. In the words of one funeral prayer: "For your faithful people, life is changed, not ended." Death is but a door to the eternal life that awaits God's faithful people. But the resurrection of Jesus is also a reminder that eternal life begins right here, right now... today! For the women who came to the tomb early that Sunday morning, death was all they

⁵ Marshall, Peter. *The First Easter*. Old Tappan, NJ: Chosen, 1988.

⁶ Pope Francis. *New Beginning, New Hope: Words of Pope Francis: Holy Week through Pentecost*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Division, 2014.

were expecting to see. Imagine their amazement when, in the place they expected to only encounter grief, was an angel of light telling them to turn back around, spread the good news, carry on the mission, and be on the lookout for Jesus in the places they least expected to see him. In the words of a contemporary Easter hymn: "Because you live, O Christ, the spirit bird of hope is freed for flying; / our cages of despair no longer keep us closed and life-denying. / The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison! / O sing this Easter day, for Jesus Christ has risen!"⁷

Take a look at the picture you a coloring. The image of Jesus seems to be transcending all time and space as he stretches his hands out over the horizon. Those who were dwelling in the land of the shadow of death *have* seen a great light! God *has* been with all those who have walking through the valley of the shadow of death! Indeed, there is no place on earth that has not been touched by the new life of resurrection!

REFLECTION FOR CHILDREN

Three days after Jesus was buried, some women went to his tomb to anoint his body. They were very sad because they loved Jesus very much. When they got to the tomb, they were surprised to see an angel sitting there. The angel told them that Jesus was no longer dead. God had brought him back to life, and Jesus would now be with us forever. This was the very first Easter Sunday morning!

DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN

- How do you think God brought Jesus back to life?
- If you were one of the women coming to Jesus' tomb, how would you feel when you saw the angel sitting there?

GOING DEEPER

- Most of us think of eternal life as something that begins when we die. How would your outlook on life change if you thought of eternal life as having already begun for you?
- Think of a time when you experienced new life or a new beginning in a place you were not expecting it.

⁷ Murray, Shirley Erena. *Because You Live, O Christ*. Hope Publishing Company, 1987.