

The Lord is risen indeed.

And so the story goes: The women of Jesus' company, whose compassion outweighs common sense, get up early the day after the Passover Sabbath to finish the job of burying Jesus.

When they arrive, they find the stone rolled away (how they planned to pry that boulder from the tomb's entrance is one of the great not-thought-through questions in all of Scripture). The tomb is empty. Two angels greet them. "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" What a strange - and somewhat chiding - thing to say to these poor, terrified, well-intentioned women. But it's the question of the morning. He is not here. He is risen. It's not over. It's only begun.

Don't think you can come here and hide. Go into the streets and look for him. Go to the prisons and soup kitchens. Go to the ghettos and hamlets. Go home to your families. He is there among your spouses and children, your coworkers and friends, your classmates and teammates. In other words, beat it! The best part of the story is ahead of you and me.

Easter pushes us out of the tombs in which we bury ourselves and challenges us to discover fulfillment in living a life centered beyond ourselves. Easter throws us out of the cemeteries where we hide and invites us to embrace the love of Christ present in family and

community. Easter dares us to look around the rocks we stumble over and find the path of peace and forgiveness. Jesus has been raised up from the dead. He is not bound by burial cloths of hopelessness and cynicism. Jesus grows no older, but is forever caught in the one moment of his saving passage through death to life.

He is no longer entombed by fear and distrust. His cross is not the dead wood of shame and ridicule, but the first branches of a harvest of compassion and justice for everyone of every time and place. Easter invites us to rise with him and live the miracle. Share the holy food and drink - touch the waters of rebirth and go forth to live.

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