

**Mark 16:1-8**

**What it means to be Easter people**

The women who come to Jesus' tomb early on Sunday morning find it open and empty. They see a young man in white robes, who tells them that Jesus is raised. They are to tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they will meet Jesus, risen as he had told them. With little else to go on (as yet), the women are both amazed and terrified, and afraid to speak to anyone.



**Bible notes**



Mark's Gospel moves straight from the burial of Jesus to this account of the discovery of the empty tomb. For the women who discover the tomb, however, two nights have passed, with a whole day in between, of living with the absence of Jesus and the knowledge and witness of his death.

The events of this week's reading are experienced in the context of having lived through that 'holy' Saturday. Mark's account is brief, and (except in the longer ending in some versions) without the resurrection appearances recounted in the other Gospels. The resurrection is spoken of, but not witnessed, and so readers are left to draw their own conclusions. However, the missing body suggests that if a resurrection has taken place, then it is a physical one: the same body that died has been raised.

Clearly this account is not the end of the story, as the women, keeping silent through fear, must at some point have spoken out. Their role, however, adds authenticity to the account, given that in that time and culture women were not seen as reliable witnesses so would not have been the means to add credibility to the story. The inclusion of the women, along with the singling out of Peter who had so recently denied Jesus, demonstrates the restorative message of this story, in keeping with what we know of Jesus, but not in a way expected of the longed-for Messiah.

There is a lack of detail and explanation in this account of the empty tomb: the identity of the young man (probably intended as an angel), how the stone was moved, the whereabouts of Jesus, how the message was finally shared. Perhaps living the resurrection, being Easter people, entails trust while living with questions, uncertainties – all against the backdrop of the reality of Holy Saturday.

**First impressions**

- What are the reactions of the three women who visit the tomb?
- How does the Easter message transform your life?
- What does it mean to be shaped as a community by the joy and wonder of the resurrection?



**BAKE**



Make spicy Easter biscuits and talk about the women going to the tomb and finding the stone rolled away.



Make a display in the house of objects that relate to each person – football, swimming goggles, a school text book. Add a cross to the display and spend a moment each day looking at it and thanking God that you are all individuals but all Easter people.



Hard boil half a dozen eggs. Take them to a hill and have fun rolling them down the hill until they break open. Think about the fact the stone was rolled away and the tomb broken open.

**A prayer of thanksgiving**

Lent and Holy Week is gone, that journey over.  
Maundy Thursday called us to service and devotion.  
Good Friday pained us and stained us and drained us.  
Saturday stopped us in our tracks, reflecting.  
Easter Day brings us resurrection that never will be over.  
Christ is risen for us and within us.  
Beyond the fluffy chicks and Easter eggs there is life in all its fullness.  
In the midst of our joys and delight:  
In the midst of suffering and pain:  
God is with us, God within us.  
Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to our risen Lord.  
Amen.