

APRIL 6, 2026 FATHER JOHN BERTAIO

Happy Easter. Questions that I have for you:

Are you grieving after Happy Easter, after the death of a loved one? Perhaps a spouse, a parent, a child, a sibling, or anyone with whom you developed a relationship with in this life.

To start off with, and important to remember, and believe, is that death is not the end. Yet, when we grieve, we hurt. And sometimes the hurt is only realized when we make the funeral arrangements. Some of you have already experienced that, I'm sure.

At that time, we want to look for ways to say goodbye and to select the best spot in the cemetery, depending, of course, on the financial circumstances.

I personally was faced with having to arrange all of the above in 1995, when both a close friend of mine and one of my favourite aunts, died, and I was in charge of making the arrangements.

My grieving then, as much as it was, was replaced with the joy when my parents told me that they were so happy, they were so pleased with the way things worked out, that they wanted me to do the same for them when their time came.

I was, "Okay, I've done the right thing."

One of my sources writes that in today's Gospel, we learn that the women came to the tomb to lovingly minister to Jesus' dead body and encountered him alive, who they proclaimed, in great peace, to them, "Peace be with you. Don't be afraid."

These women were entrusted with a mission to a proclamation. Imagine. If they had not been faithful to the risen Christ, especially to his command to preach the good news to the Church, we—according to my source—the Church would not exist today.

They started proclaiming. Their bold, courageous action made the global impact around the world as they knew.

Like the women who encountered Jesus, all of us are called to be missionary disciples and to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ.

We may never know the impact of our words of loving encouragement, or works of justice and charity, but we can trust that God receives our efforts and multiplies them for the good of all.

All we have to do is try our best to do that.

A final question:

Are you prepared to meet the risen Lord?

The disciples of Jesus were as unprepared for his resurrection as they were for his death. The empty tomb, you see, it made them fearful and joyful at the same time.

Where did they put the body, or where did he really rise from the dead, as predicted?

Even though Jesus had spoken to them before his death and rising, they could not believe him 'til they saw the empty tomb and met the risen Lord.

Aren't we the same?

We want to see with our own eyes before we believe.

The guards brought their testimony to the chief priest and elders, who met the news with denial. When they resolved to not believe that Jesus had risen, and they bribed the guards, in the hope of keeping the others from believing.

Go figure. It's still to this day. What do you think?

Dear friends in Christ, let us always proclaim that Jesus is risen. Jesus is risen from the dead. That's so important for us and for our faith.

And at this time of the year, you can probably say:

“He is risen.

Hallelujah,

hallelujah,

hallelujah.”

And I leave you with a short prayer.

Lord Jesus, may we always live in the joy and hope of the resurrection and never lose sight of its truth in our lives.

Amen.