

## HOMILY EASTER 2017

I was dead in the grave.  
I was covered in sin and shame.  
I heard mercy call my name.  
He rolled the stone away.  
Amen, amen, I'm alive  
I'm alive because He lives.  
Amen, amen, let my song  
join the one that never ends.  
Because He lives.

He lives. Two thousand years ago Jesus rose from the dead and alive and with us today. Do you really believe that? After all, no one actually saw the resurrection. Do you think the Gospel message is too good to be true? We know that Jesus rose from the dead because we have eye witness testimony from the disciples who witnessed his 3 years of public ministry and all that happened surrounding his suffering, death and resurrection. They were so convinced that Jesus rose from the dead that they were willing to die rather than recant their testimony. They were convinced. Everything goes on in the world as it does because he lives; he is with us and sustaining our lives. We could not live unless he lives. The resurrection was never meant to be witnessed. The resurrection was meant to be experienced. We need to open ourselves to experience the living God in our lives. He lives.

On that first Easter Sunday, God rolled away the stone from the tomb to allow Jesus to be raised to new life. God wants to roll away the stone in your life to make room for new life. Do you believe that the God who created the whole world out of nothing has the power to roll away the stone in your life, the barriers that are preventing you from being the best version of yourself that you can be? Sometime we just get comfortable with what is. Do you want God to roll away the stone, or are you comfortable in the tomb that you have created for yourself? Do you want to stay in the tomb or do you want to celebrate Easter joy? Are you ready to rethink the future?

Are you ready to let go of the incomplete, the broken, the lost, the dysfunctional in your life? Are you completely happy with the way everything is going in your life, or deep down do you know there is something more? God will help you if you want his help. Because he lives.

Sometimes life is difficult. The first Easter started in total darkness and hopelessness. Sometimes we have darkness in our lives. Sometimes we hear things like: “I am sorry, it is malignant. There is nothing we can do.” God can heal us, sometimes physically but always spiritually. Or sometimes we hear things like: “There has been an accident. Can you come to the hospital?” God can accompany us. We do not have to do it alone. Because he lives. And because he is alive and taking care of us, we will discover that the sun will rise again, the birds will sing, and joy will creep back into our lives. Like the first Easter, what starts in darkness and hopelessness can move forward to new life. Experience the living Jesus in your life. Because he lives we can face tomorrow. Because he lives we have great hope for the future. Because he lives we can find peace. Because he lives.