

## Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord A - Have you seen the Lord?

April 5, 2026

It is early on Sunday morning, now the third day since Jesus's cruel death on a Roman cross. Dawn has yet to break. Jesus's disciples had scattered for fear of arrest. They are terrified of the might of the Roman Empire, which brutally crushed their hopes in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, who had come to live among us. During those long hours, lost in grief, the shock of the reality caught up with them. This was no nightmare from which they could awaken. Jesus was truly dead. But something happened on that Sunday following Jesus's crucifixion and death. That morning marks the hinge in human history.

John's gospel tells us that on Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb of her rabbi, Jesus. Lost in grief, she travels to the place where her Lord had been laid to rest. Finding the stone removed from the entrance, Mary runs to Simon Peter and the beloved disciple. The two go with Mary Magdalene to investigate the empty tomb. Seeing Jesus's burial cloths lying on the ground, and the face cloth neatly folded, the beloved disciple sees and believes. The two disciples return to their homes. Mary remains. She is weeping inconsolably when angels ask her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" In her deep loss she finds the words, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." Then Mary turns and sees a man standing there. There is Jesus, standing in front of her, resurrected from the dead, never to die again. Yet Mary feels no joy. She remains lost in her grief. She does not recognize her Lord. She still cannot grasp the world-changing revelation of Jesus's resurrection, even though he is standing in front of her. Then Jesus says her name. That does it. Hearing her name called by Jesus, the light of the glory of God floods in. Mary Magdalene will become the apostle to the apostles, bringing the Good News that life has conquered death. She went out into the darkness of the night only to return illumined by the risen Jesus. She can confidently proclaim: "I have seen the Lord."

The resurrection is the story of the unexpected. The disciples proclaimed Jesus's resurrection, not because everyone expected this of the Messiah, but because it was so life-changingly unexpected that they couldn't avoid talking about it. It would have been easier if they had just claimed that Jesus's message was still valid, that his teaching should live on. That was good enough for the followers of the Buddha or Muhammed. But that is not what those first followers of Jesus claimed. They, quite inconveniently, said that Jesus was resurrected, never to die again, and that they continued to experience his presence by the power of the Holy Spirit. As they spoke, they created new converts, whose experiences of Jesus matched their own. The resurrection is hard to grasp, yet it is the central mystery of our redemption. Christ's victory at Easter is the triumph of the cross!

Jesus had always been about the work of converting hearts and minds rather than overthrowing an empire. Jesus never tried to establish a kingdom *without*—with an army and a palace, like other would-be Messiahs. Jesus was establishing a kingdom *within*. The occupying forces he sought to overtake existed within the human heart. The Jesus Movement still exists because Jesus's followers still feel his presence right here, right now. That was the surprising truth his first followers discovered after Jesus's resurrection and later ascension: He was still with them. He is still here now. We routinely see how God is *still* touching hearts and minds in that same way today. The light of Christ has come into the darkness of our world providing us with hope for a future greater than we dare to believe. It challenges us to share a kind of living that goes beyond the expectation of this earth. This is not possible unless we reverse our sinful ways by rising above the things that keep us entombed and imprisoned and become people of the resurrection. Easter has no meaning for us if Christ has emptied his tomb and we are afraid to come forth and put the darkness of sin to flight by exposing ourselves to his light.

People's lives continue to be changed for the better by the power of the Holy Spirit in amazing ways one can only call a miracle. If you have yet to come to that sure and certain knowledge, in your own life, come back to worship again and again. This is a place of resurrection, where love still conquers death. Here, we can meet Jesus anew in worship, surrounded by people whose lives are just as messy as ours. We have a sure and certain hope built on seeing God show up. All our hopes and happiness come from Christ's resurrection. It announces that love is present in the world and is more powerful than the evil any individual may carry out. The good news is that in all the dark and despairing moments of life the possibility of resurrection exist because no defeat is final and no lie is written off as hopeless. We must make use of the power of Jesus to ensure that our life grows towards God. It is through our union with Christ in baptism that we share in the glory of his resurrection. Baptism means letting the world of God dwell in our hearts by doing everything in our lives in the name of Jesus Christ. Pope Francis proclaimed that Christ's resurrection brings the "unexpected good news" that life triumphs over death, urging believers to become "pilgrims of hope". He encouraged Christians to run toward the risen Lord, who is present in daily life and in others, and to roll away stones of disappointment. Put our whole trust in Jesus and we will come to share in Mary Magdalene's confident assertion: "I have seen the Lord."

Have you seen the Lord? I have seen the Lord when I heard the story of a firefighter watching his own house burnt while working tirelessly saving the houses of strangers during the big fire in Fort McMurray in 2016. I have seen the Lord when I was told by my cousin risking her life and insisted on giving birth to her first child even knowing the child's chance of survival after birth would be for just a few minutes. I have seen the Lord when I listen to this song, the lyrics as follow:

I believe for every drop of rain that falls  
A flower grows  
I believe that somewhere in the darkest night  
A candle glows  
I believe for everyone that goes astray  
Someone will come to show the way  
I believe  
I believe  
I believe above the storm the smallest prayer  
Will still be heard  
I believe that someone in the great somewhere  
Hears every word  
Every time I hear a newborn baby cry  
Or touch a leaf  
Or see the sky  
Then I know why  
I believe...

### I Believe

by Frankie Laine