



# DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

## The Second Sunday of Easter – Revelation 1:4-8

**Focus:** *The resurrected Christ – who was, who is, and who is to come*

### word of life

**“Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come ...from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.”**

Revelation 1:4b-5 (NRSV)

Read Revelation 1:4-8

### CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!

The Church’s celebration of Easter continues over the great fifty days following Easter Sunday as the good news of the resurrection is proclaimed in word, song, and deed. The second lessons for the Sundays of this season of Easter in this year C of the lectionary (the common Sunday Bible readings for many Christian denominations) are all from the book of The Revelation to John.

1. *What do you know about the book of Revelation?*
2. *Why do you think Revelation is chosen for the Easter season?*

For many, The Revelation to John is a mysterious, misunderstood book. It is known as *apocalyptic* literature (from the Greek word *to reveal* or *to expose*). Revelation has been interpreted by some as a revealing of the events of the end of the world; countless books have been written as people have tried to explain the many symbols and hidden messages of Revelation. Oftentimes, the doom and gloom of the events signaling the end of the world are emphasized.

But there is a strong underlying theme of hopefulness in the book of Revelation that makes its reading during the Easter season so appropriate. The book can be summarized with three thematic statements:

- a. The resurrected Christ is the Lord God Almighty.
- b. The powers of death and evil seem to be in charge.
- c. But God’s power in Christ is ultimately in control.

For a community of faith experiencing persecution, cultural and religious crisis, exile, or death, the message of the resurrected Christ who overcame death and the powers of evil is a powerful word of hope, encouragement, and consolation. It clearly is an Easter message.

3. *How have you experienced the hope and encouragement of the resurrected Christ?*
4. *Are there times when it seems as though evil is stronger than good? How does the message of Revelation make a difference?*

The reading for today from Revelation proclaims the totality of the power of the risen Christ “...who is and who was and who is to come.” (Revelation 1:4 NRSV) Past, present, and future are all encompassed under the grace, love, mercy and power of the resurrected Christ. Three attributes of Christ are lifted up in Revelation 1:5 as evidence of Christ’s reign: 1) “the faithful witness” (the Greek word for *witness* is *martyr*) – fulfilled in the crucifixion; 2) “the firstborn of the dead” – fulfilled in the resurrection; and 3) the ruler of the kings of the earth” – fulfilled in Christ’s exaltation. No earthly power, no matter how powerful it might seem, not even death itself, can in the end prevail. **FOR CHRIST IS RISEN!**

### CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!

5. *Reflect on the significance of a God “who was, who is, and who is to come.”*
6. *How is this an Easter message?*

## **word among us**

Easter isn't over at sunset on Easter Sunday. The Easter season is celebrated for 50 days from Easter Sunday until Pentecost Sunday. In the calendar of the church year, every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection (thus we gather for worship on Sunday rather than Saturday).

This Easter emphasis is evidenced in the naming of the Sundays of the Church year. The Sundays that fall during the season of Lent are named the Sundays **in** Lent, while the Sundays falling in the Easter season are the Sundays **of** Easter. Every Sunday is a celebration of the risen Christ.

1. *What difference does this understanding of Sunday make in your weekly worship?*
2. *How might you celebrate Easter for 50 days and every Sunday?*

Not only is every Sunday a celebration of the resurrection, every service of Holy Communion is also an Easter celebration. As the bread and cup are lifted up, the gathered faith community speaks of the mystery of faith: "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." We hear echoes of the words from the book of Revelation: Christ is the one "... who is and who was and who is to come" (Revelation 1:4b NRSV)

The power of the resurrection knows no bounds. All of time – all of history and all of creation – is under the risen Christ's loving embrace. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8 NRSV)

3. *How is this message a word of hope for those experiencing persecution, exile, or a crisis?*
4. *How does this message speak to you in your life circumstances?*

## **faith practice in daily life**

### **Hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper**

We are an Easter people in a Good Friday world. We need to hear and experience the Good News of the resurrection to renew our faith in the midst of sorrow, death, and suffering. We need to experience the presence and sustenance of the risen Christ in and with us in the Lord's supper to face the challenges and forces of evil in our lives. We need to hear and proclaim the bold promise is Easter:

**CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!** Because Christ has died, and is risen, and will come again, every morning is Easter morning from now on. Thanks be to God!

5. *What does it mean to say, "Every morning is Easter morning from now on"?*
6. *How will your week be different because you know Christ is risen?*

### **Prayer**

O Risen Christ, we praise you for your glorious resurrection which makes all things new. Help us to live as Easter people, proclaiming life and hope in all we say and do; through Christ our Lord. Amen

## ***last word***

When you arise in the morning,  
begin each new day with the words:  
"This new day is an Easter morning.  
Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!"