



April 20, 2025 – Easter Day (C) Reflections on the Resurrection, Week 1

During the Easter season, Sermons That Work is pleased to present reflections from some of the newest bishops of The Episcopal Church on the resurrection of our Lord. Check back each week for a brief exploration of how Jesus Christ's rising from the grave changes everything. To listen to this reflection, scan the QR code on this page and subscribe to the Sermons That Work podcast.

It's Easter! We've just heard the story that is likely familiar—even if this is your first time in church. Every year, preachers struggle with how to preach about Easter. Some of you know the story well, while for others, it's a little less familiar, and this might be the only sermon you hear all year. For all of you, the challenge is the same: Where do you find yourselves in this story?

Perhaps last Sunday you heard the story of Jesus being welcomed like a rockstar in the city of Jerusalem, only for those same people to later cheer on the governor who condemned him to death. Maybe you have betrayed someone you love or have been betrayed yourself. Perhaps you have heard the stories of the crucifixion and even acted out the part of Jesus. Or maybe, simply by knowing your neighbors, listening to the news, or talking with your family, you know the suffering of an innocent person. Is this your entry into the story? Perhaps you were in church on Thursday evening, kneeling to wash someone's feet. Allowing a stranger, or even a friend, to wash your feet is a vulnerable choice. Living the Christian life is a messy journey! Is this the life you want to sign up for? Perhaps you live life like Jesus every day—feeding the hungry, healing the sick, welcoming the stranger, visiting prisoners, and working for justice. You certainly must understand the resurrection!

But... yet... here we are, wondering what it means for us to know the risen Christ today. I have only one thing I know: I have experienced the resurrection in my own life, and I know you can too.

When my first daughter was born, I had everything I needed—an easy birth, an easy baby, a loving spouse, a comfortable home, a good job, and a church community. And yet, I experienced postpartum depression. It was the first time in my life that I could not find joy or control my emotions. I did everything out of habit, including going to church, but I was disconnected—from myself, from my loved ones, from God. I wanted to run away. But I knew I couldn't; the emptiness would follow me. I was stuck.

And then came resurrection. It was not immediate; it took months, not days. It was not magical, but it was miraculous. Thanks to love, medicine, counseling, prayer, and time, I found joy again. I began to live again. I came out of the tomb and back into the land of the living.

When Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, see the empty tomb, the two dazzling beings ask them a funny question: "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" Today, we are looking for the living among the living – each of us living stories of resurrection.

If you have never known resurrection, you are not alone. When you pray today, when you receive the bread and wine—the reminder of Jesus' journey through life, hell, death, and new life—pray this: "Dear God, show me your resurrection in my life, take me out of pain, suffering, and hurt and show me new life. Take me out of the land of the dead and into new life."



I have seen the risen Christ in my own life—I believe you can too.

The Rt. Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer is the ninth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and the first woman to serve in this role. A lifelong Episcopalian, she spent 19 years as rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Chicago, focusing on community, justice, and inclusion. She now leads 48 congregations across eight counties in New York, spanning from Lake Ontario to the Pennsylvania border, striving to be a light of love and service in diverse communities.