

“After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week,
Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.
There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and,
going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.”
(Matthew 28:1-2 NIV)

I love a good joke! Since Easter falls on April 1st this year let's share a little humor:

A father was reading Bible stories to his young son.
He read, 'The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city,
but his wife looked back and was turned to salt.'
His son asked, 'What happened to the flea?'

That little joke might have practically nothing to do with Easter, but it may remind us of the very old tradition which says the day after Easter is a day for telling jokes. Why? Because a joke – the greatest joke in the history of the world – was played on the devil and his demons at Easter.

The tradition may originate with some of the early Christian theologians like Augustine and John Chrysostom. In one of his Easter sermons, Chrysostom (344-407), described a vision of the resurrected Jesus confronting the devil and laughing at him.

Let's face it, on Friday of Holy Week, as Jesus died on the cross, the devil and his cohorts of darkness thought they had won. The Messiah, the Son of God, was dead. But God always has the last word and the last laugh too.

The resurrection is the last word. It means that not only did Jesus die on the cross for the sins of the world but by the power of God was raised from the dead. God defeated sin and death! Yes, it's the icing on the cake. We are forgiven of our sins and we also inherit eternal life.

In past centuries Easter Monday was known as The Day of Joy and Laughter, Bright Monday, or White Monday. Some countries today still consider Easter Monday a public holiday and have great celebrations. Some parts of the world have traditions of flying kites or having picnics on Easter Monday.

What does Easter Monday mean to you? Is it just another day? I hope not. I hope we can all appreciate the traditions of the past as a recipe for joyful life today. Knowing that God did defeat sin and death with the cross and the empty tomb let us live joyfully, without fear, and with great courage to tell others the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Remember, He IS Risen!

Have a wonderful Easter season,

Pastor Tim

