

“Consider taking time this Easter season to sit with this mystery, to feel the discomfort of uncertainty and to rest in God’s great love which is, in the fullness of time, making all things new.”

While many churches do not offer formal Christian education programs such as Sunday School or the Adult Forum on Easter Day, it is important to take time during the season of Easter to reflect on the Resurrection. Whether you are planning an adult Easter series, newsletter for families, or Easter prayer stations for youth, here are three teaching points to consider.

## **Easter is *The Great Mystery of Our Tradition***

It sounds obvious, but it is worth reminding ourselves on a regular basis that Easter is a mystery. We cannot fully understand how Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. Or how the heavy stone was rolled away from the tomb. Nor can we fully comprehend what it means for our own lives (and deaths), that the Son of God overcame death on the cross.

We live in a society eager for certainty, scientific explanations, and clear answers. In such a world, to believe in the mystery of Easter, to have faith in something we cannot fully understand, is not only counter-cultural, it is a small rebellion! Believing the mystery, realigns us. It is an orientation of awe and wonder, of trust in God, of hope in everlasting love.

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## **Resurrection Does Not Negate Suffering**

If we are not careful, the story of Easter can sound like a simple story of triumph: suffering plus time leads to overcoming. We have many examples of such stories today from books and movies to the way we talk about our own lives. But the story of Jesus is complex. Jesus undergoes great suffering and dies. Three days later the tomb is empty, but the risen Jesus carries the marks of his suffering. Not only does the risen Christ carry the wounds of his crucifixion on his hands and feet and side, it is through these wounds that he is known to his disciple Thomas ([John 20:24-29](#)).

What does it mean for our life after death, that Jesus carries the signs of his suffering through death and into eternal life? Could eternal life hold healing and restoration without entirely forgetting the suffering that shaped our lives? As we joyfully celebrate the risen Christ in churches throughout the world his Easter season, it is worth remembering that we cannot separate Jesus's resurrection from his suffering and death.

## Easter, A New Beginning

The incredible narrative of Jesus's resurrection we tell at Easter can sometimes sound like we have given a neat and tidy ending to a challenging story. But Easter is not the end of the story, it is a new beginning.

The story that unfolds after the Resurrection, from the Ascension to Pentecost and beyond, is equally compelling. In the mystery of the Ascension, we celebrate Christ returning to God the Father and at Pentecost we celebrate Christ sending us his Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church. The narrative of Christ's resurrection is still unfolding, 2000 years later, for we all receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at our baptism, which leads us deeper into the knowledge and love of God.

This Easter season may we take time to consider our part in the Resurrection story, our lives in light of the Risen Christ.

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