

### What if it is true that Jesus rose from the tomb?

Eastertide celebrates an empty tomb. Easter celebrates that nobody, no force or any power, could keep Jesus in the tomb.

The Bible in simple, almost childlike clarity teaches us that Jesus died and rose. Every early Christian preacher made this the main theme of his message. And for all the centuries that followed, it remained the very core of the Good News preached about Jesus. On this truth all Christian faith and service are founded.

Nothing could secure the tomb in such a way that it could keep the Messiah, the Christ of God, locked inside. No guards, no stone, and, yes, no fancy, clever theology, and no lie or deception can ever keep Jesus locked inside the tomb.

When Jesus was laid in the tomb on the first Good Friday afternoon, hope had died even in the hearts of Jesus' most loyal friends. It looked as if his enemies had won a victory. The disciples thought the Master was defeated. But the testimonies of many that had fellowship with him before his ascension, even 500 people at the same time, say Christ defeated the enemy!

The chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate to get a security order.

*(Mt 27:63-64) "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead.*

To their credit we can say that they accurately quoted what Jesus said. Jesus did predict his own resurrection. He said to his followers:

*(Mt 20:18-19) "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!" (Mt 16:21-23; 17:22-23)*

The chief priests and Pharisees were afraid. What if Jesus was telling the truth, they asked themselves.

They asked the great "what if" question! What if Jesus has risen? What if the lifeless body started to breathe again? What if the wrapped-up, bandaged body stood up and came to challenge them about what they did to him?

What if the living Lord challenges us on how his resurrection impacts on our daily lives? Because Jesus was telling the truth!