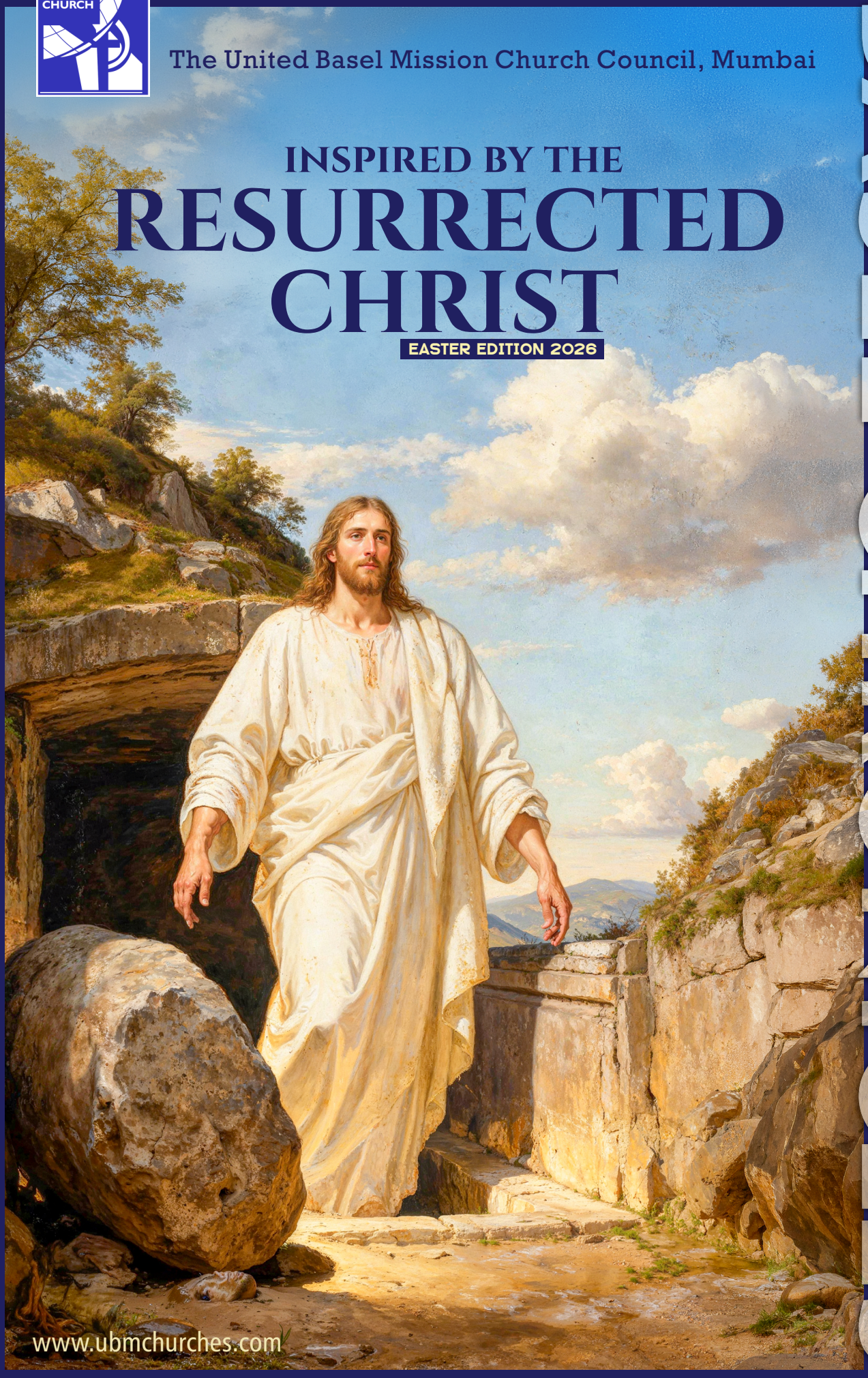
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EDITORIAL

Rev. Sunil Joy

UBM Sushanthi Church, Byculla

Greetings to you all in the holy name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

I extend my wishes to all of you on this blessed celebration of the Resurrection. By celebrating this Resurrection festival, I pray that each one of you may experience spiritual resurrection—leaving behind a life of sin and living a holy and righteous life.

This Resurrection festival is very important for every Christian. Because Christ gave His life on the cross for us and rose again on the third day. His death and resurrection completely changed our lives. Through His suffering, death, and resurrection, He purified us who were sinners, and most importantly, He gave us freedom from the bondage of sin. No matter how much gratitude we express for Christ's grace and His service, it will never be enough.

The resurrection of Jesus gives us inspiration. Let us now reflect on what things it inspires us and what this resurrection teaches us.

1. The Resurrection of Christ Inspires Us to Come Out of a Life of Sin

Sin entered the world because Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command. Because of this sin, the relationship between God and humanity was completely broken. God should have given punishment for our sins. But instead of punishment, He showed us His love. Because of our sin, we were unable to see God or have a relationship with Him. However, God Himself came forward, revealed His love and grace, and sent Christ into this world.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the image of God, and the One who has been with God from the beginning. Leaving His throne and His position, He took the form of a servant and came into this world as a servant. The purpose of His coming into this world was to deliver us from sin. Therefore, the punishment that we deserved, the penalty we had to bear for our sins, and the debt we had to pay, He took upon Himself on our behalf. By giving His life on the cross, He bore our punishment. For our sins, He became the sacrificial lamb, shedding His body and His blood to grant us forgiveness. According to the will of God, Christ rose again on the third day.

The resurrection of Christ teaches and inspires us to no longer live a life of sin. Because

Christ gave His life on the cross for our sins, if we continue to live in sin again, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ would become meaningless. Therefore, the resurrection encourages us to no longer sin but to live holy and righteous lives.

2. The Resurrection of Christ Inspires Us to Forgive

Human nature is such that if an officer or a wealthy person insults us, hurts us with harsh words, or causes us suffering, we tend to keep those memories in our hearts. When we later gain power or become wealthy, we try to return the insult to that person twofold. When someone humiliates us, we often feel no peace until we take revenge.

However, a similar situation also happened in the life of Jesus. Many people —including leaders and Pharisees—insulted Him, caused Him suffering, and finally sentenced Him to death on the cross. Yet the first word Jesus spoke on the cross was: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Jesus prayed this to the Father. It was His nature and character to forgive those who insulted Him or caused Him suffering and punishment.

When Jesus began His ministry, He chose twelve disciples. These twelve disciples served with Him every day, witnessing His teachings, miracles, and signs. But when Jesus was captured by the Romans and sentenced to death on the cross, all the disciples abandoned Him and fled. In particular, Peter denied Jesus three times, saying, "I do not know who this Jesus is."

However, when Jesus rose from the dead, He did not hold against them the fact that the disciples had abandoned Him or Peter had denied Him. Instead, He forgave them wholeheartedly. When the disciples were sitting inside a house with the doors locked out of fear, Jesus appeared to them and said, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19). Jesus forgave His disciples, gave them His Holy Spirit, and sent them out to serve and to proclaim the Gospel.

The resurrection of Christ teaches us this: love your enemies and forgive those who insult you with all your heart. If you have thoughts of taking revenge on those who have done wrong to you, remove those thoughts. Christ forgave those who insulted Him and did not become angry even when His own people abandoned Him in His time of suffering.

Therefore, if you truly want to celebrate the resurrection festival, first forgive your enemies. Turn away from a sinful life and live a life of purity and righteousness. May God bless you, may Christ grant you forgiveness, and may the Holy Spirit guide you. Amen.



U.B.M
OFFICE BEARERS DESK

Mr. Allwin Karkada
Associate Secretary, UBM Church Council.

The Resurrection is not an annual remembrance it is a present reality. It is Heaven's declaration that Jesus Christ is Lord.

The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead now dwells in us (Romans 8:11). This is not mere emotional excitement this is doctrinal truth, Pentecostal power, and eternal assurance. The grave could not hold Him. Sin could not silence Him. Death could not defeat Him.

- The Cross was the payment.
- The Resurrection was the receipt.
- The Spirit is the guarantee.

In a world battling anxiety, broken homes, moral confusion, economic uncertainty, and silent depression—the Resurrection speaks.

- To the hopeless: There is hope beyond your present pain.
- To the weary: There is power beyond your present weakness.
- To the fallen: There is grace greater than your failure.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you” (Romans 6:14).

This is not positive thinking it is Kingdom authority. Because He rose, sin has lost its mastery. Because He lives, we walk in victory.

The Resurrection is God's bold declaration over every failure:

- You are not finished.
- You are not forsaken.
- You are not defeated.

In Christ, we are more than conquerors (Romans 8:37) not by denying our struggles, but by triumphing through the Spirit. Pentecost reminds us that Resurrection power did not stop at the empty tomb it was poured out upon the Church. The Holy Spirit empowers ordinary believers to live extraordinary lives.

And this hope is not only for today it is eternal.

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven…” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Because He rose, we too shall rise. This mortal shall put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:53). Our King is coming and we shall reign with Him forever.

- The tomb is empty.
- The Spirit is active.
- The Church is alive. Our future is secure.

May this Resurrection season ignite holy boldness in the young, steadfast faith in the old, and renewed fire in every heart. We are blessed. We are redeemed. We are Spirit-filled. We are victorious in Christ.

Christ is risen – And we rise in Him.



U.B.M PASTORS DESK

Pastor David Kamble

UBM Christa Sannidhi church, Mira Road.

Human life is often marked by moments of deep need. There are times when we face sorrow, uncertainty, weakness, and fear. In such moments, the resurrection of Jesus Christ becomes a powerful source of hope and inspiration. The risen Christ reminds us that God's power is greater than every human limitation.

When the women came to the tomb early in the morning, they were filled with grief and confusion. Yet the angel proclaimed, “He is not here; He has risen!” (Luke 24:6). This declaration transformed their sorrow into joy and their despair into hope.

The resurrection teaches us that God often works most powerfully when we are in our greatest need. The disciples had witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus and believed that everything was lost. Their hopes seemed buried with Him in the tomb. However, on the third day, God revealed His mighty power by raising Christ from the dead. What appeared to be the end became a glorious beginning. This reminds us that even when situations seem hopeless, God is still at work behind the scenes, preparing a greater victory.

In our personal struggles, the resurrected Christ becomes our source of strength. When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, they were hiding in fear. Yet He came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you” (John 20:19). These simple yet powerful words remind us that Christ meets us in our weakness and brings calm to our troubled hearts. When we feel overwhelmed by the burdens of life, the presence of the risen Lord assures us that we are not alone.

The resurrection also inspires us to trust God even when we cannot see the outcome. Faith in the risen Christ teaches us that God's plans are greater than our understanding. The cross looked like defeat, but it became the path to victory. Likewise, the challenges we face today may seem heavy, but in God's hands they can become opportunities for growth and testimony. The risen Christ invites us to place our needs, fears, and hopes into His hands.

Furthermore, the resurrection encourages us to live with renewed courage. After encountering the risen Jesus, the disciples were transformed from fearful followers

into bold witnesses of the gospel. Their lives became powerful testimonies of the power of Christ. This transformation shows that the resurrection is not only a historical event but also a living reality that continues to change hearts today. When we encounter the risen Christ in our lives, we receive strength to face difficulties and courage to continue our journey of faith.

In every season of need, the resurrection reminds us that God's power is never limited by human circumstances. The empty tomb stands as a symbol of victory, hope, and new life. Because Christ lives, our struggles do not define our future. Instead, they become places where God's grace is revealed.

Therefore, whenever we find ourselves in need – whether spiritual, emotional, or physical – we can look to the resurrected Christ. He is the living Savior who understands our pain, strengthens our faith, and leads us toward a future filled with hope and life. Because He lives, we too can rise above our challenges and walk confidently in the promises of God.



EASTER MESSAGE

Rev. Christina Chavan

Good Shepherd Methodist Church Chembur

28th April 2023, Friday, sitting beside my son, Steve, holding his hands in mine, was a different experience at this special juncture. One of the hands was growing colder but tremendous faith upon the living Christ in my heart never wavered. The irritating noise of the machine, the woman in pink and man in blue gazing at me were surprisingly conveying a different message tonight. The beeping of the machine changed its pace with different sound and that last breath he breathed was visible on the oxygen cap that was covering that innocent, beautiful face of my beloved son, it was already a new day then.

When I came back to my consciousness a long time later, I found myself to be a transformed being. The true gist and meaning of the resurrection of my redeemer Lord, Jesus Christ, has become crystal clear and personal to my faith journey. The interrogative statement "why" has transformed into the affirmation of faith now.

Indeed, the resurrection of the Lord inspires, assures and offers the transformations in our lives.

Resurrection of Lord: A new life over the old.
The resurrection inspires us to change our perception of temporary life and to focus upon the spiritual growth by relying upon God's promises of granting eternal life by coming in faith to him. (John 3:16; 10:28; 6:47)

A believer inspired by the resurrection of the Lord tends to dispose of, his/her old self and adopts a new life, characterized by love, compassion, humility, and service.

Saul, persecutor of Christians, was transformed into an apostle after encountering the risen Lord on the road to Damascus. Philippians 3:10 describes his wish to 'know Christ to know the power of his resurrection."

Resurrection: A life of hope amid despair.
Under the inspiration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we learn to live in hope in times of fear of death. The resurrected Lord offers a heart of confidence to us and reminds us of His triumphant victory over death.

The disciples of Jesus were terrified by the crucifixion of Christ, they have lost their hopes that Jesus is the Christ after His death and Peters denying of Jesus is a proof of their tremendous fear.

But their transformation happened when the resurrected Jesus appeared to them and proved Himself to them. Their timidity transformed into a courageous preacher of gospel.

Resurrection of Lord: A life of testimony for the service of God and others by starting afresh.

Resurrection of Jesus our Lord prepares us to serve the mankind, sharing the gospel of personal resurrection experiences to them and start afresh in the ministry of God, through different gift of God

“As each has received a gift, use to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace'- 1 Peter 4:10.

Mary Magdalene with other two women was the first to encounter the risen Christ and inspired by the resurrection of the lord instead of mourning she started new and shared this good news to the apostles.

Come live a new life inspired by the resurrected Lord which will lead us into the hope now and after death offered by our Lord.



THEOLOGY TODAY

Rev. Dr. Prof. R. Annie Watson

Mangalore.

The forty days of lent, led us to the meditation of Jesus' Passion and agony on the Cross. God so loved the world that He gave His only Son for the redemption of our sins and to bring salvation to the humanity. Jesus the Son of God, the High Priest bore all our sins and the wrath of God on behalf of us and was crushed for our iniquities and died once for all (Isaiah 53). He paid the ransom through His crucifixion.

However, God's redemptive mission did not end up on the cross or in the grave, but is continued beyond the grave in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and is living (Isaiah 53:10), and whoever believes in Him, though they die, yet shall be living in Him (John 11:24-25). The Gospel of John 5:26 reads: “For as the Father has life in Himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in Himself.” Through His resurrection, Jesus “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel...” (2 Timothy 1:10)

DEATH AND RESURRECTION: FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURE

Easter is not only the celebration of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead but also the triumphal victory over the evil power of death which had put Him to the vicious sufferings and crucified, that led Him to the death and burial of Him in the grave. His death and burial were to be fulfilled according to the scriptures (Refer Isaiah 53:9-10). John 2:22 narrates, “When therefore he was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that he had said tHis, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.” 1 Corinthians 15:4 Paul affirms “that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...”

Nevertheless, if he had not been resurrected then it would have been the victory of the evil power. Though the evil power of this world saw the victory for a moment when he suffered and died on the cross and was buried, their joy was not long lasting. To ensure their victory they laid a huge rock to close the grave that His body is not removed from the grave to devise a story of His resurrection by His disciples, because he had already spoken about His being raised on the third day from the dead. The synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John record the resurrection of Jesus and His appearances among His disciples and the people *(Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20, 21; and 1 Corinthians 15)*.

In Peter's Sermon at Pentecost, he states that "this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised Him up, losing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it..." (Acts 2:23-24; Refer Acts 3:15).

The empty tomb or the grave was proof of His resurrection and of His victory over the power of death. The invitation to the women who came to see the tomb, as in Matthew 28:5-6; Mark 16:6 "He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay..." Jesus Himself who has risen from the dead appeared to the women, assured them not to be afraid, but rather to go tell the others to go to Galilee that there they would see Him (Matthew 28:10; Mark 16:7).

HOPE OF RESURRECTION

The hope of resurrection has primary significance for Christian faith and is an indispensable aspect of Christian Theology. God will raise His people from the dead to an eternal life in the new creation. Jesus' sayings "...for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgement" (John 5:28-29).

The hope of resurrection is part and parcel of God's plan of restoration and redemption, and was prophesized as we see in the Old Testament. (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6; Psalm 16:9-11; Psalm 73:23-26; Psalm 40:15; Isaiah 25:7-8; Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37:1-14; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3). Though the Old Testament does not speak directly about resurrection, the restoration pictures the imagery of resurrection. The pictures of the bodies rising from the grave, and the return from the exile are surely the imagery of resurrection.

In the New Testament the Gospel accounts narrate where Jesus Himself during His ministry, before His crucifixion, raises a few from the dead. (Luke 7:11-17; John 11) Martha the sister of Lazarus affirms her faith in resurrection and in Jesus Christ, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day... and I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." Jesus makes known that "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..." (John 11:24-25). Jesus incarnated into this world so that we may "have life and have it abundantly" because he is "the way, and the truth, and the life." (John 10:10b; John 14:6)

ESCHATOLOGICAL RESURRECTION

Through the power of His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ destroys the power of death in His coming again, an eschatological truth (1 Corinthians 15:24-26). The first

Adam's disobedience brought in death and condemnation into the world, but Jesus the second Adam by means of His obedience and offering Himself to crucifixion and in His resurrection, he brought justification and eternal life to all humanity (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23). The God who raised His Son from the power of death, in His mercy through the resurrection of Jesus Christ has given all humanity a hope of eternal life beyond the grave, and "to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven... who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 3-5). Though we die, we will be raised to eternal life through the living Christ to share in His glory on His coming again. (Romans 8:17-18; Colossians 3:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; Colossians 1:27).

Jesus in His resurrection conquered sin and death and brought in life which is the dawning of the new creation and of resurrection. He holds the keys of Death and Hades (Rev.1:18). Those who are in Him and believes in Him will be raised from the dead at His coming again (1 Cor 15:23). Jesus in His resurrection "became a life-giving spirit," and God "made us alive together with Christ" and by God's grace we have been saved..." from our transgressions (1 Corinthians 15:45; Ephesians 2:5).

Though death is a reality to every born being, grave is not the dead-end, but rather there is life beyond the grave in God's redemptive acts (Romans 8:11). We have hope in the eschatological resurrection, that God in His grace and love redeems us from death through Christ's death and resurrection, and brings us into His presence to share His glory, for we become His new creation with new life in Him. Therefore, while we are still living in this world, we in faith should walk in God's ways as transformed beings in righteousness and in His holiness, for we are sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:17-32; Romans 8:12-17).



LEADERSHIP TODAY

Rev. Emmanuel Jones

Presbyter - Karnataka Central Diocese

" I want to stand-out said some,

I stand-by said some

Whatever came, I was the only standing-up were the voices of few"

This is the reality of leadership today, that can be understood to some extent, because leadership has become not only powerful and rightful excercise of responsibility but aspiration to prove oneself powerful while truly forgetting the responsibility.

Popular leadership

Jesus disciples themselves sought it , James and John when they wanted to sit one next to him on the left and right, thinking Jesus when he becomes powerful, would grant them favourable positions proves people want the fame and power associated with leadership .

God-mode leadership

In many ancient civilizations people considered their rulers representations of God on Earth , we see it in the earliest example of Pharaoh when Israelites were undergoing slavery under him.And such leaders think whatever they do is and will be right , there's no one to stop them.This presently can be found in the world power divide , where powerful nations and their leaders want to exert pressure and power on the weaker or developing nations.

Chameleon leadership

'I work for you' says the voice but truly the leader works and used their position only for their self interests and self gain. Giving false assurances and hopes to people in the name of leadership, is somewhere exploitation like wolf in sheep's clothing.

These above are the prime picturisation of leaders and leadership we find today eliminating the true essence and real truth of what leadership is :

The real leader was and ever will be God- be it in our lives, Churches , Society or World

at large because, from the beginning he meant only Good for his creation, he wanted it to stay intact untouched by falseness, deception and temptation,yet humanity fell under temptation, letting go of God's leadership to self control our lives and decisions therefore neglecting God's true intent for what was projected to us from deception (Serpent - Genesis 2&3). In all these he still cares , worked and led humanity through forefathers, leaders, Judges,Kings,Prophets and later through his son Jesus Christ. This is what reflects the never giving up on humanity ,never letting go ,always caring for ,always working for , as found in Psalms 121:4 "Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep". It's the greatest quality of leadership hence Catholic Church father and theologian Thomas Aquinaas calls God the unmoved - mover.

All these ideals and true image of leadership was found in our Lord Jesus Christ's life, faith and ministry being the leader who never needed to portray himself, the God who never needed to prove who he was , the person who sacrifices himself for his people.

Today as we see leadership we claim to be wanting these ideal leaderships in our lives but sometimes we fail to recognise, because true leadership doesn't need to shout ,nor to please people but do what is right be it in life, society, politics, Church ,etc and also not only failure of recognition we also neglect and make space for persecution of such rightful leaders when they stand for the right we stand by our own safety rather than supporting true leadership standing,

That is why the crowd chose Barabbas rather than Jesus as their leader because, they wanted to be safe with the Roman leaders and Jewish leadership rather than stand with Jesus who represented the truth of their time. Today it poses a rightful challenge for us being the crowd ; or being the few who weren't in the crowd ,who chose what was rightful, because I believe that "leadership is not only what a leader is but, also what the people accept the leader to be and push the leader to be " because it is both action and mindset that defines leadership today.



SPIRITUALITY TODAY

Rev. Melvin Mullur

Karnataka northern Diocese

Spirituality refers to the practice of our faith. It is about understanding the practical expression of our belief—how we engage in spirituality and how we live closer to God while practicing our faith. Spirituality carries the purpose of living faithfully before God and moving from darkness to light. It reflects a life of reverence and devotion to God.

“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:8). As Paul writes to Timothy, he emphasizes that godliness is greater than physical discipline because it carries the promise of life.

“If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?” (1 Corinthians 9:11). When Paul writes to the Corinthians, he highlights the relationship between the spiritual and the physical, pointing toward a life where spirituality is expressed in both dimensions.

According to Indian culture, practices like yoga, silence, and meditation are seen as means of engaging in spirituality. However, in today's Christian context, spirituality is often viewed differently. Just as life is divided into professional, family, and personal spheres, spirituality is sometimes treated as a separate category. There is a narrow understanding that spirituality is limited to Bible meditation, prayer, and worship. While these are indeed means that strengthen us spiritually, they are not the entirety of spiritual life but tools that inspire us toward a deeper spiritual walk.

In this context, let us understand that Christian faith is not abstract but practical.

Luke 24

1. The Reality of Enlightenment

As two disciples were traveling from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus, the risen Jesus joined them and engaged in conversation. Though they had spent nearly three and a half years with Jesus and knew He was the promised Messiah, they still lacked faith in the words of the prophets. Jesus pointed this out and explained to them, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, what was said concerning Himself in the Scriptures.

Yet, they failed to recognize Him. Later, when Jesus sat with them at the table, took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him.

Today, an important question arises: Are we being led to true spiritual enlightenment? Even though we may have knowledge of God's Word and experiences of His works, during times of trial we often fail to recognize that the risen Jesus is near us. Just as Jesus strengthened the disciples through His presence, He is able to strengthen us as well.

Mark 16

2. The Reality of Contextual Faith

After rising early on the first day of the week, Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene. She went and told those who had been with Him, but they did not believe her. Later, two other disciples reported the same, yet they were not believed either. Finally, Jesus appeared to the eleven while they were eating and rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, and instructed them regarding their mission.

Today, what is the use if our spiritual life lacks reflection? Even after hearing about Jesus, experiencing Him, and receiving blessings, we often fall into doubt and unbelief when facing difficulties. Thoughts such as "God does not see my suffering" or "He does not hear my prayers" harden our hearts and distance us from God.

It is essential for us to receive God's correction. When God's Word teaches us to abandon wrong attitudes and unbelief, and when we commit ourselves in prayer, but fail to live it out practically, we end up following Jesus only traditionally and not spiritually.

Acts 1 & 2

3. The Promise of the Anointing of the Holy Spirit

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples over a period of forty days, speaking about the Kingdom of God. He gathered them and instructed them to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit. After giving this promise, He ascended into heaven.

The disciples waited, and on the day of Pentecost, they received the anointing of the Holy Spirit and were empowered to continue Jesus' mission. The same disciples who once failed to recognize Jesus and doubted His resurrection were transformed.

Today, we must ask ourselves: Have we received the anointing of the Holy Spirit? Like the disciples, let us be filled with the Spirit and boldly continue the mission God has entrusted to us. Let us proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom through our words, actions, and lifestyle. This is the true purpose of our spirituality.

Reflection

We must examine how much our meditation on God's Word, our prayer life, and even physical disciplines done in God's name have strengthened our spirituality and led us toward transformation.

In today's world of artificial intelligence, where information is instantly available, true Christian enlightenment should lead us to a reflective spirituality. Our spirituality must transform our lives and become a model of transformation for others.



PAROUSIA

Rev. Machline Ananda

UBM Christa Shanthi Church, Marol

Salaam all,
Happy and Blessed Resurrection greetings to you all in the matchless name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is my immense joy to share this reflection with you.

Christian beliefs, doctrines, and teachings can sometimes be difficult to understand. However, engaging with theological terms deepens our knowledge of Christianity and spirituality, and more importantly, helps us encounter Christ more closely and with a broader perspective. Where there are questions and confusions, there are also clarifications and answers. In this article, we reflect on the term Parousia.

The word Parousia is a well-known term that points to a future eschatological event in which Christ will manifest His complete authority over the cosmos. It can also be defined as the final act of God that will occur when human history reaches its divinely appointed goal. This act of God will usher in a reality where all humanity comes under the sovereign rule of God.

There are, however, many questions surrounding the understanding of Parousia:

- **Is it related to the present or only the future?**
- **How will it happen?**
- **What does Scripture truly teach?**

Let us attempt to understand it in a simplified manner.

The Greek word Parousia (pronounced pair-oo-see-ah) is a noun meaning “coming,” “arrival,” or “presence.” In classical and Koine Greek, it referred to the arrival or presence of an individual. In the New Testament, the term occurs twenty-four times. In six instances, it refers simply to the arrival or presence of a person. For example:

- *In 1 Corinthians 16:17, Paul refers to “the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus.”*
- *In 2 Corinthians 7:6–7, he speaks of “the coming of Titus.”*
- *In Philippians 2:12, it refers to Paul's personal presence.*

However, the remaining eighteen occurrences carry an eschatological meaning. In

these cases, Parousia refers specifically to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture speaks of two dimensions of Christ's coming. Some believe Christ will return only once at the end of the seven-year tribulation. Others distinguish between:

1. **The Rapture –** when Christ comes in the clouds to receive His Church (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 1 Corinthians 15:23).
2. **The Second Coming –** when Christ returns to earth with His saints to defeat His enemies and establish His millennial reign (Revelation 19:11; 20:1–7).

Therefore, the meaning of Parousia must be understood within its context—whether it refers to Christ's appearing for His Church or His return to establish His Kingdom.

Parousia and Eschatology

The term Parousia is closely connected with eschatology—the study of last things. The early Church understood the Parousia as the time of God's final judgment (1 Thessalonians 1:10). Scripture often uses the expression “the Day of the Lord” in connection with this event.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, “the Day of the Lord” initially signified a time of blessing and divine intervention. However, the prophet Amos revealed that it would also be a day of judgment and accountability. Thus, Parousia and eschatology are deeply intertwined encompassing both salvation and judgment.

The Time of the Parousia

When we consider the doctrine of the Parousia, a natural question arises: When will it happen?

Jesus Himself taught that no one knows the exact time (Matthew 24:44). Some scholars argue that the early Church expected the Parousia within their lifetime. Paul, in his writings, connects the resurrection of the dead with the coming of Christ resurrection first, then the Parousia.

Therefore, we cannot treat this doctrine casually. We need a broader understanding. The Parousia is not merely a distant future event; it has both a present and future dimension.

Christ inaugurated the Kingdom of God through His life, death, and resurrection. The Kingdom has already begun but its fullness awaits completion. Thus, the Parousia is both “already” and “not yet.”

Inspired by the Resurrected Christ

In this Easter edition, the theme is “Inspired by the Resurrected Christ.”

- *Inspired – for what?*
- *Inspired – for where?*
- *Inspired – for how?*

Often, we limit inspiration to personal spiritual activities. But inspiration must shape every dimension of our lives our understanding, our ministry, and our witness.

If we apply this to the doctrine of Parousia, we are called to be inspired to understand it correctly and live in its light. The Thessalonians initially had limited understanding, but as the Church matured, clarity grew. Likewise, we are called to grow in understanding.

We must prepare ourselves not merely for a future event, but for a present reality that has already begun. Jesus said, "The Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him" (Matthew 24:44). This calls us to readiness not fear, but faithful preparation.

The Kingdom has already been inaugurated through Christ's Resurrection. Its fulfilment will come in the future. Therefore, both present vigilance and future hope are essential.

A Call to Faithfulness

Today, many teachings about the Parousia circulate. It is essential that we preach, teach, and follow the true Christ not a distorted version shaped by personal agendas or cultural pressures.

Sadly, in our present context, there are many representations of "Christ" that are moulded to suit convenience. But as Christians especially within mainline Churches, we are called to proclaim the authentic Christ in an inspired and faithful manner.

We are not merely change-seekers. We are called to be change-makers.

- Let us live in the light of His Resurrection.
- Let us remain ready for His Parousia.
- Let us proclaim the real and risen Christ.

AMEN.



MISSIONARY STORY

REV. JOHN ELIZER

UBM CHRISTA PREETHI CHURCH, BHANDUP



Elisabeth Hebich

Elisabeth Hebich – A Servant of Women's Education and Empowerment

Elisabeth Hebich remains one of the significant yet often understated figures among the women missionaries of the Basel Mission in India. Serving during the 19th century, she dedicated her life to the upliftment of women through education, spiritual care, and compassionate ministry. Though her name may not be attached to the founding of a specific institution, her influence was deeply woven into the growth of women's education and Christian formation in South India.

During her time, Indian society placed many restrictions on women, especially in the areas of education and public life. Recognizing this urgent need, the Basel Mission actively established girls' schools in regions such as Mangalore and Calicut, creating new opportunities for women to learn and grow. Elisabeth Hebich worked under this broader mission movement, contributing faithfully to its vision and outreach.

Her role was especially significant in the day-to-day ministry of education. She was involved in teaching girls in mission schools, where education was not limited to reading and writing but extended to moral instruction and spiritual formation. These schools became places of transformation, where young girls encountered new possibilities for their lives. Elisabeth Hebich's dedication as a teacher helped nurture confidence, dignity, and faith among her students.

In addition to classroom teaching, she played a vital role in supporting the expansion of women's education. She contributed to strengthening the mission's educational efforts by assisting in the organization, functioning, and sustainability of existing schools. Rather than establishing a school independently, she participated in building

and nurturing institutions that were already in place, ensuring that they effectively served the needs of women and girls.

Her ministry also extended beyond formal education into the realm of personal and relational outreach. Elisabeth Hebich encouraged literacy and Christian formation among women, often reaching out to those who had little or no access to schooling. Through patient interaction, teaching, and spiritual guidance, she helped women understand their worth and identity in the light of the Gospel.

Furthermore, like many women missionaries of her time, she likely engaged in home-based ministry, visiting women in their domestic spaces. This allowed her to connect with those who could not attend school due to cultural or social restrictions. In these personal encounters, she offered prayer, counsel, and biblical teaching, embodying the love and compassion of Christ.

Elisabeth Hebich's contribution may not be marked by institutional titles or public recognition, but it is evident in the lives she touched and the foundations she helped strengthen. Her work reflects the quiet yet powerful impact of women missionaries who labored faithfully within a collective mission.

Her legacy continues in the ongoing emphasis on women's education, empowerment, and active participation in the church. Elisabeth Hebich stands as a reminder that true mission work is not always about founding new structures, but about faithfully nurturing and strengthening what already exists, so that lives may be transformed for generations to come.



CONGREGATION'S DESK

SNEHAL KARKADA
UBM CHRISTHA KARUNYA CHURCH, DOMBIVLI

Every year when Easter approaches, I find myself asking a simple question:
What does the Resurrection really mean for me — today?

Not just as a Christian.
Not just as someone who celebrates Easter.
But as a person navigating responsibilities, expectations, fatigue, prayers, doubts, and hope.

The Resurrection is not just a story I learned in Sunday school. It is not just an event we remember once a year with hymns and white clothes. It is deeply personal. It speaks into my everyday life — into classrooms, conversations, disappointments, and quiet prayers whispered before sleeping.

And slowly, over the years, I have realized this:
The Resurrection is not just about Jesus rising from the grave.
It is about learning how to rise with Him.

When Hope Feels Delayed

There have been moments in my life when things did not go as planned. Prayers that seemed unanswered. Situations that felt unfair. Efforts that were unnoticed.

I imagine the disciples must have felt something similar on that Saturday — the day between the crucifixion and the Resurrection. A day of silence. A day of confusion. A day when nothing made sense.

We don't talk much about that Saturday. But we all experience it.

That in-between season.
That waiting period.
That quiet uncertainty.

And yet, Sunday came.

The Resurrection reminds me that God is always working — even on the silent Saturdays of my life. Just because I do not see movement does not mean there is no miracle in progress.

From Fear to Courage

After Jesus rose, the disciples were still hiding behind closed doors. They were afraid. And honestly, I find comfort in that. Even after the miracle, they were human.

Sometimes I think faith means we must always be strong. But the Resurrection shows something different. Jesus did not wait for them to become fearless. He entered the room where they were hiding.

How many times has Christ quietly entered the closed rooms of my own heart?

The room of anxiety.
The room of self-doubt.
The room of “Am I doing enough?”

As a teacher, there are days when the workload feels heavy and expectations feel high. There are days when I wonder if I am truly making a difference. And yet, in small moments — a student's smile, a word of gratitude, a lesson that finally “clicks” — I sense His presence.

The Resurrection gives courage — not loud, dramatic courage — but steady, daily strength.

The Stone in My Own Heart

We often speak about the stone that was rolled away from the tomb. But sometimes I ask myself — what stones need to be rolled away from my own heart?

Is it pride?
Is it comparison?
Is it holding onto past hurts?
Is it discouragement?

The risen Christ does not only remove stones from tombs. He removes stones from hearts.

There have been times when I held onto disappointments longer than I should have. Times when I allowed frustration to overshadow gratitude. And yet, whenever I return to Him, there is renewal.

The Resurrection reminds me that change is possible. Growth is possible. New beginnings are possible.

Scars That Still Speak

One of my favourite Resurrection moments is when Jesus shows His scars to Thomas. He did not hide them. He did not erase them.

The risen Lord still carried His wounds.

That comforts me deeply.

It means that our scars — emotional, spiritual, personal — do not disqualify us. They tell a

story. They become testimony.

Sometimes we think being a strong Christian means pretending everything is perfect. But the Resurrection shows us something else: victory does not erase the memory of pain; it redeems it.

The challenges we face — whether in family life, work, ministry, or personal struggles — are not wasted. God can use them to strengthen our faith and help us understand others better.

Living Easter, Not Just Celebrating It

It is easy to celebrate Easter for a day.
It is harder — but more beautiful — to live it every day.

Living inspired by the Resurrected Christ means:

Choosing forgiveness when it is easier to stay offended.
Choosing patience when irritation rises.
Choosing integrity when compromise seems convenient.
Choosing kindness when no one is watching.

It means carrying hope into spaces that feel heavy.

In our schools, workplaces, and homes, people are quietly battling things we may never fully understand. If Christ truly lives in us, then His peace, His gentleness, and His compassion should reflect through us.

Sometimes inspiration is not loud preaching.
Sometimes it is consistent goodness.

A Personal Easter Prayer

As I reflect on the Resurrected Christ, my prayer is simple:

Lord, let Your Resurrection power be real in my daily life.

Not just in big miracles — but in small transformations.

Help me rise above negativity.
Help me rise above doubt.
Help me rise above fear.
Help me rise above anything that keeps me from becoming the person You created me to be.

Because if Christ conquered death, surely He can help me conquer discouragement.
If the stone was rolled away, surely obstacles in my life can move too.

Becoming Resurrection People

Our world does not only need Easter services. It needs Easter people.

People who carry hope into hopeless places.
People who respond with grace instead of anger.
People who remain steady when circumstances shake.

Being inspired by the Resurrected Christ means living with quiet confidence that nothing is beyond God's power.

It means believing that even when situations look final, God can still write a new ending.

The empty tomb is not just a symbol of victory long ago. It is a reminder for today.

It tells me:
Do not give up.
Do not lose heart.
Do not let fear win.

Christ is alive.

And because He lives, I can face uncertainty.
Because He lives, I can serve faithfully.
Because He lives, I can rise again — every single day.

May we not only celebrate the Resurrection —
May we be inspired by it.
May we live it.
May we reflect it.

THANK YOU

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