

The Anglican Province of Christ the King

All Saints Anglican Pro-Cathedral

Archdiocese of the Atlantic States

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Office of the Archbishop

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Easter Day

Dear Clergy, Parishioners and Friends of the Anglican Province of Christ the King,

On that first Easter Day when Mary Magdalene and the other women went to the tomb, they found the stone rolled away from the tomb and the tomb empty. They also saw an angel who said, “*Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.*” (Luke 24:5). Mary and the other women went to tell the disciples, but they didn’t believe them even though they later saw the empty tomb themselves.

What is the meaning of the empty tomb? The tomb itself doesn’t prove the Resurrection. Jesus’ body could have been stolen away by His disciples, as St. Matthew tells us was claimed by some (Matt. 28:11–15), or It could have been taken by the Romans themselves. But on the other hand, the empty tomb is not insignificant.

Do you know how hard it is to get rid of a dead body? As a former forensic scientist, I know of several creative ways people have used to try to make a body disappear. They were not successful. So while it’s not impossible, it’s unlikely Jesus’ body was stolen. The English monk, Fr. Andrew wrote, “. . . one authentic relic of Christ’s body would have proved for ever that the story of His Resurrection was untrue, it is impossible to suppose that that relic would not have been procured if it had been possible. Every murder trial reveals how difficult it is to get rid of a body, when there is every reason to do so. In the case of our Lord’s body, all the actors in the drama wished to produce it: His friends to pay it honour, His enemies as a proof that He had not risen. There can be no explanation of the empty tomb except that the Church’s faith in the Resurrection is true.”¹

But is the empty tomb the real reason why the first Christians believed in the Resurrection of our

¹ Rev. Fr. Andrew, S.D.C., *Meditations for Every Day*, (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1934), p. 135.



Lord? No, they believed because they had seen Him face to face. And the disciples have left to us in the Gospels their testimony of their encounters with the Resurrected Lord. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus: *“Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?”* (Luke 24:32) And the Eleven who were gathered together on the evening of the Resurrection: *“The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”* (Luke 24:34)

Alleluia, the Lord has risen! The Lord has risen indeed, Alleluia!

May you have a blessed Easter.

+ The Most Reverend Blair William Schultz

✠ The Most Reverend Blair William Schultz
Archbishop, Anglican Province of Christ the King