

Happy Easter!



Theme: The Power of Candles

Prior to the abolition of apartheid in South Africa, many who were committed to ending this system of injustice would often light a candle and place it in the window. The lighted candles in windows became a powerful sign of hope that apartheid would one day be overcome and all could live in freedom and peace. Knowing this, the authorities cracked down on the practice, making it illegal to have a lit candle in your window. During this period, it was as illegal to have a lit candle in the window of your house as it was to carry a firearm. Those who worked diligently to overcome oppression looked back on the experience, recognizing that the candles were ultimately more powerful than firearms. Hope is more powerful than fear, injustice, and armed might.

Easter is the feast day of hope. It is the day we celebrate that life and love, faith and hope, are more powerful than violence, than oppression, more powerful than whatever enslaves us. The cynical may doubt the power of hope. And yet, we know that sometimes lit candles defeat guns. Some hopes are realized. We get our dream job. We write that book. We marry the love of our life. The crucified Jesus appears to family and friends, the embodiment of a promise too grand for words. These experiences are a foretaste of the new and everlasting life promised to us by God. In many ways, the season of Lent is a special time for us to renew our trust in the promises of God. Easter is the great feast of the church year, the great celebration that foreshadows the fulfillment of the promises of God. It is the celebration of new life, new life that comes, not from the avoidance of suffering and death but in a mysterious way, through it. Life can be hard. Death is painful. Yet, Easter reminds us that neither the hardness of life nor the sadness of death speaks the final word on our existence. The final word belongs to God, and it is a word of love, a word of life forevermore. It is a word that calls us to place our trust in the promises of God. It is a word that calls us to reflect in our lives the truth of Easter life. May our lives be lighted candles for people and for a world often shrouded in darkness.

Prayers

Prayer for Monday of Easter Week of Lent

Light of the World,

Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! Your light shines forth in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it. On this Monday of Easter week, we celebrate the gift of Easter life, this life leading us to eternity. May our lives reflect our gratitude for the gift of your life. Amen.

Prayer for Tuesday of Easter Week of Lent

Loving God,

Your promise of love came to fulfilment in the rising of your Son, Jesus. May this act of love serve as an example of how to live our lives each day, treating all people as your sons and daughters. May the joy we feel this Easter season never fade, and may we share that joy through acts of kindness and love towards each other. Amen.

Prayer for Wednesday of Easter Week of Lent

God of Easter,

Throughout this Easter season, may we be examples of Easter life, filled with the love and joy of the Risen Christ. May the light from the candles that were lit during the Easter Vigil, continue to shine bright in our lives that others may see your goodness and love for the world. All for your glory, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for Thursday of Easter Week of Lent

Joyful God,

Our hearts are filled with great joy as we celebrate the meaning of Easter in our lives. From the dark days of your son's passion and death to the joyous celebrations of Easter Sunday, we have experienced more deeply the love you shower upon us. Help us to spread that love throughout the world, helping others experience the joy, love, and new life of Easter. In joy we pray, Amen.

Prayer for Friday of Easter Week of Lent

God of the Resurrection,

The Gospel of John states, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." As we continue to celebrate this Easter season, let us never forget that Jesus was the friend who laid his life down for us, for love of us. Stir within us hearts open and willing to spread his love, touching each other's lives until the world better embodies the truth of authentic love. In thanksgiving for your love, we pray. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What would my life look like if I were to fully commit to being an Easter person?