

# Christ's Resurrection Not a Fairy Tale, Says Pontiff

## Proclaims Savior's Victory Over Death

VATICAN CITY, APRIL 12, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Easter is not based on a myth, a theory or a fairy tale, but rather on the very real historical event of Christ's death and resurrection, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope said this today during the Easter message he delivered from St. Peter's balcony at midday before he imparted his blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city of Rome and the world). He began with the question: "What is there after death?"

The message of Easter, he explained to 200,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square, is that "death does not have the last word, because Life will be victorious at the end."

"This certainty of ours is based not on simple human reasoning," the Pontiff continued, "but on a historical fact of faith: Jesus Christ, crucified and buried, is risen with his glorified body."

He continued: "Ever since the dawn of Easter, a new Spring of hope has filled the world; from that day forward our resurrection has begun, because Easter does not simply signal a moment in history, but the beginning of a new condition."

"Jesus is risen not because his memory remains alive in the hearts of his disciples, but because he himself lives in us, and in him we can already savor the joy of eternal life."

The Holy Father affirmed that the Resurrection "is not a theory, but a historical reality": "It is neither a myth nor a dream, it is not a vision or a utopia, it is not a fairy tale, but it is a singular and unrepeatable event: Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary, who at dusk on Friday was taken down from the Cross and buried, has victoriously left the tomb."

Light in darkness

"The proclamation of the Lord's resurrection lightens up the dark regions of the world in which we live," Benedict XVI reflected. "I am referring particularly to materialism and nihilism, to a vision of the world that is unable to move beyond what is scientifically verifiable, and retreats cheerlessly into a sense of emptiness which is thought to be the definitive destiny of human life."

"It is a fact," he continued, "that if Christ had not risen, the 'emptiness' would be set to prevail. If we take away Christ and his resurrection, there is no escape for man, and every one of his hopes remains an illusion."

The Pope said Easter Sunday is the day when "the proclamation of the Lord's resurrection vigorously bursts forth," and it is the answer to the question put forth in the Book of Ecclesiastes: "Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See, this is new?'"

On this day, he said, Christians answer "yes": "On Easter morning, everything was renewed."

The Pontiff lamented, however, that in the world today "there still remain very many, in fact too many signs of [death's] former dominion."

Helpers needed

"Even if through Easter, Christ has destroyed the root of evil, he still wants the assistance of men and women in every time and place who help him to affirm his victory using his own weapons: the weapons of justice and truth, mercy, forgiveness and love," he said."

The Holy Father said that this was his message he carried to Africa last month during his visit to Cameroon and Angola, and the message he wishes to carry to the Holy Land in May.

"Africa suffers disproportionately from the cruel and unending conflicts, often forgotten, that are causing so much bloodshed and destruction in several of her nations, and from the growing number of her sons and daughters who fall prey to hunger, poverty and disease," he said.

And in the Holy Land, he said, "reconciliation -- difficult, but indispensable -- is a precondition for a future of overall security and peaceful coexistence, and it can only be achieved through renewed, persevering and sincere efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

"My thoughts move outward from the Holy Land to neighboring countries, to the Middle East, to the whole world," Benedict XVI continued. "At a time of world food shortage, of financial turmoil, of old and new forms of poverty, of disturbing climate change, of violence and deprivation which force many to leave their homelands in search of a less precarious form of existence, of the ever-present threat of terrorism, of growing fears over the future, it is urgent to rediscover grounds for hope.

"Let no one draw back from this peaceful battle that has been launched by Christ's resurrection."

He added, "Christ is looking for men and women who will help him to affirm his victory using his own weapons: the weapons of justice and truth, mercy, forgiveness and love."

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