

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate  
His Holiness Pope Tawadros II  
Pope of Alexandria and  
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark  
The Papal Center



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English – Resurrection 2024

**In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen.**

May His grace and mercy be upon us from now and forever, Amen. Christos Anesti, Alithos Anisti. Christ is risen, truly He is risen. I congratulate you, beloved ones, on the glorious feast of Resurrection. I congratulate all the Coptic Orthodox churches and monasteries on the continents of the world, in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, and on the continent of Australia and in the city of our great God, Jerusalem. I congratulate you on this feast we celebrate after fasting, this Great Lent, the Holy Fast. This fast, which contains ascetic practices and spiritual life, fills and satisfies us.

When we come to the Resurrection and the dawn of the Resurrection, we envision many scenes. One of these is the scene of the Marys trying to offer spices. But they were concerned with this question: Who will roll away the stone for us (Mark 16:3)? This dilemma is not only attributed to the Marys but also confronts us in our daily lives as well. We face many circumstances and situations in our lives, and sometimes, the stone remains apparent. This stone could be a sin. It could be laziness, excessive preoccupation with work, or even your own self, or priorities and their arrangement. Who will roll away the stone for us? The stone here represents an obstacle for the person. Who will move it? Of course, it is clear to us that the Marys were women. When they stood in front of a large stone that was blocking the door of the tomb, it was not easy for them to move it. It was causing a problem.

In our daily lives, we face many problems, and the question comes: Who will roll away the stone? Who solves the problem? Who will remove this obstacle? Who opens the dead end? I remind you of the rich young man (Luke 18:18-23). The rich young man who lived and went and asked Christ an outstanding question and said, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Great question. A young man was searching for his eternity. After Christ explained to him to keep the commandments, he said to him, "All these things I have kept from my youth." He said to him, "You lack one thing." One step ahead. What is one step? Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor so that you may have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me, carrying the cross. The book tells us that this

young man departed sad (Luke 18:23). A stone was in front of him, and he could not overcome it. His wealth was a stone. I remind you of the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). When they entered to pray, this Pharisee's self-righteousness stood before him, and the feeling that he was the best. As for the man who was the tax collector, he left justified because he said one phrase. Oh God, have mercy on me, a sinner (Luke 18:13). Who will roll away the stone for us?

The second point is the Marys; although the question preoccupied them and they faced difficulties, the truth was that they had diligence and determination. What did they do? They prepared the spices and themselves and left at dawn to go out (Mark 16:1) to place these spices on the body of Christ, who had died on the wood of the cross. Their concern was who would roll away the stone. This question did not deter them; it ignited their determination. They persevered with unwavering hope and a steadfast belief that something was inevitable. Saint Paul the Apostle tells us a beautiful verse: "Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). In the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament, it says: "The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting" (Proverbs 12:27). This means that if you bring a hook and set it without preparing it well, you will not catch a fish. In the Old Testament, we see Nehemiah's circumstances in captivity. News came to Nehemiah that his country's walls were broken down, and its gates were burned with fire. After receiving the king's permission, he returned to his city, Jerusalem, and tried to build it. He did not have any capabilities, so he began to tell those living around the wall's perimeter that each one should build part of the wall that was in front of his own house (Nehemiah 3:28). And they began to work as such. He gave them a powerful slogan that said to them: "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore, we His servants will arise and build," (Nehemiah 2:20). This means we will take this success from God when we get up and work. Although the wall in front of him was destroyed and the doors were burned by fire. Perhaps this exact situation was with the wise virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). They worked hard, prepared oil, prepared lamps, and waited for Christ. They stayed up even though they did not know when Christ the Bridegroom would come.

The first step, who will roll away the stone for us? This is the obstacle. The second step is diligence and effort. The third step was a good step, which was the step of the raised stone. It is the hand of our Lord when it works. They arrived at the tomb and saw the stone had been rolled away (Mark 16:4). Please imagine their feelings. Their inner joy was that the stone that represented the problem and difficulty was lifted by Jesus Christ, and he rose from the dead. They found the stone was rolled away, the tomb empty, and the hand of God at work. Therefore, when you face any difficulty, know that the hand of our Lord is working. Prior to the Resurrection by two days, there was the cross on Friday, and on the cross Jesus Christ was crucified, and on his right was a thief and on his left

was another thief, so that everyone would be considered as if they were thieves. The right-handed thief said a beautiful phrase, and I think he did not expect its result: "Remember me, O Lord, when you come into your kingdom," and this was the result. "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:42-43). Christ rose to raise us up with Him. For this reason, when you face a difficulty or a problem, work hard and be honest and know that God's hand is working, and the result will be amazing with your faith and hope.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations on this glorious feast to all members of our community. I congratulate all the Fathers Metropolitans, Bishops, Hegumens, and Presbyters. I congratulate the deacons, the archons, and the servants. I also congratulate every Coptic family in every church and in any place. I congratulate the young men and women, and I also congratulate the boys and girls, and I congratulate the children. I congratulate you all from the land of Egypt and from the Coptic Orthodox Church, here from the cathedral, St. Mark's Cathedral in Abbasiya, Cairo. I send this congratulations to all of you. I wish you a joyful and blessed feast, filled with the cheerfulness and deep sense of the glorious resurrection that we commemorate and rejoice in as we echo the words of our daily prayers, "Arise, O sons of light, so that we may praise the Lord of hosts." Christos Anesti, Alithos Anisti. Christ is risen, truly He is risen.

*Pawadra II*