Simple Prayer, Simple Praise
Worship for Sunday April 12th

Opening Prayer
Mighty God, in whom we know the power of redemption, you stand among us in the shadows of our time. As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life, uphold us with knowledge of the final morning when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son, we will share in his resurrection, redeemed and restored to the fullness of life and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 28:1-10
After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Meditation
This is the day that the Church calendar says is Easter Sunday. We are expectant that the Risen Christ will be seen in our lives, yet somehow, it still seems far off. We have left the ‘season’ of
Lent yet many of us might feel as if we are still there; we are still in a place of introspection, a time of evaluation of what really matters in our lives. This forced time of shelter in place is an opportunity even if we did not choose it, an opportunity to look at our priorities. Has Christ entered into your lives? Do you see the love of Christ in yourself and in those around you? During this time of quarantine, we can take a serious look at what a risen Christ means in our lives and not just in the life of the church. Who is Jesus to us? Have you seen how being less about self and more about serving others can free you from prison? That prison that has bars made of self-righteousness, self-aggrandizement, and just plain selfishness. Jesus came to free us, his death and resurrection invite us into the community of faith that is marked by unbridled, unquenchable love. The risen Christ is within each of us and as we shed the dross of self-satisfaction and reach out to others to support and be supported, we can live into an Easter that knows no limit.

So while the Church calendar says it is Easter, I invite you to look for Easter in your own life. It’s not about spring and dyed eggs, the personal Easter is about getting a new life, a life based on sharing that Love that God showed us, the love of a risen Christ.

(The Rev. Steve Lane, Priest-in-Charge, St. Philip’s, Buffalo)

Closing Prayers

Let us pray for the needs of the church and the world to God who raised Jesus to new life.

Take a moment to pray for your needs, lift up your worries and offer them to God. Remember the people that you are concerned for, pray for all those that are in distress, those that are struggling. Pray for those that are helping amid this crisis. Offer up your hopes for the resurrection in your life and the lives of those around you. Say a prayer of praise knowing that the Lord has risen. Raise all of this up in prayer through the words our Savior taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

Resurrecting God, you conquered death
and opened the gates of life everlasting.
In the power of the Holy Spirit, raise us with Christ
that we, too, may proclaim healing and peace to the nations.
Amen, Alleluia!

In this time of confinement, let us remain expectant for the risen Christ to be in our lives. Jesus said “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." We are not alone, though we may be confined to the house. Jesus meets us there—Face to face we meet Jesus in our sorrow, our fear, and our disorientation. That encounter leads us to restoration, to joy, and to new life. Invite Jesus to take your hand in these difficult hours, and pray that fear may be transformed into faith. Pray for a new life when we will all rise again.

**The Grace**

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine:
Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.
Amen (Ephesians 3:20,21)

Call a neighbor, a friend, and a family member this week and let them know you are praying for them. Consider sharing this message with them.

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Join online worship with Bishop Rowe Sunday at 10 am
https://episcopalpartnership.org/
The Daily Office from the National Cathedral
https://cathedral.org/worship/

Prayers adapted from Revised Common Lectionary Prayers