

April 20, 2025 – Easter Sunday

JESUS WINS by Pastor Julio Romano

Gospel: John 20:1-18

A group of kids were playing basketball in the high school gym. An elderly janitor sat nearby, patiently waiting for the game to end while reading the Bible.

After the game, one of the kids asked, “What are you reading?”

The janitor replied, “I’m reading the book of Revelation.”

The kid said, “I’ve heard Revelation is hard to understand. Do you know what it means?”

The janitor smiled and said, “Yes, I do.”

Curious, the kid asked, “What does it mean?”

The janitor answered, “It means that Jesus wins.”

Jesus’ win is what we celebrate today—a victory that, from the very beginning, was never just for Himself but for all of us. Jesus’ triumph over death is what we call the greatest news ever shared. This news is at the very heart of the Gospel.

The announcement of that news was made more than two thousand years ago, and yet it feels so fresh and alive that every time we hear it, it’s as if the Resurrection is happening right now.

I say this because the news of Jesus’ victory over death renews our faith in the gift of eternal life. The news of His resurrection revives our trust in the God of life—the God who became flesh so that we would no longer live in fear of death or in hopelessness, but in the light of His promises. And all because **He Lives!**

As the Apostle Paul once said, *“Because He lives, we shall live also.”*

Big win, isn’t it?

In the history of humanity, there have been a few powerful phrases that have shaped our imagination and inspired generations:

- *“If you judge people, you have no time to love them.”* – Mother Teresa
- *“All I know is that I know nothing.”* – Socrates
- *“That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.”* – Neil Armstrong

These are phrases we all recognize. But what about these life-changing words from the Gospel?

- The angel at the empty tomb said to the women: *“He is not here; He is risen.”*
- Mary told the disciples on Easter morning: *“I have seen the Lord.”*
- And let’s not forget the angel’s announcement to the shepherds on Christmas night: *“Today in the city of David, a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.”*

These are not just famous quotes. These are **proclamations of the Good News**, words that have transformed lives and changed history. And today, we still repeat them with joy and hope:

“He is Risen! He is Risen indeed!”

Christ has won. Death no longer has dominion over us. Its power is broken—its sting is gone.

But the events of Easter reveal more than God’s victory over death. They reveal what God is **against**. God is against **sin** in all its forms.

Let’s not forget: the word *“sin”* in the New Testament comes from the Greek word *hamartia*, which means “missing the mark”—a term from archery when you aim at the bullseye and fall short .

Think about it: if you’ve ever shot an arrow or played darts, you know how hard it is to hit the bullseye every time. In life, we often **miss the mark**—and every time we do, it’s as if we’re shooting arrows into the heart of God.

As Paul says in Romans 6: *“The wages of sin is death.”*

Death is the final outcome of sin. And God is against both. God is against anything that causes us to miss the mark—anything that diminishes or destroys life.

Throughout Scripture, we hear God’s call to care for the poor, to welcome the stranger, to support widows and orphans, to resist greed, racism, hate, anger, lies,

and all forms of injustice. God calls us to aim for the mark—justice, love, dignity, and respect for one another and ourselves.

Sadly, in our brokenness, we keep missing the mark.

Just look around. The world is filled with arrows flying in all directions—wounding one another and wounding the heart of God. And yet, **this is the world God loves**, the world He came to redeem, to give **eternal life**.

God took on the weight of our sin so that we might be reconciled to Him—and with each other.

“He is not here; He is Risen.”

“I have seen the Lord.”

These are not just words from history. They are gifts to us today.

The tomb was empty. The battle we couldn’t win was won by the only one who never missed the mark. Only He could wash away our sin. And He did it with His own blood.

And the most incredible part? We did nothing to earn it. Nothing to deserve it. Jesus died for us simply because He loves us that much.

And many of us—maybe all of us—have experienced His presence, His Spirit, His providential hand in our lives.

“He is Risen! He is Risen indeed!”

This is a personal cry of faith—a shout of joy that comes from deep within. Jesus has triumphed. And because **He wins, we all win**.

His victory is our victory.

Alleluia! He is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

Amen.