

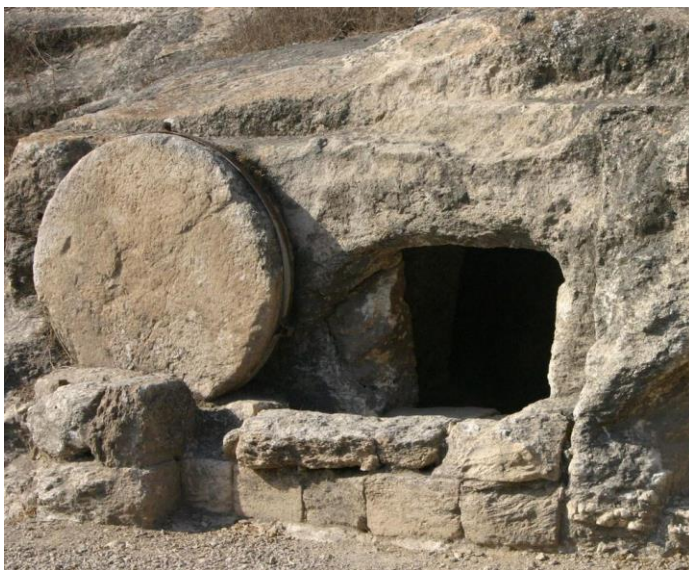
Being Like Joseph of Arimathea

Easter Sunday was a week ago. During Holy Week, we heard about the sequence of events that culminated with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is easy to gloss over the role of Joseph of Arimathea in the Easter story. We tend to focus on the miracle and meaning of the Resurrection and may overlook another story component.

Joseph was a well-respected member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council that condemned Jesus to die. The Bible doesn't tell us what went on behind the closed doors of the council, but the members of the Sanhedrin emerged from their meeting with a death sentence for Jesus. Joseph of Arimathea was personally a seeker of the Kingdom of God and not likely to be supportive of the decision to crucify Jesus. We don't know if Joseph spoke up in that meeting, but even if he did, he was vastly outnumbered. Or, he might have remained silent for fear of being looked at poorly by his peers. Objecting to the will of Pilate could have put his life at risk. So, Jesus was crucified outside the city walls of Jerusalem with a sign over His head that said, "King of the Jews." The Romans made Jesus an example of what could happen to believers. Following the crucifixion of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus to give Him an honorable burial. It took courage to seek the body of Jesus from the vengeful Pontius Pilate. Jesus was placed in a tomb owned by Joseph, where Jesus rose from the dead three days later.



Do you feel outnumbered by non-believers who seek to be in control? Believers may feel intimidated, remaining silent about their faith. Are you afraid that others will look down on you because of your Christian belief or for seeking God's Kingdom instead of earthly power? We may be outnumbered in the greater world, but we can speak up boldly about the fact that Jesus rose from the dead.



Joseph of Arimathea asked for the body of Jesus. We can, too. We can receive the sacrament of His body and blood as we seek the forgiveness of our sins. Be courageous to speak up and share the Good News – Jesus Christ has risen. Halleluiah.

The Bible Tells Us: *Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. (Mark 15:43).*

Prayer: Dear Lord. It takes courage to share our faith in a world of so many unbelievers. Some people are even hostile to the Word of God because they haven't seen it in action or understood how it applies to their lives. They may think it takes away their opportunity to thrive in this fallen world. Give us the courage to share the Good News that Jesus rose from the dead, so we can have Peace in this world and Salvation in the next. Amen.