

## Let's Have More Shouting in Easter

April 15, 2021 Scott Gunn

*Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate*

*Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen*

*Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing*

*Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty*

*Christ is Risen indeed from the dead, the first of the sleepers,*

*Glory and power are his forever and ever.*

Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170 – c. 235)

This prayer of Saint Hippolytus is new to me, one of the gifts of writing these daily Easter reflections. I was familiar with other works of Hippolytus, but I hadn't read this lovely little prayer.

I love the simplicity and grandeur of this prayer. Christ is risen, repeated again and again. It reminds me a bit of a Russian Orthodox Easter service I attended once in which the celebrant and people shouted, again and again, "Christ is risen!" "Truly he is risen!" Those people shouted with all their might.

That's exactly what we should do. I mean, if we shout when our favorite sports team wins, how much more should we shout when we celebrate the triumph of life over death?

The year I went to that Russian Orthodox service, I was in Jerusalem. I had planned to be inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the liturgy of the New Fire, to see the first flame of Easter kindled in the Tomb and shared with throngs inside the church and then around the world. Because of unusually tight security that year, the Old City was completely closed off, and I was unable to attend.

Our little group found our way to the Russian church, because they too celebrate the New Fire. They send someone to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and that person lights a torch from the new flame and then runs as fast as possible to the Russian church, where they have their own Easter Fire celebration.

It was amazing. The vigorous joy was inspiring to see and to share. There was a lot of shouting and singing. This was no mild-mannered Easter service.

I've been to plenty of Easter services in my time. A few of them have included loud shouting and unfettered praise, but most of them were pretty dignified and even a bit restrained (relatively speaking).

What if we did a bit more shouting in Eastertide? After all, the world below lies desolate, the spirits of evil are fallen, the angels of God are rejoicing, and the tombs of the dead are empty. That's worth celebrating, right?