



April 7

Matthew 27:51-52

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.

To ponder

Paul confronted death—examined it, wrestled with it, accepted it—as a physician and a patient. He wanted to help people understand death and face their mortality. . . . Of course, he did more than just describe the terrain. He traversed it bravely. —Lucy Kalanithi, in *When Breath Becomes Air*

And when from death I'm free

A universal metaphor for spiritual growth is finding your way, discovering the path, walking the road. Early followers of Jesus were called the people of The Way, indicating that they were finding purpose and direction as they were being led by the Holy Spirit. As we walk this mysterious road, the way may at times seem completely mundane; at other times it may suddenly be illuminated by leaps of faith and transcendent experiences of amazing grace.

What lies up ahead? For the faithful, this is best described as a world immersed in the promises of God's wondrous love. Though this love may seem hidden as we encounter Jesus' suffering and death, God is with us always—even beyond death. As if to announce that promise in no uncertain terms, *Matthew 27* tells of earthquakes shaking open tombs and of saints being raised. My, what a road this is! The way of Jesus brings us to the grandeur of life restored and transformed.

Prayer

God of restoration and transformation, my soul sings with joy unspeakable: What wondrous love is this! And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing God's love for me, and through eternity I'll sing on. Amen. (adapted from "What wondrous love is this"; ELW 666, st. 4)