

Easter Day 2020

Hymn

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia,
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia,
who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia,
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia.

Hymns of praise then let us sing Alleluia,
unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia,
who endured the cross and grace, Alleluia,
sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia.

But the pains that he endured Alleluia,
Our salvation have procured; Alleluia,
now above the sky he's King, Alleluia,
where the angels ever sing, Alleluia.

Welcome to our worship on this Easter day when our Lord Jesus Christ was raised gloriously from the dead, crushing the power of sin and destroying the sting of death.

Christ is risen

He is risen indeed. Alleluia

Risen in quiet and mysterious darkness
before the chorus of the dawn
Alleluia, Christ is risen

He is risen in deed, Alleluia

Risen with glory and grace in reserve,
and authority beyond measure.

Alleluia, Christ is risen

He is risen in deed, Alleluia

Risen to prove that violence is no solution;
to offer us peace and life in all its fullness

Alleluia, Christ is risen

He is risen in deed, Alleluia

Opening words

It is the Lord, in the dawning, in the renewal, in the arrival, in the new day.

It is the Lord, in the crowd, in the church, in our homes, in the conversation, in the crisis.

It is the Lord, in our joys, in our sorrows, in our sickness, in our health

It is the lord, in the stable, in the humble, in the stranger, in the poor

It is the Lord, risen and returned, alive for evermore, giving us new life, saving us in strife.

It is the Lord

Collect

God of Glory, by the raising of your son

you have broken the chains of death and hell:

fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned

and the way of life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

A reading from John's gospel - Barbra

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb.

⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.'

¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?'

For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.'

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' which means Teacher. ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."' ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Reflection - Anne

We've journeyed through a Holy Week like no other. We've made that journey in our own homes, but I know that many of us continue to feel a sense of community. Palm Crosses have arrived in homes in our parish this week, and I know how much many of you have appreciated this simple gesture.

During the past couple of week's there have been comparisons made to wartime Britain, so this morning I have a story from that time in our country's history for you. It's a story I've used before but thought it deserved retelling.

During the second world war, London's most treasured painting was a painting from the 16th Century of the risen Christ with Mary Magdalene. It was on display at the National Gallery and was the only painting there because thousands of paintings had been removed to Welsh slate mines for safekeeping. And it was on display because as the bombs fell, Londoners found reassurance in this story that love is so strong that it can survive death.

The resurrection appearances of Jesus have the ring of truth about them because they are so downbeat. If Stephen Spielberg was writing the story he would, no doubt, have devised a scene in which superhuman hands toppled the tombstone while the enemies of Jesus staggered back aghast. The account we heard this morning from John's gospel couldn't be more different. Resurrection came with the whisper of a name and a message of good news. Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, a woman who had lost her way through life and then found calm and purpose when she followed Jesus. She was a forgiven sinner. She was a person who, on that Sunday morning, was demoralized and in distress. And she was someone whose evidence had every likelihood of being dismissed in the male-dominated culture of the day - you just couldn't make it up.

She had watched him die a cruel death on the cross, and yet even this hadn't quenched her love for him - in fact it only served to make her love him more.

And so we find her at the garden, lost in her own way, lost in grief, and mourning the loss of the one she loved most.

For us, like Mary Magdalen the journey through Holy Week represents the journey through our lives – whatever joys and sorrows we face, whichever of our friends and family let us down or disappoint us, the times when we fail to be the people God wants us to be, the times when we deny God by treating others in a way that is less than loving and compassionate. All of this is there in the Easter Story.

We are witnessing scenes in our country and in our world that we could never have imagined – and yet we hope and pray that out of all of this new life will come.

And so today we shout Alleluia because Christ has risen – the God who met Mary Magdalen in the garden meets us today. We give thanks that the Jesus who was lost in the garden promises never to be lost again. And today more than any other day in the church's year we remember that light has met darkness, and the darkness has not put it out; that love has met sin, and sin has been forgiven; that life has met death – and death has met its end. Amen

Intercessions and The Lord's Prayer – Tom

We offer our prayers, on this Easter Day, for our world, our church and ourselves. We remember those who have asked us to pray for them, the sick in body, mind and spirit, and those who care for them, continuing our prayers for the NHS and all carers. We pray too those whose earthly journey has ended and pray for the souls of Wally Marshall, Paula Barry and Lee Hayes.

When hope lies dead in the tomb and we cannot see that things can improve,
for our world, our country, our church,
for our loved ones, for ourselves
God of life and love

Raise us to new life with Christ

When joy lies dead in the tomb, and life seems a dreary, uphill struggle
for the needy, the sick, the depressed,
for our loved ones and ourselves.
God of life and love

Raise us to new life with Christ

When peace lies dead in the tomb and intolerance, conflict and terror abound,
between nations, races and religions,
between loved and within ourselves.
God of life and love

Raise us to new life with Christ

When love lies dead in the tomb and the world can seem a harsh, uncaring place,
for the hungry, the homeless, the needy,
for our loved ones, for ourselves.

God of life and love

Raise us to new life with Christ

When faith lies dead in the tomb and suffering challenges belief and trust in you
for the bereaved, the fearful, the doubters,
for our loved ones, for ourselves

God of life and love

Raise us to new life with Christ

Eternal God, give us the grace to die with Christ – to put behind us the things that
come between you and us, and to offer ourselves wholeheartedly in the service of your
love.

God of life and love

Raise us to new life with Christ

We join all our prayers together in the prayer that Jesus gave 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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Closing response – Anne

When we are all despairing; when the world is full of grief;

When we see no way ahead, and hope has gone away

Roll back the stone

Although we fear change; although we are not ready;

Although we'd rather weep and run away

Roll back the stone.

Because we're coming with the women; because we hope where hope is vain;

Because you call us from the grave and show the way

Roll back the stone.

Blessing

God the Father, by whose glory Christ was raised from the dead, strengthen us to walk
with him in his risen life, and the blessing.....

Hymn

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting:

Refrain

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above:

Refrain

Companion to the revised Comon Lectionary c Christine Oddell 1998

Eggs and Ashes c 2004 Ruth Burgess and Chris Polhill

Bread of tomorrow c Christian Aid 1992