

Easter Sunday 12 April 2020

*M:* Christ is Risen.

*All:* **He is risen indeed.**

*M:* He has trampled down death by his death.

*All:* **He has given eternal life to us.**

*M:* This is the day that the Lord has made;

*All:* **let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

*M:* Jesus says: I was dead, but see!

I am alive forever and ever; Alleluia.

*All:* **and I have the keys to Death and Hades. Alleluia.**

*M:* In the name of the Father

and of the Son †

and of the Holy Spirit.

*All:* **Amen**

*M:* The light of Christ.

*All:* **Thanks be to God.**

*M:* May the light of Christ, rising in glory,  
dispel the darkness in our lives.

The light of Christ.

*All:* **Thanks be to God.**

**Opening Hymn – Christ the Lord is risen today**

*TIS 370*

**1. Christ the Lord is risen today:**

***Hallelujah!***

**Let the whole creation say:**

***Hallelujah!***

**Raise your joys and triumphs high:**

***Hallelujah!***

**Sing now, heaven, and earth reply:**

***Hallelujah!***

**2. Love's redeeming work is done,**

***Hallelujah!***

**Fought the fight, the battle won;**

***Hallelujah!***

vain the stone, the watch, the seal:

*Hallelujah!*

Christ has burst the gates of hell.

*Hallelujah!*

3. Lives again our glorious king;

*Hallelujah!*

where, O death, is now your sting?

*Hallelujah!*

Once he died our souls to save:

*Hallelujah!*

where your victory, O grave?

*Hallelujah!*

4. Soar we now where Christ has led,

*Hallelujah!*

following our exalted Head;

*Hallelujah!*

made like him, like him we rise;

*Hallelujah!*

ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

*Hallelujah!*

*M:* Brothers and sisters, as we celebrate again the resurrection of our Lord, we remember that through our baptism, we were also raised with him to new life.

Having prepared ourselves during Lent, let us now reaffirm our baptism vows:

*M:* Brothers and sisters in Christ:  
Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?

*All:* **Yes, I do.**

*M:* Do you believe in God the Father?

*All:* **I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

*M:* Do you believe in God the Son?

*All:* **I believe in Jesus Christ,  
his only Son, our Lord, who  
was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,**

suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again  
from the dead.

He ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand of God,  
the Father almighty,  
from thence he will come to judge  
the living and the dead.

**M:** Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**All:** I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen .

**M:** Do you intend to remain firm in this faith  
and reflect it in love to God  
and your neighbour?

**All:** Yes, I do.

**M:** May God, the Father of our Lord Jesus  
Christ, who has given you new birth by  
water and the Spirit and has forgiven you  
all your sins, strengthen you with his  
Spirit †, so that you receive eternal life.

#### Hymn of Praise – TIS 360

1 Light's reddening dawn gleams through the sky;  
heaven thunders forth its victory:  
alleluia, alleluia!  
the glad earth shouts her triumph high  
and groaning hell makes wild reply:  
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, alleluia!

2 While our Lord Christ, the mighty king,  
despoiling death of all its sting  
alleluia, alleluia!  
and trampling down the powers of night  
brings forth his ransomed souls to light.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, alleluia!

3 His tomb of late the threefold guard  
of watch and stone and seal had barred;  
alleluia, alleluia!  
but now in power and triumph high  
he comes from death to victory.  
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, alleluia!

4 The pains of hell are loosed at last;  
the days of mourning now are past;  
alleluia, alleluia!  
an angel robed in light has said,  
'The Lord has risen from the dead!'  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, alleluia!

5 From every weapon death can yield  
your own redeemed for ever shield:  
alleluia, alleluia!  
O Lord of all, with us abide  
in this our joyful Eastertide.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, alleluia!

*M:* The Lord be with you.

*All:* And also with you.

*M:* Let us pray that we rejoice in Christ's victory:

*All:* Everliving God, we thank you that you have overcome  
the old powers of sin and death through the mighty resurrection of your Son,  
and have made all things new in him.

*All:* Make us dead to sin and alive to you  
in Jesus Christ. For he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading – Acts 10:34-43

*Summary of Jesus' life and ministry*

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he

went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**R:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

#### Second Reading – Colossians 3:1-4

##### *Your life is hidden with Christ in God*

<sup>1</sup> So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup> for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

**R:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

#### Gospel Reading - Matthew 28:1-10

Glory to you, O Lord.

##### *The first Easter morning*

<sup>1</sup> After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.”

<sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

**M:** This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, O Christ, raised to live forever. Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for rising from death. Let us share in your new life forever. Amen.

**Gospel Hymn – I know that my Redeemer lives *LH 103***

1. I know that my Redeemer lives;  
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;  
He lives, my ever-living head.
  
2. He lives triumphant from the grave,  
He lives eternally to save;  
He lives all-glorious in the sky,  
He lives exalted there on high.
  
5. He lives, and grants me daily breath;  
He lives, and I shall conquer death;  
He lives my mansion to prepare,  
He lives to bring me safely there.
  
6. He lives, all glory to His name!  
He lives, my Jesus, still the same;  
O the sweet joy this sentence gives:  
I know that my Redeemer lives!

**Sermon**

**Hymn of Praise – He is risen *LH 95***

1. He is risen, He is risen!  
Tell it with a joyful voice;  
He has burst His three days' prison,  
Let the whole wide world rejoice.  
Death is conquered, man is free,  
Christ has won the victory.
  
2. Come with high and holy gladness,

Chant our Lord's triumphant lay;  
Not one touch of twilight sadness  
Dims His resurrection day;  
Brightly dawns the radiant east,  
Brighter far our Easter feast.

3. He is risen, He is risen!  
He has opened heaven's gate;  
We are free from sin's dark prison,  
Risen to a holier state;  
Soon a brighter Easter beam  
On our longing eyes shall stream.

*M:* Let us pray:

*All:* Everliving God,  
let the resurrection of your Son  
fill us with hope and joy.

May our lives and our gifts  
help to bring your new life to others.

Amen.

#### Prayer of the church

*Response:*

*M:* Lord, in your mercy:

*All:* hear our prayer.

*M:* Lord, teach us to pray:

*All:* Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive  
those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever.

Amen.

**M:** Let us pray:

Almighty God,  
you have overcome death through your Son Jesus Christ, and have opened for us  
the gate to eternal life.

As you have given us the benefits of his death and resurrection in this sacrament,  
keep us strong in faith until the day when we can gather again around your table.  
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**All:** Amen.

**M:** May the God of peace,  
who raised from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
provide you with every good thing you need  
in order to do his will;

Go in peace, as witnesses of the risen Lord.

**All:** In the name of Christ.

**M:** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you  
and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favour,  
† and give you peace.

**All:** Amen.

**Closing Hymn – TIS 380**

**Yours be the glory**

1. **Yours be the glory,  
risen, conquering Son,  
endless is the victory  
over death you've won;  
angels in bright raiment  
rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes,  
where your body lay.**

**Refrain:**

***Yours be the glory,  
risen, conquering Son,  
endless is the victory  
over death you've won.***

2. See, 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 the Lord is living,  
death has lost its sting.

*Refrain:*

*Yours be the glory,  
risen, conquering Son,  
endless is the victory  
over death you've won.*

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

*Refrain:*

*Yours be the glory,  
risen, conquering Son,  
endless is the victory  
over death you've won.*

Sermon Easter Sunday

Text: Matthew 28:1-10 – Fear and Joy

If we could sum up the feeling of the world at present I believe the word “fear” best sums up how people are feeling.

Fear of catching COVID-19

Fear of the economic cost

Fear of keeping my job.

Fear of how long this is going to go on for.

Fear of inadvertently breaking the rules and getting fined like that teenage girl who received a \$1,600 fine when her mother took her out for a driving lesson.

Fear.

Fear is also at the heart of our Easter Sunday Gospel reading.

When the 2 Marys went to the tomb to tend to Jesus’ dead body a great earthquake happened – an angel of the Lord came and rolled away the stone covering the tomb and then sat on it.

Matthew says that the guards there shook with fear and became like dead men.

When the angel spoke to the 2 Marys – they too feared.

But their fear was different.

It says they left the tomb quickly with fear AND GREAT JOY.

Notice the difference.

The guards had fear and they became like dead men.

The 2 Marys had fear but it was a fear that was comforted by Joy.

Joy in the knowledge that Jesus was alive and had risen from the dead.

Likewise, as we live in the midst of this pandemic – we have a level of fear – even as Christians.

We don’t become flippant about it and disregard the warnings.

We don’t act irresponsibly and ignore the safety aspects thinking “God will protect me from getting it”.

That’s how Satan tempted Jesus when he told him to jump off the top of the temple because God will not let him get hurt and catch him.

No, we abide by what the Government has asked us to do.

We follow all the recommendations of hygiene, social distancing, self isolation.

We haven’t looked for loopholes or flaunted the rules.

Following the rules is not a lack of faith or suggesting that God is not in control.

The difference is that we place God above it all, knowing that he is in control of everything.

The 2 Marys believed that Jesus had risen from the dead and had great joy.

But they still lived in the midst of knowing that the Jewish leaders who put Jesus to death and the Roman Government were still hostile towards them – so there is that physical fear – it’s human nature.

They weren’t quite sure what the future might hold for them physically but they knew that Jesus was alive – and that created joy.

And that’s the same situation for us.

It’s not a lack of faith to be fearful of what is ahead.

The difference for us is that we can place all our fears upon Jesus.

That’s what St Paul encouraged us to do in the mixture of heavenly faith and earthly fears.

He says: you have been raised with Christ – the Easter message.

So seek things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God – the Easter resurrection message.

So Paul is clear on our Christian joy – Christ has risen and ascended – and we too have been raised with Christ.

Notice Paul writes in the present tense – you HAVE been raised – not WILL be raised.

But Paul also acknowledges that even though we have been saved by Christ that we are still affected the things of this world that can create fear.

He says “your life is hidden with Christ in God”.

Hidden behind the veil of sin and worldly flesh that still strikes fear.

But what is different for us who put our hope in Jesus Christ is that we have that comfort and joy of knowing that anything the world throws at us that can create fear does not have the final word.

And that’s the joy that Easter Sunday brings to us – is that God has the last word.

Whereas death was the last word – life in Christ is now the new last word.

A life that is hidden with Christ – safe with Christ until Christ returns and reveals his glory and our glory.

At present that glory is hidden to the world.

A world that has been brought to its knees in fear.

But we have been brought to our knees in praise of Jesus Christ.

The world around us is closing down – including our church buildings which have been closed.

But the grave has been opened forever and no one can close it.

At the moment we are caught between 2 worlds.

The world we live in physically – we are in the world but not of the world – as we often say.

But we are also citizens of heaven.

So, we live here but our true citizenship is in heaven because of Easter.

So it’s okay to be fearful but our fears are overcome by the joy of knowing that Jesus has won the victory.

That Jesus has defeated death – the worst weapon that Satan and the world had against us.

So Jesus says to you – as he said to the 2 Marys in their fear – Do not be afraid go and tell the others that they will see me.

Friends, let us also not be afraid when the fears of the world confront us as they presently are –

But let us go and tell the world about the joy we have and the joy they too can have because Jesus has been raised from the dead and so have we.

Christ is risen – he is risen indeed.

Let us go in the peace of the Lord.

Amen.