

# Prayers at Home for Easter Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## Hymn

Jesus Christ is ris'n 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 heav'nly King, Alleluia!  
who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!  
sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

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

Sing we to our God above Alleluia!  
praise eternal as his love; Alleluia!  
praise him, all ye heav'nly host, Alleluia!  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!



*This great Easter hymn is based on a 14<sup>th</sup> century Latin hymn Surrexit Christus hodie. The tune was composed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and makes the most of the word Alleluia.*

*'Alleluia' or 'Hallelujah' is from the Hebrew word meaning 'Praise the Lord'.*

## Welcome

Happy Easter! – but isn't it strange not to be in Church with lots of flowers, decorations, Easter Egg hunts and the sense of celebration that comes with Christ's rising from the dead.

In the video for today children are seen lighting the three new paschal candles, one for each of our parishes. If you have a candle at home, this would be a good moment to light it. If you don't have a candle don't worry but picture one in your mind. Picture the way in which the flame flickers and, as our eyes adjust, it has the power to light a dark space. Today I will take each candle to the church where, over the coming year, it will remind us of the risen Christ alive in our word today.

When the paschal candle, or the candle in our home, is lit we pray:

Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega,  
all time belongs to him and all ages; to him be glory and power,  
through every age and for ever. Amen.

The Light of Christ. Alleluia!



*The **Paschal candle** is usually the largest candle in any church. A new Paschal candle is blessed and lit every year at Easter and is used throughout the Easter season and on special occasions, such as at services of Baptism. The candle displays several common symbols. The Greek letters alpha and omega signify that God is the beginning and the end of all things (from the Book of Revelation). The current year represents God in the present amidst the congregation – God is here in the here and now! Five nails or pins are inserted to mark the wounds of crucifixion, nails that pierced his hands and feet, the spear thrust into his side, and the crown of thorns. In the medieval Church, Paschal candles often reached a stupendous size. The Paschal candle of Salisbury Cathedral was said to have been 36 feet (11 meters) tall!*

## **Colossians 3:1-4**

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<sup>[a]</sup> life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

## **Psalm 118: 1–2, 14-24**

This is the day that the Lord has made  
**We will rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!**

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
his mercy endures for ever.

**Let Israel now proclaim,  
'His mercy endures for ever.'**

The Lord is my strength and my song,  
and he has become my salvation.

**Joyful shouts of salvation  
sound from the tents of the righteous:**

'The right hand of the Lord does mighty the right hand of the Lord raises up;  
the right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.'

**I shall not die, but live  
and declare the works of the Lord.**

The Lord has punished me sorely,  
but he has not given me over to death.

**Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.**

This is the gate of the Lord;  
the righteous shall enter through it.

**I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.**

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.

**This is the Lord's doing,  
and it is marvellous in our eyes.**

This is the day that the Lord has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.**

**This is the day that the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!**

## Matthew 28:1-10

Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to the tomb. Suddenly there was a great earthquake; an angel came down from heaven and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face shone like lightning and his clothing was a brilliant white. The guards shook with fear and were unable to speak.

Then the angel said to the women. "Don't be frightened!". "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified, but he is not here! He has come back to life again, just as he said he would. Come in and see where his body was lying. . . .

And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and that he is going to Galilee to meet them there. That is my message to them."

The women were frightened but filled with joy ran from the tomb and rushed to find the disciples to give them the angel's message. And as they were running, suddenly Jesus was there in front of them!

"Greetings!" he said. And they fell to the ground before him, holding his feet and worshipping him. Jesus said to them, "Don't be frightened! Go tell my brothers to leave at once for Galilee and to meet me there."

### Reflection

Just one thing to remember about Easter. That is, that Jesus didn't come to die – he came to live, and that is what Easter is all about.

The simple Christian truth – that Christ lives. And although we'll miss being in our churches, what I think we probably miss more is being in our churches together. The sense of Christian family; the sense of being in this together.

Even now, there are probably people around the world writing the books and scripting the films that will depict this moment in history. They'll be creating the character traits of the key plays - the likes of Boris and Trump. But alongside them they'll also be the sub-stories - the accounts of ordinary people whose lives have been turned upside down by Covid-19.

They'll be doing that in much the same way as the Gospel writers made books to record their moment in history. The key players are Jesus, Pilate, Judas and Peter; and then the accounts of ordinary people whose lives were turned upside down when they went to the tomb and found it empty.

Jesus didn't come to die – he came to live, and that is what Easter is all about.

I'm not surprised, just saddened really, that the Bible doesn't tell us anything about the children who were part of the resurrection story - and so we assume that there were none. The writers probably thought that children weren't important enough, though Jesus of course knew better. Children, he said, are first in the Kingdom of God and we should be like them ... which is why in the Easter video reflection there are more children than adults. Children encapsulate life and energy; but also innocence, beauty and godliness in their own unique delightful and sometimes mischievous ways. At home, think today of the children you know and of their energy and life. Think also of the children today who are restricted to small or compact areas in which to play and in your prayers, prayer that they soon may, with us all, enjoy a new freedom.

Some people say children are the church of tomorrow. They of course are wrong – children are as much the church of today as anybody else because they have so much to teach us about the nature of God and the aliveness of Christ.

So, we are not in our churches but we are nonetheless church. You are church in your home or wherever it is that you are seeing this. Church is where you are and that is part of the miracle of the resurrection, for just as Christ could not be contained by a tomb nor can he be contained by our buildings.

Sooner or later we will be able to meet in larger groups and to share the celebrations that we as human beings need, but in the meantime just remember this. Jesus didn't come to die – he came to live, and that is what Easter is all about. Amen.

### **The Prayer for Easter Sunday written by Max**

We are praying for those that feel lonely and missing their friends and family.

Sending happy and positive thoughts to those with Coronavirus.

Thanking those helping with shopping and giving thanks for our Easter sunshine and yellow daffodils. **Amen**

### **For our Queen and government**

We pray for our Queen, Prime Minister and government; for the leaders of the world, and all with authority and power in cities, towns and villages. For wisdom and good judgement; for patience and self-restraint; for forgiveness where we have failed; for good will and for kindness amongst all people. May the grace of the risen and living Christ be with everyone to bring healing, strength and new life. **Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that 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.**

### **Collect for Easter Sunday from the Book of Common Prayer**

Almighty God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ has overcome death, and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: We humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Blessing**

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, make us perfect in every good work to do his will. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon us, and remain with us always. Amen.

He is not here. He is Risen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.

**In the name of Christ. Amen. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

### **Hymn**

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

***Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won.***

*The great hymn we associate with Easter which is also a favourite for weddings and funerals was written by the Swiss writer Edmond Budry (1854-1932) and is set to a tune from Handel's oratorio Judas Maccabaeus. The hymn was first translated into English in 1923 based on words recalling the resurrection of Jesus and also elements of Isaiah 25:8.*

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.

*Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won.*

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;  
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conqu'rors, thro' thy deathless love:  
bring us safe thro' Jordan to thy home above.

*Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won.*



***Happy Easter!***