



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday 18th April 2021

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Maundy Thursday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your prayers.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon Cf. Ps 65: 1-2

A: Cry out with joy to God, all the earth; O sing to the glory of his name. O render him glorious praise, alleluia.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: Easter is a long season, and as it unfolds we will be thinking about many things – the growth of the Church, Baptism, the Eucharist, the Ascension of Jesus and the role of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. But for this Sunday we are still thinking about the actual resurrection of the Lord itself: it was real, and moreover it was physical: the tomb was empty, because Jesus was walking around in his glorified body! Joyfully celebrating the bodily resurrection of Jesus, we praise God's glory as we say:

Gloria

A: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Opening Prayer

L: Let us pray.

May your people exult for ever, O God, in renewed youthfulness of spirit, so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption, we

may look forward in confident hope to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading Luke 24:35-48

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread. They were still talking about all this when Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts? Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and feet. Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, and they stood there dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes. Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms has to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

The Gospels are remarkably honest about the doubts of the friends of Jesus after his Resurrection – which should be a great comfort and help to

us! It's not easy to believe in the resurrection of the dead: if we put ourselves in the disciples' place, we can easily imagine that our reaction might well be the same as theirs – *"in a state of alarm and fright, thinking we were seeing a ghost."* Just as with so many aspects of Jesus' life and mission, our very familiarity with the story can sometimes blunt us to its significance and meaning. The resurrection is a perfect example of this. So in response to today's Gospel, perhaps we should step back a little and try and use our imaginations: how would you react if you had been to a funeral on a Friday, and then saw that person walking down the street on the following Sunday? What would you think? Would you tell other people about it, or be afraid what *they* might think?! In the face of such doubt the response of Jesus is wonderful: he gently works through the doubts and fears, with great patience and love. He reassures them he is not a ghost by letting them see he has "flesh and bones", and even goes so far as to eat a piece of grilled fish "before their very eyes"! This is important for us: we believe the resurrection of Jesus was a physical resurrection – the resurrection of the body that we mention in the Creed – not just a spiritual or mental or metaphorical thing. The risen Jesus eats the fish. He has a body that can be touched. In this last year so many people have been denied human touch – elderly relatives in care homes, the sick and dying in hospital, grandchildren and grandparents. We long for that human touch once more. The bodily resurrection of Jesus teaches us that our ultimate destiny is also a physical resurrection, when we are raised in the body on the last day, which is definitely something to look forward to! As the Opening Prayer today said: *"we look forward in confident hope to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection."*

For our Younger Friends

The friends of Jesus must have been VERY confused – as well as

upset and scared. Did you hear in today's Gospel how they were "in a state of alarm and fright" – this is probably a polite way of saying they were absolutely terrified! But when you think about it, they would be. This Gospel is happening on Easter Sunday – just two days after Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday. Jesus has to "open the minds" of his friends so that they can understand what has happened, believe it, and go and tell other people about it! Sometimes we can be scared and confused because our minds are closed: things we don't understand can be scary! Perhaps you know what this is like – it can be anything from learning to ride a bike or to swim, to worries about the world, your family or your own life. One of the reasons we celebrate Easter so much and for so long is because we need to be able to trust in the risen Jesus – the Jesus who is with us, here and now, today: when we pray, we should make sure that we are quiet sometimes, so that Jesus can "open our minds", perhaps to help us see things in a different light, to understand things better, to trust in Jesus.

Profession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and 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, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

L: Believing that Jesus is in our midst through the Holy Spirit, let us offer our prayers.

May the church continue to witness to its belief in the resurrection by its commitment to uphold the gift of life for all persons. As we rejoice in your triumph, we pray:

A: Receive our prayers, Lord.

May the Spirit of truth guide to true faith those who struggle with doubt in the resurrection. As we rejoice in your triumph, we pray:

A: Receive our prayers, Lord.

May the dying and rising of Christ transform the sadness of death into hope and joy for all who have died. As we rejoice in your triumph, we pray:

A: Receive our prayers, Lord.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

L: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: 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. Amen.

L: Receive, O Lord, we pray, these intentions of your exultant Church, and, as you have given her cause for such great gladness, grant also that our faith and hope may bear fruit in perpetual happiness. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

Preparation for Spiritual Communion

L: Loving Father, it is our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but in this time above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed. Through him the children of light rise to eternal life and the halls of the heavenly Kingdom are thrown open to the faithful; for his Death is our ransom from death, and in his rising the life of all has risen. At the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment

receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

A: Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

L: When I call, answer me, O God of justice; from anguish you released me, have mercy and hear me!

A: Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

L: It is the Lord who grants favours to those whom he loves; the Lord hears me whenever I call him.

A: Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

L: 'What can bring us happiness?' many say. Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

A: Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

L: I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at once for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

A: Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

THE CONCLUDING RITE

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

Look with kindness upon your people, O Lord, and grant, we pray, that those you were pleased to renew by eternal mysteries may attain in their flesh the incorruptible glory of the resurrection. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!

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