

**April 4<sup>th</sup> 2021 Easter Sunday: Jesus has risen – Luke 24:1-12**

**The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;  
let us pray with one heart and mind.**

**Silence is kept.**

**As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,  
so may the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever.**

**All: Amen.**

**(Morning Prayer)**

**Do you rejoice in the gift of each day? Every day is a gift from God. Do you rejoice? Do you pray for the light of his presence? To know him. Recall all that he has done for you. And Rejoice?**

**And knowing the light of his presence with you, does it set your heart on fire with love for him?**

**Today, on this Easter day, we remember that he is risen. He is risen indeed. And we rejoice!**

**And we remember all that he taught, and all that he did to save us.**

**On Friday he died.**

**And in three days he rose again!**

**Rejoice!!**

**Luke tells us the story of that morning.**

**The women go up to the tomb in which the dead Jesus had been laid. They had prepared spices to further prepare the body. He died. And they need to finish honouring him in this way.**

**But when they get there they find the tomb open. The huge circular stone, larger than the tallest of men, rolled to one side, and the mouth of the tomb open. They walk in. There is nothing to find here. Jesus is nowhere to be seen.**

**They did not expect that!**

**Suddenly they see two men in glowing white. Witnesses surely to what has happened. The women are frightened (Luke always portrays people meeting an angel as terrified – Mary, Zechariah, the shepherds – remember?) But these angels don't on this occasion say "Do not be afraid" – they have even more important news for the women, and through them for the men too.**

The angels don't comfort them but confront them with an alternative explanation. One that Jesus had already shared with them.

Three times Jesus had told the disciples what must happen.

Three times in Luke's gospel Jesus told them what would happen:

Firstly just after feeding 5000 people....

*<sup>22</sup> 'The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.'* (9:21-22)

Secondly after being transfigured in glorious brightness on the mountain with Peter, James and John....

*<sup>44</sup> 'Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.'* They didn't understand (9:43-45)

Finally, on the way to Jerusalem, for this holiest of week....talking of himself Jesus said....

*<sup>31</sup> 'We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. <sup>32</sup> He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; <sup>33</sup> they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.'*

Again, they did not understand. (18:31-34)

But for these women, as soon as the angel said these things again.

They remembered Jesus' words.

"Remember how he told you". And they did remember.

Why were they looking in the tomb for a dead person, the angels said. When the Son of Man, the Son of God, their Messiah wasn't dead any more. He was alive!

Why look for the living amongst the dead.

"On the third day he will rise again"

This is, of course, the third day. Friday, Saturday....Sunday!

The third day. They remembered! He is alive!

They run to tell the others. The men do not believe them. It made no sense to them. They knew he was dead.

But, for Peter, something stirred in him. He had heard all three predictions, including the one on the mountain. He did not understand

then and he did not, truth be told, understand now. But he had to go and see for himself.

In Luke's telling of the story Jesus is yet to reveal himself to two people on the road. Only having done that will he reveal himself to the gathered apostles in the upper room. More of this in coming weeks.

At the end of our reading today, Peter is scratching his head, wondering what it all could mean.

But remembering Jesus' words.

Maybe not just the predictions. What about all the other teaching along the way?

John recounts for us in his story a whole evening of teaching. Of preparation. We have been exploring that teaching through this Lent season. A season of preparation, just as Jesus prepared in the wilderness, Jesus prepares the disciples for this moment and for the task to come – of being church in the light of Jesus' resurrection. A resurrection body to bring light to the world. The body of Christ.

First on that Thursday evening John describes Jesus gathering the disciples and washing their feet. He shows them how to serve. He also looks forward to a time when they will be anointed with power. Inheritors of all that the Son has.

Power.

Next – he reminds them that he is the way. *Only* through him and by following his commands is the way to the kingdom. We exclude ourselves from the inclusive kingdom following any other way.

Obey

Thirdly – the lesson of the vine, we are only of service when connected and when connected the Spirit gives us words to speak the Good News.

Tell

Next – Jesus prayed for them having proclaimed that he had overcome the world; so pray boldly!

Pray.

Fifth – the answer to Pilate's question "What is truth" Jesus had told the disciples – "I am the way, the truth and the life". The Word of God is truth.

Truth

**Next – we saw the crucifixion of an innocent man, in our place; an injustice done, and borne by the one, to save us. We are called to stand up for justice.**

**Justice.**

**Finally – we see a God of power and peace; the resurrected Jesus calms their fright, concern and anxiety. Resurrection power and calming peace.**

**Peace.**

**The question for us today as we rejoice in the news. He is risen. He is risen indeed! Will we remember his words of preparation? His words to inspire a church?**

**Power, Obey, Tell, Pray, Truth, Justice, Peace**

**Pick a word. Pray over it. Ask God what it means to him and what he wants it to mean to you.**

**And respond.**

**Today. Tomorrow. Every day.**

**Power, Obey, Tell, Pray, Truth, Justice, Peace**

**Then they remembered his words.....**

**Let's pray.**

## LENT PREPARATION LESSONS

- 1. John 13 – Both/and ...hold them in tension: Receive anointing in power for his service and glory.**
- 2. John 14 – Inclusive exclusivity : Obedience centred on Jesus by the power of his Holy Spirit.**
- 3. John 15/16 – The opposite of love isn't hate...its apathy: Listen to the Spirit, speak of Jesus.**
- 4. John 16/17 – I have overcome the world.: Pray boldly, listen to the Spirit's words, otherwise keep quiet!**
- 5. John 18 – What is truth?...: Jesus, the Word, is the truth, of that you can be certain.**
- 6. John 19 – It just isn't fair...: Let his selflessness turn our selfishness to humility; advertise God by the ripples we make against injustice!**
- 7. John 20/21 – Resurrection power.....: Call him Lord, your God, he gives you power.**

**Power; Obey ; Tell ; Pray ; Truth ; Justice ; Peace**

24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. <sup>2</sup> They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup> While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. <sup>5</sup> In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, *'Why do you look for the living among the dead?'* <sup>6</sup> *He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: <sup>7</sup> "The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again."*

**<sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words.**

<sup>9</sup> When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. <sup>10</sup> It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. <sup>12</sup> Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and **he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.**

