

Sunday 18 April 2021 - Easter 3

Sermon Notes

Opening comments

- After 6 weeks of Lent including the sombre days of Holy Week and Good Friday, Easter seems to be over in a flash.
- Yet Christians are Easter people - so should have that Easter feeling all the time.
- Two questions for today: 1 - How do we make the resurrection of Jesus real for us every day?
- 2 - How do we come alive, and stay alive in midst of pandemic and all that life throws at us?

Luke's Gospel - after the Resurrection

- Look first at what Luke reports between the women at tomb and Jesus' Ascension - two incidents.
- Heard a moment ago about second one (Lk 24:36-48) - come back to that later.
- Before that remind ourselves of the first one - Jesus' appearance to two disciples on road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35).
- Talking together afterwards the two disciples commented on 3 things:
 - Jesus explaining the Scriptures to them
 - How their hearts burned
 - They recognised him in the breaking of bread
- Then in this morning's Gospel we heard:
 - Jesus spoke to the disciples and showed them his distinguishing marks
 - He ate some fish
 - He explained opened their minds to the Scriptures
 - He told them to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit

What can we learn from Luke's testimony?

- (1) Understanding Bible is essential grounding of our faith.
- Can't understand without reading: reading, relishing and reflecting.
- Example from Alpha course of Nicky Gumbel becoming a Christian when reading Gospels and today's Gospel - the fish in particular; reinforced when he realised that Jesus fulfilled no less than 300 OT prophecies.
- (2) If we approach our faith with open hearts and minds, hearts will be warmed and minds satisfied.
- (3) Jesus wants to encounter and engage with us: it's easier if our thoughts are already on him, like the disciples on Emmaus road or in upper room.
- (4) We too can recognise him fully in the breaking of bread in HC.
- All ways in which we can make the Resurrection real every day (q1).

Learning from the world around us

- (5) Jesus came to give us life - life in abundance, life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

- Wherever we glimpse full, good lives we glimpse Jesus; we saw it in Capt Tom Moore, saw it in Prince Philip - lives of service, duty and a vision of a better, different world.
- We've seen it too in countless other lives, dedicated during pandemic to helping others - nurses, doctors, teachers, scientists, many others - all pointing to a world where love and caring counts more than greed, grasping and aggression.
- (6) See it also in the natural world where, as we emerge from winter, new life is all around us - flowers, lambs, buds and leaves - everything being renewed.
- (7) May also see it in restored relationships, or in new loves, or in music or art or books, in new hopes.
- What do all these have in common - they make us grateful.

Gratitude the best way of making the Resurrection real and of staying alive

- Gratitude is the greatest sign of being alive, of the Resurrection itself.
- Gratitude the best possible way to start our prayers.
- Attitude of gratitude the best possible way to start each day.
- Attitude of gratitude the best possible way to end each day - even bad days.
- Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:19-20).