



Canon Diane writes:



We have just celebrated Palm Sunday and are now in Holy Week. Sadly last year we were in lock-down and unable to share worship together at such a holy and special time. I am so thankful that we will be able to do so this year!

Maundy Thursday (1st April)

commemorates the day of the Last Supper, when, after He had washed their feet, Jesus and His disciples broke bread and drank wine. Our service of Holy Communion is in thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Holy Communion which our Lord gave to His Church the night before He died.

During the service, I, as priest and incumbent, would wash the feet of my church officers emulating the actions of our Lord. Sadly, due to Covid restrictions I won't be able to do so this year. At the end of the service all ornaments and movable items are stripped from the church leaving everything desolate and bare. This action symbolises our Lord's desolation during His sojourn in Gethsemane, His arrest and trial. We all leave the service without the dismissal by the priest and in silence.

Also due to government restrictions we are not allowed to hold services in church unless 72 hours has passed between services, therefore this year, in order to be able to commemorate Maundy Thursday, we are unable to have our usual Wednesday service of Holy Communion or our final hour on Good Friday but this will be recorded and emailed out to you or printed out and put through your letter box if you are not on email.



Good Friday Jesus is condemned and mocked by the soldiers; they pushed a crown of twisted thorns on His head and spat on Him. He was beaten and then taken from the city on a lonely, extremely painful and humiliating journey to Calvary, where He was crucified. The crucifixion was the worst thing that was ever done, yet it was the best thing that ever happened!

On Easter morning at 10.45 a.m. we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour. We light the **Paschal Candle** to remind us of the power of God working to transform the darkness of Good Friday into the light of new life in Christ. We carry the Paschal Candle through the church to signify that Christ is Risen from the dead, to give His new life to all who truly turn to Him.

Easter Eggs: Owing to restrictions on movement in churches we are unable to have our usual Easter Egg hunt for the children but each child will be given an Easter Egg at the Communion Rail.



Easter Day will be Gift Day.

Over the last twelve months so many of us may well have saved money by not going out for meals, not spending money in shops whilst browsing, not travelling and therefore saving on having to buy petrol and - the big one - by not going on holiday.

I would like to suggest we give what we have saved or a portion of what we have saved to our church which, because of Covid-19 is in dire need.

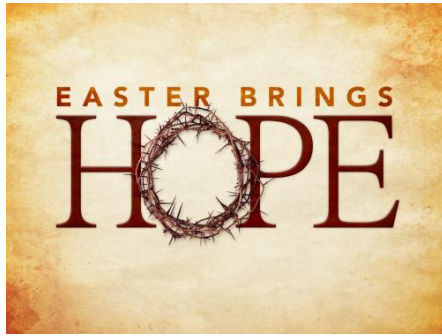
Our income is down by £40,000 on last year's figures! We have lost so much money through not being able to have all the events we had planned, no special life events i.e. Christenings and weddings and no Community Cafe. And we still don't know when all these will be possible again!

We will need to do some serious fund raising once we are allowed to. In the meantime please can I ask you to pray and to think very seriously about how much you've managed to save and consider giving some of it to St. Saviour's in the enclosed envelope by way of a gift on Easter Day.

I'm going to start the ball rolling by giving what I would have spent on my planned week away last Summer.

I do realise that this may not apply to all of you especially if you are no longer employed or you own a business, as money might be tight right now, but even a small gift would be so gratefully received.

St. Saviour's has never needed our money as much as it does right now. Thank you. Diane x



“So many people right across the country are anxious about employment, anxious about food, isolated from loved ones and feel that the future looks dark.” These are words from the Archbishop of Canterbury’s sermon on Easter Day 2020. Who would have thought that we are experiencing the same uncertainties this Easter!

Yet the Easter story remains one of hope overcoming darkness and despair. The women arrived at the tomb on Easter morning with mixed emotions, as they came to anoint Jesus’ body. *‘But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.’* (St. Mark 16:4). They were confused, as they tried to make sense of Jesus’ death. Their hopes were dashed with an uncertain future. In the current pandemic, we too are left asking: *Where is God in all this?*

The young man at the tomb reminds them that God is still in control: *“Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.”* (St. Mark 16:6).

The women had forgotten Jesus’ promise to the disciples that He would die and rise from the dead. Jesus’ resurrection is also the sure foundation of hope for us in the present crisis. He turns our confusion and fear into joy and wonder! We can trust Jesus’ plan for the future of our world and lives, despite the fact that things can’t return to the way they were: ***“There needs to be a resurrection of our common life, a new normal, something that links to the old, but is different and more beautiful. We must dream it, build it, make it, grasp it, because it is the gift of God and the call of God.”*** (Justin Welby).

By the Revd Tony Horsfall of Charis Training.

Walking and talking

During the pandemic, I have enjoyed walking. In many ways, getting out daily for a good walk has not only helped me physically, but also bolstered my mental well-being. Often, I have arranged to walk with a friend, and we have enjoyed good conversation and fellowship.

Today I was walking alone, and I noticed it seemed further and to take longer. When you are walking and talking, you hardly notice the distance or the time. I am not usually able to think much when I am walking alone, but today the reminder came into my head of a saying: *‘If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.’*

It made me thankful for all the friends who have encouraged me this year and helped me to keep going. We can walk alone, and sometimes that's a good thing; but it is easier to be able to walk through life with others.

Who has walked with you this year? Do they know that you appreciate their companionship on the journey?

Lessons of Lockdown

This past year may have altered your perspective on life. Some of the following statements may be worth thinking about....

Life is precarious

A nurse is worth more than a professional footballer

Spare time isn’t a waste of time

A smile is precious

Being alone isn’t the same as loneliness

Hard work doesn’t guarantee employment

I’m spending more on food & drink and less on church & charity

Silence opens us to creative ideas

Social media are a mixed blessing

Shopping needn’t be addictive

Driving less and walking more is good for humanity

Isolation teaches us we need each other to generate energy

Getting back to ‘normal’ isn’t God’s plan for the human race

When everything else is shut, God is open.

All in the month of APRIL

It was:

500 years ago, on 27th April 1521 that Ferdinand Magellan, Portuguese explorer who led the first expedition to circumnavigate the earth, died at the hands of natives in the Philippines. He was aged 41.

300 years ago, on 3rd April 1721 that Robert Walpole became the first British Prime Minister.

250 years ago, on 13th April 1771 that Richard Trevithick, British mining engineer and inventor of the first steam locomotive, was born.

125 years ago, from 6th to 15th April 1896 that the first modern Summer Olympic Games were held in Athens. The original Olympics were banned by the Roman Emperor Theodosius (I or II) in either 393 or 426 AD.

95 years ago, on 21st April 1926 that Queen Elizabeth II was born in Mayfair, London. Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. Her father became King on the abdication of his brother King Edward VIII in 1936, from which time Elizabeth was the heir presumptive.

90 years ago, on 14th April 1931 that the first edition of the Highway Code was published in the UK.

80 years ago, on 12th April 1941 that Bobby Moore, British footballer, was born. He was Captain of the English team that won the 1966 World Cup and died in 1993.

70 years ago, on 17th April 1951 that the Peak District National Park was established. It was Britain's first national park.

60 years ago, on 11th April 1961 that Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann went on trial in Jerusalem. He was convicted on 12th September and executed in June 1962.

40 years ago, on 11th April 1981 that the Brixton riot took place in London. 5,000 youths rampaged through the streets, attacking police officers and damaging buildings, looting shops and setting cars alight.

30 years ago, on 3rd April 1991 that Graham Greene, novelist, short story writer, playwright and journalist died. Author of *Brighton Rock*, *Our Man in Havana* and many more.

20 years ago, on 7th April 2001 that NASA launched its Mars Odyssey spacecraft to search for evidence of life and volcanic activity on Mars. It went into orbit around Mars and remains operational (though it will run out of propellant in 2025). It is the longest surviving continually active spacecraft orbiting another planet. (It has successfully mapped the distribution of water below the surface and discovered a vast amount of ice below the equatorial regions.)

10 years ago, on 29th April 2011 that the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton took place at Westminster Abbey in London. They were given the titles the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

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## Easter faith in atheist Russia

Three years after the Russian Revolution of 1917, a great anti-God rally was arranged in Kiev. The powerful orator Bukharin was sent from Moscow, and for an hour he demolished the Christian faith with argument, abuse and ridicule. At the end there was silence.

Then a man rose and asked to speak. He was a priest of the Russian Orthodox Church. He went and stood next to Bukharin. Facing the people, he raised his arms and spoke just three triumphant words: 'Christ is risen!'

At once the entire assembly rose to their feet and gave the joyful response, 'He is risen indeed!' It was a devastating moment for an atheist politician, who had no answer to give to this ancient Easter liturgy. He had not realised he was simply too late: how can you convince people that God does not exist when they have already encountered Him?

## ***Solicitor, David Pickup, considers: Was the trial of Jesus legal?***



We have high expectations of the legal system. In criminal cases we want criminals punished and innocent people protected. I have been involved in many court hearings and all clients want a just result. Some disagree with the decisions, but few actually question the basic fairness of the legal system.

As a lawyer, I have thought about the legal trial Jesus faced. I find the biblical accounts of what happened on Good Friday challenging to read, not because the gospels differ a lot, because they are remarkably consistent; not only because the subject matter is harrowing. They are difficult because the subject matter is complicated.

The legal system was very different from ours. For a start, Jesus was in the centre of three different legal jurisdictions: the Jewish legal system with its council, the law of the occupying Romans and also that of King Herod, who ruled Galilee, where Jesus came from. There was not one trial, but several. One writer has counted six. There were at least two hearings before the Temple council, two procedures with Pontius Pilate and a hearing of sort with King Herod. These were interspersed with beatings and abuse.

Jesus faced two separate sets of legal accusations: one for blasphemy before the religious council and one of rebellion before Pilate. The Romans would not have been interested in the Jewish religion, but sedition meant trouble.

Very few of the participants come out of the story well. Many of them could have stopped at the different states, but they did not. The whole procedure was a setup, the illegal murder of an innocent man.

So, what was illegal about it? Here are some points:

There was an unholy and unfair rush to accuse, convict and kill Jesus before Passover.

The judges had conspired to arrest and charge Jesus, the procedure was muddled, and they tried to fit the charge to suit the evidence. The judges were prejudiced and determined to kill Jesus. It is not the judge's role to find witnesses, but to be impartial.

It was illegal to try capital cases at night. By doing so, the Sanhedrin broke the law. When a person's life was at stake, the trial could only be held during the day and they should have delayed judgement until the next day. It was illegal to try someone on the day before the Sabbath or before some holy day.

Jesus was forced to incriminate Himself, which was not allowed and not acceptable evidence. Jesus had no-one to support Him or given time to defend Himself.

The trial should not have taken place in anyone's home. The whole thing was a travesty of justice. Jesus was illegally murdered.

This is a very brief introduction to a complex subject. There are many websites which analyse this, written by much more learned people than me. Two books stand out which are readable authoritative and available:

Grieve, V, (1990), *The Trial of Jesus*, STL Bromley

F. F. Bruce, (1985) *The Real Jesus* Hodder & Stoughton, London

## Why Easter will never go away

How do you make sense of the Resurrection? Dead men don't rise, so why believe that this particular dead man *did* rise?

At the end of St Luke's gospel we read that: "they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement" (Luke 24.4). This is highly significant. The Gospels do not show us a group of disciples who were in a receptive frame of mind. After the crucifixion, they were in hiding, frightened and scattered. Then suddenly, they came out of hiding and were totally different; excited, joyful. By Pentecost they were confident, with one firm message: 'You crucified Jesus, but God raised Him up!'

How did they know this? Because of direct personal experience. Some of them had visited the tomb of Jesus: it was empty. Others claimed to have seen and touched the risen Lord. Were they hallucinating? People can hallucinate in groups – when taking drugs, for example. But of course, each one will see a different hallucination. But the disciples all saw the same thing. Or rather, the same person. Jesus.

Were they lying? Jesus had died a humiliating death as a criminal. Perhaps they wanted to rescue His good name. So, did they pretend they had seen Him?

This theory has a big problem. Their preaching led them into trouble with the authorities. They were beaten and imprisoned and some of them killed. People will die for ideas and causes which they believe in passionately. But not for things they have made up. We might suffer for our convictions, but we will not suffer for our inventions.

What about the 'swoon' theory? That Jesus didn't die on the cross, despite terrible wounds? That He recovered in the tomb, and then escaped? That the disciples nursed Him back to health? But Roman soldiers knew when a man was dead; and there was the guard on the tomb. Also, the events which followed simply don't fit. If the disciples had been hiding Jesus all along, they would have kept very low-key, and out of the way, so that the authorities did not come after Him again.

Besides, to preach that God had raised Jesus from the dead – which is exactly what they did preach – would have been a lie. Beatings and threat of death would soon have loosened their tongues. Inventions crumble under pressure; convictions hold fast.

Another reason for believing in the Resurrection is this: Jesus' continuing impact. Thousands and soon millions of people in every generation since have shared an inescapable sense of being 'accompanied' through life. Though unseen, they identify this presence as the Risen Lord.

Sometimes this experience of meeting Jesus is gentle and fitful. Sometimes it is dramatic and life changing. This reminds us that the resurrection of Jesus is not just an interesting historical puzzle. It is a vital, present day reality. It brings wonderful comfort, assuring us of the central Christian truths: death is dead; Jesus is alive; God is love.

This central notion was captured, most movingly, by the great Albert Schweitzer: 'He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: "Follow thou me," and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.'

Have a joyful – and a challenging – Easter.



John Barton considers the Government's policy on Covid-19.

**Covid-19: should we have sacrificed the economy, or us?**

Suppose the Government had chosen an entirely different policy for dealing with coronavirus. Instead of building temporary hospitals and instructing us to wash our hands, observe social distancing, and then locking us down, they had let the pandemic run its course? Hundreds of thousands of people would have died: mainly those who were old, as well as some younger people with pre-existent health deficiencies.

As these potential casualties were already costing the National Health Service much more per head than anyone else, their (slightly) premature deaths would have saved the Exchequer billions and freed up resources to improve the health and standard of living for the rest of the more vigorous population. Only the fittest would have survived. Isn't that the law of nature?

Instead, the policy was deliberately to sacrifice the economy. At all costs, human beings were to be saved, whatever their longer-term prospects. Consequently, many businesses have gone under, unemployment has shot up, family relationships have been curbed, children may have lost a year's schooling, and leisure, hospitality and travel have been hampered.

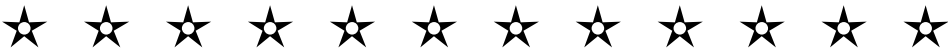
Why? Why choose this policy and not that? The answer is a religious one. Perhaps without realising why, policy-makers chose to act as though each human being has a value which can't be measured by their state of health or wealth or status. That's not what 'nature' intends. It's what the Christian faith demands. Everyone, everyone without exception, is unique and marked with God's image. Everyone has the potential for adoption as a child of God. Christ died for each one. You can't put a price on that.

Some countries have this faith ingrained in their national character. Some do not. In some, life is cheap, disposable and valued only by its usefulness for production or warfare. The fittest survive. Even then some are sacrificed as warriors, like suicide bombers paying the price of an ideology.

Dreadful as it is, Covid-19 will eventually be controlled. In its wake will be a history of survival, not of the fittest, but of the God-given value of every human being.

April

|                    |            |                                                                                                                |
|--------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thur. 1st          | 7.30 p.m.  | Maundy Thursday Eucharist                                                                                      |
| Fri. 2nd           |            | Good Friday - no church service -<br>Reflections will be emailed and put<br>through your door if not on email. |
| <b>Sun. 4th</b>    |            | <b>Easter Day and Gift Day</b>                                                                                 |
|                    | 10.45 a.m. | Eucharist                                                                                                      |
| Wed. 7th           | 10.30 a.m. | Holy Communion with votive candles                                                                             |
| <b>Sun. 11th</b>   |            | <b>2nd Sunday of Easter</b>                                                                                    |
|                    | 10.45 a.m. | Eucharist                                                                                                      |
| Wed. 14th          | 10.30 a.m. | Holy Communion                                                                                                 |
|                    | 12 noon    | Clergy Chapter vi Zoom                                                                                         |
| <b>Sun. 18th</b>   |            | <b>3rd Sunday of Easter</b>                                                                                    |
|                    | 10.45 a.m. | Celtic Prayer & A.P.C.M.                                                                                       |
| Wed. 21st          | 10.30 a.m. | Holy Communion (traditional language)                                                                          |
| <b>Sunday 25th</b> |            | <b>4th Sunday after Easter</b>                                                                                 |
|                    | 10.45 a.m. | Eucharist                                                                                                      |
| Wed. 28th          | 10.30 a.m. | Holy Communion                                                                                                 |



**Notices found in church newsletters - that didn't quite come out right!**

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Brown, our church warden, to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Ladies are requested not to have children in the church kitchen.

For those who have children and don't know it, we have a crèche in the crypt.

Bring and share church supper: Prayer and medication will follow.

Don't let worry kill you. Let the Church help!

The organist invites anyone who enjoys sinning to volunteer for the choir.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick both of our church and the community.

