



AT HOME AT EASTER RETREAT

Spending time with the God Who Speaks

EASTER OCTAVE: WEDNESDAY – 15 APRIL 2020



FROM MORNING PRAYER – PSALM 149 – The saints rejoice

“The members of the Church, God’s new people, will rejoice in their king, who is Christ” (Hesychius)

Alleluia. The Lord has risen, as he promised. Alleluia.

SING a new song to the Lord,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
Let Israel rejoice in its Maker,
let Zion's sons exult in their king.
Let them praise his name with dancing
and make music with timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes delight in his people.
He crowns the poor with salvation.
Let the faithful rejoice in their glory,
shout for joy and take their rest.
Let the praise of God be on their lips
and a two-edged sword in their hand,

to deal out vengeance to the nations
and punishment on all the peoples;
to bind their kings in chains
and their nobles in fetters of iron;
to carry out the sentence pre-ordained:
this honour is for all his faithful.

Alleluia. The Lord has risen, as he promised. Alleluia.

Intercessions – praying for those in need of Easter hope today.

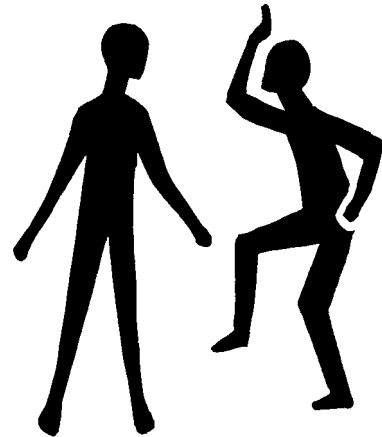
Our Father...

FIRST READING OF THE DAY – ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 3:1-10

Once, when Peter and John were going up to the Temple for the prayers at the ninth hour, it happened that there was a man being carried past. He was a cripple from birth; and they used to put him down every day near the Temple entrance called the Beautiful Gate so that he could beg from the people going in. When this man saw Peter and John on their way into the Temple he begged from them.

Both Peter and John looked straight at him and said, 'Look at us.'

He turned to them expectantly, hoping to get something from them, but Peter said, 'I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk!' Peter then took him by the hand and helped him to stand up. Instantly his feet and ankles became firm, he jumped up, stood, and began to walk, and he went with them into the Temple, walking and jumping and praising God. Everyone could see him walking and praising God, and they recognised him as the man who used to sit begging at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. They were all astonished and unable to explain what had happened to him.



Many people will be praying for a miracle today – or feeling devastated that, despite all their prayer, someone they cared for has still died. We cannot explain why some people are miraculously healed and others not. What we know in the West is that miracles are happening. Very sick people are becoming well. True, it is not because someone has looked at them and taken them by the hand. It is more usually the combined efforts of many people sharing their expertise and, in the cases of Coronavirus, their courage in the long haul of supporting people through the illness. God is working through their efforts – and those working in far more difficult situations in war-torn and poverty-stricken countries. We are usually relieved when someone we love becomes well – but, perhaps, we should also share the astonishment felt by those around the lame man. Those who were close to death being brought back by the love and care of strangers.

- Read the passage slowly – as if hearing someone is describing the scene as an eye-witness.
- Which word, phrase or, perhaps, an image seems to resonate most deeply with? Jot them down – or sit with it for a while to internalise it.
- You might like to use some of your reflection time praying with those in Intensive Care Units – on recovery wards – in care homes. Those looking at patients and observing symptoms but trying not to lose sight of the person. Those reaching out hands of healing and compassion to intubate and monitor – but touching with professional love those who are very sick. Pray particularly for those who feel that they have few resources left – but who carry on regardless.
- Use your word or phrase as a mantra as you go through the morning.

NOON – THE ANGELUS



The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,
and she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

Behold the handmaid of the Lord,
Be it done unto me according to your word.

Hail Mary...

And the Word was made flesh,
and dwelt amongst us.

Hail Mary...

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may, by his Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

Through the same Christ our Lord,
Amen

Intercessions – praying for those in need today.
Our Father

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY – LUKE 24:13-35

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us; they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.



When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.'

So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

- Spend a few minutes praying with this Gospel. It is rich so you might like to take it a stage at a time: the walk – the stranger – the meal – the recognition – the return.
- Around the world today, there are people on their own "road to Emmaus". There are people whose lives have fallen apart following the death of a loved one. Life no longer makes sense. Like the disciples, they could not hold their loved one's hand at the end. The funeral will seem perfunctory... Just like Jesus'. They are bewildered by the events they are caught up in. Pray for them today – that Christ comes alongside them and eases the burden until – sometime in the future – they recognise that they were never abandoned but loved through it all.
- How might you be open to the fact that Christ might use your eyes – your ears – your hands – to be his way of reaching out in love to those in need? And how might you respond to St Teresa of Avila's assertion that:

"Christ has no body on earth now but yours,
no hands but yours,
no feet but yours;
yours are the eyes through which he looks with
compassion on the world;
yours are the feet with which he walks to do good;
yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world."

REVIEW OF THE DAY

When have you been aware of Christ walking alongside you today?

Where have God's words made your heart burn today?

Where have you felt challenged by them?

How have you sensed that Christ might call you to be his hands – eyes – ears – feet – mouth?

And how might you respond to that call? What grace do you want to pray for to accomplish the task?

Join in the prayer that will enfold the world tonight...

NIGHT PRAYER OF THE CHURCH - COMPLINE

O God, come to our aid.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Psalm 90 (91) The protection of the Most High

"Behold, I have given you power to tread under foot both serpents and scorpions." (Lk 10: 19)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High

and abides in the shade of the Almighty

says to the Lord: "My refuge,

my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!"

It is he who will free you from the snare
of the fowler who seeks to destroy you;
he will conceal you with his pinions
and under his wings you will find refuge.

You will not fear the terror of the night
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the plague that prowls in the darkness
nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand fall at your right,
you, it will never approach;
his faithfulness is buckler and shield.

Your eyes have only to look
to see how the wicked are repaid,
you who have said: "Lord, my refuge!"
and have made the Most High your dwelling.

Upon you no evil shall fall,
no plague approach where you dwell.
For you has he commanded his angels,
to keep you in all your ways.

They shall bear you upon their hands
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
On the lion and the viper you will tread
and trample the young lion and the dragon.

Since he clings to me in love, I will free him;
protect him for he knows my name.
When he calls I shall answer: "I am with you."
I will save him in distress and give him glory.

With length of life I will content him;
I shall let him see my saving power.
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Short Reading – Apocalypse 22: 4-5

They will see the Lord face to face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. It will never be night again and they will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign for ever and ever.

Short Responsory

This is the day which was made by the Lord: let us rejoice and be glad, alleluia!

Canticle - Nunc Dimittis

Save us, Lord, while we are awake; protect us while we sleep; that we may keep watch with Christ and rest with him in peace.

At last, all-powerful Master,
you give leave to your servant go in peace.
according to your promise.

For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations,
the light to enlighten the Gentiles
and give glory to Israel, your people.
Glory be ...

Save us, Lord, while we are awake; protect us while we sleep; that we may keep watch with Christ and rest with him in peace.

Let us pray.

God our Father,
as we have celebrated today the mystery of the Lord's resurrection,
grant our humble prayer:
free us from all harm
that we may sleep in peace
and rise in joy to sing your praise.
Through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Marian Anthem

Regina Caeli

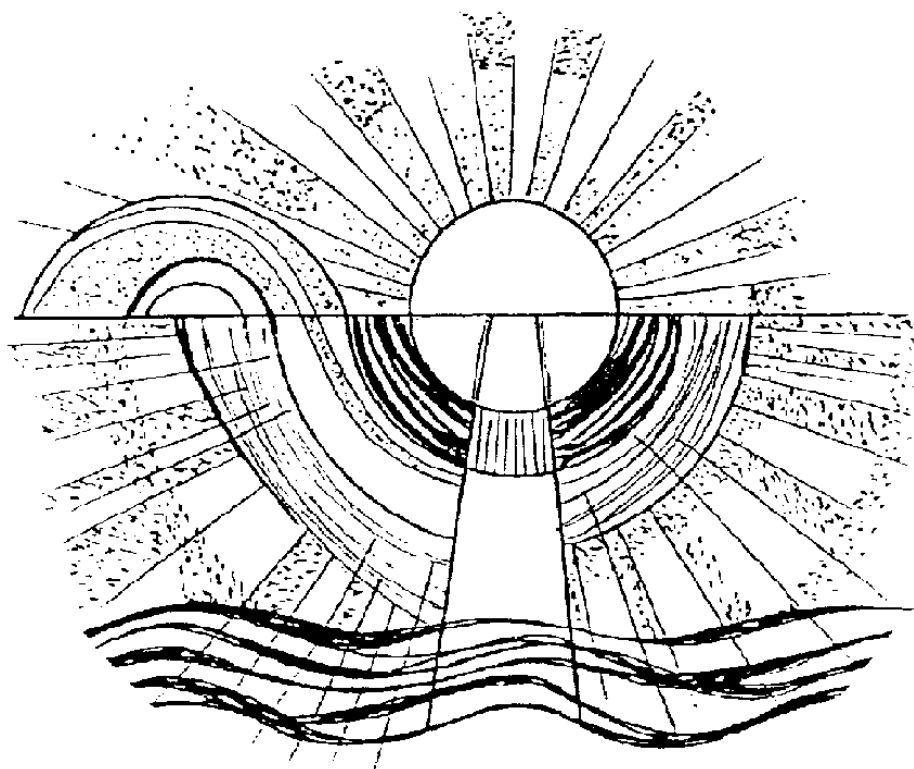
Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia!
for he whom you were worthy to bear, alleluia!
has risen for us as he said, alleluia!
Pray for us to God, alleluia!

Regina caeli, Laetare, alleluia!
quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia!
resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia!
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia!

Intercessions – placing those for whom you wish to pray into the hands and heart of God.

Prayer of St Augustine

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake,
or watch, or weep tonight,
and give your angels and saints
charge over those who sleep.
Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.
Rest your weary ones.
Bless your dying ones.
Soothe your suffering ones.
Pity your afflicted ones.
Shield your joyous ones,
and all for your love's sake. Amen.



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