



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 18 APRIL 2021 - 3rd Sunday of Easter

COLLECT

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples
with the sight of the risen Lord:
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,
that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Psalm 4

- 1 Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness; ♦
you set me at liberty when I was in trouble;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.
- 2 How long will you nobles dishonour my glory; ♦
how long will you love vain things and seek after falsehood?
- 3 But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness; ♦
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.
- 4 Stand in awe, and sin not; ♦
commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.
- 5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness ♦
and put your trust in the Lord.
- 6 There are many that say, 'Who will show us any good?' ♦
Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us.
- 7 You have put gladness in my heart, ♦
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.
- 8 In peace I will lie down and sleep, ♦
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.

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Acts 3.12-19

12 When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? 13 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. 14 But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, 15 and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. 16 And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you. 17 "And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. 19 Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out."

Luke 24.36b-48

Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 37 They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38 He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate in their presence.

44 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 46 and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things."

Reflection - This week we share with you a piece entitled 'Those Glorious Scars', written by Ken Taylor in his book Sunday by Sunday, Volume 1, published by Kevin Mayhew

His (Jesus's) coming is almost 'played down': they are talking quietly, incredulously, together, and then they realise he is there. There is an amazing restraint about the Resurrection; no blast of trumpets heralds the new creation. This is the way God usually works – quietly, unobtrusively, almost unnoticed, often unrecognised, and with great humility.

What sort of body is this?

He cannot be touched by Mary 'until he is ascended',
but invites the touch of Thomas,
and those he met in this room;
he is no ghost, but 'flesh and blood'
and can eat fish;

he can pass through walls and locked doors
(so he had no need to move that Stone
except to show that he was gone);

and he can appear and disappear at will.

Seen only by those who love him,
is it only because he is unexpected
that he is so hard to recognise?

What kind of body is this?

Easter faith asserts that Jesus lives
but claims nothing specific about a resurrected corpse
or defines what a 'resurrection body' is.

How can we understand life in another dimension,
or this glimpse of a new creation?

We are facing mystery.

When he held the bread at Emmaus,
and in the upper room,
especially with Thomas,
the marks in his hands and feet,
wounded for our transgressions,
bruised for our iniquities,
are the signs by which he is recognised.

We need to explore more fully
how the presence of the living Christ
is best identified by the marks of suffering Love.

A living Church,
alive to Christ, alive in Christ,
will show the same marks of Love.

'Bearing in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus'
means living the way that Jesus died.

Amen.