



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 14 APRIL 2024 - EASTER 3

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.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 3, verses 12-19

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? 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. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. 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. 'And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:

The second reading is from Luke, chapter 24, verses 36b-48.

and then at the end:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel and it is introduced with an Acclamation, as below:

Alleluia.

Alleluia.

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke, chapter 24, verses 36b-48.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 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.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

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.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 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, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

A Reflection from Peter...

I remember a meeting of the monastic chapter at Mirfield years and years ago when the Superior was doing a very ordinary, annual duty. He was reading out the list of names of brothers whom he had asked to take on particular responsibility for things in the monastery – who would be the guest brother, the librarian, teach in the College and all the rest. It was all going as normal until he read the name of the brother who was to be Sacristan. Suddenly a brother in the back of the room shouted “What?” in utter disbelief!! It was a dramatic moment. (I have to say that others shared Fr Mark’s surprise, but more quietly!) And our readings today catch something of this common experience. It can be good things; it can be bad things. It can be David Cameron’s astonishment at losing the Brexit vote; it can be American disbelief that Donald Trump won the election in 2016; it can be the “surely it can’t be true” shock that comes over us on hearing that the Archers omnibus edition is moving to 11 am on a Sunday – or it could be the first time someone saw a solar eclipse. Even now it is an astonishing, strange event. But for people who had no idea what was happening, it must have been terrifying.

Our readings this morning record something of this kind of reaction to two events. The Gospel is obviously talking about the Resurrection of Jesus; the reading from the Acts of the Apostles about the man who Peter healed at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple – an action directly related to the Resurrection, but quite different.

What are we to take from this? First, this is a reminder of just how different it is to live in the world and see it as God sees it; a reminder that, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, ‘My ways are not your ways, says the Lord.’ Secondly, that God is infinitely patient. St Luke says, “while in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering...”: God gives us time to allow the divine reality to sink in. And thirdly, that, in contrast to everyday experiences, God’s surprises are always good!