



St Mark's Church, Reigate

May 2022

Letter from the Vicar, Father Martin Colton

Dear Friends,

We are privileged to be living in Britain and to have such distinct seasons. Whilst climate change is causing some worrying changes in our weather, the seasons still help us mark time and help give rhythm to our lives. Along with the seasons we also have the Festivals that help our spiritual journeying. We have experienced the light in the darkness at Christmas, and now we are in the Easter season. It feels like over recent years we have had far too much Good Friday horror and Easter Saturday waiting. After the disruption and disharmony of Brexit came the fear and loss of the Covid Crisis. Just as it felt like we were beginning to emerge from that, we are plunged into the dreadful situation in Ukraine. How we have been longing for Easter Sunday resurrection joy when we declare "Alleluia, Christ is risen". We want for everything to be made right, made whole again, and for the pain to go away.

But as we look at that first Easter when Mary finds that Christ has risen and death has been overcome, we see that outwardly the circumstances of the disciples hadn't changed. They were still living as oppressed people, under Roman occupation. That didn't end with the resurrection. Some would go on to suffer great persecution, even death. Their lives were not changed on the outside but they were changed on the inside. Christ's resurrection didn't change their circumstances but it did change their destiny. The journey remained hard but the destination was different.

They experienced hope that wasn't dependent on what was happening on the outside but was from knowing that they were loved by Jesus, loved enough that he died for them and that he overcame death that they may have eternal life.

We too can know that whatever is going on in our circumstances we can live in the reality of Easter Sunday every day. Eternal life is not just for when we die, it is from today – from now. Writer Henri Nouwen says, "This is the enormous revolution, that in this fleeting, temporary world, he comes to plant the seed of eternal life ... it is the life of the Divine Spirit within us ... Become aware of this mysterious presence and life turns around."

May you know the hope and joy that is found in Christ this Easter, and join us as we proclaim, "He is risen indeed, Alleluia!"

With my prayers and blessings.