



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION**  
**SUNDAY 20 APRIL 2025 – Easter Day**

**COLLECT**

Lord of all life and power,  
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son  
overcame the old order of sin and death  
to make all things new in him:  
grant that we, being dead to sin  
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,  
may reign with him in glory;  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit  
be praise and honour, glory and might,  
now and in all eternity.

**Psalm 118. 1-2, 14-24**

- 1 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; ♦  
his mercy endures for ever.
- 2 Let Israel now proclaim, ♦  
'His mercy endures for ever.'
- 14 The Lord is my strength and my song, ♦  
and he has become my salvation.
- 15 Joyful shouts of salvation ♦  
sound from the tents of the righteous:
- 16 'The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds; the right hand of the Lord raises up; ♦  
the right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.'
- 17 I shall not die, but live ♦  
and declare the works of the Lord.
- 18 The Lord has punished me sorely, ♦  
but he has not given me over to death.
- 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, ♦  
that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.
- 20 This is the gate of the Lord; ♦  
the righteous shall enter through it.
- 21 I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me ♦  
and have become my salvation.
- 22 The stone which the builders rejected ♦  
has become the chief cornerstone.
- 23 This is the Lord's doing, ♦  
and it is marvellous in our eyes.
- 24 This is the day that the Lord has made; ♦  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

**A reading from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 10, verses 34-43.**

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

This is 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 John, chapter 20, verses 1-18.

***and then at the end:***

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

***For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):***

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 John, chapter 20, verses 1-18.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

***And then at the end:***

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## John 20. 1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." ' Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

## *A Reflection from Peter*

At the Chrism Mass in Lichfield Cathedral this Maundy Thursday the preacher was Bishop Matthew of Stafford. He took as his text “Are any cheerful?” from the letter of James. Surely, we think, being cheerful is how life should be... But Bp Matthew talked about opening his emails for the day, and wondering as he waded through the barrage of misery, whether there were any cheerful people at all! Now we all recognise the way in which every moment of joy and rejoicing can so easily be swallowed up by yet another blast of something awful. But this is Easter Day; the feast of feasts, the pinnacle of the Christian mystery. Alleluia! Christ is risen! What could be better than that?

It’s tempting to write at length about the miracle of resurrection, but instead let me make two observations.

First, we are generally better at being miserable than happy. Things going wrong is so much part of our experience that we can get to grips with that. Everything being wonderful and perfect always seems too good to be true and we are either inclined to distrust our response or to allow ourselves to slip back into expecting another bit of awfulness round the next corner.

Secondly, we usually have unreal expectations of ourselves. If we’re told something is really special, then we try to appreciate it – even if we can’t see anything special about it, no matter how hard we try. And when it comes to Easter we know that we’re supposed to rejoice, but we generally breathe a sigh of relief when we get beyond Pentecost and ‘ordinary’ time resumes. One of our hymns talks about an ‘endless alleluia’ – and that’s just how Easter seems sometimes!

So, what do we do? Look to our Gospel. Mary Magdalene had found in Jesus someone who understood her, who loved her and who had changed her life. Then he was taken from her, put to death and buried in the tomb. She goes, weighed down by grief. Even when the risen Jesus is standing behind her she can’t see through the anguish and sorrow. Even as Jesus begins to talk to her she remains blinded by grief. This must be the gardener, she thinks. Then Jesus says, “Mary!” – and she **knows**. In other words, it is God who brings about the change. It is God who gives the joy, a kind of joy that is itself a participation in God, a kind of joy that cannot be taken away. Faith in God, faith in the resurrection is not about working up a certain kind of attitude or character in ourselves. It is simply letting the truth of God begin to penetrate to the depths of our being. Then, life will go on: the good and the bad, the rough and the smooth, but everything will rest in the foundational truth of God, “Be of good courage: I have overcome the world!”