



DURHAM CATHEDRAL

THE SHRINE OF ST CUTHBERT

Praying Together

*during the week beginning Sunday 26 April:
The Third Sunday of Easter*

During this time of great anxiety and uncertainty, we want to stay in touch with our regular worshippers and indeed with everyone who is associated with the Cathedral family.

This is particularly important to us at a time when, following the Church of England's instructions, public worship at the Cathedral has been suspended. The residential clergy are still saying the Daily Offices at home and they are being live-streamed via the cathedral website where there is a link that takes you to the Cathedral's Facebook page (you don't need a Facebook account).

We hope that this pamphlet will provide you with important worship and prayer resources for use at home as well as a reminder of how to keep in touch with us, especially if you have particularly needs. Please be assured that you are firmly in our thoughts and prayers, and please pray for us at this very difficult and worrying time.

Gospel

Luke 24. 13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and

told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Thought for the Day

by The Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

This passage of scripture, which is often called 'The Road to Emmaus', holds a particular fascination for me and is one I return to again and again. There's a personal connection, an authenticity about how the gospel is communicated, and a mission imperative.

My personal connection takes me back to the mid-1990's when I was a Chaplain serving at the English Church in Rotterdam. The First World War was a difficult time for the English community there. The Netherlands remained neutral and foreign military personnel were interned. The Chaplain at that time visited the interned POW's in Groningen and as a thank-offering a three- paneled reredos behind the altar was painted.

The interned Royal Navy personnel has echoes of the isolation we are experiencing at the moment.

The central panel depicts Jesus breaking bread – ‘then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him’ – and it’s a picture which remains in my minds-eye whenever I celebrate Communion.

There’s also an underlying authenticity which comes out for me – the story chimes in with how I have experienced the gospel.

This episode in Luke’s gospel opens with the two disciples in a dejected state, wondering what on earth had happened during the Passover. Then Jesus enters the scene, but they don’t recognise him – ‘What are you discussing while you walk along?’

Then, in true rabbinic style, Jesus the teacher leads them through scripture to show how all these things had to happen. And finally the imperative of hospitality kicks in, and the disciples almost compel Jesus to join them for supper. And it’s at that point that the penny drops, and their eyes are opened.

So the second point about this passage is that this really is a journey of faith: there are stages which involve the reality of human experience, the ups & downs of our lives; it is something we come to ‘on the road’, it is gradual; and then there is a light-bulb moment – ‘Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him’.

But alongside my own personal connection and my strong sense of how strongly this chimes with personal experience, the punchline is not that they had a wonderful experience of the Resurrection, nor that the eyes of their faith were opened, but rather ‘Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made know to them in the breaking of the bread’. They had good news to share.

In other words, that very real encounter was not enough in itself; faith is not self-serving or self-sufficient. Meeting with Jesus through scripture, encountering him in the sacrament of bread and wine has to lead somewhere – and that somewhere is making him known to others, even in these days of isolation through our deeds and our words.

As St Francis is often quoted: ‘Preach the gospel always; use words if you must’.

Prayers of Intercession

Jesus, our exalted Lord, has been given all authority.

Let us seek his intercession that our prayers may be perfected by his prayer.

Jesus Christ, great high priest,
living for ever to intercede for us,
pray for the Church, your broken body in the world,
at Durham Cathedral and in our own local churches.

Silence is kept.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, King of righteousness,
enthroned at the right hand of the majesty on high,
pray for the world, and make it subject to your gentle rule,
for politicians and health experts
as they seek to guide us through the current pandemic.

Silence is kept.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, Son of Man,
drawing humanity into the life of God,
pray for your sisters and brothers in need, distress, or sorrow,
especially those experiencing the effects of coronavirus.

Silence is kept.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus, pioneer of our salvation,
bringing us to glory through your death and resurrection,
surround with your saints and angels
those who have died trusting your promises:
those whom we have known and whose memory we treasure.

Silence is kept.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, Lord over all things,
ascended far above the heavens and filling the universe,
pray for us who receive the gifts you give us for work in your service
as we seek to minister after your example in the world.

Silence is kept.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ,
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at your feet;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

An Easter Hymn

The Day of Resurrection!
Earth, tell it out abroad;
The Passover of gladness,
The Passover of God!
From death to life eternal,
From earth unto the sky,
Our Christ hath brought us over
With hymns of victory.

Our hearts be pure from evil,
That we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal
Of resurrection-light;
And, listening to his accents,
May hear so calm and plain
His own 'All hail,' and, hearing,
May raise the victor strain.

Now let the heavens be joyful,
And earth her song begin,
The round world keep high triumph,
And all that is therein;
Let all things seen and unseen
Their notes of gladness blend,
For Christ the Lord hath risen,
Our joy that hath no end.

*Greek, St John of Damascus,
translated by John Mason Neale*

Easter Hymn: A E Housman (1859-1936)

A E Housman considers the two thousand years of wrong that have followed Christ's death and resurrection and wonders if they contradict the Gospel message of salvation or if in fact we need the Easter message all the more.

If in that Syrian garden, ages slain,
You sleep, and know not you are dead in vain,
Nor even in dreams behold how dark and bright
Ascends in smoke and fire by day and night
The hate you died to quench and could but fan,
Sleep well and see no morning, son of man.

But if, the grave rent and the stone rolled by,
At the right hand of majesty on high
You sit, and sitting so remember yet
Your tears, your agony and bloody sweat,
Your cross and passion and the life you gave,
Bow hither out of heaven and see and save.

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A Prayer for use during the Coronavirus outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who are in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

A Prayer of Hippolytus of Rome (c 170-235)

Christ is risen: the world below lies desolate;
Christ is risen: the spirits of evil are fallen;
Christ is risen: the angels of God are rejoicing;
Christ is risen: the tombs of the dead are empty;
Christ is risen indeed from the dead,
the first of the sleepers.
Glory and power are his for ever and ever. Amen.

The next issue of *Praying Together*
will be published on Monday 4 May