

Reflection Easter Day

During my morning coffee break which I am taking sitting in the sun quietly in the Rectory garden, I have been reading Rowan Williams' reflection on the experience of being in New York in 2001. He writes about the immediate impact of the attack on the Twin Towers, and subsequent events. While the current pandemic is certainly not an exact parallel, some of his reflections offer an insight which is helpful now.

"The trauma can offer a breathing space; and in that space there is the possibility of recognising that we have had an experience that is not just a nightmarish insult to *us* but a door into the suffering of countless other innocents, a suffering that is more or less routine for them in their less regularly protected environments.

And in the face of extreme dread, we may become conscious, as people often do, of two very fundamental choices. We can cling harder and harder to the rock of our threatened identity—a choice, finally, for self-delusion over truth; or we can accept that we shall have *no* ultimate choice but to let go, and in that letting go, give room to what's there around us—to the sheer impression of the moment, to the need of the person next to you, to the fear that needs to be looked at, acknowledged and calmed (not denied). If that happens, the heart has room for many strangers, near and far. There is global hospitality too in the presence to death."

Rowan Williams, *Writing in the Dust* 2002.

Fr David

Church of England coronavirus prayer Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

NEXT SUNDAY 19th April 2020

SERVICES Public worship suspended



READINGS

(NT): Acts 2:14a, 22-32

NT: 1 Peter 1:3-9

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

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(suspended)



St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 12th April 2020

Easter Sunday

Last week's pewsheet mentioned the idea of a **Community Larder** in partnership with our Christian neighbours in St Thomas. This would operate in a similar way to a Food Bank and be based at St Thomas Methodist Church. It would be open to all on the basis of referrals from local clergy, The infrastructure of this has not been finalised, but we are hoping the collecting of non-perishable goods like rice, pasta, tinned fruit and vegetables, perhaps some chocolate treats might start very soon.

In this respect, the Church Hall will be open on Wednesday and Friday of next week (15 & 17 April), between 10 and 12 to receive donations. You could use this as part of a walk, but do not take any unnecessary risks. To help social distancing, people will be asked to go in via the main door and out through a Fire Exit, and leave goods in the main hall. If you are not leaving your house, we will find ways of making a collection.

This is a really suitable sign of hope for Easter Week. We will try and keep this pattern going, but please watch this space.



Fr David

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. **Amen**

Jeremiah 31:1-6

At that time, says the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus says the Lord: The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall take your tambourines, and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers. Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit. For there shall be a day when sentinels will call in the hill country of Ephraim: Come, let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God.'

Acts of the Apostles 10:34-43

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.'

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.

Post-Communion Prayer

God of life, who for our redemption gave your only - begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NOTICES

Fr Charles' last Sunday is Easter Day. We were planning on a shared meal and presentation, but obviously this won't happen now. If you would like to pledge a donation for this, please speak to Ian. We can leave Charles a card and a gift outside his door, and maybe do something later on.

We are trying on these two Sundays (Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday) to be saying our prayers in some form **together at 10.30** in the morning, and to be intentionally holding each other up to God, and praying for the wider community of St Thomas. I encourage you to try this.

One of the suggestions from the Bishop is that we light a candle and put it in our windows at **7pm on Sunday evenings**, as a mark of prayer and solidarity.