

Wednesday Word

In reflection on the message for Sunday 16th April 2023.

First Reading: extracts from John 20, v1-18. **The Empty Tomb.**

v1: **Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.**

This is the passage which reports Peter and the disciples witnessing Christ's resurrection,
Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene.

v11f: **Mary stood outside the tomb crying...Two angels in white... asked, "Woman why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said.**
v14f: **She turned around and saw Jesus standing there but did not realise it was Jesus.**
He asked the same question as the angels, "Woman why are you crying?" adding,
"Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said,
"Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him."
v16: **Jesus said to her, "Mary". She realised, crying out in Aramaic,"Rabboni."**
v17f: **Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.**

Go instead to my brothers and tell them
'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'
Mary went to the disciples with the news:
"I have seen the Lord!"

Second Reading: extracts from John 20, v19-29. **Jesus Appears to His Disciples.**

v19: **On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders,**

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

v20f: **After he said this he showed them his hands and side.**

The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said,
"Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

v22: **And with that he breathed on them and said,**
"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven;
If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus Appears to Thomas Didymus (often called 'doubting Thomas') who was absent when Jesus came and who refused to believe until he could touch Jesus' hands and side. Jesus told Thomas to do so, then Jesus said, (v29) **"Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."**

Sermon: Resurrection: It is clear from our readings that the disciples had a problem with understanding the events of the resurrection of Jesus. We all have our thoughts on what the resurrection (the risen Christ) is about. The many appearances of Jesus in the lives of the disciples, to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Saul/Paul, to those on the Emmaus Road, etc., help us to realise that we in modern times we have our own experiences of meeting God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Thus, as believers, we should have no doubts that Jesus is alive for us and we meet him in our private and Church life. That we shared together today in the Sacrament of Holy Communion should have dispelled all doubts about the living Christ.