

Luke 24:36 - 48

Good morning

Well I don't know about anyone else but these last couple of weeks of sunshine have been really appreciated. People walk round with their heads up smiling. The world seems some how newer, fresher and full of colour.... Reborn....Refreshed. A very fitting way to start the Easter season with the gift of the resurrection.

It is an even more fitting because this morning we will see Harriet baptised, a washing away of the old and the beginning of a new life in Christ's church!

It's a day of sunshine and new beginnings.

However, it's not enough to proclaim, "Christ is risen!" It's not enough to believe in the resurrection. At some point we have to move from the event of the resurrection to experiencing the resurrection.

Here I am talking about new life and new beginnings, but experiencing resurrected life begins with recognizing the risen Christ among us. That is the gift of Easter and it is also the difficulty and challenge described in today's gospel.

Cleopas and his companion are telling the other

disciples how Jesus appeared to them on the road to Emmaus when Jesus, again, shows up out of nowhere, interrupting their conversation. "Peace be with you," he says.

They see him, they hear his voice, but they don't recognize him. They "thought that they were seeing a ghost." They know Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried.

This can only be a ghost, a spirit without a body. The tomb is open but their minds are closed. They are unable to recognize the holiness that stands among them. They are continuing to live, think, and understand in their usual way.

They have separated spirit and matter, divinity and humanity, heaven and earth.

Whenever we make that separation we close our minds, and we lose our sense of, and ability to recognize holiness in the world, in one another, and in ourselves.

Resurrected life can never be comprehended, contained, or controlled by human thought or understanding. Jesus' resurrection compels us to step outside our usual human understandings of reality and enter into the divine reality.

That new reality begins with touching and seeing, flesh and bones, hands and feet, and broiled fish. Jesus said to his disciples, "Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself."

Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." Then "he showed them his hands and his feet." After this he ate a piece of broiled fish in their presence.

The resurrected body and life of Christ unite the visible and invisible, matter and spirit, humanity and divinity. On the one hand Jesus has a real body. On the other hand it is not subject to the natural laws of time and space. It's not one or the other. It's both. It is a new and different reality.

The degree to which we have allowed ourselves to be bound by our humanity is the degree to which are unable to see resurrected life and holiness in this world.

We bind ourselves through our fears, our sorrows and losses, our runaway thoughts and distractions, our attachments and addictions to things, people, and even beliefs.

Sometimes it's our unwillingness to allow or trust God to grow and change us. In binding ourselves to the closely to our humanity we lose recognition of and

the ability to live in the sacred. That's the very opposite of resurrected life.

The resurrected life of Christ reveals that all creation and every one of us are filled with God, holiness, divinity. Nothing can bind or supersede the grace that is given us through resurrection: unconditional love, unconditional forgiveness, unconditional life. That is, I think, one of the most difficult things for us to see, believe, and live into. Although sometimes we can glimpse it in the smile of a baby, the joy of a child, the innocence and trust we see in children like Hattie and Isabelle her sister.

It is, however, the divine reality into which we are invited, not at some future time and place but here and now.

That's what Jesus did for the disciples and it's what he does for us. That the disciples were witnesses does not mean they had all the answers. It means they now had the life Jesus wants to give them.

It's a life that is open for us.
A resurrected life.

As we see Harriet baptized today with the living water into her new life. Carry that moment with you, live with it and hold it close, let it open your eyes, your heart, and your mind to the life Christ is offering you.

Let it be the voice of Christ opening your mind to understand. Sit with it. Pray with it. Wrestle with it. Trust it.

The resurrected life is yours. You are witnesses. You are witnesses.

Amen