



St Marylebone
Parish Church



Easter Sunday 2020, 8.30am BCP Holy Communion

Readings:

The Epistle of St Paul to the Colossians 3.1

The Holy Gospel according to St John 20.1

Christ is Risen. Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia!

There are moments in our lives that change us and define us. In novels and films they are often moments of decision, of love or tragedy. This is true of real life too, but I suspect that many of our lives have also been permanently shaped by much smaller moments. ‘Sliding Doors moments’, ‘forks in the road’. Many are forgotten or unnoticed, and at least for the most part unless we stop and think we live without them at the forefront of our mind.

This is true of life. It is also true of human history.

Today, we stop and notice.

Today we stop and notice an event that has permanently and irreversibly shaped the history of the universe. It has also permanently and irreversibly shaped your life.

It is the **Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth**, but you already knew that.

The Church’s year provides the path on which we walk our lives together, so that we *don’t* sleepwalk, but are always becoming more alive and awake to the true

depths of being a human being fully alive. An essential aspect of this is being called each year to plunge into the reality of the Resurrection of Christ. It's *too* important not to.

In several lockdown evenings I've been playing cards over zoom with friends. It's been a real laugh. Well, this is the moment when God shows His hand completely. All the cards on the table.

Death and sadness and pain and the fear and separation that eats away at the heart of our human condition are all eclipsed. **Jesus goes through it all, and comes out the other side.** 'Death where is your sting?'
Gone.

We are living through the death-throws of death; hell's 'last gasp'. But the game is up. Our destiny is set: life forever through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father.

And that moment at the heart of human history, conveyed in those electrifying words of St John's Gospel, is not only *the* moment in the *universal* history. It is also *the* moment in *my* history. In *your* history. **Through our baptism, we died with Jesus and rose with Him.** We have been sealed with the victory of the New Covenant, washed in the Blood of the Lamb. **Today, as you make your Spiritual Communion via this video that reality lives in you.** Through God's Sacramental action we are immersed in the events of history [backwards] and the life of heaven [to come], all at once.

And blimey, we're not in heaven yet. And don't we just know it at the moment, surrounded by fear and loneliness and death and confusion? But...

But even amongst such frailty (maybe especially amongst such frailty) today as the Church we stop and notice the truth that has permanently and irreversibly shaped the history of the universe, and permanently and irreversibly shaped your life and mine.

In Jesus, death has been deprived of the last word. Everlasting life has become our true homeland. This is not 'destiny' spoken of by dictators and Disney cartoons, this is the real thing. **This is our destination, and the point of our daily lives:** the substance of our ordinary living, our relating, our working, our praying, our worshipping, our family life and friendships, our living and all that we are and all that we do in between now and when we go home to God. This Eastertide and every day of our lives, let us live this truth and share this truth. Christ is Risen. Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia!