

RCIA: SESSION TWENTY-SEVEN

Resurrection

Week: 24/04/23-30/04/23

1. Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

- Christ's Resurrection is an object of faith in that it is a transcendent intervention of God himself in creation and history. (CCC no. 648).
- For us it means that 'not only do our souls survive physical death, but even our bodies will rise again at the end of time at the Last Judgement and resurrection of the dead.'¹ (See 1 Cor. 15:12-19).
- All four Gospel accounts of the Resurrection have a similar structure in narrating the event: Mary Magdalene and a companion go to the tomb on Easter Sunday morning; they find the tomb empty; they meet an angel who proclaims the Resurrection of Jesus; the angel tells them to bring the Good News to the Apostles; Mary Magdalene, the first witness to the Resurrection, does so.
- Jesus appears to his Apostles and disciples on various occasions. 'He appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too.' (1 Cor. 15:5-8). The scriptures also detail appearances to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-32) to Thomas (Jn. 20:26-29) and to the eleven (Mt. 28:16-20).
- The empty tomb demonstrates what God had done in raising his son. When St John entered the empty tomb 'he saw and he believed' (Jn. 20:8).
- Easter eggs: For many years people gave up eggs for Lent and they were collected up to be used during the days of Easter. People swapped eggs and gave them as gifts or reward for doing the Lenten fast. Sometimes the story of Easter would be painted on the eggs. A chick hatching from an egg reflects Jesus rising from the dead and leaving the tomb. When the Lenten fast moved on to people giving up sweet things, chocolate eggs became the norm in many parts of the world. As you give an egg or eat one reflect on its significance to us as Christians.

¹ Irish Catholic Catechism for Adults, p.103.

- Butterfly: Butterflies undergo a complete metamorphosis, which means there are four separate stages in the life cycle: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis) and adult (butterfly). Each stage looks completely different and the change from caterpillar to butterfly is often used to symbolise the Resurrection.

2. Gospel Reflection: Sunday 30th April is the Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year A (Jn 10:1-10)

The following format will be used for all Gospel reflections:

- Read the text aloud.
- Pause for a minute's silence.
- Read the text aloud again.
- Ask everyone to pick a word or a phrase that struck them. They just say the word or phrase without comment or discussion.
- Read the text again.
- Ask those present to comment on their word or phrase. What struck them about it? Why/how is it speaking to them?
- Continue with the discussion. The following questions may be helpful: What does this mean to me? How does it make me feel? Do I find the text disturbing/hopeful/confusing? What images of God emerge for me? What do I think that God is saying in this text? What impact does this have on my life?

GOSPEL READING

Reader: The Lord be with you.

Response: And with your spirit.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said:

'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them. So **J**esus spoke to them again:



'I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold.

All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them

I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.