

5th April 2021 Easter Monday

Gospel: Matthew 28:8-15

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! This is the cry of this week where every day is Easter day. Such is the greatness of this solemnity that we cannot celebrate it on only one day, it lasts for eight days! Therefore, this week the Gospels present us with the different accounts of the Resurrection. We can get uptight about the slightly different versions in each of the Gospels, but that is to miss a point. Instead, we need to focus on what they have in common, and that is the utter astonishment at the Resurrection, despite Christ's predictions, which were only truly understood after the event!

Today's Gospel presents contrasting reactions: those of the women whose shock and initial fear (why else would Jesus tell them not to be afraid) was overcome with joy as they did what Jesus asked – to tell the brothers (the Apostles and other disciples) the Good News of the Resurrection,



and the fear of the guards and the authorities and the efforts they went to, to hush up the Resurrection. In this painting by Piero de la Francesca* traditionally the figure in brown in the middle, is accepted to be that of the artist. On being asked why he included himself, he responded that it's to show that we can all sometimes sleep through God's most amazing works!

Note that the tomb stretches right across the page. There is no way around. Whilst our Easter celebrations this year have been muted by the regulations and limitations in the light of the Covid pandemic, we need to hold on the fact that Christ has risen from the dead! He has overcome all evil. The

psalmist wrote, "With the Lord on my side, I do not fear. What can man do to me?" (Ps. 118:6). The way to heaven is through the tomb and out again on the other side. United to Christ in our Baptism, we are now one body with Him. Whatever we suffer, Jesus suffers with us. But this gives us hope, for that union with Him is also in His Resurrection. Let us therefore keep alert, so as not miss the most amazing miracle of all, Christ is risen from the dead and because He has, we will too (I Cor. 15:20:22).

*Picture accessed from https://www.posterlounge.co.uk/p/315194.html?gclid=CjwKCAjwx6WDBhBOEiwA_dP8rd1iLLm2w-wOuFECV_jpdC8c44OkA3v-EX8G9jtuw-dZtoPebnFnaRoCc4wQAvD_BwE 4/4/21