

**EASTER DAY : ST GEORGE'S EASTERGATE ;**  
**APRIL 12 2020.**

**OUR Gospel reading tells of an event that turned people's lives around, albeit over 2000years ago...it has continued to do that ever since.**

**The sequence of events was breathtaking. Jesus' followers had been devastated by the events of the last few days; they were in mourning for someone to whom they had become very close and in whom all their spiritual hopes were placed. All Mary could think of doing was going to weep and be quiet by Jesus' tomb...we can understand that can't we! Horror of horrors she found the tomb had been tampered with, the stone rolled away. She**

**understandably assumed the body had been stolen. She rushed back to find Peter and John and they quickly rushed there with her. When they arrived at the scene they could see that it was exactly as she had described...it was Peter, who had only 3 days earlier denied that he knew Jesus when Jesus was on trial for his life, who had the courage to go right inside that tomb...From the account we have it seems that what he found indicated that the body had just been spirited away...the grave clothes were completely undisturbed. At that point we are told the light began to dawn on them...John also went in and "he saw and believed".**

**They went back home but Mary stayed there weeping. It was then, at her lowest point, that Jesus appeared to her;...at first she thought, understandably, that he was the gardener; and it was only when he spoke her name that she realised that it was Jesus. He told her not to touch Him...he was no longer just a man and He was going back to His Father...this appearance though was for her reassurance. What an extraordinary story!**

**In our Epistle today from the book of Acts we see what happened after that. We have moved on now to merely a few months later and we see that the events of that Easter morning had already begun to change the world. We see Peter now**

**fearlessly proclaiming that Jesus had appeared on several occasions to His followers after His death so that they, as he was doing now, could tell the whole world that everyone, everyone, who believes in Him can receive forgiveness from God and be accepted by Him. That is pretty amazing is it not!!**

**What we need right now, in the year 2020, of course is to see how this Easter message is relevant to us today in the midst of a world suffering terribly. The Gospel writers do not give us lengthy descriptions of this...they just tell us what happened. What we read is that through those events a new beginning dawned. We see how from early in the morning on the first day of**

**the week; after the devastating and terrible scene of Jesus' crucifixion, people's lives began to be changed. This was not just a happy ending to a sad story: it was a continuation of that story...death was not the end of that story...God's love was breaking through into people's lives in a new way; a way they never imagined would be possible.**

**In a very real sense we are seeing the tragedy of the crucifixion being lived out in the lives of hundreds of people today...they are self sacrificially offering their own lives in order to save others. BUT, BUT...This is the love of our creator ...it is how human beings were made to be. Through this Passion and Easter story God shows us that**

**He too suffers terribly as many of us are; but that death is not the end of the story...the whole of creation IS being renewed. All WILL be well...all manner of things will be well!**

**We need to remind ourselves of this as day by day we come to Him, and week by week we share bread and wine with Him...as we are about to do this morning.**

**AMEN**