

An Eastertide Meditation

Easter is such a beautiful time.

*The Earth is bursting with new life, new growth
as we celebrate Jesus triumphant rising from the dark tomb of death.*

The church calls us to shout out our 'Alleluia Christ is risen'.

No more weeping, no more tears!

See, He has overcome death, He is risen indeed.

*We are reminded in the Easter readings of the confusion of joy
experienced by the followers of Jesus.*

*St Luke tells us that when Jesus appeared to his friends on the first Easter night,
'Their joy was so great that they could not believe it, and they stood there
dumbfounded'.*

*The resurrection stories are filled with a delirium of delight,
and we are invited by the church to be caught up in that same delight.*

Yes, Easter is the time for rejoicing.

Alas, life is not always neat and tidy.

Sometimes it is difficult

to enter into the joyful outpouring of Easter celebration.

Our hearts may be still cold with the winter chill of death and despair.

*Other may be running from the tomb with the women, full of awe and great
joy,*

*but we may sometimes find ourselves still standing in the shadow of the cross,
heavy with the weight of pain and loss.*

*As we get older, the more pain and loss there is – an accumulating of sorrows:
loss of friends and loved ones, loss of health and energy, loss of time to do all
those*

*wonderful things we had hoped for in our younger years –
broken dreams, broken promises, broken heart.*

How can we rejoice in the face of so much suffering?

*Perhaps Mary, mother of Jesus, the first disciple and best,
a model for all Christians,*

*can help us to come to terms with the paradoxes
of joy and sorrow, life and death, there are part of all our lives.*

*Surely Mary never forgot the pain of those hours standing beneath the cross
on which her son died.*

*The joy of resurrection could never take away the pain of those events.
For the rest of her life on earth Mary must have carried out that sorrow*

*as a wound that would never quite heal,
a memory that would never quite go away – a martyrdom of memories.
Surely too she still kept on singing her song of thanksgiving,
‘My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour’ –
The song she sang when filled with delight at being the mother of Jesus.*

*She sings it now in deeper knowledge
that God does indeed put down the proud and raise up the lowly,
God does fulfil the promise made from generation to generation –
Has she not seen it in the death and rising of her son?
Her pain does not go away, but though that experience of suffering
she becomes the woman of faith and hope,
the mother of mercy and compassion,
the one who believes that the promise made to her by the Lord would be
fulfilled.*

*After the resurrection, Jesus carries the wounds of the nails and spear in his
risen body,
a visible reminder of his deep love for each person.
The wounds are the marks of his suffering,
the marks of his triumph.
Now as he stands before God, pleading for us,
we can be confident that his pleas will not be ignored.
God sees the price that Jesus has paid for our salvation.
And Mary, intimately involved in the life and death of her son,
joins with him now in this great prayer of intercession,
offering her broken heart.
With such friends on our side.
What need we fear!*

*Like Mary, we too have to learn to sing that song of joy
in good times and in bad,
in sickness and health,
So to enter into the saving death of her son,
that our own lives may become a channel of grace for others.
If we died with Jesus, then we shall rise with him,
and truly our song will be ‘Alleluia’.*