

SUNDAY PLUS

Alleluia!

Jesus is risen. Alleluia!

By Mary Bell

This is the Day of Rejoicing, of praising the Lord who rose from the dead and dwells with his Father in heaven. Alleluia! For us there is light and life and hope. However, John's Gospel account begins in darkness: the shadows of early morning, the empty tomb, the sense of loss. The body has gone! Imagine the dreadful confusion. Who can have done this thing?

Brokenhearted, Mary Magdalene weeps for she does not know where they have taken her Lord. There

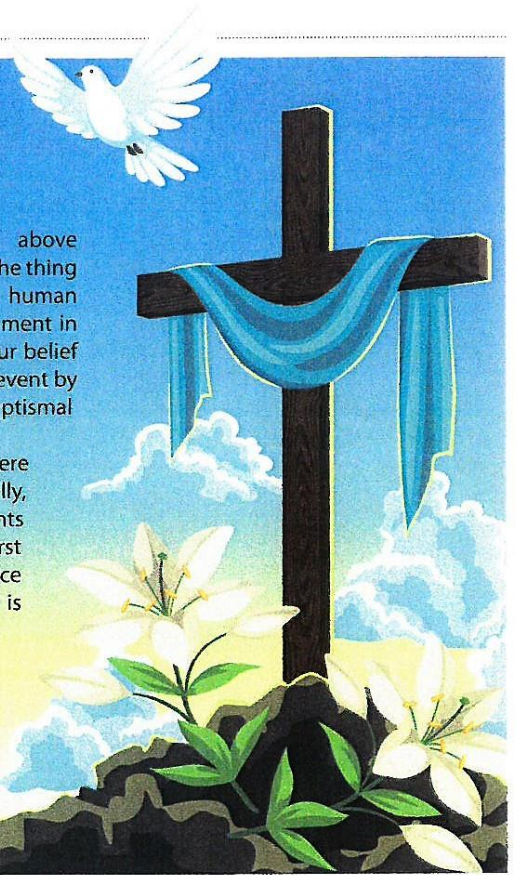
is no doubt she believes he is dead and now they have lost him, perhaps to tomb-robbers. Later, encountering Jesus in the garden, her joy will be restored: it will be all the greater when he speaks her name and she recognises him and realises that she has not lost him after all.

Darkness is transformed into light. At the Easter Vigil we process into the darkened church, following the Paschal Candle which represents Jesus himself, the Light of the World. As the light of the candles we carry spreads and glows, the shadows recede. The *Exsultet*, that great hymn of rejoicing, is sung. We celebrate the glory of the Father whose Son has broken the prison bars of death.

Jesus has risen above death: conquered the thing that haunts all human beings. At this moment in time, we confess our belief in this astounding event by repeating our baptismal vows.

Although we were not there physically, we have the accounts of those first witnesses. We rejoice and are glad. Jesus is risen. Alleluia!

Following many years in the classroom, retired teacher and school principal Mary Bell now has time to enjoy the beauties of the natural world around her.



“This also makes us think about how women, in the Church and on the journey of faith, had and still have today a special role in opening the doors to the Lord, in following him and in communicating his Face, for the gaze of faith is always in need of the simple and profound gaze of love.”

Pope Francis

Feast of the week Easter Octave

The story of Emmaus is the beginning of our journey to mission. When we gather to celebrate the Eucharist, we too listen to the word of God and break bread together. Jesus comes among us not as the stranger; rather, he comes to us in word and sacrament to

give us new hope to face the future with faith in him. Our own stories may not sound very different from the two forlorn disciples on the road to Emmaus: we too may be covered in disappointment; we too may have a past that bewilders and hurts us. But we are invited to tell our stories to the Lord, to listen to him as he speaks his word, to recognise

him in the breaking of the bread and become one with him in communion. Only with him can we look with understanding at the past and with hope look to the future. Only in his name can we share the good news with others. Only with him and the gift of the Spirit can we move from Eucharist to mission.

Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

Resurrection happens!

By Paul Higginson

The cross and resurrection of Jesus are not historical events to be pondered from afar – they reflect our own lived experience, our own

falling and rising. Here we find hope, that the personal darkness we often experience will eventually be followed by the morning light.

For many Christians the resurrection is significant because it signals that there is life for us too, after our own physical death. But this is to only grasp the half of it. The resurrection is something for us to experience whilst we are still

alive! By seeing the risen Christ in those we encounter, we participate in our own unique resurrection experience. We bring Jesus to life by the love and joy we show each other – our attempts to faithfully live out the Gospel. By our daily acts of kindness and compassion we proclaim to the world that Jesus is alive. Happy Easter!

Following decades in the classroom and as a parish catechist, Paul Higginson is finding that retirement gives him even more opportunities to support his parish.

Living Lord, I believe in you. I love you. I adore you.

Pope Francis

Today: Acts 10:34, 37-43
Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
John 20:1-9

Monday: Acts 2:14, 22-33
Matthew 28:8-15

Tuesday: Acts 2:36-41
John 20:11-18

Wednesday: Acts 3:1-10
Luke 24:13-35

Thursday: Acts 3:11-26
Luke 24:35-48

Friday: Acts 4:1-12
John 21:1-14

Saturday: Acts 4:13-21
Mark 16:9-15

Next Sunday: Acts 2:42-47
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31