

Victimae paschali laudes immolent Christiani

May you praise the Paschal Victim,
immolated for Christians.

The Lamb redeemed the sheep:
Christ, the innocent one, has reconciled sinners to the Father.

A wonderful duel to behold, as death and life struggle:

The Prince of life dead, now reigns alive.

Tell us, Mary Magdalen,
what did you see in the way?

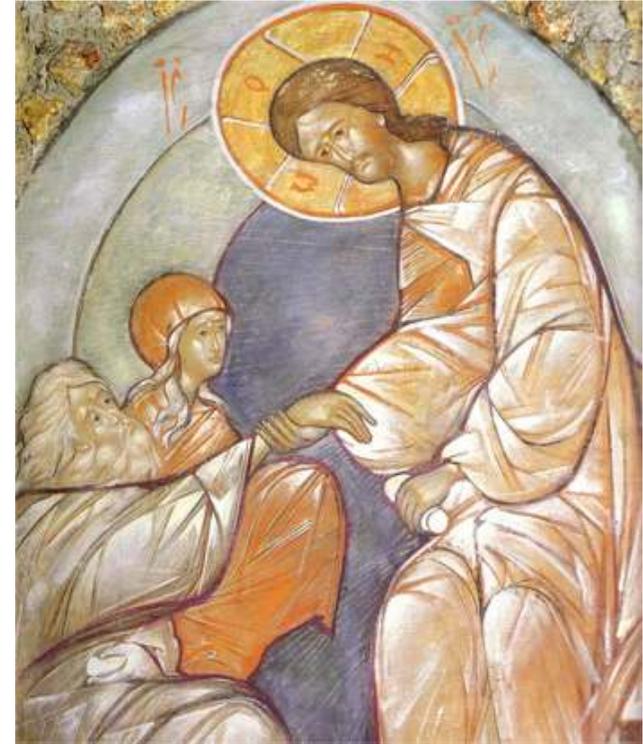
I saw the sepulchre of the living Christ, and I saw the glory of
the Resurrected one:

The Angelic witnesses,
the winding cloth, and His garments. The risen Christ is my
hope: He will go before His own into Galilee.

We know Christ to have risen truly from the dead:

And thou, victorious King,
have mercy on us.

Amen.
Alleluia!



CELEBRATING
EASTER AND THE GLORY OF THE RESURRECTION
St Martin Roath



The Parish
of Roath Saint Martin of Tours
Albany Road Roath Cardiff

The Easter Season

Resurrection of the Lord

*Hail thee, festival day!
Blessed day to be hallowed forever;
Day when our Lord was raised,
Breaking the kingdom of death.*

Lo, the fair beauty of the earth,
From the death of the winter arising!
Every good gift of the year
Now with its Master returns.

Easter celebrates and proclaims
the resurrection of Jesus the Christ from the dead.
Even before theologians explained the death of Jesus in
terms of various atonement theories, the early church saw
his resurrection as the central witness to a new act of God
in history and the victory of God in vindicating Jesus as
the Messiah.

This event marks the central faith confession of the early
church and was the focal point for Christian worship,
observed on the first day of each week since the first
century (Acts 20:7; Sunday was officially proclaimed the
day of Christian worship in AD 321). Easter is an annual
celebration of the Resurrection that lies at the center of a
liturgical year has been observed at least since the fourth
century.

In fact, every Sunday of the year is another Easter Day, the
day of resurrection, the first day of week,
a day when all the baptised are encouraged to be
present at Mass

Regina Coeli

The Ancient and beautiful Easter Anthem to Our Lady

**Joy to thee, O Queen of Heaven. Alleluia!
He whom Thou wast meet to bear. Alleluia!
As He promised hath arisen. Alleluia!
Pour for us to God thy prayer. Alleluia!**

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.
R. **For the Lord is risen indeed, alleluia.**

Let us pray,
O God, who through the resurrection of Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ didst
vouchsafe to give joy to the world: grant, we beseech thee, that through His
Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through
the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Regina caeli, laetare, alleluia:
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia,
Resurrexit, sicut dixit, alleluia,
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.**

Gaude et laetare, Virgo Maria, alleluia.
Quia surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia.

Oremus. Deus, qui per resurrectionem Filii tui, Domini nostri Iesu Christi,
mundum laetificare dignatus es: praesta, quaesumus; ut per eius Genetricem
Virginem Mariam, perpetuae capiamus gaudia vitae. Per eundem Christum
Dominum nostrum. **Amen.**





Dates for Easter - 2011 to 2015

Easter Day will fall on the following Sundays:

24th April 2011
8th April 2012
31st March 2013
20th April 2014
5th April 2015

In 325 A.D., the Council of Nicaea ruled that "Easter shall be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox".

The above dates are for the UK / Western / Anglican/Roman Catholic Church/ Protestant denominations. The Greek and Eastern Orthodox Churches celebrate Easter on different dates in some years because they reckon the date by the use of a different calendar.

In 2011

The Whole Church, east and west celebrated Easter on the same date

Origin and Significance of Easter

Prior to the fourth century, Christians observed Pascha, Christian Passover, in the Spring of the year. Adapted from Jewish Passover, Pascha was a festival of redemption and commemorated both the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as the vehicle for God's grace. While historical records are not clear, it is likely that early Jewish Christians observed both Passover (Pesach) and Pascha. However, many Gentile converts were hesitant to adopt the Jewish festival, especially since the Jerusalem Council had decided that Gentile converts to Christianity did not have to observe Jewish religious practices (Acts 15).

Gradually by the fourth century, with an increasing emphasis on Holy Week and Good Friday, Easter moved into a distinctively Christian celebration of the Resurrection, with Good Friday commemorating Jesus' crucifixion and death.

Easter, like Passover, is a movable feast. That is, the date of Easter (and Passover) is not fixed but is determined by a system based on a lunar calendar adapted from a formula decided by the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. In this system, Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the Spring equinox (the day when the sun's ecliptic or apparent path in the sky crosses the equator, thus making days and nights of equal length). This usually occurs on March 21, which means the date of Easter can range between March 22 and April 25 depending on the lunar cycle.

Since Jewish Passover is calculated differently, the dates for Passover and Easter do not correspond, although often the first Day of Passover falls during Holy Week. Much of the calendar of the Church year is determined by the date of Easter.

In the Christian Church year, the two major cycles of seasons, Christmas and Easter, are far more than a single day of observance. Like Christmas, Easter itself is a period of time rather than just a day.

It is actually a seven-week season of the church year called Eastertide, the Great Fifty Days that begins at sundown the evening before Easter Sunday and lasts until Pentecost Sunday. The Fifty Days between Easter and Pentecost are called the Sundays/Days of Easter. The feast of the Ascension of the Lord falling on the Fortieth Day of Easter - always a Thursday.

The Sundays called Sundays after Pentecost following the Easter Season focuses on the church as the witness to the resurrection. In anticipation of this emphasis at Pentecost, the Scripture readings during the Sundays of Easter are different, with readings from the Acts of the Apostles replacing readings from the Old Testament. This emphasizes that the church, as empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, is the best witness to the resurrection and the work of God in the world in Jesus the Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15, the earliest New Testament writing to discuss Christ's resurrection, Paul tells us what the resurrection meant to Christians in the first 25 years of church history.



Saint Paul begins his debate by using two technical terms that indicate how Christian traditions were passed on. He says he "handed on" to them what he had "received" (1 Cor. 15:3). The story of the resurrection was passed on by word of mouth. Paul did not create his own story; he stood as a link between early eyewitnesses and the Corinthians.

In 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 we find four elements of early Christian tradition. First, Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. Christianity had its origin in Judaism and therefore appealed to the Jewish scriptures to interpret its experience with Jesus.

middle of a world or an experience where, practically speaking, there seems so little hope. It's not that the risen Christ appears saying, 'By magic I will take away your history and I will smooth out your faces'; but that the risen Christ says, 'In the depth of this reality I will speak, I will be present and I will transform.'

There are many icons of course depicting the great saints of the classical era of Christianity, but there are also icons now of the saints of our own age, saints whose photographs we can see. And it's one of the most intriguing and challenging things you can imagine: to look at a photograph of someone whose icon you can also see. Any fool can take a photograph (within reasonable limitations!) but only someone living in the light of the resurrection can paint an icon. And it comes home when you see the lined, ordinary, prosaic faces of modern people who have been recognized as saints; when you see those faces transformed in modern icons to show the glory and radiance coming through their very specific, recognizable contemporary faces, it is then that you see something of what this image of the resurrection is telling us. It's this flesh and blood, this history, these sufferings and these failures that the risen Jesus touches and transfigures.

So, as we come to bless this icon of the resurrection, this image of the new beginning, we are asked to look at Adam and Eve as if in a mirror: to see there the ups and downs, lights and shadows of our own actual, complex, uneven lives, and to see that as the place where the risen Jesus begins. Because God begins always with who we are now and what we are now: and it's there, now, that life comes from death, and light from darkness. We may begin again at every moment by the power and strength of the risen Jesus. But more: that new beginning is also the gathering-together, the leading-forward of all that we actually are and have become.

May God give us the freedom and the courage to look into that mirror: that mirror of the wintry face, of Adam and Eve grown old, and in that moment to see something of how the spring begins in its heart. The spring of Jesus' own Easter, his rising, his 'eastering in us', as the poet (Gerard Manley Hopkins) says. In him our life begins afresh day by day.

To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

*A sermon by the Archbishop of Canterbury
at a Parish Eucharist at St Andrew Holborn, London,
during which a new icon of the Resurrection
(painted by a sister of the monastery of Vallechiara) was blessed.*

That is what happened on Easter Sunday and what happens whenever Easter is re-enacted, commemorated afresh in the life of the believing community as we do this evening. It's why so often in the early Church – and today in the Eastern Church – Sunday is the 'eighth day' of the seven day week. It's the start of the new world because it's the day of the resurrection of Christ.

So far, so good. The resurrection is the beginning of the new creation; the resurrection is the rising not only of Jesus, but of Adam and Eve. Then you look more closely at Adam and Eve in the icon, and you see that this is Adam and Eve grown old. They are not the radiant, naked figures of the first beginning of the story. Their faces are lined by suffering and experience, by guilt, by the knowledge of good and evil, scarred by life and by history. This is Adam and Eve having lost their innocence – the Adam and Eve who are of course ourselves, we who carry around with us the marks of history, of experience, of the knowledge of good and evil, hurts received and hurts done. Those are our faces on the icon, Adam and Eve 'four thousand winters' on, as the carol rightly puts it.¹ Because the history of Adam and Eve is a wintry one, and we know that in ourselves.

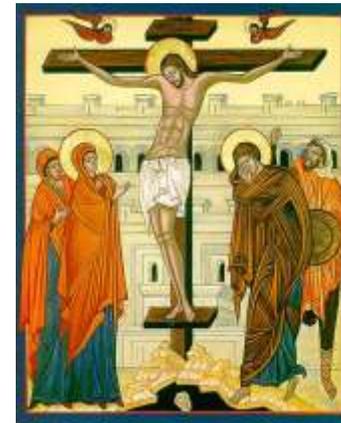
So, when we speak of the resurrection as a new beginning, a new creation, it is in the sense that the risen Jesus reaches down and touches precisely those faces: Adam and Eve grown old. He doesn't wave a wand and make them young again, strip off their clothes and leave them standing in their first innocence. What he deals with is humanity as it has become, our humanity, suffering and struggling, failed and failing. The resurrection is not about the wiping out of our history, pain or failure, it is about how pain and failure themselves – humanity marked by history – may yet be transfigured and made beautiful. Perhaps the most poignant feature of this and indeed all such icons is those aged faces. Adam and Eve four thousand years old in winter, turning to their spring, and being renewed.

So what the Christian gospel offers is indeed a new beginning. It is indeed something from nothing, life from death, light from darkness. And at the same time it is, mysteriously, the transformation of what we have become: real flesh and blood human beings with our histories, with the lines etched in our faces by those four thousand winters. If we did not believe that, what a very strange and hopeless world we would inhabit: a world in which again and again, when we turned to God, we would have to write off what had become of us and say 'all that is to be discarded', and the tape is simply reeled back to the beginning again.

No: God 'wonderfully created us' as the prayer says, 'and yet more wonderfully restored us'.² The re-creation, the new beginning of resurrection is more wonderful because it is the planting of newness and freshness, beauty and vision and glory, in faces like yours and mine, in lives like yours and mine, in Adam and Eve as they are there depicted. And that is why the resurrection is good news for those in the midst of what seems to be incurable, intractable pain or failure, in the

Second, Christ was buried. There should be no doubt about the awful finality of his death and burial. Yet this was not merely a martyr's death for a noble cause. It was for our sins, and therefore redemptive.

Third, Christ was raised on the third day in accordance with Scripture. The passive verb means that Jesus did not rise by himself but was raised by God. The terrible dilemma of a messiah executed as a criminal gave way to the good news that God vindicated him by raising him up.



The Cross and the death of Jesus
words by Jeffrey John - Lent 2007

“The cross, then, is not about Jesus reconciling an angry God to us; it's almost the opposite. It's about a totally loving God, incarnate in Christ, reconciling us to him. On the cross Jesus dies for our sins; the price of our sin is paid; but it is not paid to God but by God.

As St Paul says, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Because he is Love, God does what Love does: He unites himself with the beloved. He enters his own creation and goes to the bottom line for us. Not sending a substitute to vent his punishment on, but going himself to the bitter end, sharing in the worst of suffering and grief that life can throw at us, and finally sharing our death, so that he can bring us through death to life in him.

On the cross God absorbs into himself our fallenness and its consequences and offers us a new relationship with him. God shows he knows what it's like to be the loser; God hurts and weeps and bleeds and dies. It's a mystery we can hardly glimpse, let alone grasp; and if there is an answer to the problem of suffering, perhaps it's one for the heart, not the reason. Because the answer God's given is simply himself; to show that, so far from inflicting suffering as a punishment, he bears our griefs and shares our sorrow. From Good Friday on, God is no longer "God up there", inscrutably allotting rewards and retributions. On the Cross, even more than in the crib, he is Immanuel, God down here, God with us.”

Saint Paul - 1 Corinthians 15 is an important chapter not only because it contains early Christian traditions, but also because it illustrates how a truth is communicated across cultural lines.

Paul, raised in Judaism and steeped in the Old Testament, was making his case to Corinthian Christians who held to Greek ideas of life and death.

At the beginning, Christianity was primarily a Jewish movement. Judaism viewed human beings as mortal; their destiny was death. In the Old Testament, there is little reference to life after death.

In contrast to Jewish and Christian ideas of resurrection, Greek philosophers from the time of Plato thought in terms of immortality of the soul. Human beings were made up of two parts, body and soul. The body died and decayed but the soul lived on forever. When Corinthian Christians said, "There is no resurrection" (1 Cor 15:12), they meant that the body of Jesus turned to dust but his soul remained immortal.

Paul protested. If there was no resurrection, the Christian faith was in vain. It was not so much that the soul of Jesus somehow survived death but that God raised His Son in triumph over death and sin. And just as God raised Christ He will also raise us up. Our hope is based not on immortality of the soul but on an immortal God

St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (Ch. 15) and his Letter to the Romans (Ch. 5), the contrast between the first Adam, who initiated the whole story of human sin and the new Adam, who has brought the blessings of grace and eternal life.

St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (Ch. 15) and his Letter to the Romans (Ch. 5), the contrast between the first Adam, who initiated the whole story of human sin and the new Adam, who has brought the blessings of grace and eternal life.

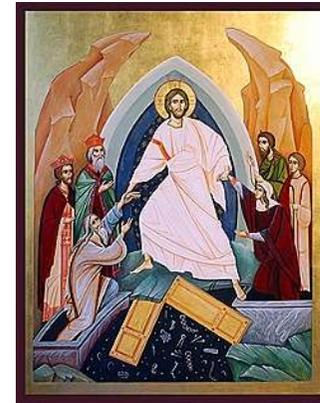
Calling Christ the second Adam is a solidly traditional practice. In the second century St. Irenaeus developed the differences between the first and last Adam. By referring twice to Adam, an early liturgical text, the Exultet or Easter Proclamation (still sung at the Easter Vigil) implies Christ's role as the second or new Adam. In the medieval mystery plays, the actor who played Adam usually reappeared to play Christ—a vivid way of connecting the first and second Adam. A contrast between the damage done by the first Adam and the gifts of the second Adam entered into the Council of Trent's 1547 decree on the justification of sinful human beings. Right down to the 21st century, images of Adam and Christ are still wonderfully joined in icons used in the liturgy and in the decoration of churches.

The images of Adam and Eve and the image of Christ the new Adam have been linked in art, literature, legend and liturgical traditions to hold together creation and redemption. To be sure, considering Christ as the new or second Adam is not the only way to understand and interpret what he did for us in his life, death and

resurrection. But it is one way that has proved enduringly successful, from St. Paul down to John Henry Newman's "Dream of Gerontius" ("A second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came") and beyond. Generations of Christians have found here light and strength, and in three particular ways.

First, the Adam/Christ contrast vividly reminds us that we are saved not merely through divine power "from the outside." By the loving kindness of God's plan, we are also saved "from the inside," through the incarnate Son of God, who is our brother. The two figures in Masaccio's pitiless scene seem to have lost paradise forever. But they are on a path that leads to Christ, the second Adam who will heal and transform human destiny for all eternity.

Thoughts by the Archbishop of Canterbury - Rowan Williams.



For some people, when they first encounter the classical Byzantine icon of the resurrection, it's just a little bit puzzling. Here is Jesus descending to the dead, taking Adam and Eve by the hand, surrounded sometimes by prophets and kings of the old covenant. And it seems rather a long way from the scene described in the Gospel that we've just read (Luke 24.1—9) or even the narratives that St Paul recalls in 1 Corinthians.

Surely the resurrection is about those precious moments of personal encounter with the risen Jesus on the part of a range of people, those mysterious and elusive meetings described in the gospels?

However, here in this icon, we're taken into another realm, another frame of reference. That of course is what an icon does: it takes you to the inner story, to the bedrock of what's going on. And what this icon says to us is that the bedrock of what is going on in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the re-making of creation itself.

Here are God and Adam and Eve: this is where it all began and this is where it begins again. The resurrection is not the happy ending of the story of Jesus: it's the story of the word of God speaking in the heart of darkness to bring life out of nothing, and to bring the human race into existence as the carriers of his image and his likeness.