Barnabas CLARKSFIELD

April 2022

medlockhead.co.uk

Services at St Barnabas' Church

Sunday 9:30 am Parish Worship

When the pandemic is over:

Tuesday 10:00 am Holy Communion (said)

The first Tuesday of each month: Service of Holy Communion at Moor Haven Nursing Home on Ripponden Road, starting at 2:00 pm.

Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

Please submit items for the May magazine by 15 April. Please e-mail files to paulmonk11@gmail.com

People at St Barnabas' Church

Vicar

The Revd Dr Paul Monk St Barnabas' Vicarage, Arundel Street, Clarksfield, Oldham OL4 1NL Tel: (0161) 624 7708

Assistant Curate

The Revd Denise Owen (and Vicar of St Thomas' Church Moorside)
Tel: (0161) 652 0292 and E: therevd.dowen@vahoo.co.uk

Lay Reader	Mr Peter Haslam	(0161) 345 0215
Wardens	Mr Peter Haslam Mrs Nicola Williams	(0161) 345 0215 (07549) 630 943

Administrator	Ms Sarah Gura	(07708) 714 813
Treasurer	Mrs Vicky Heaton	(07468) 463 753
Parish Hall bookings	The Vicar	(0161) 624 7708

Letter from the Wicar

As a Church, St Barnabas has many goals, but the Kingdom of God needs to inspire all of them. 'The Kingdom' is a shorthand term that means God is inspiring everything we do. Jesus came to usher in this Kingdom, and the Church is one of God's principal vehicles in achieving that aim.

As a local Parish Church, St Barnabas has a key role in changing Clarksfield and Greenacres in such a way that it more closely reflects the Kingdom of God. There are two main strands to this goal.

First, St Barnabas is called to change the lives of its own members. The aim of that change can be called 'godliness', 'holiness,' or 'Christlikeness' but, in essence, each of these terms mean the same thing. That quest for personal holiness explains why we hold services of divine worship: worshipping together enables us to share in the power of the Gospel and the sacraments.

The second way in which St Barnabas is called to work toward the Kingdom involves our encounters with the local community. That community engagement must always have as its focus the need to make Jesus known and to improve the lives of local people.

Accomplishing these miracles require the sort of a power so profound that it can raise a human being from death to new life. We're talking the language of inner transformation. In fact, we're talking resurrection.

That's why Easter is so important to every Christian and to the Church. Because of Easter, every disciple can access this Easter power and pass from spiritual death into New Life. It starts with radical forgiveness and then energises every part of this new life. It makes us more like Jesus.

Wishing you all the power and joy of Easter:

PAUL

Updates

News from the church and parish

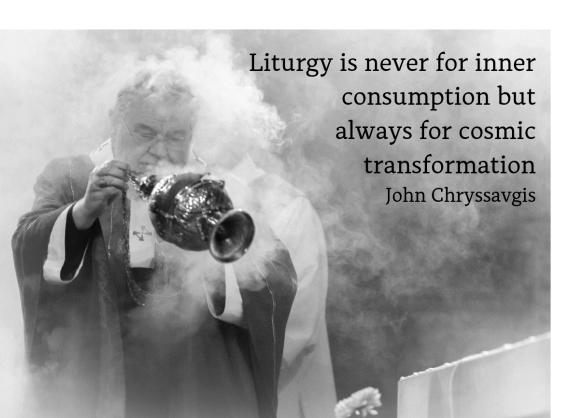
The Church has received two grants this month:

The Garfield Weston Foundation has given us £7,500 toward the cost of upgrading the Church interior, specifically the floor and seating.

First Choice Homes Oldham has given the Church's *Thrive Women!* project £750 to purchase six Chromebook computers.

Confirmation

The Bishop of Middleton is coming to the team on Friday 10 June at 7:00 pm. The service occurs in Waterhead Church. Please talk to Paul if you or a member of your family wants to be confirmed.



Bible readings for April

Sunday 3 April Passion Sunday

O.T.: Isaiah 43:16–21 Epistle: Philippians 3:4b–14 Gospel: John 12:1–8

Sunday 17 April Easter Sunday

O.T.: Isaiah 65:17-end Second: Acts 10:34-43 Gospel: John 20:1-18

Sunday 1 May Easter 3

O.T.: Zephaniah 3:14-end Second: Acts 9:1-6 Gospel: John 21:1-19

Sunday 10 April Palm Sunday

O.T.: Isaiah 50:4–9a Epistle: Philippians 2:5–11 Gospel: Luke 23:1–49

Sunday 24 April Low Sunday (Easter 2)

O.T.: Exodus 14:10-end; 15:20-21 Second: Acts 5:27-32 Gospel: John 20:19-31

R°N

She had been the magician's assistant for more than 30 years

Dates for your diary

Sunday 10 April **Palm Sunday** 9:30 am: Eucharist Monday 11 April **Holy Monday** 7:00 pm: Compline Tuesday 12 April **Holy Tuesday** 7:00 pm: Compline Weds 13 April **Holy Wednesday** 7:00 pm: Compline Thursday 14 April Maundy Thursday 7:00 pm: Eucharist Friday 15 April **Good Friday** 9:30 am: Family service 12: 00-3:00 pm: Meditation Sunday 17 April **Easter Day** 9:30 am: Eucharist Sunday 10 July Lucy Reilly will be licenced as a Lay Reader at **Manchester Cathedral**. The time has yet to be announced.

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The carpenter

He knew his son would outshine him from the beginning,

so taught this child the only thing he could:

The skill of taking blades and wood

and turning death into something else entirely.

Jay Hulse from *The Backwater Sermons*

Small kindnesses

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs to let you by. Or how strangers still say 'bless you' when someone sneezes, a leftover from the Bubonic plague. 'Don't die,' we are saying. And sometimes, when you spill lemons from your grocery bag, someone else will help you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other. We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot, and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass. We have so little of each other, now. So far from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange. What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these fleeting temples we make together when we say, 'Here, have my seat,' 'Go ahead—you first,' 'I like your hat.'

Danusha Laméris

Prayer of the month

Asking for faith 1 believe; help my unbelief?

This short prayer was said by a man who approached Jesus, asking Him to heal his son. The boy probably had a condition such as epilepsy which put the boy in danger and caused the family great distress. St Mark tells the full story in his Gospel (Mark 9:11–29). It may be significant that St Mark places it in this part of his Gospel because a great many other stories occur around the same position, and all of them are designed to help us develop a more realistic view of who Jesus is.

The man who prayed these words had approached Jesus asking for a miracle—in effect, he was asking Jesus to intervene and change things. In seeking Jesus' help, the man was saying that he found the situation difficult and could not cope. He was starting from a position of truth. He also had faith because he was saying that Jesus was able to cause the change he wanted.

The key to understanding the story is to realise that the man already had faith but he wanted that faith to grow and develop. We can pray this same prayer for the same reason. Our faith, however weak or strong, can always grow, develop, and mature.

Beingan eco-Church in

April

- As we plant up our gardens for the summer, don't forget lots
 of flowers for the bees and butterflies: the more colourful
 the better. Among their favourites are honeysuckle, lavender, foxgloves, cosmos and poppies.
- If you like to grow your own herbs, the flowers of chives and rosemary are great for the bees too. Even if you only have a window-box, the bees will still appreciate it.
- And if you have clover growing in your lawn, please don't mow it all down. It's full of nectar for the pollinators.



Raising a hand in blessing The halo round the young woman's head tells us she is a saint. The background of yellow roses implies femininity and gentleness. And she seems to gaze out *through* the observer into the world.

This gaze explains the point of God's blessings: we receive God's help in order to share it. The blessing of the Cross is for everyone. We limit the power of the Cross whenever we hug its forgiveness to ourselves.

Mary Magdalene came from the Galilean district of Magdala near Tiberias, on the western shores of the Sea of Galilee. Unfortunately, there is much confusion about her life. At one extreme, some scholars believe that the lives of three distinct people have become combined to form the single person, St Mary Magdalene. At the other extreme is the idea that all three instances are the same person.

The first of these St Marys in the Gospels followed Jesus and his disciples around Galilee. She witnessed first-hand Jesus' crucifixion and burial, and later went to his tomb to anoint his dead body on Easter morning. She was the first person to see the risen Lord and announced his glorious resurrection to the apostles. Accordingly, many early Christian writings call her 'the apostle to the apostles'.

The second of these Marys is 'Mary of Bethany,' the sister of Martha and Lazarus **Luke 10:38–42** and **John 11**. And the third Mary is an unnamed penitent woman who anointed Jesus' feet (**Luke 7:36–48**). This example of extravagant love, together with the ambiguous statement that Jesus had previously cast out seven demons from her (**Luke 8:2**), supported the later tradition that she had been a prostitute before meeting Jesus.

The incident of washing Jesus' feet belongs to the Galilean phase of Jesus' ministry: it precedes the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand and the third Passover. Straight afterwards, St Luke describes a missionary circuit in Galilee, and portrays the women who ministered to Christ. This list includes 'Mary who is called Magdalen, out of whom seven devils were gone forth' (**Luke 8:2**). But Luke does not tell us that she is to be identified with the 'sinner' of the previous chapter.

St Luke later describes Jesus visiting his friends Martha and Mary 'in a certain town' (**Luke 10:38–42**). Jesus had just left Galilee, so this 'town' may have been Bethany. The idea seems to be confirmed by the preceding parable of the Good Samaritan, which could have been spoken on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem, which is close to Bethany. But here again we find no suggestion of any identification between the three Marys.

Indeed, if we only had St Luke's account, we should certainly have no grounds for saying they are the same person. St John clearly identifies Mary of Bethany with the woman who anointed Jesus' feet (John 12; cf. Matthew 26 and Mark 14). It is important to note how St John speaks of Mary as 'she that anointed the Lord's feet' in 11:2—before he actually mentions the actual incident.

It is commonly said that Luke refers to the subsequent anointing, which he himself describes in **12:3-8**, but some scholars question whether he

would have used this exact phrase if another woman (and she a 'sinner') in the city, had done the same. It is conceivable that St John, just because he is writing so long after the event and at a time when Mary was dead, wishes to point out to us that she was really the same person as the 'sinner'. Similarly, St Luke may have veiled her identity precisely because he did not wish to defame one who was yet living; he certainly does something similar when he conceals the identity of St Matthew by calling him Levi the publican (5:7).

It was inevitable that a woman about whom almost nothing was known should later attract many stories. The Greek Orthodox Church says St Mary Magdalene went to Ephesus with the Virgin Mary and died there. Her relics were transferred to Constantinople in 886 AD, and are preserved there. However, according to another (early French) tradition, Mary, Lazarus, and other companions went to Marseilles and converted the whole of Provence. Legend also says that Mary's family's castle was called Magdalon. If true, then her family were descended from King David.



You hardly imagined standing here, everything you ever loved suddenly returned to you looking you in the eye and calling your name.

And now
you do not know
how to abide this ache
in the centre
of your chest
where a door
slams shut
and swings open
at the same time,
turning on the hinge
of your aching
and hopeful heart.

I tell you this is not a banishment from the garden.

This is an invitation, a choice, a threshold, a gate.

This is your life calling to you from a place you could never have dreamed but now that you have glimpsed its edge you cannot imagine choosing any other way.

So let the tears come as anointing, as consecration, and then let them go.

Let this blessing gather itself around you.

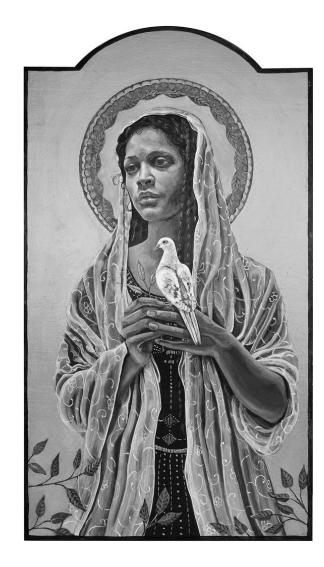
Let it give you what you will need for this journey.

You will not remember the words—they do not matter.

All you need to remember is how it sounded when you stood in the place of death and heard the living call your name.

Jan Richardson from *Circle of Grace*

Modern icon of Mary Magdalene by Sue Ellen Parkinson



There once was a man—passionate, driven, and desiring to do all that he could to deliver his proud people from their enslavement to overlords. A man of violence—and we do treasure our rebels and their battle against supposed tyranny, our Robin Hoods, our Bravehearts. One man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist and the Romans had him in their grasp—dead to rights, condemned to death. Barabbas was his name.

And his only future was the torment the disgrace the shaming of the cross. The Romans intentionally made a spectacle of rebels so as to deter others and we sentimentalise the cross at the cost of misunderstanding its horror and effectiveness. No lovely green hill but a public display of torment at the cross roads entering the city. As far as he can he prepares himself for the awfulness to come until he hears his name being called out echoing through the streets.

In confusion he is released to leave the city. The tradition of releasing a guilty man at the Passover has happened and he is free but to his horror he hears there was a choice—the Nazarene has been rejected and the Zealot freed, the man of violence and murder or the man of peace, the innocent suffers and the guilty walks away, Barabbas lives but Jesus dies in the place he should have been and worst deserved in so many ways.

Every moment from then on is for Barabbas lived in the shadow of that cross: Jesus taking his place; his life at a crossroads—and what a poignant phrase that is in this context. I wonder what he made of it. How he lived it? Did it change him?

Each Good Friday we are faced with the same shock and horror. We are confronted by the terrible self-giving of our God and Saviour who surrenders himself to the Cross so that by his death our enslavement might be broken, as the price paid for our freedom. Our chains removed. But at such a cost.

And like Barabbas we can never be truly the same. We walk always in the shadow of that Cross where our friend, our Lord, our Saviour gave himself for us. At any moment he could have called on his power and walked away yet he chose the path of pain and sacrifice, the path of the Cross because he loved you and me to the uttermost.

For us as Christians the day we realised what our friend did for us is

the rest of our lives? May God help us in gratitude and love to give ourselves to the love and to the service of our astonishing, amazing Saviour.

Robin Wilding

Barabbas

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. Suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead!" '

Matthew 28:1-7b

Mission communities

Last year, the Diocese of Manchester started a new initiative, creating 'mission communities'. It's a way of helping parishes to share and work together. The new Deanery of Oldham and Ashton comprise seven of these mission communities. Our Parish will work more closely with a group also comprising Glodwick, Hey, the Leesfield benefice, Moorside, and Waterhead. The Mission Communities came into force on 1 January.

While Glodwick no longer has a Church or worship centre, it's parish is still a legal entity with legal responsibilities.

Each Mission Community has a designated leader. Our Vicar Paul Monk has been asked to lead this particular group. That leadership involves coordination and promoting communication between the parishes and the central bureaucracy of the Diocese. In some respects, it also represents a kind of figurehead position. Paul is officially licenced in June.

The Mission Community is served by three full-time clergy: Paul; Denise Owen who is Vicar of Moorside and also licenced to work in our own team; and Lyn Woodall, who is Vicar of St John's Hey and of the Leesfield group of Churches. St Barnabas, Moorside, and Waterhead all have good Lay Readers. Hey has several curates.

In future, we will automatically be invited to services, events and functions at these other Churches, and can expect to share staff and help from these other Churches.

From the parish registers

Holy matrimony

Saturday 17 March Shaun Scantlebury and Natalie Haynes

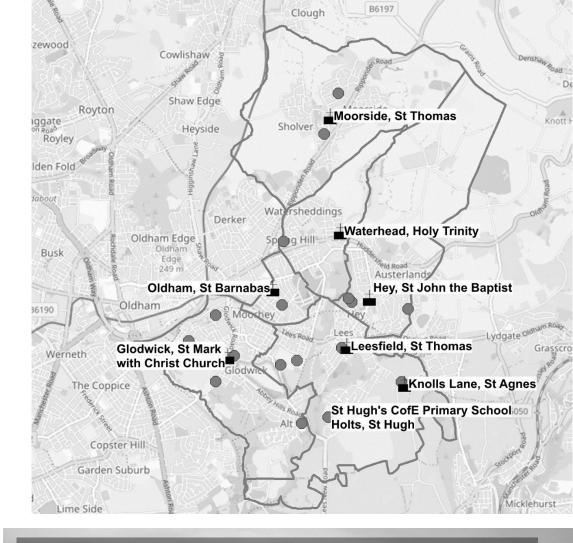
in Waterhead Church.

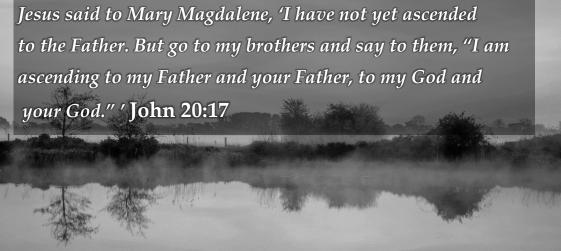
Christian funeral

Joan Platt Friday 4 March in St Barnabas Church.

Marion Scoltock Wednesday 23 March in Oldham Parish Church.

Jack Marsden Monday 28 March in St Barnabas Church.





Date This letter was written shortly after John wrote his first letter, so 86–88 AD.

Authorship The Church traditionally says the First, Second, and Third 'Letters of John' were written by John the son of Zebedee. He was one of Jesus' twelve Apostles and brother of the James the Great.

According to tradition, John became the Bishop of Ephesus in Asia Minor and the other churches in the Roman province of Asia mentioned in Revelation Chapters 2–3. It was at Ephesus that he wrote the fourth Gospel and the three Letters. Like John's Gospel, they share many distinctive words and phrases, with frequent contrasts of opposites (compare, for example, 2 John 1:5 with 1 John 2:7 and John 13:34-35, or 2 John 1:12 with 1 John 1:4, John 15:11 and John 16:24, and so on).

John wrote the letter in Ephesus during a time of persecution when identifying people by their real names could endanger lives. The author therefore called himself 'the elder' and addressed the letter to 'the chosen lady and her children' (2 John 1:1) by which he meant a Church and its members.

This letter in context At thirteen verses, 2 John is the second shortest book of the Bible, with only 3 John being shorter.

Both the letters 2 John and 3 John say the writer has more to say, but he hopes to come and speak to them in person.

For more information, go to:

https://www.christianity.com/bible/niv/2-john/https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/John_2/John_2_Lesson_1.htmhttps://www.thebiblejourney.org/biblejourney1/19-johns-letters-to-the-believers-in-asia-minor88730/the-2nd-letter-of-john/

John's three letters are linked. For example, each encourages faithful adherence to God's truths and obedience to His commandments. And each says Jesus is divine; he is the Son of God who came in order to offer eternal salvation to all humankind. In some respects 2 John forms a bridge between 1 John and 3 John. It shares many themes with 1 John but copies 3 John in terms of format and expressions.

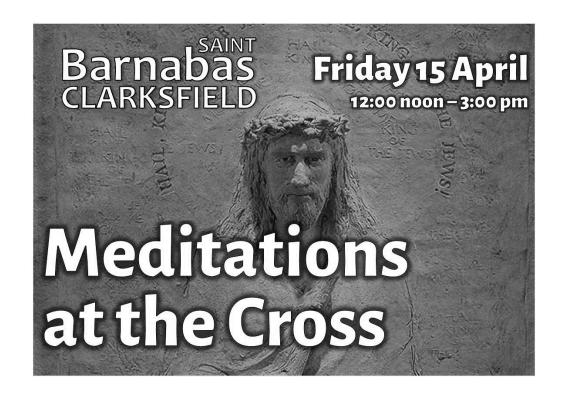
Reason for writing Just decades after Jesus' earthly ministry, false teachers were harming the church, so John used the second half of this letter to warn his flock against them. These false teachers believed that Jesus was truly divine, but argued that he was not fully human (today we call them 'Gnostics'). John's three letters complement each other in imploring love for God and one another, walking in the truth, and warnings concerning the dangers of following false teachers who deny the Incarnation of Jesus.

John therefore told them to walk in truth and to love one another because only love and truth working together are strong enough to withstand these Gnostics. He says in verse 5, 'And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another.'

John then uses the word 'truth' five times in the first four verses. He speaks of those he 'loves in truth', those who 'know the truth', and living in Christ 'for the sake of the truth'. He speaks of being glad to find 'children walking in the truth' (verse 4). He even tells his flock that these false teachers not even be welcomed as guests, saying that 'anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work' (verse 11).

The Second Letter of John









Early, on the first day of the week the women came to the tomb ... they bowed down with their faces to the ground.

Angels said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead?

He is not here; he has risen!'

Luke 24:1, 5-6



This sinner needed the maximum baptism experience.

Didyou know?

Peter and John set out and went towards the tomb ... [John] bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. *John 20:3–7*

Peter and John entered Jesus' empty tomb and saw a pile of abandoned graveclothes, and noticed how the discarded face cloth lay separately, apart from the linen.

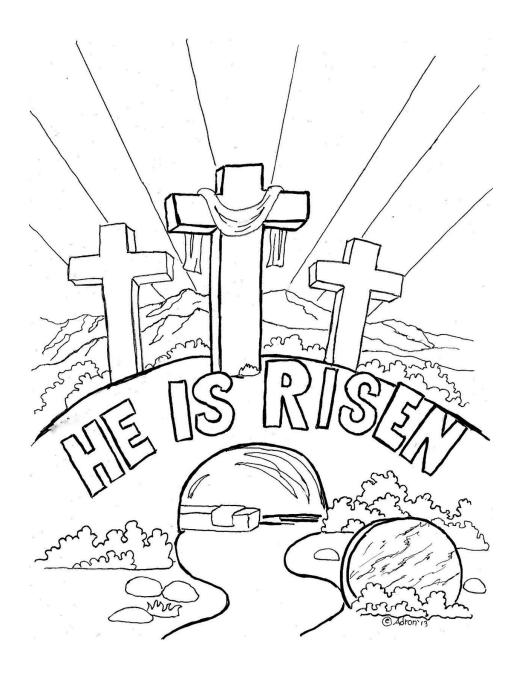
But the positioning was no afterthought. To this day a Palestinian craftsman shows his satisfaction with a completed work by taking a cloth and wiping his brow with it. He then places that cloth before the finished work. And Jesus the master carpenter placed a face cloth in front of a task he thought satisfactory.

But what is the task? To answer that question, consider the plinth on which Jesus' body lay, a catafalque hewn from the bare rock. On it, the disciples saw two angels. The image reminds us of the Ark of the Covenant, a gold-plated box made to contain the two stone tablets of the Law that God gave to Moses. On its lid were two angels, and God was said to dwell in the space enclosed by their outstretched wings.

Combining these two images that accompany the resurrection, Scripture invites us to see that Jesus had accomplished the task given him by God. He had died and risen. His risen form was pure God, which itself says that although he had taken our sins into his body on the cross, those sins had distilled from his body at the instant of his rising from the dead. We are forgiven and Jesus showed

his delight at the new start he had

achieved for us



Colour this picture

Wordsearch for Easter

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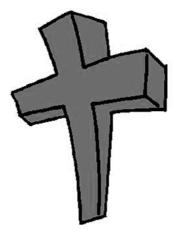
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APOSTLES
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Looking at Jesus seriously changes things; if we do not want to be changed, it is better not to look too hard or too long.

Rowan Williams



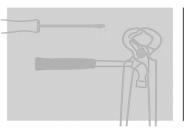


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When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Jesus. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back.

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' Mark 16:1–7









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