

St Luke's in the City

Easter Sunday

8 April 2007

Celebrating at the CROSSroads

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Resurrection Day! One of the first things we notice when we look around our world today is that nothing seems to have changed. If we were hoping that Christ's resurrection would have joined old enemies in fraternal bliss, put an end to drug-dealing, sex slavery, gang-thuggery, lust, envy, greed, pride, unforgiveness, usury, money-laundering, tax evasion, fornication, sloth, slander, doubt, fear, anxiety, madness, suffering, loneliness, corruption, planetary destruction, hatred, religious intolerance and wars... well, we're bound to be bitterly disappointed. No, outside the sun rises today just as it did yesterday and will tomorrow. All those sins, and more, will be committed again today and tomorrow, by others and by us. Except with the eyes of faith, apart from hearing our own names spoken by the risen Lord in the dark hours before dawn, unless we see that the one who is victimised becomes the forgiving victor, darkness reigns uninterrupted and unhindered, and the prince of this world overwhelms us.

We are mostly looking for something spectacular – this is as true in matters of faith as it is generally-speaking, in this spectacle-obsessed culture of ours. We imagine or hope that Christ resurrected will conquer the world much as armies conquer other nations, as multinationals triumphantly strangle competitors. Only when our eyes are adjusted to the dazzling Light in the darkness, is it possible to see that the social, political, religious and economic construction of the world is being completely undone, from the inside, by the new Adam, Jesus the forgiving victim who rises from the depths of earth. The only way in which Christ remains with us always is as the kind of conqueror who is crucified victim, “lifted up”, one who liberates and transforms only as wounded one whose desire is draw all peoples to himself - not compel them or threaten them!

So we look outside and see the sun rising as usual and we will hear the dread news of the world today as usual, and we will be aware of all our own suffering and faults as usual. But with eyes becoming gradually attuned to the Paschal Light penetrating the darkness – an ocular adjustment which takes a lifetime – we are learning to see the world with the eyes of Christ, who plunders the dread death-grip in every person and every system, by occupying the place of the forgiving victim, as though death were not at all. By Paschal Light we see the pseudo-kingdoms of the world – economic, religious, political, ego-centric – as they really are, accurately and stripped bare. And the prince of this world is overthrown! The risen Christ is not the object of our vision or adulation – “Do not hold onto me”, he tells Mary – rather, Christ is the one who makes Paschal vision universally possible. As we have reaffirmed our baptismal vows this day, pray that with ‘Paschal vision’ we may overcome the suffering, injustice and greed of the world as those who are able to live joyfully and faithfully as though death were not at all.

With my love, David