

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



I really wasn't expecting that!

Dear Friends,

Reading a book or watching a film, you have worked out in your mind how it will all end and then suddenly there is a surprise ending. We really haven't seen it coming, there's been no spoiler alert and we are really surprised or even overwhelmed.

All four of the gospels have an account of Jesus' Resurrection with Mary Magdalene present at the tomb and her utter surprise. All the disciples are caught off guard and Mary, a faithful follower of Jesus, possibly the most surprised of all!

As we know the ending so well, the Good News that Jesus rose from the dead, do we perhaps miss the total surprise of that world changing moment?

Mary had been quietly following Jesus all through that Holy Week. The excitement when the palm waving crowds cheered Jesus into Jerusalem. The celebration and sadness of the Last Supper. The loneliness of the garden of Gethsemane and the horror at the arrest of Jesus. The rumours of the mockery of the Jesus' trial before the High Priest and Pilate. Moreover, finally – and most harrowingly - Jesus' agonising death on the cross.

Mary had travelled a long way emotionally, and it was only now – having gone through the depths – that she was ready, spiritually, for the unexpected Risen Christ. However, on that first Easter morning Jesus was the last person she expected to see. She was so caught up in her grief that even when Jesus talks to her she does not recognise him. When he says her name, it is then that

she recognises Jesus and tries to cling on to him. Jesus has shown us God, the human face of God. There is something in Mary, as there is in us all, that wants to hold on to Jesus to prove, to capture that which cannot be held, the joy, and the surprise of the life changing resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This year we will have the privilege once again of holding the Easter Journey for the schools during Holy Week. If you are able to help with this in any way, whether in setting up or down to story-telling or being there to welcome the children I can guarantee that the Easter journey will have a profound effect on your spiritual journey, going through the events of Holy Week.

For others who may not be around during the day to assist with the Easter Journey, you can join us, not only for the moving narrative and Eucharists of Palm Sunday and Easter but also participate in the mysteries of Maundy Thursday at 8.00pm, on Good Friday at the 9.30 Family Service followed by the Churches Together service in Bircherley Green and for the meditation at the foot of the cross (a profound hour of readings, music and silence) at 2.00pm.

For us, reflecting Mary's experience, it is not so easy to experience fully the joy and the overwhelming surprise of Resurrection without first journeying through the conflict and sorrow of Holy Week.

Why not try it, you may well be surprised!

Love,
Jo