

there must be
more to **life...**



Discover
Jesus.

Greetings,

While last month's letter provided some resources, etc., for Holy Week and Easter, April commences on Easter Sunday, so there is a flow-on effect as a result with some of the material provided below.

This month's theme is: **Jesus reveals new life**, picking up on the Easter Season and its theme of Resurrection, New Life for the newly baptised, as well as for the believer. We have occasion to not only reflect upon 'new Life' as found in the resurrection of Jesus, but also how that impacts us in our Christian life – How do we interpret new life for us day-by-day? – What does it mean to participate in the life of eternity (*zoë* life) compared with biological (*bios*) life? How do we communicate that our lives are different to those around us and offer the invitation to participate in the 'something more' which we are now part of, and which isn't 'eternity' meaning 'pie in the sky when I die'?

The Easter Season actually lasts 50 days – up to the feast of Pentecost. Do we as faith communities maintain something of that season in our worship – e.g. the use of Easter hymnody throughout the season? The use of Easter seasonal material in Blessings, Calls to Confession, the Greeting of Peace, and the various Easter Prefaces. The APBA provides a limited range for the season, but have a look at the English Common Worship material for the Easter Season to enrich your liturgies.

www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/easter

Easter is also the principle season for Baptism – and one way of carrying through the theme is to use a Penitential rite which reinforces that and uses the Baptismal water, blessed at the Easter Vigil, as part of the Confession. A format adapted from the English Church, with options for singing as the sprinkling occurs is attached. (By the way – the *Vidi aquam* is traditionally used in the Easter season, and the tune *Lux Eoi* is quite a powerful one to use! – other tune options are listed)

There is also the opportunity, as with the Epiphany season, to use the waters blessed at the Easter Vigil for the blessing of homes. Again, this is a pastoral and celebratory way of taking the season into people's homes (or even workplaces). A format from the Episcopal Church's Book of Occasional Services comes with this letter.

Christ is Risen! Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! – Remember that Easter is a whole season of 50 days, not one day, and the greeting at the beginning of the Eucharist is intended to replace all other greetings, and be used throughout the WHOLE season! How many of your people, if you say “Christ is Risen! Alleluia!” would be able to give the response back straightaway – whether at the beginning of worship, the beginning and end of your sermon, or at any other time?

Because April also coincides with the school holidays – are there activities you are able to sponsor which can involve families and children? Maybe activities which enable a reflection on the mysteries of Easter – Jesus death & resurrection? – (There is a bit of a challenge with the Easter themes – people can get their heads around the event of Jesus’ crucifixion & death, but ‘resurrection’?)

Easter

A note on terminology: The word "Easter" is actually a word rooted in the name either of an alleged Teutonic goddess (Eostre) or, more probably, from the name "Eostur" meaning the "season of rising" and indicating springtime. It is only used in the English language. It came into use because the month of April was known in Anglo-Saxon countries as *easter-monadh*, and *Eastur* became an old Germanic word meaning springtime. Other languages have different names for Easter; "Pascha" (Latin and Greek), "Pasqua" (Italian), "Pascua" (Spanish), "Paschen" (Dutch), Pasg (Welsh). All of these examples derive from the Hebrew word "Pesach" meaning "Passover." The point is that the claim that "Easter is a pagan holiday" because of the word "Easter" is ridiculous. The English *word for it* might have pagan origins deriving from Eostre and/or the word for springtime, but the Solemnity is rooted in the Old Testament Pesach which was fulfilled at the Crucifixion which gave us the fruits of the Resurrection. In addition, all the names for the days of the week are "pagan" in origin, too. Sunday is named for the Sun; Monday for the Moon; Tuesday for god Tiu, Wednesday for Woden, Thursday for Thor, Friday for Freya, and Saturday for Saturn, so anyone who balks at celebrating "Easter" because of its "pagan origins" had better not refer to the days of the week by their English names!

Sourced from www.fisheaters.com/customseastertide1.html

Stations of the Resurrection

We are well used to *Stations of the Cross* in some form or another. A possibility for non-Eucharistic worship during the Easter Season – or even a time set aside for a reflection on the Resurrection – is the ‘Stations of the Resurrection,’ ‘Stations of Joy’ or ‘Way of Light.’ Imaginative use of PowerPoint etc. could be used to highlight each of the ‘stations’ or points of reflection? There is no shortage of imagery/art online which could be accessed.

Attached with this letter is “Via Lucis Stations of the Resurrection” which gives an introduction and a liturgy that may be used. Another option is from the Church of England website.

www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/easter#mmm218

Low Sunday/Thomas Sunday – The Gospel recounting of Jesus’ appearance to St. Thomas becomes a good occasion to reflect upon the nature of ‘belief,’ ‘faith’ and ‘doubt’ – and the positive role the latter can actually play in the life of faith by opening up the believer to God’s possibilities!

Lady Day – Transferred to 9th April, because Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week fall on the usual day this year (25th March). The Mothers' Union often hold a service to celebrate this day. Perhaps for others, it could be a day to do something honouring the women in your parish?

Hocktide! (Who said Christians have no fun?) – Second Tuesday after Easter (Hock Day)

This day used to be held as a festival in England and observed until the 16th century. According to custom, on Hock Monday, the women of a village seized and bound men, demanding a small payment for their release. On the Tuesday of Hocktide the men similarly waylaid the women. The takings were paid to the churchwarden for parish work. A new idea for fundraising?

Good Shepherd Sunday – 22nd April, the fourth Sunday of Easter, is Good Shepherd Sunday. There are plenty of resources online for children's activities, but what do you think you could do to involve adults on the day? There is always the opportunity for food – a roast lamb (unfortunate imagery?) dinner & invite those on the fringe of church life to share? Biscuits cut out in the shape of sheep, or even shepherd's crooks, and distributed to the housebound and those in hospital, or even to friends? If you are in a rural community, what activities might you plan for this day – linking the farmer's experience with that of Jesus as Good Shepherd & his love and care?

Thoughts from other sources: - Articles, etc.

Some activities for use with Children: - reinforcing the faith!

Easter activities – www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/easter/easter-resources

Including:

Signs of New Life colouring page

www.loyolapress.com/~media/Images/Loyola%20Press/ocf-articles/liturgical-year/easter-activity-Signs-of-New-Life.ashx

Emmaus play

www.loyolapress.com/~media/Images/Loyola%20Press/ocf-articles/liturgical-year/easter-activity-emmaus-Play.ashx

An Easter poem – filling in the missing words

www.loyolapress.com/~media/Images/Loyola%20Press/ocf-articles/liturgical-year/easter-activity-Poem.ashx

Made new: ideas for a series from Easter to Ascension

www.reformedworship.org/article/december-2000/made-new-ideas-series-easter-ascension

Beyond Trumpets and Lilies: Practical ideas for the 90-day Easter cycle

www.reformedworship.org/article/december-1990/beyond-trumpets-and-lilies-practical-ideas-90-day-easter-cycle

Easter

www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/easter

The Easter Proclamation

www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20100407_1.htm

Easter Reading: The Acts of the Apostles

www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20120509_1.htm

Choose life: horizons beyond the tomb walls

www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/choose-life-horizons-beyond-tomb-walls

Other Liturgical Material:

A Commemoration of the Resurrection – a Liturgy of the Word for use throughout Easter:

www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/daily-prayer/morning-and-evening#mm008e7

A Thanksgiving for the Resurrection & Ascension (using the older language, from *Cambridge Offices and Orisons*, Eric Milner-White, B.T.D. Smith)

www.tonusperegrinus.blogspot.com.au/2007/05/thanksgiving-for-resurrection-and.html

I Believe in the Resurrection – An alternate form of the confession of faith, appropriate to use anywhere a typical creed would function in a worship service, but it is especially appropriate for use on Easter Sunday during a service celebrating the resurrection.

www.reformedworship.org/article/december-2011/i-believe-resurrection

From *Jubilate* – musical ideas, but also material suitable for use in non-Eucharistic Liturgies of the Word

www.jubilate.co.uk/collections/easter

A link shared:

Western Fleurieu (Southern Vales) Mission Partnership publish a magazine, *The Grapevine*, which often lists activities they have undertaken, as well as other news. You might get helpful ideas from them?

www.southernvalesparish.org/the-grapevine/

The Riverland Mission Partnership also publishes the *Anglican Riverland Grapevine*

www.riverlandanglicans.org.au/Anglican%20Riverland%20Grapevine%20201712%20A4-WEB.pdf

- ❖ While not every community is able to have a website, if you do and there are ideas and events to share, please let us know.

DP

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