

## Easter – Easter Vigil 2023

### Gospel Matt 28:1-10

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The readings we have heard tell the history of salvation. They speak of the meaning of our existence. From Genesis we learn how God created humanity in his own image, an image that enables us to know God and to Love God. The story of Abraham and Isaac shows how even in the most unfavourable circumstances God is faithful to his promises.

The story from Exodus emphasises God's loyalty to his chosen people and in the parting of the Red Sea how his power can be exercised. The fourth reading from Isaiah expounds on the intimate mystical nature of God with his people, portrayed as the relationship between husband and wife. The fifth tells of God's continual call to his people to respond to him – to 'listen' - and the joy they will find if they do. The reading from Baruch finds the people chosen by God once again being roused up out of spiritual lethargy to follow God, and not wander from the Law that gives them life. This theme that is repeated in the seventh reading from Ezekiel calling the people back to holiness: *'I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed'*.

Then Christ walks upon the earth. Paul's letter to the Roman's witness's to the saving power of being baptised into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the Gospel we have the words of the Risen Christ: *'Greetings...Do not be afraid'*.

*'Do not be afraid.'* From our issuing forth in the world, our history with God has been one of humanities constant faithlessness and his continual recalling of us back to him. But at the precise moment that it seems that our relationship with God has been irrevocably sundered, when we have put the Son of God to death, we are called back from the doom we have called upon ourselves. From deserved death and damnation, we are offered eternal life. This is the message of Easter. *'Greetings'*: a call that betokens friendship. *'Do not be afraid'*: Gentle words of instilling strong hope from one who has seen all the horror and pain of separation from God. The king of life has issued from the grave this day and freed us from being slaves to sin and death. Let us rejoice in Love and Thanksgiving.

Alleluiah, alleluiah.