

### Living the Word: Acts 10.34-43

This is one of the most important passages in Acts, as it's the last evangelizing that Peter will do in this book. And it shows him slightly adapting the message that he has already preached to the Jews. We hear Peter tell the story of Luke's Gospel again – easily the fullest summary that Luke, the author, gives us – and here Luke is making clear, through Peter's speech, that healing is essentially a spiritual matter. As Peter goes on, he tells us that the message delivered by Christ, although initially delivered to the Jews, and then the Apostles, is universal in nature, and one with meaning for every single person. Suddenly the House of Israel is not the sole guardian of the mysteries of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The Christian story becomes the story of the whole world, and the preaching of the Apostles makes it simple for people to follow Christ should they wish to do so. The Risen Lord has done so much of the work. Let us complete it by walking the path he has laid for us.

31<sup>st</sup> March 2024  
Easter Day



### O Sing Unto the Lord

One of the most beloved Easter hymns, The Day of Resurrection (NEH117), is a translation by John Mason Neale (1818-66) of a text by St John Damascene. The three verses made up Ode I of the 'Canon for Easter Day', and was sung first at midnight on Easter Eve. With his enthusiasm for the glories of the Eastern Church, Neale quoted a description of the service he attended: 'At midnight, a cannon was fired, then the old Archbishop elevating the cross exclaimed in a loud exulting tone, "Christos anesti, Christ is risen!" and instantly every single individual took up the cry, and the vast multitude broke through and dispelled for ever the intense and mournful silence which they had maintained for so long, with one spontaneous shout of indescribable joy and triumph, "Christ is risen!" "Christ is risen!"'

### From the Fathers:

Now the holy rays of the light of Christ shine forth, the pure stars of the pure Spirit rise, the heavenly treasures of glory and divinity lie open. In this splendour the long dark night has been swallowed up and the dreary shadows of death have vanished.... This is the true festival and the everlasting memorial, the day upon which freedom from suffering comes from suffering, immortality from death, life from the tomb, healing from a wound, Resurrection from the fall.

*From A Paschal Homily, by St Hippolytus of Rome (c.170-c.236, theologian)*

### The Empty Tomb

During Holy Week our churches serve as different stage settings for the liturgical re-enactment of the Holy Week story. On Palm Sunday, we paved the streets of Jerusalem with palm branches to greet the Lord; on Maundy Thursday, we entered the Upper Room with the disciples and processed with the Lord to the Garden of Gethsemane and kept vigil with him at the altar of repose. On Good Friday, we moved from Pilate's Palace to Golgotha and witnessed the crucifixion of Christ. During the Easter Vigil the church served as the dark tomb to which Mary Magdalene came early in the morning. Now, filled with light and beauty, the church rejoices at the Lord's resurrection and reflects the radiance of the heavenly Jerusalem, anticipated in the empty tomb. Jesus said: 'I will not drink from this fruit of the vine... until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom (Matthew 26.29). Today, as we celebrate the Eucharist over the empty tomb we participate in the heavenly banquet of the Kingdom of God.