

Dear Friends,

I always get caught out at least once at this time of year. I look out of the window and think the sun is shining so I won't need a coat. I then find it's not quite as warm as it looks. The opposite is also true. I can be out and about and find I've got a coat which I then need to carry. The nights can be chilly and the days really warm, but sometimes not. There are many twists and turns along the way.

As we enter April, we will be towards the start of Holy Week which is so important in our lives of faith. The events of Holy Week may be familiar to many of us but if we were coming to it for the first time, there are many twists and turns we face. Palm Sunday begins with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. By Thursday, he is praying in the garden of Gethsemane and from there he is betrayed by Judas, one of the disciples, and arrested. Within the next 24 hours, Jesus is tried, condemned and crucified. Then, on Easter Day, we celebrate the resurrection and the move from sorrow, fear and despair to joy, hope and peace.

Holy Saturday, the day between Good Friday and Easter Day, is a day which is often overlooked but which has great significance. It was the Jewish sabbath meaning the first disciples couldn't do anything practical in response to Jesus' death and it's a time to draw near to God. It is seemingly a day of silence. Holy Saturday is the day where we are processing the sorrow, fear and despair but have not yet experienced the joy, hope and peace which is to come. Holy Saturday is a day where we must exercise great faith and trust in God. It is a time of waiting.

We all go through different seasons in our lives where we experience new bursts of energy, frustrations, happiness, disappointments, or whatever it might be. To make sense of it, we might find it helpful to link it to the Christian seasons in some way. Where times are difficult and there is a sense of having to wait for something to unfold, maybe thinking about Holy Saturday is helpful.

In the silence, God is working. A time of seeming inactivity can be a time to process all that is going on. Resurrection is coming. Resurrection is a time of transformation, where things don't look as they did. But to rest in Holy Saturday is to trust in God. We know that Jesus showed us what it meant to trust. We see it throughout his life, and throughout Holy Week. We see it in Gethsemane and on the cross. In the times of greatest difficulty Jesus trusted God. In the resurrection we see the fruit of that trust. Jesus' resurrection shows us how God's love for the world, changes the world and brings hope, joy and peace.

The cross and resurrection are decisive moments in our faith and we can truly rejoice in the hope this brings. Let's take this time to consider which season of life we are in and think about how this relates to the Christian year. We can then reflect on how we can learn more of God through Jesus in our lives for this season and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us closer to God once again. Let's rest in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection knowing the joy and completeness which comes from knowing our risen Lord and Saviour in whom we place our trust.

God's blessings for Easter,  
Chris