



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

'Stay with us, Lord, on our journey'

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EASTER SUNDAY 4 APRIL 2021

**Pope Francis' Urbi et Orbi Blessing from Rome will be relayed by BBCI TV
today at 11.00 am**

HOLY MASS THIS WEEK

SUNDAY	First Mass of Sunday is 7pm Saturday. Sunday morning 9.00 & 11.00 am
MONDAY	12 noon Easter Monday
TUESDAY	12 noon Easter Tuesday
WEDNESDAY	12 noon Easter Wednesday
THURSDAY	12 noon Easter Thursday
FRIDAY	12 noon Easter Friday
SATURDAY	12 noon Easter Saturday

The church is open every day

Monday to Saturday from 11.45 am to 1.00 pm
Sundays from 8.45 am to 10.00 am, 10.45 am to 12 noon

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

*Exult, let them exult, the
hosts of heaven,
Exult, let Angel ministers of
God exult,
Let the trumpet of salvation
sound aloud our mighty
King's triumph!*

So begins the **Easter Proclamation**. It is sung at the Easter Vigil, after the lighting of the Paschal Candle, which represents of course the risen Christ. It is a song probably dating back to the fifth century. When we hear it, we become the latest in that long line of Christians rejoicing in Our Lord's triumph over death.

*Be glad, let earth be glad, as
glory floods her,
ablaze with light from her
eternal King,
let all corners of the earth be
glad,
knowing an end to gloom
and darkness.*

Yes, the whole earth must be glad, but more especially God's world-wide Church, and the church too in which this thrilling song is heard:

*Rejoice, let Mother Church
also rejoice,
arrayed with the lightning of
his glory,
let this holy building shake
with joy,
filled with the mighty voices
of the peoples.*

It has been said that beneath the inspired words of this ancient composition lies a spiritual world which makes us feel the nobility of Christianity. So what does the *Exultet* tell us about Easter? It sings of Easter on three levels. **First**, from the Old Testament; **second**, the historical fact of the resurrection; **third**, our sharing here and now in the Easter sacraments. Let's take these, one by one.



The song recalls how Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt; the night when the paschal lamb was slain and the doorposts were marked with its blood; when the people went safely through

the Red Sea, and were led by a pillar of fire. These events in the past explain what is happening now, when Christ rises from the dead.

These, then, are the feasts of Passover, in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb, whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night, when once you led our forebears, Israel's children, from slavery in Egypt and made them pass dry-shod through the Red Sea.

This is the night that with a pillar of fire banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night that even now throughout the world, sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices and from the gloom of sin, leading them to grace and joining them to his holy ones.



Then the song bursts into praise of the great event of the Resurrection:

This is the night when Christ broke the prison-bars of death and rose victorious from the underworld.

Daringly, the song speaks of original sin as truly necessary and a happy fault:

*O truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!
O happy fault that earned for us so great, so glorious a Redeemer!*



Finally, the song celebrates the present moment, when we ourselves share the reality and the joy of the Resurrection,

and God enters the world and our souls:

This is the night of which it is written: The night shall be as bright as day, dazzling is the night for me, and full of gladness.

The sanctifying power of this night dispels wickedness, washes faults away, restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners, drives out hatred, fosters concord, and brings down the mighty.

O truly blessed night, when things of heaven are wed to those of earth, and divine to the human.



Parishioners and visitors are truly grateful to those who have worked so hard to beautify the church: the school children, the flower arrangers, the welcomers, the cleaners, the singers, the sacristan, and others.

Fr Dearman and I are very grateful for the good wishes and gifts received in the past few days. We warmly wish all of you a very happy and blessed Easter.

Fr Allen

**Fr Dearman's Reflections:
The Resurrection
YOU WILL RISE AGAIN!!**

The composer Gustav Mahler, brought up in the Jewish faith, became a Catholic in later life. He was bowled over by the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead, so much so that he composed a huge symphony portraying this stupendous event in the language of music.

His long final movement begins with howls of anguish as the whole of the material world collapses and dies, followed by a period of peaceful rest. Then a choir begins, very quietly at first, to announce a gradual rising to new life. Eventually the huge orchestra builds up to a shattering climax and the choir sings the triumphant words of Mahler himself.

"O believe, my heart! Nothing is lost for you. All that you wished for, all that you struggled for, all that you loved, is yours. You were not born for nothing. What had to pass away must rise again. YOU WILL RISE AGAIN! What you had to suffer will carry you to God!"

The celebration of Easter is a time of rejoicing in the rising of Jesus to a new and glorious life. As his brothers and sisters, we are destined to rise with him and to share in his glory.

There are several great performances on YouTube of Mahler's Second Symphony. It lasts about an hour and a half but if you prefer to get more quickly to the heart of the matter you can find recordings of just the last movement, or even just the last quarter of an hour. Even if you don't normally go in for classical music you may find this a great spiritual experience.

Happy Easter!