

St Mary's Church, Dorchester, Sunday 20th April 2025 i.e. Easter Sunday.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The night before he died Jesus told his friends that he was “the way, and the truth, and the life” [John 14:6]. That's a pretty grand thing for anyone to say, especially someone who knows they are about to die.

My brothers and sisters, this is not idle talk: at Easter Jesus *shows us* that he is the way, the truth, and the life.

On that night, the night he was betrayed, Jesus gave us a law of love. “[K]nowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God,” [John 13:3] Jesus washed his friends' feet. He told them to show that kind of love to everyone they meet. That is, not merely to do good grudgingly, but to do it gladly. And not merely to do good for those we like, but to love even our enemies and persecutors [Matthew 5:43-48]. Jesus is able to love like this because he knows how much he is loved, and he teaches us that we too have a loving Father who is with us whatever happens to us. So we can also love as he has loved us. This is what Jesus teaches, by word and by example; it is quite simply the most beautiful and hopeful doctrine there is. If there is a way worth following, Jesus Christ is that way.

On Good Friday Jesus submits to an unjust trial. He does this, he says, so that he might draw the whole world to himself [John 12:32]. He doesn't draw people, or persuade people, by saying one thing and doing another; he never pretends to be something he is not. So at his trial Jesus confronts lies and violence with sincerity and gentleness. Even under the greatest imaginable stress he stays true to his best self. In doing that, he shows how empty all of our human power games really are. In life and in death he has no time for lies. So I say Jesus Christ is the truth.

And on Easter Sunday morning while it is still dark, Jesus' friends go to his tomb expecting to encounter death. They are expecting something to be missing: movement; response; relationship... And there is something missing: death is nowhere to be seen. Jesus had said that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit [John 12:24]. And again, he had said that if people were to destroy this temple – that is, the temple of his body – in three days he would raise it up [John 2:19, 21]. Jesus lays down his life to take it up again. He has the power to lay it down, and he has the power to take it up again [John 10:18]. Jesus

Christ is the resurrection, and he is the life [John 11:25].

In Jesus Christ each one of us finds our way, our truth, and our life. In Christian community we learn more about that way: what it means to love and to be loved. Through repenting, and forgiving each other – speaking truth to each other – we learn that we need truth in order to thrive. As many as are baptised into Jesus Christ are baptised into his death, and also his life.

Today Elysia is bringing Santos to share in this way, this truth, and this life. Let's pray for him, and for all of us: that we may be true to our baptism; and that in us, all the world might see the new life of Easter.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.