



FROM ALL OF US AT ST MATT'S .. HAPPY EASTER EVERYBODY!

*This week's Revd. Morris' message: **This Easter, is Jesus calling your name in the Garden?***

Today's reading tells of Jesus' triumphant resurrection and victory over death - **Praise the Lord!** In this gospel, John also contrasts the *Resurrection Responses* of Peter and the beloved Disciple [John - See John 21:24] with that of Mary Magdalene.

Peter and John, roused by Mary Magdalene, ran to the Garden Tomb. Peter, still reeling after his denial of Jesus [see John 18:15], went inside and witnessed the swaths laid aside, 'Believed' ... **and then went home** ... presumably in fear and staying behind locked doors [see John 20:19].

In contrast, Mary Magdalene, present at the foot of the Cross [John 19:25], rushed to Garden Tomb as soon as it was permitted to do so after the Sabbath. Finding the covering stone rolled away and the tomb empty, she flies to Peter for assistance to locate the body of her beloved Lord. She returns to the Tomb to find Peter and John gone! She enters the Tomb for the first time and has her angelic encounter .. followed by a **never to be forgotten Divine one!** Enraptured, she is made the '**Apostle to the Apostles**' and given the instruction to spread the Good News of Jesus' resurrection and imminent Ascension to the Disciples.

But, why did Jesus appear to Mary Magdalene rather than the leader of His Disciples [Peter] and John [His Beloved Disciple]? Many scholars have puzzled over this. In Jewish law at the time, the witness of 2 men was considered necessary to prove a fact in a court of law. However, the testimony of a woman was generally inadmissible - see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Testimony_in_Jewish_law Perhaps, Jesus had a special relationship with her? Mary's epithet '*Magdalene*' may mean that she came from the town of Magdala on the sea of Galilee. Alternatively, it could be a reference to a 'Migdol' - Hebrew for 'a high strong tower' for defence and could also be a type of lighthouse to provide safe passage home for ships. Magdala possessed such a tower in Jesus's time and the town's name was derived from its significant Migol Tower. Perhaps, Jesus used this 'nick name' for Mary since she was likewise a **strong tower** of strength for Him, the provider of monetary support for Him and the Disciples [see Luke 8:2+3], and the one who was to be chosen to shine the light of Christ as the Apostle to the Apostles? See https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/magdala/#google_vignette]

So, what lessons can we take from the gospel this Easter?

Like Mary, Peter and John, today we receive afresh the Good News of Jesus's resurrection. We are reminded that He died for our sins so that we may accept His invitation to '**Come and see for yourself .. and follow ...**'. *What a privilege to be invited into a Divine embrace where we are transformed in God's good time, more and more into our true selves - the persons we were meant to be and become!* And, thus, shed the hard shell of our 'false selves' - the persona we show to others so that they may not see who we truly are inside. Note that Jesus called Mary - an ineligible witness and unlikely



choice by comparison to Peter and John. *I wonder if you may have felt yourself at some point an unlikely [or perhaps even an unworthy] companion of Jesus?* Yet, we all are His beloved children, whom He aches to gather us to Himself in a Divine embrace [see Luke 13: 34ff]

I wonder what our reaction to this Resurrection Revelation will be today? Will

we, like Peter and John just return home- still living our lives in fear? Or, will we like Mary, *respond when Jesus calls us to Himself, open our hearts to Him, listen to what He says, strive to obey and follow Him, live in His love that drives out all fear ... and share with others what we have experienced ourselves?*

This Easter, I wonder if Jesus may be calling your name to come closer to Him?

I pray that you, yours and your homes, like Mary, are visited by the Risen Christ this Easter.

And from all of us at St Matt's, we wish you all a Blessed and Holy Eastertide!

Gospel reading: John 20:1-18.

To dig further: <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/resurrection-of-our-lord-2/commentary-on-john-201-18>

Upcoming Parish Activities : ***Midweek service - Wednesday @10:30am ; Bible Study*** Wednesday night at Heather's @ 7 pm; Thursday night by Zoom @ 6:30pm; ***NB The next Friday morning 10:30am Bible study will be on the 2nd May Op Shop - Thursday 9 am until Noon; ANZAC Day service 7:15 am @ RSL Arnold St; Next Sunday- 'Like Us Sunday' with Andrew Coates and ANZAC Commemoration ; Behind the scenes thx: Patricia and the Op Shop team*** ***Readings for next Sunday:*** Acts 5:27-32; Ps 118:14-29; Revelation 1: 4-8; John 20:19-31.

Parish Directory: Revd Morris Rangiwai: 0449 557 351; morris.Rangiwai@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.

Wardens: Heather Walker: 0411556 279; hezzie16@gmail.com
Randal Dennings: 0408 878711; randaldennings@gmail.com

Bank Details: Holland Park Anglican Church Anfin BSB 704 901; Acct: 00000760.

Parish website : <https://www.stmatthewshollandpark.com/>

Parish Private Facebook site : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/292308270851142> ; ***Public Site:*** <https://www.facebook.com/StMatthewsHollandPark> ; ***Tipper's***

Treasure's Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559040358754>

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Turrbal and Jagera Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today. We acknowledge their continued spiritual connection to country and surrounding land, sky and water. We pay our respect to their Elders, past present and emerging and pray that we may continue to learn from and nurture one another in the spirit of Reconciliation.

