

Sermon Easter 2025

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Now, I'm not naturally a competitive person – not really, anyway. But, I would be prepared to wager that I saw the earliest crème egg on sale for this Easter. Christmas Eve. I shan't name the shop, but suffice to say it's a well-known emporium of a variety of household and grocery products, with orange branding, and a name that rhymes with Cadbury's.

I'm sure you can barely begin to imagine how your Rector felt about seeing such an abomination so soon. You will be, I'm sure, also seething with fury at the fact that the season of Christmas had not yet started, and yet the confectionary by which we will celebrate the church's next great feast was already on sale. I expect many of you are thinking, 'thank goodness that in our parish priest we have the sort of guy who will find the shop manager and remonstrate severely with her that such a thing could have happened – no doubt in error'.

But, in fact, if you thought I was the kind of fussy person who would get all wound up by such thing, you are happily mistaken. (Perhaps don't ask the people who I've walked precisely through the services this week if I really am that fussy...!)

I was secretly thrilled to see the crème egg there alongside some moulding brussels sprouts. I can't resist the supermarkets bouncing

from Festival to Festival. I love that we experience something of the seasons – at least religiously – even if we can eat strawberries all year round.

There's something about the secular world marking what's going on in our world in church that I find really fantastic. And if you're thinking, 'but Easter isn't about chocolate eggs', you're right. But we have chocolate eggs because of what Easter really is around. So by them being there, there's the opportunity for us to tell the world about the good news we know, behind the delicious calories.

In our Gospel today, the tomb is round empty, the stone rolled away, angels greet the woman who were the first to see. And then, within a few short years of the first signs of the resurrection, the news has spread all around the known world. News travels fast, for sure; and this news, which is news of how the world has changed, travels very quickly indeed. From the running of the women who saw, the pace only intensified.

And all because having this good news is worth sharing with the world.

This week we have marked a radical shift in the relationship between good and humanity. This week, we have seen humanity fall to the depths of despair, typified by the violent nothingness of the cross.

But now, the dawn has broken, death has been undone, and new life has begun. And that is good news. Good news to be taken and

shared, good news to motivate and inspire, good news for love to take root.

But in this life, we see only signs. Sometimes big ones, like feeling the love of friends or family; often ones we take for granted, like the joy of the spring. But these signs are signs of a news so great that the world can hardly bear it. That's why we are given only signs – only grave clothes folded and angels gently letting us know. These signs are signs of a secret happening in the middle of the night. A secret too amazingly dazzling that we would not understand if we did see.

So when we see the *signs* of this extraordinary light and joy in the world, it is our solemn duty to rejoice. In rejoicing, the world sees the joy that Christ means for our world. In rejoicing, the world sees the joy of life spring from desolation. In rejoicing, the world sees the joy of love's victory over death.

Death has not the final word, darkness no longer holds for us a fear. Because today Christ is risen from the dead; today love has cast out fear, and sins have been forgiven. Today, there is Good News for us to share with the world that Jesus came to save – a world crying out for good news.

So if the signs that God gives us are an un-seasonal Easter egg, in a tasteless and gaudy supermarket aisle, rejoice. Because for us, these are signs of Good News. Perhaps it's for our imaginations to get to the joy that God has prepared for us.

We, who believe in the Good News of the risen Jesus are compelled to share this Good News with the world. Christ risen is for everyone, for all who see the signs. It is for us to read them, and – having read them – it is for us to share them.

And besides, we are Easter people, because we were first Christmas people. And we are Christmas people because we will be Easter people. So maybe that supermarket was theologising after all.

Alleluia is the song of these signs; alleluia is the message they bring; alleluia is the Good News we have of love for all the world.

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