

## **Easter Sunday 27 March 2016: "Jesus Christ is Risen! Hallelujah!"**

These words will be repeated with great joy over and over in every church all round the world today as Christians celebrate this truth.

But the first Easter Sunday didn't begin with joy. Oh no!

I wonder if the women who had loved and followed Jesus had slept at all on Friday or Saturday night. I suspect they had spent the nights sadly remembering him. At the first hint of dawn on Sunday morning, these women lit their lamps, gathered their spices and made their way through the dark and quiet streets out to the garden where Jesus body had been buried. This was the last time they could do anything for Jesus. And so they went sadly, puzzling over why his life had ended like this. No joy there!

Meanwhile, Jesus' disciples had locked themselves into a room, terrified in case they too might be captured and crucified because they had followed Jesus. They too had probably not had any sleep. They were probably wondering if they had wasted their time following Jesus. No joy there!

The soldiers who had been on duty guarding the tomb were also in a state of shock and fear. They had been put on duty to make sure that Jesus' body stayed in the tomb. And yet the body was gone! They had failed in their duty and must have been terrified as they knew they would be punished. No joy there!

Yet within a few hours, joy burst out into the world. Jesus was alive! Death couldn't keep him captive!

Not much else changed. The followers of Jesus were still in danger of being arrested by the authorities. But now they knew beyond doubt that the man they had followed was God himself. And in his strength they could face anything.

In many places today Christians are still in danger because they follow Jesus. Yet they go on because they know Jesus is alive; they talk with him and feel his strength. Remember to pray for them this Easter.

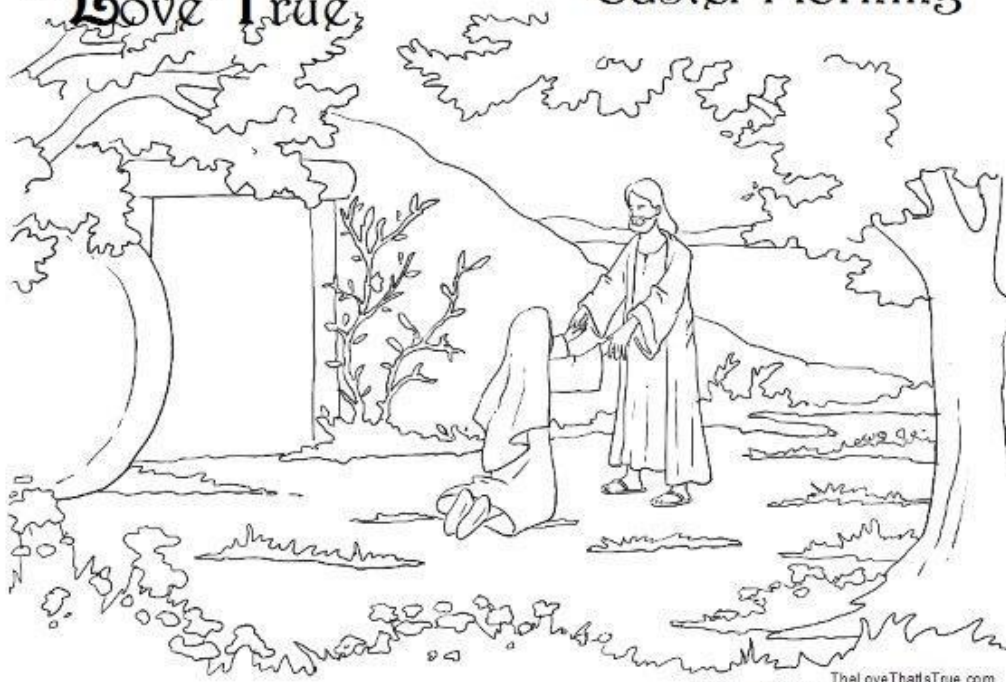
And remember to pray for us at DMC. We don't get punished for being Christians, but sometimes our joy disappears because we live in a world which thinks Easter bunnies and Easter eggs are more important than the fact that Jesus has risen.

So celebrate the real message of Easter: Jesus Christ is risen! Hallelujah!

Think about this as you colour in this picture:

The Love That Is True

Easter Morning



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