

**Sermon Summary**  
**Easter Sunday**  
**30<sup>th</sup> /31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

- The gospel accounts of Easter start with what seems to me an indisputable historical mystery: the empty tomb.
- The easiest answer for opponents of Christianity would have been to point to the tomb of Jesus- but they could not or did not. .
- Instead, down to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, increasingly elaborate reasons are given for an empty tomb: theft of the body, an escape from the cross with later claims for tombs in Jerusalem, Kashmir and even Japan. There is a wealth of competing claims of why the tomb was empty.
- All point to the fact that no-one knew where the body was
- The evangelists, in the face of such diverse claims, offer a common account- acceptable to many, but not all of Jesus' contemporaries- resurrection.
- We note, however, that John does not ask us to understand all this.
- The first disciples see, and their seeing is the foundation of faith.
- They believe- they trust- but do not yet understand what is going on (John 20:9)
- Understanding will follow in the subsequent appearances of the Risen Lord.
- Their experience provides the blue print for our discipleship.
- We cannot see- and John always makes a point of saying how valuable it is that faith need not start from this immediate eye-witness experience.
- We can, however, trust what has been reported.
- Such trust in the reports and in our understanding of God allow the potential for believing in the resurrection.
- The lifelong task of the Christian is the classic definition of faith given by Anselm of Canterbury: faith seeking understanding.
- We believe- we trust- and we worship, pray and study Holy Writ to grow in understanding. Of the full riches of God's saving work and promises to us.

30/1 March 2013