



Words for the Way

An online Lent Course for the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney

Resurrection

Thursday 13 April – Easter Thursday



Photo of the Royal Porticos in the Second Temple Model of Jerusalem

Acts 3:11-26

While the lame man whom Peter and John had healed clung to them, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished. When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

"And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets. Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you from your

own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.' And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days. You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, 'And in your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Today's reading from the Book of Acts is part of Peter's Speech at the Portico. A very public place where the disciple who denied knowing Jesus three times before Jesus was crucified is now announcing what Jesus has done for the world and how Jesus has fulfilled what was foretold by the prophets. How would you tell your story of faith, of your experiences of Holy Week and Easter, of how you know Jesus to be the Son of God, the Messiah?

Christ as a Gardener by Andrew Hudgins (1991)

The boxwoods planted in the park spell LIVE.

I never noticed it until they died.

Before, the entwined green had smudged the word unreadable. And when they take their own advice again – come spring, come Easter – no one will know a word is buried in the leaves. I love the way that Mary thought her resurrected Lord a gardener. It wasn't just the broad-brimmed hat and muddy robe that fooled her: he was that changed.

He looks across the unturned field, the riot Of unscythed grass, the smattering of wildflowers.

Before he can stop himself, he's on his knees.

He roots up stubborn weeds, pinches the suckers, deciding order here – what lives, what dies, and how. But it goes deeper even than that.

His hands burn and his bare feet smolder. He longs To lie down inside the long, dew-moist furrows and press his pierced side and his broken forehead into the dirt. But he's already done it – passed through one death and out the other side.

He laughs. He kicks his bright spade in the earth and turns it over. Spring flashes by, then harvest.

Beneath his feet, seeds dance into the air.

They rise, and he, not noticing, ascends on midair steppingstones of dandelion, of milkweed, thistle, cattail, and goldenrod

