

RECTOR'S PINT

April 2024

The Rector's Pint

March ended, literally with Easter Sunday, it was the last day of the month, and the clocks went forward an hour. This may well have tested the mettle of anyone who went to a sunrise service on Easter morning. I know what I am like in the early morning!

The Sundays following Easter give us a glimpse into the mindset of the early disciples and not least, Thomas, who we call 'doubting Thomas'. He is in fact my favourite disciple because he's the one who asks the awkward questions. I think that his doubts are to his credit; he wasn't going to believe in a story or a rumour without evidence. On the Sunday after Easter, his story, recorded in John's Gospel (Chapter 20) tells us that he refused to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead without evidence: "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe".

We read that Thomas had to wait a week for the evidence to present itself. We don't often get what we want when we want it! "Although the doors to the room they were in were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you". Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe". Thomas answered him," My Lord and my God".

I love that story, and that Thomas, who we accuse of being the doubting one, was, in fact, the first among the disciples to declare that Jesus was Lord and God.

Anyone who has ever been at a baptism that I have conducted, will know that I always tell the visitors and guests that I do what I do essentially because I believe this to be true, that Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day. I believe in the truth of resurrection from the dead because of Him. I have had plenty of times of doubt over the years, about how it all works in the face of the world's complexities and sorrows, but I can't get round this, that those who wrote these accounts down believed them to be true, and that conviction has stayed with me for many years now.

I rarely recommend films that try and tell us this story, but I am very happy to do so with *Risen* which stars Joseph Fiennes as the Roman Tribune who oversaw Jesus' crucifixion and who is then tasked with finding his body when rumours circulated that Jesus had been seen alive. It takes a different and unique view on the resurrection story. It can still be found on Netflix, and I think it is encouraging and uplifting.

Christ is risen.

Simon

I'd like to let you know that all three of our churches are holding their APCM's over the coming month. These Annual meetings are open to all members of the congregation, and

anyone who lives in the villages, and are an opportunity to hear about the work of the PCC and the church in our community over the year. Please come along and have a chat, or ask questions, you'll be very welcome. Great Milton's APCM is on Sunday 21st April at 11.30 in St Mary's, Little Milton's APCM is on Sunday 19th May at 11.30 in St James', and Great Haseley's APCM will be at 12.00, following the Benefice Service in St Peter's on Sunday 26th May.