

Hatching Hope!

Acts 10³⁴⁻⁴³; Psalm 118^{1-2,14-24}; 1 Corinthians 15¹⁻¹¹; John 20¹⁻¹⁸

*So we proclaim and so you have come to believe.
[1 Corinthians 15¹¹]*

As a teacher I was guilty of issuing pointless punishments to students who were silly rather than pursuing things through the formal channels. At Pope John School in Corby I remember, around Easter, giving a student an essay to write on the title, *What happens to chocolate eggs when they hatch?* He objected that it was pointless, yet it was done and read to the class meeting the one condition – that it was funny!

I have no particular objection to the traditions that have grown up around Easter – the chocolate eggs (although I do prefer painting hard-boiled eggs and rolling them down a hill – much more symbolic); the easter bonnets; even the Easter Bunny! What I do have a problem with is anything associated with Easter that doesn't give hope: hope in the resurrection; hope that death is never the end; hope that gives purpose to life!

It is a particular joy today to baptise Omarie and Zoe Rose into our Easter faith – traditionally Easter was the day on which Baptisms were administered in the early Church because it is *the* Sacrament that celebrates looking forward with faith because sin has been paid for, the Devil defeated, death conquered and hope is assured.

A quick recap of the basics:

- ✘ Jesus had died – those of you who have followed the Reflections during Holy Week know that Pilate checked this: Roman executioners were ruthlessly efficient.
- ✘ Jesus was buried, sealed in a tomb.
- ✘ Those who went to the tomb expected to find a corpse and went equipped to deal with, yet the tomb was empty.

- ✘ All who met the Risen Christ were shocked, yet he was there: he ate with them; talked with them and commissioned them.
- ✘ The disciples preached the death and resurrection of Jesus to those who were there at the time and no-one challenged them.
- ✘ Christians, from the disciples onwards, have experienced the Risen Christ for themselves and have known the power of the resurrection to change and energise them.

In life and through death, we proclaim Jesus is risen from the dead – Jesus lives!

I am not setting anyone a punishment essay of *What happens to chocolate eggs when they hatch?* today! What I am celebrating is that hopeful faith that is hatched because Jesus is risen from the dead. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! **He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!**