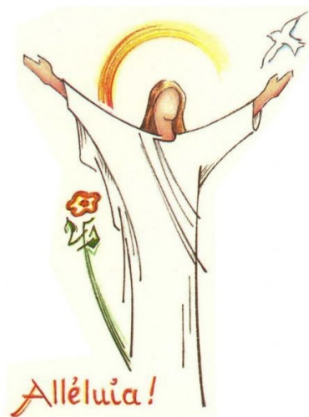


# EASTER DAY HE IS RISEN – ALLELUIA!

## Easter Sunday Camino—4<sup>th</sup> April 2021



May I take this opportunity to wish you Easter blessings and peace; this journey has now reached its natural conclusion. We have been invited to share the beauty and strength of our great Easter Vigil. We join with millions of Christians, down through history, who celebrate that we are a Church of life—not death.

Through the lighting of a Holy Fire, we have brought the light of faith to our community: symbolically we have brought the paschal candle into our darkened church building—as we lit out our own individual Easter candles, so our church was bathed in light.

We have been able to follow the great story of salvation in our scripture readings, culminating with the account of the women going to the tomb of Jesus and worrying about **'who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb.'**

Just as the stone sealing the tomb would have been an obstacle to those women in ministering to the body of Jesus, we too may encounter stones and rocks in our lives which prevent us from reaching out in faith to Jesus Christ to receive His gift of salvation or eternal life; that keep us from following the will of God in our lives and work against our gaining the fullness of joy in life. These stones and rocks may come in different shapes and sizes. Whether they are big or small, they block our way and trap us in anxiety, doubt, worry, disappointment, grief, sadness, and fear and, ultimately lead to a loss of faith in ourselves, in others and a further loss of faith and belief in God. What are the stones in your life right now? Are there times when you look at these stones standing in your way and feel powerless and afraid? Do you feel you are not strong enough to move any of these stones and wonder who will move them for you?

Are there any stones or obstacles in your way today? It could be family or relationship problems, financial stress, job loss or difficult co-workers, or deadly sins such as resentment, anger, hatred, envy, lust, pride, greed. Your obstacle could be an addiction to drugs, alcohol, or gambling—please know that just as God rolled away the stone to allow the women's entrance into the tomb, God is there to remove all of your stumbling blocks out of the way and fill your life with faith, truth, hope, peace and joy. There is no stone which God cannot remove from your life. No stone is too large or heavy for Him to remove from your path.

The women, the first witnesses to resurrection, see that that stone has been rolled back—they find the tomb EMPTY: the message of the angel echoes down through time, **'there is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth: he has RISEN.'** On this Easter Day we proclaim that new life is found in the grave! Resurrection points to a LIFE that we are invited to share, as Jesus moves us forward in the story of salvation. The events of this past week have been so hard to endure; the events of these pandemic times have been hard to endure. Resurrection points to a bright and new future: even the darkest of nights will give way to a bright dawn of hope.

As we renew our baptismal vows, holding our individual Easter candles, may that hope boost our faith. Our lives have had to change so much, and we have had to make new ways of being Church. However, the basics will never change: the kindness, the care, the texts, the calls, and the hand of help.

Easter is a chance to make a real difference; today is that chance to bring the Easter light into the lives of family and friends. The Good News must be shared to make a real and lasting difference:

**On this Easter morning, let us look again at the lives we have been so generously given and let us let fall away the useless baggage that we carry—old pains, old habits, old ways of seeing and feeling—and let us have the courage to begin again. Life is very short, and we are no sooner here than it is time to depart again, and we should use to the full the time that we still have. We don't realise all the good we can do. A kind, encouraging word or helping hand can bring many a person through dark valleys in their lives. We weren't put here to make money or to acquire status or reputation. We were sent here to search for the light of Easter in our hearts, and when we find it we are meant to give it away generously. The dawn that is rising this Easter morning is a gift to our hearts and we are meant to celebrate it and to carry away from this holy, ancient place the gifts of healing and light and the courage of a new beginning.**

*'Walking in the Pastures of Wonder' John O'Donohue*



*The Easter Fire of Hope  
Young Adults' Retreat at Savio House Bollington, Easter 2014  
(Images on p1 via Qumran2.net)*