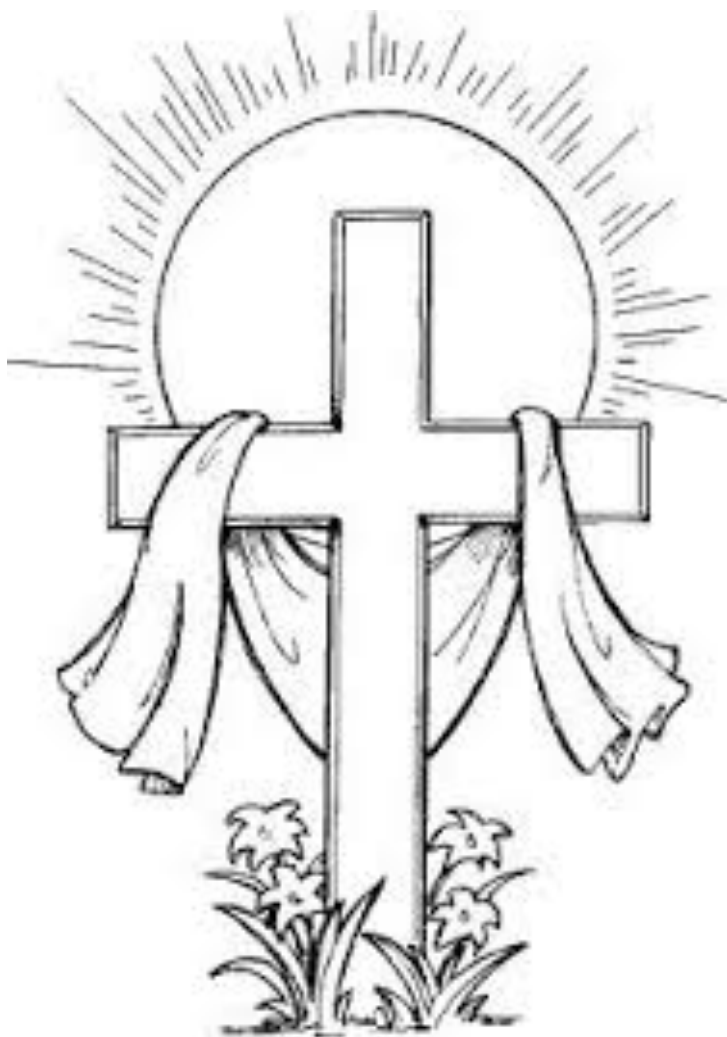


Ardal Weinidogaeth Bro Ystumanner Ministry Area



Easter Reflections

An Anthology of Poetry

The Cast of Christmas Reassembles for Easter

Steve Turner

Take the wise men to the Emperor's palace.
Wash their hands in water.
Get them to say something about truth.
Does anyone know any good Jewish jokes?
The one about a carpenter
who thought he was a King?
The one about the Saviour
who couldn't save himself?
The shepherds should stand with the chorus.
They have a big production number –
'Barabbas, We Love You Baby'.
Mary? She can move to the front.
We have a special section reserved
for family and close friends.
Tell her that we had to cut the manger up.
We needed the wood for something else.
The star I'm afraid I can't use.
There are no stars in this show.
The sky turns black with sorrow.
The earth shakes with terror.
Hold on to the frankincense.
We'll need that for the garden scene.
Angels? He could do with some angels.
Avenging angels.
Merciful angels.
He could really do with some angels.
Baby Jesus.
Step this way please.
My! How you've grown!

Good Friday

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Am I a stone, and not a sheep,
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy cross,
To number drop by drop Thy blood's slow loss,
And yet not weep?

Not so those women loved
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;
Not so fallen Peter, weeping bitterly;
Not so the thief was moved;

Not so the Sun and Moon
Which hid their faces in a starless sky,
A horror of great darkness at broad noon –
I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,
But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock;
Greater than Moses, turn and look once more
And smite a rock.

A Better Resurrection

Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)

I have no wit, I have no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears;
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
A lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is like the falling leaf;
O Jesus, quicken me.

!! Easter Saturday

Michael Shepherd

Today is the day after;
after blackness, what?

yesterday, black present filled the mind;
today, not even light on blackness..

a day not on the calendar;
an empty diary entry;

faith smaller than a mustard seed;
hope an untilled field.

This is what a present with
no future feels like;

the mercy only
that there is a present;

among the closest, the rumour
of a promise so ethereal

it has no shape or form
to build into new faith, no hope;

not even waiting, when
there may be nothing for to wait;

a day out of time; wrap around you
the thin silk of love;

be still; surrender everything
and find a peace beyond all promises;

today, there is no tomorrow;
if you have hope, then hope;

if you have prayer, then pray and pray;
perhaps tomorrow's born today.

In Memoriam (Easter, 1915)

Edward Thomas (1878-1917)

The flowers left thick at nightfall in the wood
This Eastertide call into mind the men,
Now far from home, who, with their sweethearts, should
Have gathered them and will do never again.

Easter Even

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

There is nothing more that they can do
For all their rage and boast;
Caiaphas with his blaspheming crew,
Herod with his host,

Pontius Pilate in his Judgement-hall
Judging their Judge and his,
Or he who led them all and passed them all,
Arch-Judas with his kiss.

The sepulchre made sure with ponderous Stone,
Seal that same stone, O Priest;
It may be thou shalt block the holy One
From rising in the east:

Set a watch about the sepulchre
To watch on pain of death;
They must hold fast the stone if One should stir
And shake it from beneath.

God Almighty, He can break a seal
And roll away a Stone,
Can grind the proud in dust who would not kneel,
And crush the mighty one.

*

There is nothing more that they can do
For all their passionate care,
Those who sit in dust, the blessed few,
And weep and rend their hair:

Peter, Thomas, Mary Magdalene,
The Virgin unreprieved,
Joseph, with Nicodemus, foremost men,
And John the Well-beloved,

Bring your finest linen and your spice,
Swathe the sacred Dead,
Bind with careful hands and piteous eyes
The napkin round His head;

Lay Him in the garden-rock to rest;
Rest you the Sabbath length:
The Sun that went down crimson in the west
Shall rise renewed in strength.

God Almighty shall give joy for pain,
Shall comfort him who grieves:
Lo! He with joy shall doubtless come again,
And with Him bring His sheaves.

Easter Saturday

Or 'Has Anyone Here Seen Thomas?'

Godfrey Rust (from *A Touch of Flame: An Anthology of Christian Poetry*, compiled by Jenny Robertson)

Sometimes I feel
like an Easter Saturday,
just
a tombful of possibilities
wishing my guard
would fall asleep.

The Morning That Death Was Killed

Steve Turner (from *The moon has got his pants on and other poems*)

I woke in a place that was dark
The air was spicy and still
I was bandaged from head to foot
The morning that death was killed.

I rose from a mattress of stone
I folded my clothes on the sill
I heard the door rolling open
The morning that death was killed.

I walked alone in the garden
The birds in the branches trilled
It felt like a new beginning
The morning that death was killed.

Mary, she came there to find me
Peter with wonder was filled
And John came running and jumping
The morning that death was killed.

My friends were lost in amazement
My father, I knew, was thrilled
Things were never the same again
After the morning that death was killed.

Haiku 41 – Life Renewed

David L. Hatton

Spring's Lenten season
bestows buds, blossoms fragrance—
bedecks empty tomb.

Haiku – Easter Lilies

Mary Havran

Trumpet shaped bloom
Good News sounds forth from tomb
Lilies shout Glory

I: Easter Hymn

Edward Alfred Housman (1859-1936)

If in that Syrian garden, ages slain,
You sleep, and know not you are dead in vain,
Nor even in dreams behold how dark and bright
Ascends in smoke and fire by day and night
The hate you died to quench and could but fan,
Sleep well and see no morning, son of man.

But if, the grave rent and the stone rolled by,
At the right hand of majesty on high
You sit, and sitting so remember yet
Your tears, your agony and bloody sweat,
Your cross and passion and the life you gave,
Bow hither out of heaven and see and save.

Easter Wings

George Herbert (1593-1633)

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Easter

George Herbert (1593-1633)

Rise, heart, thy lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him may'st rise:
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and, much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art,
The cross taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort, both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long;
Or, since all music is but three parts vied
And multiplied
Oh let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers to straw thy way;
I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,
Though he give light, & th' East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we misse:
There is but one, and that one ever.

Easter

Katharine Tynan

Bring flowers to strew His way,
Yea, sing, make holiday;
Bid young lambs leap,
And earth laugh after sleep.

For now He cometh forth
Winter flies to the north,
Folds wings and cries
Amid the bergs and ice.

Yea, Death, great Death is dead,
And Life reigns in his stead;
Cometh the Athlete
New from dead Death's defeat.

Cometh the Wrestler,
But Death he makes no stir,
Utterly spent and done,
And all his kingdom gone.

Easter Communion

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

Pure fasted faces draw unto this feast:
God comes all sweetness to your Lenten lips.
You striped in secret with breath-taking whips,
Those crooked rough-scored chequers may be pieced
To crosses meant for Jesu's; you whom the East
With draught of thin and pursuant cold so nips
Breathe Easter now; you serged fellowships,
You vigil-keepers with low flames decreased,

God shall o'er-brim the measures you have spent
With oil of gladness, for sackcloth and frieze
And the ever-fretting shirt of punishment
Give myrrhy-threaded golden folds of ease.
Your scarce-sheathed bones are weary of being bent:
Lo, God shall strengthen all the feeble knees.

Poem for Easter

Steve Turner (from *Up to Date*)

Tell me:
What came first
Easter or the egg?
Crucifixion
 or daffodils?
Three days in a tomb
 or four days
in Paris?
 (returning
Bank Holiday Monday).

When is a door
not a door?
When it is rolled away.
When is a body
not a body?
When it is a risen.

Question.
Why was it the Saviour
rode on the cross?
Answer.
To get us
to the other side.

Behold I stand.
Behold I stand and what?
Behold I stand at the door and

knock knock.

Easter Day
Oscar Wilde

The silver trumpets rang across the Dome:
The people knelt upon the ground with awe:
And borne upon the necks of men I saw,
Like some great God, the Holy Lord of Rome.
Priest-like, he wore a robe more white than foam,
And, king-like, swathed himself in royal red,
Three crowns of gold rose high upon his head:
In splendour and in light the Pope passed home.

My heart stole back across wide wastes of years
To One who wandered by a lonely sea,
And sought in vain for any place of rest:
'Foxes have holes, and every bird its nest,
I, only I, must wander wearily,
And bruise my feet, and drink wine salt with tears.'

Easter Week
Charles Kingsley

See the land, her Easter keeping,
Rises as her Maker rose.
Seeds, so long in darkness sleeping,
Burst at last from winter snows.
Earth with heaven above rejoices;
Fields and gardens hail the spring;
Shaughs and woodlands ring with voices,
While the wild birds build and sing.

You, to whom your Maker granted
Powers to those sweet birds unknown,
Use the craft by God implanted;
Use the reason not your own.
Here, while heaven and earth rejoices,
Each his Easter tribute bring-
Work of fingers, chant of voices,
Like the birds who build and sing.

soulsurvivor

inspired by Allison Moyet

See Allison Moyet's video on YouTube "Love Resurrection"
for the backing music to this song.

what can we do
to bring light to
these dark, dark days?

what switch can we turn
to illuminate the way?

there's nothing but war
and hardship and want
children who starve
demons that haunt

we all need a
love resurrection
just a little divine intervention
we all need a
LOVE RESURRECTION
just a little divine intervention

what can we do
to restore the parched parched land
teach us to harvest
and bring *good seed* from our hands

let's be optimistic
and say we won't toil in vain
if we pull together
we can soothe each other's pain

we all need a *love resurrection*
just a little divine intervention
we all need a
LOVE RESURRECTION
just a little divine intervention

The Answer is the Empty Tomb

Kevin Smead

My heart is full of worry
And my mind with anxious care
The answer is the empty tomb
His body is not there

My soul is filled with fear and shame
My life is filled with dread
The answer is the empty tomb
Christ risen from the dead

The world is full of sorrows
All the cities full of woe
The answer is the empty tomb
The whole world needs to know

The youth are filled with unbelief
The schools are filled with doubt
The answer is the empty tomb
The Saviour made it out

No matter what you're facing
No matter how it feels
The answer is the empty tomb
A risen Lord that heals

Easter Children's Prayer

Author unknown

God made you and God made me,
He made the world for us to see.
God loves you and long ago,
He sent his Son to tell us so.
Jesus showed us many things,
To love and share and dance and sing.
To learn and pray, to help and care,
He promised he'd always be there.
He died but then came back to life,
Let's celebrate for he's alive!
Amen.

Thanksgiving

Edith Forrest (from *A Touch of Flame: An Anthology of Christian Poetry*, compiled by Jenny Robertson)

We give thanks for St Thomas
All we who have known
The darkness of disbelief,
The hollowness at the heart of Christmas,
The intolerable emptiness of Easter,
The grief of separation.

With Thy great mercy, Thou dost enfold us,
The waverers, the aliens, who stood apart, alone.
For the impoverishment of our barren years
Thou wilt atone.

Now with faithful company we bring,
From depths of thankfulness
Our adoration
To Thee
O, Christ our King.

An Easter Blessing

**May the celebration of resurrected life
bring new hope to your being.
May the victory over earthly death
turn your eyes to the promises of heaven.
May the empty tomb
help you to leave your sorrows at the foot of the cross,
so that God's hope, promises, love and forgiveness
reign in your life forever.
Amen.**