Alleluia Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!!

Easter Day – and what’s left to say? Throughout the weeks of Lent, and Passiontide, we have been led on a journey through history and faith – the history of Christ’s life, especially his latter days, and our own personal response to that history, in the revisited journey of our own faith. Many words have been spoken, many readings heard, many hymns and anthems sung. Many of them led us into the experience of despair and abandonment – into an identification with those suffering in the world, recognising Christ’s identification with their tragedy.

Today we reach the conclusion of that journey, and we have read readings and sung songs of triumph. What sort of triumph is it, though? And how should it be proclaimed? With shouts, or with whispers? With Tannoy loudspeakers, or with a gentle touch on a shoulder?

The triumph of Easter is not a ‘we’re more powerful than them’ sort of triumph. It’s the triumph of a romance – which is why the reading from the Song of Solomon is so appropriate, and of course the gospel of John. It’s the return of one whom was loved, who was presumed dead. A deeply personal victory – a victory of love.

The story of the cross and resurrection is in the end a love story. A story of God’s love for the world, which reached out in the physical flesh of Jesus Christ, a love which did not flinch back from offering all, and finding yet more still to offer. And in the end, an offering back of love into love’s hands, as Jesus commits his Spirit to the Father in the moment of death. It was in this commitment, that salvation was won for the world – for it was for this trusting abandonment into his hands that the Father was waiting. It was this single act that opened the way of faith, of hope, of the ultimate triumph of love in the word. As we are able to follow Christ in casting ourselves on the love of the Father that we, too, will know the fruits of his redemption.

So what’s changed? Love wins. That’s what’s changed. A truth to be made known in songs and praises of love, not in ‘we’re better than you, or stronger than you – or anything “than you”’. This is when ‘they’ gets turned back to ‘us’, when ‘I’ gets turned to ‘we’. This is the story that has angels dancing.

I’ve been pondering the West screen through the last days of Holy week, and early this morning (very early!) I’ve been looking at those three rows of angels dancing, falling out of the frame in their exuberant blowing of their trumpets. They are dancing because love wins. In the midst of all the huge disasters that confront our planet, and fill the news, love wins. And every time that truth is made known, they dance again!

How do you think it should be made known? I think it’s made known whenever there is a word, or perhaps more appropriately, a touch of love. Stuff still happens in this world to make angels weep – but something else has happened which will ultimately transform all of that. And that makes them dance – this is a day for dancing with the angels.
What will you do this week to make Christ’s love known, to make the angels dance?

Christ Came Juggling

Christ came juggling from the tomb, flipping and bouncing death’s stone pages, tossing those narrow letters high against the roots of dawn spread in cloud. This Jesus, clown, came dancing in the dust of Judea, each slapping step a new blossom spiked with joy.

Hey! Listen—that chuckle in the dark, that clean blast of laughter behind—Christ comes juggling our tombs tossing them high and higher yet, until they hit the sun and break open and we fall out, dancing and juggling our griefs like sizzling balls of light.

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