

Dear Friends of St Mary's

Easter Sunday

During the Second World War, a painting of Christ with Mary Magdalene, *Noli me Tangere*, by the sixteenth century artist Titian, was London's most treasured painting. For a month in 1942 it was, by public demand, the only painting displayed in the National Gallery while thousands of other paintings had been taken down and transported for safe keeping to Welsh slate mines. It was cherished because as the bombs fell, Londoners found reassurance in this story that love is so strong it can survive death.

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/picture-of-the-month/picture-of-the-month-october-2019>

As we awake this Easter morning, we awake to a world that is full of trepidation. This year, of all years, we can begin to understand how the disciples must have felt when they saw that the tomb was empty. We are told that: "then the disciple who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead". John 20:8-9. But Mary, who had broken the news, had devotion to Jesus rewarded and eventually he revealed himself to Mary. Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher) John 20:16. From this Mary received great joy and comfort.

My prayer for us this Easter is that, like the Londoners looking at *Noli me Tangere* and Mary recognising the Risen Christ, so we may receive that love and strength that comes from his Resurrection that love that is so strong that it can survive death.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

With best wishes in these difficult times and a Happy Easter to you all.

Godfrey