

This reflection is particularly well suited to a Maundy Thursday Communion

Invited to his table
Disciples of Jesus gathered

In the traditions of their ancestors
And the customs of their faith – they gathered

As soldiers reported for their watch
And religious leaders waited nervously – they gathered

As temple traders sold their wares on rebuilt stalls
And dinner hosts spread banquets – they gathered

As the Roman governor attended to his dispatches
And clerks busied themselves in the waiting council chamber – they gathered

As palace guards were posted, and angry mobs were rallied
And servants lit the fire-pits in the High Priest's courtyard – they gathered

As cross-beams were requisitioned
And the blacksmith's hammer beat nails from red hot metal – they gathered

As hearts yearned for salvation
And God's purposes began to unveil
Those who Christ invited - were gathered

And so we come together
To share bread and wine
As generations before us have done.

We gather amidst a world
Where entrepreneurs and restaurateurs, politicians, squaddies and servants
Pursue today's concerns and duties,
Daring to believe that God's purposes continue to be found and fulfilled.

We gather, that as God's people we might be better equipped
To live out this sacrament in the public square
Seeking to meet Christ afresh
That we might be renewed and strengthened in the task that we share.

We gather amidst a world that is hurting and fractured
Uncertain and confused
Declaring freedom yet constrained by fear
Longing for peace yet perpetuating violence

United in common humanity yet often divided by religion

We gather, bearing its scars and sharing its fragility
To break bread at the table of its Saviour
Share wine at the bidding of its Healer
To offer ourselves and receive grace anew
And by his hand, be made ready to continue our journey.
Confident not in our own understanding
But God's eternal wisdom
Certain not of the pathway ahead.
But that God will be with us as we trace its course.

A responsive prayer for Easter Day

Christ has died! - Christ is risen!

The Matthew 28 Easter morning reading concludes with the women being commissioned to tell the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee. Jerusalem is the religious centre, Galilee is the centre of their everyday working lives. Like those early disciples, we who on Easter Day have encountered the risen Lord, are called not to the religious or spectacular, but to resume our everyday working lives transformed by the truth which we have re-embraced. This commission seeks to capture that reality:

The everyday and familiar invites our return
School runs, commuter routes, schedules and in-trays
e-mail; g-mail; voice-mail; snail-mail;
Response: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Appointments to keep, customers to satisfy
Orders to complete, mistakes to rectify
R: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Ends to make meet, uncertainties lurking
Tough decisions to make, dilemmas to ponder
R: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Aspirations to fulfil, careers to pursue
Skills to share, accomplishments to celebrate
R: Christ has died Christ is risen

Experiences await; unimagined, unforeseen
Dreamed-of, dreaded or simply routine
R: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Christ who is Lord of all things,
We have wept and shuddered at the foot of Your cross;
Marvelled and rejoiced at Your empty tomb.

May we not return unchanged to that from which we turned aside;
But ready to seek Your living presence in every aspect of our being.
AMEN