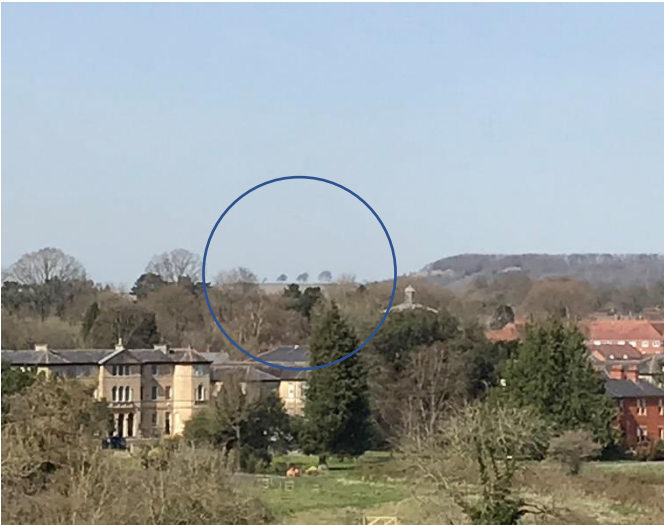


ANN'S RAMBLES and REFLECTIONS

Wishing you all a Happy and Joyous Easter 2021



Before the joy of the Resurrection, came, what appeared to be, the tragedy of the Crucifixion. And before that the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. What an up and down week of emotions occur in Holy Week – a bit like the weather!

*There is a green hill far away, Outside a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.*

(I changed 'without' to 'outside' – 'without' always confused me as a child!)

Every time I'm out on the hills and look north to Roundway Hill, these three trees stand out on the skyline. On every occasion they bring to mind the Crucifixion and those three crosses on the hill of Golgotha outside Jerusalem. Crowds followed Jesus through the narrow streets of the old city to the rocky hills beyond the city walls. It's curious how gruesome deaths attract the crowds. Executions attracted the masses. Some came to stand and gloat, or others it was a day out to watch the spectacle, others, often on the fringes of the crowd, came to mourn their loss, and yet others might say to themselves – 'There but for the grace of God go I'.

A popular source of the phrase the English evangelical preacher and martyr, John Bradford (circa 1510–1555). He is said to have uttered the variant of the expression - "There but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford", when seeing criminals being led to the scaffold. He didn't enjoy that grace for long, however. He was burned at the stake in 1555, although, by all accounts he remained sanguine about his fate and is said to have suggested to a fellow victim that "We shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night".



On the third day He rose again. No crowds this time. Just a peaceful garden.

But we sing out with joy

*Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross,
Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!*

There may be no Easter dawn communion service in a churchyard full of birdsong this year – that was the tradition at my previous church, - nor an early Easter breakfast (but I shall still have my boiled eggs), but we can all shout out '**Christ is risen, He is Risen indeed**'. That was easy to sing as we came out of St. Andrew's to the top of the church steps to proclaim to Devez:

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son; endless is the victory, thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away, kept the folded grave clothes where thy body lay.
Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son, Endless is the vict'ry, thou o'er death hast won.*



Will I dare go out and sing it in my back garden? But perhaps in the quietness and lack of business this Easter, as last year, I might find more time to reflect. The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our Christian faith. Without this pivotal moment and the belief that Jesus is our saviour, Jesus' life and the Bible mean nothing!