

Lectionary readings: Isaiah 65: 17-25; Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24; Acts 10: 34-43; Luke 24: 1-12 (Easter Day)

For reflection and prayer

- **Isaiah 65:** This is a picture of the new heavens and the new earth. God calls us to rejoice. We are a source of joy to God. He delights in us. We are a people blessed by God. We have a foretaste of the new heavens and new earth today because of God coming to us in Jesus. We can experience new life today. We can experience the joy of being accepted and loved by God. We can know the risen power of Jesus in our lives today. Let's open our hearts and lives to the Spirit of God and let Him fill us with joy.
- **Psalm 118:** This is indeed the day that God has made, a day to rejoice and be glad, for this day of resurrection is God's gift to us, given in love, to be received in love. This is a day to give thanks, to acknowledge the goodness of God in sharing His life and love with us, showing us how love triumphs over darkness, despair, tragedy. So this week let's make the decision to bring God into our circumstances more and more, finding in Him a Loving Presence and opening ourselves to Him to receive the gift of faith and see God and good in every experience we go through.
- **Acts 10:** Here is Peter playing a leading role in the early church. This is the same Peter who denied Jesus, not once, but three times. And yet he is a very different Peter, for he is forgiven, accepted, loved and called by God - a new person, because he has opened himself to the living, risen Lord. He has found that betrayal is not

the end, for there is never a dead end with God, always a new beginning, the opportunity of an inner transformation, a new direction. The same is true for us. However we have let God down, whatever mistakes or however many bad choices we have made, the risen Christ is holding out His arms to us in loving acceptance, offering us a fresh start - no condemnation, no accusation, only forgiveness, acceptance and love, the opportunity to be changed, and an invitation to go out and show that there is hope, forgiveness, new life available to all. If we feel our lives are stagnant, that we are in a rut, or paralysed by fear, disillusionment, boredom, frustration, loneliness, discouragement, the risen Christ wants to come and breathe new life into us. Will we let Him?

- **Luke 24:** The women were asked, 'Why are you looking in a tomb for someone who is alive?' Where are you looking for Jesus today? Where are you expecting to find Jesus today? In your own heart? In everyone you meet? In the ordinary everyday circumstances of your life? In your pain and suffering? In your loss? In your disappointments? In your times of joy and celebration? The Spirit of Jesus is alive in our world. There are signs of the risen Christ all around us. Let's open our eyes to see Him, our ears to hear Him and our hearts to respond to Him this week. He wants us to encounter Him in our everyday life, in whatever we are going through. He wants to fill us with hope when we are tempted to despair. He wants to give us faith and courage to go on when we are filled with fear. He wants to transform our daily life with His loving presence. Let this be a week when we experience the transforming power of the risen Christ in our life, so that we and others see God in our midst.