



**Apr 2021**

*Revd John writes:*



## **'RESURRECTION – HOPE FOR HARD TIMES'**

In 1939 when it was certain that war was on the way, the trustees of the National gallery made arrangements to ship their entire collection to Canada. When he was told of this plan Winston Churchill demanded that the treasures must stay in this country, and so the artworks were sent to be stored in slate mines in Wales. Then in 1942, with London scarred and disfigured by the ravages of enemy bombing, it was decided to exhibit one of the treasures a month so that Londoners might be cheered to see beauty on display again. Public opinion was sought as to which masterpiece should be the first to be displayed –it would surely be something that portrayed the strength and resilience of the human spirit. The popular choice is shown below:

Some of you may recognize Titian's 'Noli me Tangere' (Do not touch me) which portrays Jesus' Easter morning encounter with Mary Magdalene. Interesting to note that in the nations darkest hour it was an image of The Resurrection that provided people with the hope and comfort they needed.

Titian's title is poignant today, as many of us are still waiting to





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touch and hug our grandchildren, loved ones in hospital or aged relatives in care homes. We have lived through some hard times in the past year, and as I write the Covid virus is once again threatening a further wave across Europe, and much of the rest of the world still waits for vaccines to become freely available. The death toll, already high, seems to have some way to go yet. We are 'promised' that restrictions will soon be eased, and that life will return to 'normal', but how normal this life will be remains to be seen. Coronavirus has been a life changing bearer of death and disaster – we long for new life.

New life is the theme of the Resurrection. On Good Friday the lifeless body of Jesus was taken from the cross and laid in the tomb – life over, hope extinguished. Three days later new life bursts from the tomb, death is defeated, hope restored. This life is not just for Easter but for ever, not just for Christians but for everyone. The Resurrection is for those who are hungry for life, prepared to come alive to the power of God's love – revealed in Jesus Christ. Love that enables us to live with and overcome both the triumphs and the tragedies of the world. Though we, like Mary, might not be able to touch Jesus, we can allow his love to touch, encourage and strengthen us.

A very happy Easter to you all.

*Reverend John.*