

A reflection for Easter Sunday from Bishop Martin, Bishop of Dudley & Acting Bishop of Worcester

Have you heard the old riddle:

What is greater than God, more evil than the devil, and if you eat it you die?

Nothing! Nothing is greater than God, nothing is more evil than the devil, and if you eat nothing for long enough you will die!

When Jesus died on the cross, that seemed like the end. He was dead, and buried in a cold stone tomb.

But on the third day, the bible tells us, he rose from the dead. How do we know that is true?

Three ways:

1. The tomb was empty, when the first disciples looked inside, the body had gone. Stolen by soldiers? Or by other disciples? But why do that? And when people started saying He is Risen, why not just produce the body and put an end to it right then?
2. People saw him. Mary Magdalene in the garden, she couldn't see who it was until Jesus calls her name, Mary, and then she knows. Or Thomas, who won't believe without proof. The risen Jesus shows him his wounded hands and side, and Thomas believes. The stories go on and on.
3. Changed lives. People went from being frightened and anxious, to bravely saying Jesus was alive. Why do that if they knew it was a lie? And many, like St Peter, faced death themselves for being a Christian. Why do that if they'd made the whole thing up! And then all the millions today and down the ages who have discovered that Jesus is alive, who find that Jesus is beside them in the worst of times, and that there is no bad from which good cannot come. That Jesus loves and forgives them, as he loves and forgives you and me. Lives being changed here and now.
Empty tomb. Eyewitness accounts. Changed lives.

Brings us back to where we started: Nothing is greater than God. Evil and death are real but are defeated by the love of God, because in the end, in the resurrection, love wins!