

RECTOR'S RAMBLINGS April 2025

It all started in a Garden.

As I sit in my study, I can see out into the little orchard by the side of the house. The trees are bare, but circling around their bases halos of daffodils - which I planted last year - are bursting out. All but two are facing away from my window, but you can't have everything. Whilst the apple and plum trees are completely bare, the apricot tree by the side of the house, also without any leaves, is pushing out a profusion of delicate pink blossoms. How something that has sat through the winter looking like a pile of dead sticks can suddenly prove the strong life within it by bursting out in flower is beyond me.

As I write, we are still in Lent, and from here it feels like it will be Lent for a good while yet. However, on the 20th April comes Easter. Easter is the great day in the Christian calendar, so holy that it has hallowed every Sunday since in its memory. The women who followed Jesus go to his tomb in the garden, and find it empty. It is the miracle at the heart of the Christian faith.

I knew a gardener who said that his work amongst plants helped him to ground his understanding of Easter. After all, he said, nothing in a garden stays dead for very long. Even the stuff that is cut off, or dug up, or withered, goes to compost, and is full of such life that it is used to help grow other plants. I have often thought of the bulbs, planted only to burst out with life. Perhaps the apricot tree is another part of creation that can point us to our creator.

Perhaps it is just a miracle: like many things, and like nothing at all.

We celebrate Easter because in that Garden the tomb was empty, and God - mistaken variously for a teacher, a carpenter, a corpse, and a gardener - reaches out with scarred hands to embrace creation, and to tell us that the sin that had clung to us from Eden, was gone. We are free, and may choose what to do with that freedom.

We celebrate Easter not just because Jesus' tomb was empty, but because he has emptied our tombs, and given us life, hope, and love. The worst in life, in humanity, or in the world cannot blot out the light of Easter.

It all started in a Garden.

Reverend George