



The Parish Churches of S Philip and S Augustine and S Matthew with S Mary the Virgin Newcastle

Homily for the Easter Vigil (19th April) 2025

This evening we come across the fingerprints of Almighty God. Through the events intrinsic to our celebration, He reveals His power: a power, which can even overturn the natural course of things, obliterating the wall of death blocking the path, which takes us to the fullness of life beyond this world.

This power is not deployed by force or coercion, but by renewal - changing our lives and so enabling us to manoeuvre around the obstacle of earthly mortality. This renewal sees us throw off the perspectives of our fallen natures and embrace the attitudes of life, which will prepare us, as it were, to be eligible for a place in God's nearer Presence.

As this Liturgy makes clear in all its complexity, that life is revealed in the Sacramental framework, which flows from the Person and Work of Christ: a life which renounces Satan and all his works in favour of offering ourselves to the Will and Purpose of God, drawing our motivations from the Person and Teaching of Jesus.

In pursuit of this aim, we seek to establish and maintain around us, insofar as we can, a mutuality of society, which manifests the equal dignity of human beings before their Maker, whatever worldly habits might suggest to the contrary.

Our conviction is that the triumph of this Purpose is inevitable, because it emerges from an inexhaustible and incorruptible power; and when the last of earth's storms has blown itself out, that Purpose will endure and find its fulfilment.

This is the Christian hope for the world; and it is not a hope in which we inertly believe, but which we endeavour to live, enabling God to respond to the daily prayer put on our lips by the Gospel that His Kingdom may come on earth as it is in Heaven. We make of our Christian communities worked examples of the life inherent in the Sacraments and create, so to speak, prophetic pockets of what is to come in a world where other - ephemeral - powers still vie for ascendancy.

Even as we continue two millennia of rejoicing at the historical Resurrection of Jesus, we look forward to that time when all humanity will be renewed ; and it is a hope to which we can confidently hold, because God reveals His power in Christ, risen from the dead.