



An Easter Egg Story

There was once an old man and an old woman who lived just outside the city walls of Jerusalem. They were not rich but had everything they needed, so they felt rich. They had a cow to give them milk, a garden to give them vegetables and chickens that gave them eggs. In the morning the old man would go out to the hen house and say to the hens, "Good morning. May I have some of your eggs?" and the hens would gladly give him their eggs and there were plenty. Some days there were so many that the old man would take the ones they could not eat into the city to sell.

One day he went into the great city of Jerusalem with a basket full of eggs. A white cloth covered them. He went in through the high gates and down a narrow street. As he came closer to where he would sell his eggs, he saw a huge crowd. They were strangely quiet so he pushed his way through them, with his basket of eggs, to see what was going on.

Roman soldiers were taking three men through the city to crucify them outside the city walls. The men were carrying crosses to which they would be nailed. One of them stumbled and almost fell over as the old man watched. He couldn't help it, he stepped out of the crowd, caught the heavy wooden beam before the man fell under its crushing weight. Together they carried the cross outside the city walls. The old man stayed there all afternoon watching. Even as the sky grew dark and it began to drizzle with rain, he stayed. He watched the mother and some others standing there watching the man in the middle - the one who had stumbled. Finally, this man died. He was taken down and carried away to a stone tomb. The old man did not follow.

He started back toward the city and as he went in through the sad gate, he suddenly remembered his eggs! Where were they? He hurried back to where he had left the basket...would it be there? He doubted it because eggs were precious and too many people were hungry.

He turned a corner and there it was! He rubbed his eyes. Yes, it was really there. He saw the white cloth but knew the eggs underneath would be gone. But when he pulled the white cover back he couldn't believe his eyes! The basket was full of beautiful eggs like jewels, covered with colours and designs. It was as if the eggs were trying to say with colours and shapes what had happened that day.

What had happened that day? Of course, this is a folk story. But I always think of it at Easter. How that old man was happy because he had everything he needed, and stepped out of the crowd to help the Son of God carry his cross. It speaks to me

about being content with all I have but also of stepping out. The man was an old man. There must have been younger men there. Didn't the man, too beaten to carry his cross have friends? Yes, but they had disappeared. So the story challenges me on these 2 levels, contentment and boldness rooted in compassion. And we haven't got to Easter day yet!!!!... because the Son of God whose broken body was taken down in the grey drizzle and buried in a borrowed tomb didn't stay there. The Bible says that he beat death and was seen alive by many people. The mystery and wonder on which we build our faith is that he lives. God has victory over darkness and death.

Happy Easter Messy Church!

What's happening here at St. Mark's:

March 31st Holy Saturday - at 7pm BBQ, vicarage garden, with an Easter egg hunt and we will be renewing the Easter candle

April 1st Easter Sunday celebration 10am in church followed by an Easter egg hunt.

New service - Sundays at 4pm Launching on April 22nd for families. It will be from 4 until 5pm and end with a bring-and-share style tea. There will be singing, storytelling and some simple activities. If you would like more information or to be involved speak to Liz or Des

Messy Munchkins Tuesdays 9-10:30 during term time.

For preschoolers and their carers. Messy sensory play around a Bible story or theme. Held in the small hall. £2 per family per week.

Fun&Faith We meet once a month on Sunday evening from 5 - 7pm to eat together, discuss our faith and share thoughts as well as time to have fun and play games. Membership is open to those in year 6 and above and those who wish to explore their developing beliefs. There is a small termly fee.

Please email **Mel:** melandrobbracey@googlemail.com for more information and the next date.

May Messy Church Tuesday May 1st Celebrating May Day!

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