

Easter People Week 1: Mary Magdalene

Prayer and reflection resources

Savouring joy

The 50 days of the season of Easter invite us to savour joy.

Spend 10 minutes each day this week contemplating a source of your joy. Maybe it's a person, or it's birds in your garden, or an uplifting piece of music, or a picture that speaks to your soul. Perhaps your prayer might involve going to a place you love to be, or taking part in an activity that is life-giving.

Think about, or do, something different each day, relishing the joy of it, and giving thanks to God for this gift to you.

Spring

The season of Spring helps us understand the tone of God's invitation to us. Flowers open; trees begin to spread their leaves; seeds break free of their shells and send up green shoots. Growth in God is more than conforming to external expectations; it is cooperating with God in the drawing forth of the mystery of our inner being.

This involves:

- attentiveness to the Spirit stirring in our spirit
- trust in this movement of the Spirit and in the good of what God has created in us
- daring to respond when we sense God say 'Come'.



My beloved speaks and says to me:
'Arise my love, my fair one, and come away;
for now winter is past, the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
the time for singing has come...
O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the covert of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely.

Song of Songs 2. 8-10

Where lost life wakes: Mary Magdalene in the garden. [John 20.1-18]

Go with Mary into the garden.
Wander along its paths.
Hear the gentle breeze as it stirs the trees
Go with Mary into the garden.
Lay down there each of your sorrows like seeds in the ground.
As yet, the hard seed coat in unbroken; there seems no life within.
But you are resting these seeds in a garden; they will grow.
Water from the earth and warmth of the sun will draw life forth.

Rest all that has no answer, no healing, in this nurturing, creative earth.
Here Jesus was laid, and tears were shed
Here a woman comes, as the first bird sings a hymn for a morning yet to break.
Here a woman comes, lost, until with a 'Mary', her lost life wakes.

Recovering greenness

How fresh, oh Lord, how sweet and clean
Are thy returns! even as the flowers in spring...
 Grief melts away
 Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shriveled heart
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone
 Quite underground; as flowers depart
To see their mother-root, when they have blown,
 Where they together
 All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

And now in age I bud again,
After so many deaths I live and write;
 I once more smell the dew and rain,
And relish versing. Oh, my only light,
 It cannot be
 That I am he
On whom thy tempests fell all night.

Part of the poem 'The Flower' by George Herbert, 1593-1633