

**St. Brandon's 9<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**Easter Day 10.15am**

**HIDE    SEEK    FIND    SHARE**

Our three year old granddaughter Flo LOVES playing hide and seek. I wonder how many of you do too?

When we go out for a walk with Flo, it quite often turns into a game of hide and seek, especially when we're in the country with lots of trees and bushes to hide behind.

But I've noticed that when it's her turn to hide, she makes sure we find her pretty quickly – often with helpful clues like some giggles to guide us to where she is...

Hide and seek is one of the earliest games we play and I think there's a bit of it going on in today's gospel reading too.

At this point I must confess I have lost- or I could say hidden- my visual aids, but I'm hoping you can have a look and help me find them....I think they may have got spread around the seats somehow...

They are colourful letters making up the key words in the Easter story

*Ask children and adults to find..*

*Sort by colour and then unjumble into words, down the aisle..*

**RED HIDE** *lay words around front by Easter gardens*

Mary was hiding as she went to Jesus's tomb.

Because she was frightened of the religious authorities and the Romans, who had had Jesus killed. They'd also put a huge stone over the entrance, to stop anyone from stealing his body.

But despite her fear she had to go and be close to Jesus.

**I wonder when and why we hide, and if we will allow God to give us courage to overcome our fears?**

### **BLUE SEEK**

It was very scary for Mary when she saw the stone had gone, so she rushed to find Peter and John. They came to the tomb, saw Jesus' body had gone and then went home- they were scared too. But Mary stayed. She stayed, even though she was weeping and very upset, she stayed because she was seeking the truth, she wanted to know what had really happened to Jesus.

**I wonder if we keep on seeking the truth, even when we are upset and in distress, do we stay, or do we go?**

### **GOLD FIND**

What did Mary find when she bravely looked into the tomb?

Two angels! They were God's messengers to tell her the truth- *he's not here, he has risen.*

**If we keep on seeking, God will bring us angels, or maybe people, to help us find the truth too.**

But that's not all. As Mary moved out of the tomb, towards the light of the rising son, she met – who? JESUS!

Jesus came to find Mary. To show her he was alive, to say her name, so she really knew it was him, alive.

This is one of the most wonderful moments in the whole account of Jesus' life, I think.

**It reminds us all that Jesus finds us first!**

**He is seeking us just as much as we are seeking him.**

**And just like little Flo, I think that, deep down, we all want to be found, by God.**

Last word **GREEN SHARE**

What did Mary do next?

Yes , she rushed back to tell all the others '*I have seen the Lord*' , just as Jesus told her to.

She shared the good news, and so must we.

On this Easter Day, lets share with others that Jesus is risen and alive.

To help us do this I have a special box here, full of eggs to share and stories to share.

The eggs say on them 'The Real Easter Egg- Christ is risen'- and they're made from fairtrade chocolate, by the way.

Perhaps all my helpers would like to come and take one first as a thank you.

And the others, they are to give away!

I'm going to ask Pat to put them on the font and please take them to people you will see today, as a gift from St Brandon's, sharing the good news of Easter.

Mary was hiding, but God gave her courage to seek Jesus.

She thought she might find him, but he found her first!

And she shared the good news, which we go on and on sharing, here in Brancepeth, across Durham and Britain and all aorudn the world today.

The good news that Christ is Risen, Jesus is Alive!