Thursday 7th May 2020

We have gathered together to worship God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and to learn about the joy that the disciples felt to be with Jesus again.

Today we are thinking about the value of joy and we will be considering what it means to rejoice.

We are all very good at celebrating. We celebrate on many occasions such as our birthdays, a wedding, a christening, when we do something well or when we achieve something new. These occasions make us happy and we celebrate to show people that we are happy and to share some of our joy with them.

We are now going to think about Jesus’s friends Peter, James, Thomas and John.

Before they met Jesus, they were fisherman. They then spent three extraordinary years with Jesus and every day that they spent with Jesus had been unforgettable for them. When Jesus was killed, they were not completely sure what they should do so Peter decided to go back to what he knew best, fishing.

One evening Peter said, “I’m going fishing,” and the others, including Thomas, James and John said, “ We’ll come too.”

They fished all night, but caught nothing. They just sat there in their boat, dragging their empty nets through the waters until the mist rose on the lake and the first light of dawn was breaking in the hills.

There was a figure standing on the shore, but they could not make out who it was. “Have you caught anything, my friends?” he called.

“Nothing!” they shouted back, miserably

“Throw your net over the other side of the boat, and you’ll catch something.”

They threw their net over the other side, as if they were in a dream, not knowing who the man was but wondering…the voice was so familiar…the way he stood so calmly gazing at them all…

Suddenly, the net was full of fish, scales flashing in the sunlight, flipping and jumping, dazzling. A cascade of white and silver, so heavy that the men could scarcely haul the nets into the boat.

“It’s Jesus,” said John.

Peter leapt into the water, right up to his waist. He ran through the shallows while the others rowed the boat back to the shore, dragging the net behind them.

They reached Jesus, who was standing by a charcoal fire cooking some fish. They stood there in silence, like little children, suddenly unsure what to do or say.

“Bring some of the fish you’ve caught,” Jesus waved to them, “Let’s have breakfast.”

This story tells us about one of the occasions that Jesus appeared to his disciples after he had risen from the dead.

If you had been one of Jesus’ friends that morning, sharing in the breakfast meal, what would you have wanted to ask him?

Peter was so overjoyed at seeing his friend Jesus alive that he couldn’t wait for the boat to get to the shore; instead he leapt in and waded through the water as fast as his legs would let him. He had experienced such deep sadness only a short time earlier, when Jesus had been crucified. Yet now, he and the disciples heard him inviting them to come and have breakfast! They began to remember things that Jesus had said to them about being raised to life on the third day. It was amazing; it was true; he was alive! It was the most joy-filled time of their lives!

These words sum up what Christians believe about Jesus – past, present and future. They are used in worship in churches all over the world.

Let’s say them together.

Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again

Let’s sing together the hymn

GIVE ME JOY IN MY HEART

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTHvAsvRknw>

1. Give me joy in my heart keep me praising

Give me joy in my heart I pray

Give me joy in my heart keep me praising

Keep me praising till the end of day .

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna

Sing hosanna to the King of kings

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,

Sing hosanna to the King.

1. Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting,

Give me peace in my heart I pray

Give me peace in my heart , keep me resting,

Keep me resting till the end of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,

Sing hosanna to the King of kings,

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,

Sing hosanna to the King.

1. .Give me love in my heart , keep me serving,

Give me love in my heart I pray,

Give me love in my heart , keep me serving,

Keep me serving till the end of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna ,

Sing hosanna to the King of kings,

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,

Sing hosanna to the King.

1. .Give me light in my heart, keep me shining,

Give me light in my heart I pray,

Give me light in my heart, keep me shining,

Keep me shining tlll the end of day .

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,

Sing hosanna to the King of kings,

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,

Sing hosanna to the King

1. Give me light in my heart

On Friday, we have a Bank holiday to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE day or Victory in Europe day. So you might be wondering what is VE day and why are we celebrating it?

Just over 80 years ago, the Second World War began. It was a huge war that involved most nations of the world. On 8 May 1945, at 3 p.m., Winston Churchill, the UK prime minister at that time, announced to the nation that the war in Europe was over. This meant an end to nearly six years of war that had cost the lives of millions of people and had destroyed families, homes and cities.  
  
Millions of people rejoiced at the news that Germany had surrendered, relieved that the intense strain of war was finally over. In towns and cities across the world, people marked the victory with street parties, dancing and singing.

An estimated 50,000 people took to the streets around Piccadilly Circus in London to dance and celebrate. The joy of the day broke down normal social conventions, and people spoke to and hugged people whom they had never met before. Music was provided by gramophones, accordions and barrel organs, and revellers sang and danced to the popular tunes of the day. Lots of people dressed in the UK flag colours of red, white and blue and gathered outside Buckingham Palace in London. They cheered as King George VI and his family, including Princess Elizabeth (our current queen) and Princess Margaret, came out onto the balcony to greet everybody.  
Princess Elizabeth and her sister were allowed to leave the palace to celebrate with crowds outside, although they had to do so secretly. The future queen described it as ‘one of the most memorable nights of my life’.

Many people also attended church services to thank God for the victory and, throughout the country, churches rang their bells to signal the end to the fighting.  
  
After years of wartime restrictions and dangers, including food and clothes rationing, nightly blackouts and bombing raids, people were understandably eager to let loose finally and enjoy themselves.  
However, not everyone felt like celebrating on VE Day. The hardships of the war years had taken their toll on many people, leaving them with little energy for rejoicing. For many, the celebrations were tinged with sadness.  
Before they celebrated, many went to churches and cathedrals to spend some time in prayer and remember relatives who had been killed in the war.

After the celebrations of VE Day had died down, it took time to rebuild the country. Shortages continued for several years: clothes rationing lasted until 1949 and food rationing remained in place until 1954. Even today, for some people, their memories of VE Day are still tinged with sadness.

**Time for reflection**

Unfortunately, we live in a world where conflict and war still exist. As we think about the seventy-fifth anniversary of VE Day and celebrate the end of the war, we should stop and think about how we can remember people who fought in the war to bring about peace.

*Prayer*

Dear God,  
Thank you for all those who fought to bring peace during the Second World War.  
Thank you that peace eventually came.  
Please be with all those who are living in areas of the world that are affected by wars today.  
Please help us to do our bit in creating peace wherever we are.  
**Amen.**

Let’s finish our assembly by singing Peace Perfect Peace.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DWa8oWu1nQ>

PEACE, PERFECT PEACE.

Peace, perfect peace, is the gift of Christ the Lord.

Peace, perfect peace , is the gift of Christ the Lord.

Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.

Peace, perfect peace, is the gift of Christ the Lord.

Love, perfect love, is the gift of Christ the Lord [x2]

Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.

Love, perfect love, is the gift of Christ the Lord.

Faith, perfect faith, is the gift of Christ the Lord. [2]

Thus , says the Lord, will the world know my friends.

Faith, perfect faith, is the gift of Christ the Lord.

Hope, perfect hope, is the gift of Christ the Lord [2]

Thus , says the Lord, will the world know my friends.

Hope, perfect hope, is the gift of Christ the Lord.

Joy, perfect joy, is the gift of Christ the Lord [ 2]

Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.

Joy, perfect joy, is the gift of Christ the Lord.