

Middle Prayers - 30
22.4.68
10.5.71 ✓
17.5.73 ✓

[Byrne - RHK]
Heac Dies (Sarum)
R244 [Victin. Park]

"This day was made by the Lord: we rejoice and are glad," Alleluia.

May the risen Christ keep me young for God's greater glory — young, that is, optimistic, active, smiling, perceptive.

Lord, since with every instinct of my being and through all the changing fortunes of my life, it is you whom I have ever sought, you whom I have set at the heart of universal matter, it will be in a resplendence which shines through all things and in which all things are ablaze, that I shall have the felicity of closing my eyes.

If you haven't recognised who wrote these personal prayers, I shall be telling you in a few minutes. Meanwhile, let us pray in their spirit, the spirit of Easter, with the risen Christ; let us thank Our Lord for his great deeds on our behalf, and ask that we may grow in understanding^{of} and living with the new, divine life He has given us through faith in Him.

PRAYERS

Grant we pray thee, almighty God, that we who have carried out the festival rite of Easter morn., by thy good gift, hold to thee in the conduct of ^(our. liv.) our lives

Let's listen prayerfully now to the final chorale of ^(one of) Becket's

^{Orator's} Easter Cantatas: Q.

RHK DEC-1166
No 31 (R106)

I think he would have understood that chorale, and its words, perfectly — the man whose prayers I began with today. Perhaps you'll say it was just an accident, a quirk of fate that he expressed a desire that he might die on the day of Christ's resurrection — and that he did die, suddenly, on Easter Sunday, 10 Apr 1955. I'm not saying this proves anything; but his prayer wasn't a fancy whim, and it was granted. It wasn't a whim, because Fr Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was a ^{Serious} man, a scientist who was totally dedicated to Christ alive and active in the 20th century world. He understood, knew, realised in a striking way that Christ is risen, is Lord of history, of the world, of each one of us. This faith was very much a part of his whole life and work as a scientist — he tried to express it in his own way, as a scientist, in scientific terms. He wasn't a theologian; and his attempts to express the reality of Christ in his life and work didn't meet with the approval of meticulous, careful theologians. So he wasn't allowed to publish most of the writings he'd worked so carefully over for so many years. Being a religious priest, he was bound by a vow of obedience to the superior of his order. This too was a cause of great conflict and trouble within himself, at times. His life, probably particularly because he was such a dedicated scientist, as well as being a member of a religious order, was full of disappointments which arose from misunderstandings, difficulties and hardships. Even the same

of the great work and achievements of his scientific career. Peking a northern China between the wars and until 1946, was in some degree a banishment from France, his native country, since his ideas had begun to arouse suspicion. But never in his letters is there any trace of bitterness or resentment at what was indeed sometimes rather rough treatment by men who didn't understand him or what he was trying to do. He never was an "angry young man". Other men have thrown up their religion or declined into frustrated crabbed old age with far less reason. What kept Teilhard de Chardin alive, hopeful and active in Christ's service was his firm commitment to Christ risen from death, the light and hope of the world. He has been a figure of controversy, and the object of much writing himself, since his death and the subsequent publication of a lot of his writing. But what I'd like to leave you with now is the thought of what sustained him, and through all his difficulties and even anguish sometimes, kept him serene and balanced and smiling — his deep spirituality, based on the realization of what the Resurrection means; nothing, literally nothing, obscured the vision of Christ's glory and his place of Lordship in the universe, once he'd glimpsed it. In this Fr Teilhard can and should be an inspiration to all of us: even if we don't have his privilege of actually going back to our Father with Christ on the day of His resurrection.

"May He Rise With Us..."