

Christus Resurgens
('Resurrexi')

EASTER PREFACE

'Christ, rising from the dead, now dies no more' — the opening words of the plainsong Easter chant I began with today, and intend to play for you throughout this Easter season. For though the Easter holidays may be over, Easter goes on — in the celebration of the Church, 7 weeks altogether, indicating that really, for Christians and the world now it is always Easter, in the hope and peace and joy and victory that Christ has given us to share. It's there, always, even on the dullest, darkest days, no matter how lost in a fog or stretched (like He was) on a cross we may be. The first specifically Christian celebration was that of Easter and its events a mystery — because Christ is alive, there'll continue to be celebrations of Easter, because every year it's not just still that is one year older, but something new happening now for some Christian, somewhere — and we're all part of that same body. So we read again these weeks the Easter gospels, not only to remember certain people and events, but also to see these our own story, in Peter & John, in Mary of Magdala, in Thomas the man to whose faith we owe the confirmation of our own in Christ's words to him: "More blessed are they who have not seen and yet believe." But talking of people & events and remembering, perhaps this Easter time, in this programme, is a good occasion too to recall with gratitude and in prayer for them HK's broadcaster of the past 50 years. For as you probably are aware, RTHK has just begun to celebrate its own remembering of its past. And for over half of its history this programme 'Midday Prayers', has been regularly on the air. I'm afraid I don't know exactly

when it began, but one of my Jesuit predecessors was doing it in the late 1940s, Fr Gallaher. More recently well-known on the air was Rev. Dennis Rogers, who died just 13 months ago. For both of them in particular let us today give thanks to God our Father. Other names, and people now no longer with us, will no doubt be remembered and talked about while RTHK celebrates its jubilee — there may not be other occasions on which we are reminded to pray for them as well. This time of celebration of Christ's Resurrection is surely an appropriate one. And we may pray that the goodness in their lives, and the help and joy they gave to others may find its completeness in the fullness of Christ's redeeming of us all, in His pardon and peace. May the peace of the risen Christ be with them, and with each of us too — that peace which was His greatest gift at the first Easter and ever since. The first time His apostles saw Him, Thomas wasn't with them — maybe it was bitter disappointment, pique even, that made him then say he wouldn't believe unless he could put his head into the wounds of the Master he maybe last saw (from afar) hanging on a cross. Thomas refused to believe unless: it wasn't that he didn't believe at all, just that he wasn't willing at that point. Today too let's pray for all who want to believe but for some personal reason don't want to, or make all sorts of excuses which only the Risen Lord and they in their hearts really know. Meanwhile, the story of Thomas, in a song "Thomas" MUSIC

(follow the)

PRAYERS