

1177
1415
1563

1769

Midday Prayers - 792

23.4.81
30.4.84
7.4.86
3.4.89

This Joyful Eastertide
HMV-E-1126

Haec Dies 24 This is the Day the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it,

(Greg. Chant)
DEC-O-20
14 89
alleluia " EASTER PREFACE.

Haec Dies
(Stappart) 25
HMV 1126

The Second Easter Week, and a continuing celebration of Christ's rising from death, of the Day that the Lord has made and re-made His own. ^{LAST WEEK} (This) is the only week in the year that the Church kind of "stretches out" the celebration of Sunday, the Day of the Resurrection, to cover the whole of the week. And in fact even beyond: for the Easter season properly goes on for ^{a whole} (the next) seven weeks, until we come to the fulness and fulfillment of Pentecost. Well, of course that rhythm of things is really a bit too much for our modern, busy, efficient world. ^{As indeed I was forcefully reminded last year when I began one of those programmes (later into the Easter Season) with a direct reference to it's being Easter-time — there was quite a flurry here at RITH, where they thought I'd got my dates mixed up —} And there are those who think we already have too many holidays around Easter-time. ^{with yet another one on Wed. for Christ's rising} For the commercial, business world, that may well be so; but must we run our personal lives, our spiritual lives, to the dictates of getting and spending? Is it too much to prolong the joy and celebration of Easter, for a few days, for a week, until Pentecost? In a strange way, maybe it's easier to catch and keep the mood of Good Friday: but that was only the beginning of Easter, and it would seem a pity not to give ourselves the time and the opportunity to savour the mood of Easter Sunday too, to be open to what the Easter gospels have to tell us, and to this year's Easter happening to us in these days. To know that He is risen, is there somewhere waiting for us to come and meet Him so that He would quietly call our name, walk along the road with us,

greet us with a peace that would take away our fears where we've locked ourselves in. When you read or hear the gospel stories of Easter, you may notice that there isn't the same drama about them as there is, say, about the events of Palm Sunday or Good Friday. They're quiet scenes when Jesus appears — rather matter-of-fact, confident, joyful: in the garden, on a road, by the lakeside, in an upstairs room: in a way, everyday places. And it's in everyday places and people that we meet our risen Lord today too — if we can recognise Him. It's not, usually, in dramatic events and happenings that we meet Him and know it is He that's there with us. And maybe we need time to come to the realisation that it's our risen Lord who's with us: Mary in the garden thought she was talking to the gardener, those two dis-spirited disciples walking to Emmaus raking over their disappointments and grievances took quite a while to wake up to the fact that the kind companion who joined them on the way wasn't just simply any stranger: and Thomas, for his own turbulent reasons had to wait even longer before he could make that act of recognition of Christ through which all of us have received Christ's special blessing. There's indeed much to meditate on and contemplate in the Easter Good News: it will take more than an earthly life-time — shouldn't we at least at this season each year, allow ourselves the time and the mood to be a bit more receptive?

DEC-O-20
ABB-E-14
26 89
A prayer in music now, the (same) Easter verse we began with, this time (by Palestina) in the Gregorian chant version MUSIC - PRAYERS

One of the Fathers of the Church (I think St Ephrem), in a Christmas prayer, uses the imagery of the rings of the bark of a tree when he describes the annual return of the festival and our growing older with it. He could have said the same of Easter. Each year, we celebrate it; and we've moved on another year in age. What difference has it made? How different, for each of us, is it each year? For we've had a whole year's experience of life in between, growth and change. There should be some difference. Yet, each year's ring of bark and growth does ^{still} merge into the previous year's: it's not simply "tacked on": and the number of yearly rings in the trunk of a tree remain distinctly countable. As each Eastertide comes around, it's always something new, yet there already. And each time, there should have been a growth, a strengthening and deepening of our Christian lives and faith, as the tree grows in strength and resilience and the depth of its roots. But is it this way? Do we give space enough, air and light and nourishment for the tree to grow? Do we give ourselves, in other words, enough time and leisure and opportunity for each annual Easter encounter really to help us grow in strength and depth of faith? Does our celebration, besides reminding, also change us a little more each year so that we can grow into the risen life of Christ and recognize Him more readily in the calling of our name, and the breaking of bread together, the things that we do every day? May His Easter's joy and peace and blessings stay with you this season, ^{around the year,} and into a deeper life.