

1316
1564 rec 20/2
2022

Middle Prayers - 896
28.4.83
14.4.86
18.5.92

896

Haec Dies (Sheppard) HW 1126
25

This is the Day EASTER PREFACE

(Wood hall... 2)

Christus Resurgens
[Jen #16]

Reading, or listening to, the Acts of the Apostles in these weeks of Eastertide, in the liturgy and prayer of the Church, there ^{often} always seems to be something new, some new angle, or a fresh impression of something already known and familiar.

Have you ever, for instance, been struck by [What I've been noticing this past week or fortnight is] the geography of the first preaching and spread of the Good News about Jesus Christ - His resurrection? In sections of the book of the Acts of the Apostles there are whole lists (almost) of place-names all around the Eastern Mediterranean & the Middle East - very matter-of-factly mentioned, real places where early followers of Christ went, visited, stayed, preached in, were thrown out of, and so on. Then at one point (it's in ch. 11) you get this: "Then Barnabas went off to Tarsus, to look for Saul: once he'd found him, he brought him back to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and instructed great numbers. It was in Antioch that the disciples were called 'Christians' for the first time." | That's it: almost a throw-away line, just matter-of-fact..... it doesn't help any of our possible curiosity as to what the disciples might have been called before that, or in other places. For us who are today called Christians, who are used to the name and glad to be so called, it may be hard to imagine that as a new name, "Christian". In this baptismal season, maybe we ought in our prayers to try and appreciate how always new it is to be "Christian". No doubt, there are many different definitions of "Christian", and "being a Christian"; different expectations and understandings, as well as critical or satirical meanings given to the word. How do you understand it, understand what being a Christian means for you? Each of us probably has some

answer or explanation of our own - different times & places & experiences probably give various approaches to describing what a Christian is or should be. In inviting you today to reflect on this, I'd like to put to you an old statement about being a Christian, famous tho' perhaps not at all well-known: would you recognise yourself as your Christian friends in this, which is from a letter of an early Christian monk, Diognetus?

QQ. Brev. East. Wk 5 Wed. p 590

- from a letter of

Diognetus: before listening to another bit of it, let's reflect and pray quietly awhile, to this song for Eastertide: 'My Soul, I long'

DER-E-10, 17

MUSIC - PRAYERS

And now Diognetus

again: QQ. p 591