

Thought for the day – Friday 30th April 2021

By Revd John Marshall

This risen existence 1 Paula Gooder

I have enjoyed reading this book about the Spirit of Easter. I looked forward to it eagerly, having used an extract in a sermon on Thomas last year.

I would like to share a poem by R S Thomas which has given the book its title and Paula includes.

Resurrection

A reflection

Suddenly

*As I had always known
he would come, unannounced,
remarkable merely for the absence
of clamour. So truth must appear
to the thinker; so at a stage
of the experiment, the answer
must quickly emerge. I looked
at him, not with the eye
only, but with the whole
of my being, overflowing with
him as a chalice would
with the sea. Yet was he
no more there than before,
his area occupied
by the unhaloed presences.
You could put your hand*

*In him without consciousness
Of his wounds. The gamblers
at the foot of the unnoticed
cross went on with
their dicing; yet the invisible
garment for which they played
was no longer at stake, but worn
by him in this risen existence.*

This poem picks up on Jesus resurrection appearances and some aspects of the crucifixion. In St James' windows some of the references appear. The dice and the robe in the North doorway. St Thomas with the risen Jesus in the east window and we are aware of the wounds. When we get back to church maybe you can look for more.

Paula Gooder comments in her epilogue "To return briefly to RS Thomas's poem, we wait for Jesus to come, as we have always known he would, and discover as the whole of our being overflows with him as a chalice would the sea, that 'this risen existence' is not just his but ours too."

- This Risen Existence Paula Gooder Canterbury Press