

Easter Sunday talk 2025 – Butterflies and new life

I wonder, what do you think of when I say the word Easter? Eggs, especially chocolate eggs? Chicks? Rabbits? For many, many people Easter is all about eggs being delivered by the Easter bunny.

But Easter is about so much more than eggs and rabbits.

Here in St Mary's one of the creatures that we quite often spot in the church are (not a rabbit) but butterflies. I was hoping there might be one fluttering around today.

You might have also spotted that I have a butterfly on my stole.

Butterflies are beautiful and there are more than 17,500 different species around the world. Here in the UK there are 59.

Some people have suggested that butterflies are a good way of thinking about Jesus, especially at Easter.

Sounds a bit odd...well let's have a think

Butterflies start off as caterpillars and they crawl. They might not look very exciting some are brown or green to help camouflage them to protect them from being eaten by predators like birds or they might be multi coloured. The caterpillar doesn't look much like a butterfly.

Jesus' earthly life was a bit like being a caterpillar. He walked about on earth. He did some really amazing things. Some people followed him but many of the people didn't recognise for who he really was - that he was the son of God.

The leaders didn't like the fact that he told them off for what they were doing and how they were treating the people; they gave the people lots of rules and regulations to follow instead of helping them to love God.

Things came to a terrible end. Jesus was arrested. He had a trial which was not fair. He was handed over to the Romans and he was put on the cross to die.

It was terrible. The people who followed Jesus were incredibly sad. They must have thought that everything had been a waste of time. Jesus died and had been put in a tomb

Jesus in the tomb is a bit like the chrysalis or cocoon...in there the caterpillar grows and transforms. Caterpillars spend on average 3-21 days in the cocoon but it can be as much as several years.

In the chrysalis the caterpillar develops until the right time when it bursts out as abutterfly and it looks completely different.

On the third day when the women went to the tomb where Jesus' body had been laid it was empty! That must have been a huge shock to the women who ran to tell the disciples. And then Peter and John ran to the tomb to see for themselves. Could it really be true? But when they got there, it was just as the women had said, the stone had been rolled away and there were only the linen cloths that Jesus' body had been wrapped in.

Jesus had been raised from the dead. Jesus is alive and had burst out of the tomb!

The butterfly doesn't look anything like the caterpillar it once was, and it seems as though Jesus looked different too

Mary didn't recognise Jesus in the garden on that first Easter morning that we have just heard about. She thought he was just the gardener. When you have been crying a lot like Mary had been it is hard to see straight. It was only when she heard her name called by an oh so familiar voice, that she realised that it wasn't the gardener but Jesus himself. Cleopas and his companion didn't recognise Jesus either on the Road to Emmaus. Jesus looked different in some way

Jesus had new life, just like the butterfly emerging out of the chrysalis.

And we are offered new life too. When we love Jesus, asking for forgiveness for everything we have done wrong and choosing to follow him then we are new creations too. As we put our trust in Jesus then we are transformed too, maybe not in quite such a dramatic way as the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis or Jesus appearing on that first Easter morning, but we are transformed.

Jesus gives us new life and Jesus gives us hope.

Hope is something that we have been exploring over Lent in these little books of reflections.

We have hope because Jesus is always with us through all the ups and downs of our lives, guiding us and giving us strength. We have hope because we have been given the promise of eternal life. We have the hope that one day God will make all things right; he'll make all things new.

And that is what Easter is really all about – Jesus coming back to life, overcoming death and evil – and giving us new life and hope

And that is definitely worth celebrating and telling other people about!