



SLSW Carer Nicola Brimblecombe who has a strong faith and goes to church regularly has summed up her thoughts on Easter...

"The Christian year is representative of the whole of Jesus' life. He was 33 years old when he was crucified. His ministry lasted approximately 3 years. Jesus is the Son of God, sent to earth in human form so that he could live amongst people. Although God, he was able to feel and experience things as we do. We all have his compassion, love and understanding if we allow ourselves to feel this. We are created in God's image and God works through us if we allow him to.

Christmas ends in early February with the celebration of Candlemass. This is our festival of light when Jesus first taught in the Temple in Jerusalem. Through his teachings Jesus is letting light into our world. Lent starts this year at the end of February. For 40 days we remember Jesus's 40 days spent in the Wilderness being tempted by the Devil. We usually spend time daily in private reflection reading a set book relating to everyday life. We also spend time together in reflection about a set biblical text. Some of us will take confession with a priest. Jesus then came out of the wilderness to preach the Sermon on the Mount in which he teaches how to live in the light. Jesus was in human form and he understood the difficulties and challenges we have living in the light. His teaching is full of love, grace and compassion. Then we move into Easter time.

The most important commandments God gave us as Christians are: 'There is only one God' and 'Believe in the resurrection of Christ'. God takes the form of Father (and Mother), Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit (the Light). At Easter we remember that God sacrificed his son so that we could have salvation. Jesus gave his human life so that we

have salvation. People saw the humiliation and suffering of Jesus and could relate to it. This is why Easter is so important to me. As a human I make lots of mistakes, get things wrong and sin. We all do it. I need to say sorry to God for this behaviour (confession) and then change my behaviours so they don't happen again (repentance). Salvation means God's Grace given to us by the sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross. Jesus died so that he could take away our sins and we can live in God's Grace protected from harm. At the Last Supper the night before he died Jesus gave us the gift of Communion. He celebrated this with the disciples. As Christians we are all disciples. We take Communion, where we confess our sins, and take the sacraments of bread (representing Jesus' body) and wine (representing Jesus' blood). We remember the last supper and the sacrifice Jesus made for us. Through the sacraments we receive the Holy Spirit and God's Grace to strengthen us.

The meaning of Easter is summed up in this hymn. It was written in the 14th or 15th century by Thomas a Kempis. The language reflects this, but the meaning is still the same. When Kempis talks about men and refers to God as male, we can substitute people and think of a Creator God who is both male and female. Jesus was a living person who was male."

**'O love, how deep, how broad, how high!
It fills the heart with ecstasy,
That God, the Son of God, should take
Our mortal form for mortals' sake.**

**He sent no angel to our race
Of higher or of lower place,
But wore the robe of human frame
Himself, and to this lost world came.**

**For us he was baptised and bore
His holy fast, and hungered sore;
For us temptations shame he knew;
For us the tempter overthrew.**

**For us to wicked men betrayed,
Scourged, mocked, in purple robe arrayed,
He bore the shameful cross and death;
For us at length gave us his breath.**

**For us he went on high to reign,
For us he sent the Spirit here
To guide; to strengthen and to cheer.**

**To him whose boundless love has won
Salvation for us through his son,
To God the Father, glory be
Both now and through eternity.'**

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