**Easter Sunday – the Resurrection of Jesus**

*Show picture of Mary at the tomb*

Mary Magdalene got up while it was still dark. She could not sleep. She gathered some spices, linen cloths, a bowl to hold water and myrrh. Myrrh smells sweet. It can cover the smell of death. It can also dull pain. But Mary knew it could never take away the hurt she felt. And it could never cover the awful truth. Jesus was dead.

Mary walked in silence to the tomb, where they had placed the body of Jesus after he was taken down from the cross. The tomb was in a garden, a place filled with ancient olive trees. As she walked, Mary wondered how she would shift the heavy stone that sealed the mouth of the tomb. But when she came closer she saw that the stone had already been moved.

Who could have done this? Behind her, the morning sky was beginning to glow with colour. But all she could see was the darkness that had swallowed Jesus. Empty darkness. There was no sign of the body. Only its linen wrappings lay on the ground.

Where was Jesus?

“Why are you crying?” said a voice she did not know.

“They have taken my Lord,” sobbed Mary. “I don’t know where they have put him.”

Another voice, this one from outside the tomb, asked “Are you looking for someone?”

Mary turned around. She could barely see the speaker, dark against the sunrise. Her eyes were blurred with tears. “Please,” sobbed Mary. “If you have taken him away, give him back to me”

“Mary,” he said. She knew his voice. No one said her name the way he did.

Mary flung her arms around him.

“There is no need to cling to me,” Jesus whispered. “I am with you. Soon I will come to you in a new way. Then I will always be part of you – and you of me.”

Mary opened her eyes. Now she could see clearly. The garden looked different. Full of life and light. Mary ran to tell the others the good news.