

*Joining BBC Radio 2's [Good Morning Sunday](#) programme this morning, Archbishop Stephen offered a Pause for Thought*

I don't know what you think about Easter and the story of Jesus' resurrection?

If you think about it at all, it might be like this: You know, there was that very sad story about Jesus dying on the cross. Well, don't worry, there's a fabulously happy ending.

True. Easter is shot through with surprising joy. But I'm not sure 'happy ending' is the best way of thinking about it.

For what happens on the first Easter morning isn't an ending, but a beginning. And the pain and sorrow of the cross aren't left behind, but carried with Jesus into glory.

And yes, it is a surprise. A surprise for us today, as it was for people then.

Mary Magdalene went to the tomb on that first Easter morning to anoint the dead body of Jesus. She wasn't expecting to find anything else.

When the tomb was empty, she assumed it was because people had stolen the body away. She wasn't expecting a resurrection. It was a surprise.

Outside our experience. Beyond our imagining. But it wasn't an ending. The resurrection of Jesus is the beginning of Christian faith. Jesus, who died on the cross, has been raised to life.

And without the resurrection, the Christian faith is nothing, and Jesus, just another good person.

But Easter offers something else, something new. What appeared to be defeat, begins afresh, a new creation. This is the story we celebrate today. A new beginning. And it tells us that however difficult life can get, and however hopeless the future seems, there is always hope because the God who raised Jesus to life can raise us as well. And in the darkness of poverty, hopelessness, despair, climate crisis and human conflict we see in Jesus, a new and better way, and the hope for a better future.

So, crack open those Easter eggs. Fill your lungs with Alleluias. Uncork the champagne. Turn the music up loud. Put on your dancing shoes.

Celebrate. Today something hopeful begins.

You can listen to the programme [here](#)



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