**Sermon: The Power of the Resurrection**

So, is anyone here a superhero fan? – come and give me a hand…

Can you identify any of these characters? (Children to hold up pictures of the following)

* Peter Parker
* Bruce Banner
* Steve Rogers
* Diana Prince

Excellent, now can you tell me which superhero they can turn into?

* Spiderman
* The Hulk
* Captain America
* Wonder Woman

What can they do? – climb tall buildings, smash things up, protect with a shield, leap tall buildings etc.

Has anyone here got any special powers? Is anyone fast?

(Time them running down the nave)

Can we make you even faster?!

(give a sip of special drink – Lucozade, Iron Bru; eat a chocolate egg; then try vicar’s special trainers!)

Perhaps getting special powers isn’t that easy!

Where did the super heroes get their special powers?

* Spiderman – bitten by a radioactive spider
* The Hulk – exposed to gamma rays
* Captain America – infused with “super-soldier serum!
* Wonder Woman – conceived by Greek gods

These are all very extraordinary characters and events, but perhaps not the sort of things that we would expect to find in real life.

So, can anyone help me identify these two characters? – Simon Peter and Saul.

And are they superheroes? No?

Well, can anyone tell me who they turn into?

* Peter the Rock
* Paul the Evangelist

They were ordinary people, but they did develop some quite remarkable special powers…

* Peter – the first leader of the church – holds the keys to the kingdom!
* Paul – a faith that could move mountains! – pictured with a sword and book.

So where did these ordinary men get such powers from?

Well, I think the answer to that question is found in this day. On Easter Sunday, something happens that changes everything and makes the most unlikely of events possible – Jesus rises from the dead! Jesus breaks the bonds of death and completes God’s victory of love over hate, of justice over injustice, of light over darkness.

Jesus presents us with an example of life lived to the full – giving all that he had to give for love: enduring, suffering, dying – and then making this victory of love eternal, through the resurrection. The result of this is a love that cannot be contained, cannot be stopped and is immune to every superpower that might be set against it.

The importance of this day cannot be overstated. It is about giving all to all for the good of all - there is nothing greater than this and it is only through such an outpouring of love that fear can be overcome, that real meaning in life can be found and that lasting hope can be achieved.

Somehow, on Easter Sunday, God acts in history to change the present, the past and the future. And it is this special event, this special act of power that enables St Peter and St Paul to change the world. Such power might not seem as fun as smashing buildings, swinging between skyscrapers or defeating bad guys, but it goes much further. All can benefit from it and all of us can have it if we can manage to let go of the self and allow God to work in us.

Every time we give ourselves to God and commit to love without limit, the resurrection is repeated. Every time we pledge ourselves to living in the mystery of Jesus’ supreme sacrifice, the resurrection is repeated. Every time we open our hearts to the immense power of the Holy Spirit and open our hands in service to our neighbour, the resurrection is repeated. It is an event for all time that can make superheroes of us all.

So once again, with one voice, let us join in saying together that ancient Easter greeting, a greeting to be repeated and lived out on each day of our lives, that “Christ is risen”…He is risen indeed, Alleluia!” Amen