Mostly people are very secretive about seeing things. I mean visions. Most of us – maybe all of us dream but we are mostly able to distinguish between a dream and reality. Perhaps that is why we are secretive. If we see a vision does it mean that we are mentally unstable – and who is the unstable one… the one that sees visions or the one that does not?

First Mary Magdalene sees a vision, then Clopas and his wife, see a vision on the road to Emmaus. Then, according to Luke, all the disciples in some upper room see a vision. What do you put it down to? Magic mushrooms, Lucy in the sky with diamonds, (LSD), chronic indigestion, grief, hypnosis, or no visions just a conspiracy of lies.

In Jesus time, Tom Wright points out, the seeing of visions of the dead, in the form of a ghost, was frequent and an accepted part of life, much more so than nowadays. Today the audiences for paranormal activity, Ghost hunting, Ghost whispering etc., are popular television fictional fantasy, but many hold that there is more to it than that. I had a phone call recently from someone who was sure there was a ghost in their home and what could I do about it.

When Luke and John wrote the three lessons from today, ghostly visions were not exactly the norm, but were respectable, so it was reasonable to have the sceptics seeing Jesus resurrection as a mass hallucination. Both Luke and John, though, select stories to make us sure – as sure as we can be from an author whom we cannot cross-examine – that the Jesus was more than a human vision, a grief inspired hallucination.

Broiled fish = grilled fish. Touch me – listen to me teach you… Mark may say that Jesus is risen. Matthew says that the soldiers were bribed to say that the disciples had taken the body but that Jesus was risen. Only Luke provides the menu del dia! An apparition, an hallucination, no, not at all if he is touchable and has a meal, and he has been a rabbi, teaching, he must be real. But he equally disappears. Ghosts don’t eat. He was telling the people of his time – those who doubt – like we do, like the disciples did – he was telling them that it was true. Luke had, in his own words, done a careful examination of the facts, and this is truth.

Luke writes the detail which makes the event real, yet mysterious. Jesus appears and their minds are opened at the meal – just like the two on the road to Emmaus, just like Adam and Eve when they ate the apple. Suddenly they could see.

We break bread today, so that our minds may be open. So that, as John wrote in his letter we are children of God. He repeats it – we are called children and we are God’s children. A lovely feeling to go back to being so safe and secure as a child of God. But the future – John says: What we will be has not yet been made known.

I can’t tell you – after someone dies, what exactly happens next. What we will be has not yet been made known, but when we go to the father we go like Jesus, as a son or daughter of the God of creation, the God of love.

The evidence is of a reality beyond any hallucination or vision, it is a real Jesus with them, as real as you or me, yet mysterious too.

For me, the most moving part of the funeral of Prince Philip was the reading from John’s gospel. The raising of Lazarus. I want to walk with the Jesus who, because I am a child of God, is my brother and friend, who has power over death and all the dross of the world, and holds me in his arms. Amen