

Fifth Sunday of Easter, 10th May 2020



The Lighting of a Candle

We light this candle to remind us that the love of God is like a light in our darkness.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

Amen.

Alleluia Christ is Risen

He has risen indeed. Alleluia!

This is the day that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.

**Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Amen.

God our Father,
we come to you in sorrow for our sins.
For turning away from you,
and ignoring your will for our lives;
Father, forgive us:

save us and help us.

For behaving just as we wish,
without thinking of you;
Father, forgive us:

save us and help us.

For failing you by what we do
and think and say;
Father forgive us:

save us and help us.

For letting ourselves be drawn away from you
by temptations in the world about us;
Father, forgive us:

save us and help us.

For living as if we were ashamed to belong to your Son;

Father, forgive us:

save us and help us.

May the God of Love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Blessed is the Lord

for he has heard the voice of our prayer;

therefore shall our hearts dance for joy

and in our song we will praise our God.

The Collect for the day

Almighty God,

who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ

have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:

grant that, as by your grace going before us

you put into our minds good desires,

so by your continual help

we may bring them to good effect;

through Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

Amen

Hearing and responding to the Word of God

(We encourage you to look at the readings in your own time and will continue with the Gospel)

First Reading: Acts 7.55-60

Standing before the high priest and the council, ⁵⁵Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

Psalm 31 .1-5,15-16

- 1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,
for you are my rock and my stronghold;
guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.
- 4 Take me out of the net
that they have laid secretly for me,
for you are my strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.
- 15 'My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.
- 16 'Make your face to shine upon your servant,
and save me for your mercy's sake.'

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2.2-10

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation – ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

⁷To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner', ⁸and

'A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people;

once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Gospel: John 14.1-14

Jesus said: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

Reflection

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray to the Lord,
who is our refuge and stronghold.

For the health and well-being of our nation,
that all who are fearful and anxious
may be at peace and free from worry:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For the isolated and housebound,
that we may be alert to their needs,
and care for them in their vulnerability:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For our homes and families,
our schools and young people,
and all in any kind of need or distress:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For a blessing on our local community,
that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship,

where all are known and cared for:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

Lord God our Father,

we pledge ourselves to serve you and all humankind, in the cause of peace,

for the relief of want and suffering,

and for the praise of your name.

Guide us by your Spirit;

give us wisdom;

give us courage;

give us hope;

and keep us faithful now and always.

Amen.

Keep us, good Lord,

under the shadow of your mercy.

Sustain and support the anxious,

be with those who care for the sick,

and lift up all who are brought low;

that we may find comfort

knowing that nothing can separate us from your love

in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

God who made everyone and who may be found in every place, bless our parishes and
Benefice, prosper our attempts to be faithful to you and to draw others to you.

Inspire us by the power of your Holy Spirit that we may be a caring people, the true
community of the body of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,

to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done;

**on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord:
thanks be to God.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore. Amen.