

Sixth Sunday of Easter, 17th 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

God our redeemer,
you have delivered us from the power of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:
grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us
to eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ your Son our 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 17.22-31

²²Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said,

“For we too are his offspring.”

²⁹Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’

Psalm 66. 7-18

- 7 Bless our God, O you peoples;
make the voice of his praise to be heard,
- 8 Who holds our souls in life
and suffers not our feet to slip.
- 9 For you, O God, have proved us;
you have tried us as silver is tried.
- 10 You brought us into the snare;
you laid heavy burdens upon our backs.
- 11 You let enemies ride over our heads;
we went through fire and water;
but you brought us out into a place of liberty.
- 12 I will come into your house with burnt offerings
and will pay you my vows,
which my lips uttered
and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.
- 13 I will offer you fat burnt sacrifices
with the smoke of rams;
I will sacrifice oxen and goats.
- 14 Come and listen, all you who fear God,
and I will tell you what he has done for my soul.
- 15 I called out to him with my mouth
and his praise was on my tongue.
- 16 If I had nursed evil in my heart,
the Lord would not have heard me,
- 17 But in truth God has heard me;
he has heeded the voice of my prayer.
- 18 Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer,
nor withheld his loving mercy from me.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3.13-22

¹³Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. ¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you – not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Gospel: John 14.15-21

Jesus said to his disciples: ¹⁵'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'

Reflection

Prayers of Intercession

Prayers for Rogation

We come before you our God and Sustainer,
remembering that you are our Creator and the source of all being.

Out of your love the universe was born.

From primordial darkness you put in place all that is needed
for growth and saw that it was good.

You have put this world into our hands: may we recognise your Spirit within it,
disturbing and challenging us to care for creation, for the weak and the deprived.

Lord we remember that we are called by you to nourish the earth and its diversity of life,
to share the gifts you have given, with one another

and with the poor of the world.

We take a moment to think about our villages.

Loving God we give you thanks for all that makes up our communities.

We ask God's blessing on the churches and other spaces we cannot use but long to return to.

We ask a blessing on all who are engaged in the community response in our communities, keep them safe.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

We ask God's blessing on all the farms around our villages and for all who work on them.

We give you thanks for the food that is produced and the way that the land is cared for.

We remember those who are worried about buying food, either because of poverty or because they cannot go out.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

We pray for large urban communities at this time,
for those having to isolate in cities devoid of green spaces.

We pray for those working in the NHS, care homes and as carers in the community,
keep them safe and give them a sense of your peace.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

We remember those who live in countries where food is scarce and starvation real, where
poverty means that children die young and adults work hard just to survive.

We pray for them as they face this virus,

May they be supported and may we work for justice.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

God our Creator, you have ordered seedtime, sunshine, rain and harvest.

You have created the seed, soil and water so there may be food for all your people. May we
honour and care for these elements that sustain our earthly life.

As the food nourishes our body may we be filled with praise and thanksgiving for our Creator.

Amen

Prayer for Coronavirus

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.

Benefice Prayer

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.