

Fourth Sunday of Easter, 3rd 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,

whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:

raise us, who trust in him,

from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,

that we may seek those things which are above,

where he reigns with you

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

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 2.42-47*

Many were baptized and were added to the community. ⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Psalm 23.

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Second Reading: *1 Peter 2.19-25*

Brothers and sisters: ¹⁹It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, where is the credit in that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²²He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.'

²³When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel: *John 10.1-10*

Jesus said to the Pharisees: ¹Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of

strangers.' ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.'

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.

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father.

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 in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for 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.