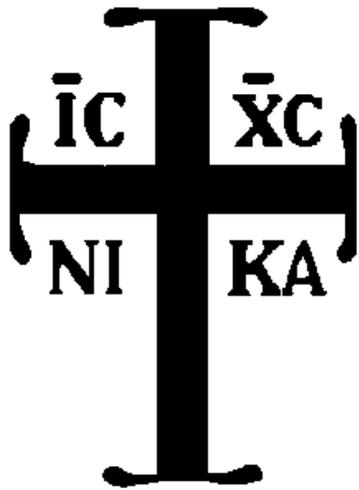


East Hendred Catholic Parish



Fifth Sunday in

Lent (A)

29th March 2020

Passion Sunday

Entrance Antiphon

Judica me, Deus (cf Ps 43:1-2)

Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.

Collect

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever

First Reading

Ezekiel 37:12-14 (RSV)

Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home into the land of Israel. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done it, says the LORD.'

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD!

² Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

³ If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But there is forgiveness with you,
that you may be feared.

⁵ I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

⁶ my soul waits for the LORD
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, hope in the LORD!
For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is plenteous redemption.

⁸ And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

Second Reading

Romans 8:8-11 (RSV)

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Gospel

John 11:1-45 (RSV)

Now a certain man was ill, Laz'arus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Laz'arus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent to him, saying, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' ⁴ But when Jesus heard it he said, 'This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it.' ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Laz'arus. ⁶ So when he heard that he was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go into Judea again.' ⁸ The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?' ⁹ Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if any one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' ¹¹ Thus he spoke, and then he said to them, 'Our friend Laz'arus has fallen asleep, but I go to awake him out of sleep.' ¹² The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.' ¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Laz'arus is dead; ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' ¹⁶ Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.' ¹⁷ Now when Jesus came, he found that Laz'arus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary sat in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² And even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.' ²³ Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' ²⁴ Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' ²⁵ Jesus

said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' ²⁷ She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.' ²⁸ When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying quietly, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' ²⁹ And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³² Then Mary, when she came where Jesus was and saw him, fell at his feet, saying to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled; ³⁴ and he said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' ³⁷ But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?' ³⁸ Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb; it was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. ³⁹ Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be an odour, for he has been dead four days.' ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?' ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you hear me always, but I have said this on account of the people standing by, that they may believe that you did send me.' ⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Laz'arus, come out.' ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with bandages, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.' ⁴⁵ Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him

Reflection

(I) OUTLINE

The two weeks of Passiontide (from this Sunday until Easter) give us chance to think about and prepare for Easter. Today's readings support our central belief that the life of Jesus – and therefore the lives of individual believers – did not end – do not end – with death. Or, rather, there is life beyond physical death. So the promise of Ezekiel is that the graves will open and fresh spirit will animate the dry bones. This is not to be taken too literally: it's a rather pre-scientific description of what happens! The letter to the Romans puts it rather simply: 'If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you.' In the Gospel, we hear the story of the Raising of Lazarus after four days in the tomb – by which time the corpse stank. This is a sign of Jesus' own Resurrection, though we notice that Lazarus was brought back to life only eventually to die, whereas Jesus himself rose from the dead and is alive for ever, and we in him.

(II) MORE DETAILED

Strikingly, the Fourth Gospel has Jesus beginning sayings with 'I AM', a constant reminder of Exodus 3:14, where God says of himself, 'I AM who I AM'. So 'I AM' is the Bread of Life (Chapter 6), 'I AM' is the Light of the Word' (chapter 8), 'I AM' is the Gate of the Sheepfold and the Good Shepherd (Chapter 10). 'I AM', in today's Gospel (Chapter 11), is the Resurrection and the Life'. 'I AM' is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life (Chapter 14), and the True Vine (Chapter 15). All of these sayings are rooted in Jesus' central claim, which, of course, is blasphemous according to the strict monotheism of the Jewish authorities, and is regarded as blasphemous by Islam:

'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.'
(John 8:58)

Jesus, rooting himself and his ministry in the Eternal Present of God's Being, is able to offer resurrection and life – that is, eternal life with God – to all who put their trust in him. This is proclaimed in the story of the Raising of Lazarus, found only in St John's Gospel. Other Gospels have raising from the dead as one of the marks of the Messiah's authentic ministry – for example the raising of Jairus' daughter, (Mark 5, Luke 8) and the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7). All of these resurrections – including Lazarus' – are temporary. All will undergo physical death, sometime later. The story of the Raising of Jesus is very different – we see him no longer and it is permanent. The earlier incidents are all partial signs of something greater.

The Raising of Lazarus is the seventh, and climax, of the seven 'signs' in the Fourth Gospel. We have had the Wedding Feast at Cana (Chapter 2), the Woman at the Well, the Royal Official's Son (Chapter 4), the Five Thousand, the Walking on the Water (Chapter 6), the Blind Man (Chapter 9) and now the Raising of Lazarus (Chapter 11). This is the last and most significant symbolic scene explores the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus for all who believe in him. This is the context in which, during the next fortnight, we explore and live out the story of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Prayers

All praise to God the Father who brought his chosen people to rebirth from imperishable seed through his eternal Word.

- Lord, create a new spirit within us.

Bless Francis, our Pope, and Philip, our Bishop:

- bless the invisible company of all faithful people.

Bring us to share, O Lord, your concern for the good of all. May we work together to build up the earthly city:

- fix our gaze on the city that lasts for ever.

Bless all doctors and nurses, all health care workers, and those at work in medical research:

- save and defend the sick and those need.

As we pray for the health and safety of our families and friends:

- healer of body and soul, cure the sickness of our spirit.

May the dying go in hope to meet Christ their judge:

- may they rejoice for ever in the vision of your glory.

Our Father....

Communion Antiphon

Omnis qui vivit (cf Jn 11:26)

Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.

Act of Spiritual Communion *St Alphonsus Liguori (18th cent.)*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Prayer after Spiritual Communion

We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Prayer for the Parish Community

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen. *cf 2 Corinthians 13:14*

Ave Regina cælorum

*Ave, Regina caelorum,
Ave, Domina Angelorum:
Salve, radix, salve, porta
Ex qua mundo lux est orta:*

Hail, O Queen of Heaven enthroned.
Hail, by angels mistress owned.
Root of Jesse, Gate of Morn
Whence the world's true light was
born:

*Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa,
Vale, o valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.*

Glorious Virgin, Joy to thee,
Loveliest whom in heaven they see;
Fairest thou, where all are fair,
Plead with Christ our souls to spare.

Scripture Reading (Lent Week 5)

Monday	Daniel 13:1-9,15-17,19-30,33-62	John 8:12-20
Tuesday	Numbers 21:4-9	John 8:21-30
Wednesday	Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95	John 8:31-42
Thursday	Genesis 17:3-9	John 8:51-59
Friday	Jeremiah 20:10-13	John 10:31-42
Saturday	Ezekiel 37:21-28	John 11:45-56

PALM SUNDAY (A)

Commemoration of the Entry into Jerusalem:

Matthew 21:1-11

Mass Readings:

Isaiah 50:4-7

Philippians 2:6-11

Matthew 26:14 - 27:66

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NOTICES FOR THE WEEK

PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Sr Catherine, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Angus Clark, Karen Greig, Kitty Teasdale, Mary Mc Nichol, Andrew Gunn, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol.

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Those who have died recently and those with anniversaries at this time: Hugh O'Connor, Mary O'Connor, Elizabeth McElroy, John Doyle, Ted Moore, May Thacker, Maurice Barret.

HOLY FATHER'S APRIL PRAYER INTENTION

Freedom from Addiction: we pray that those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied.

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DIDCOT FOOD BANK

We are still doing our best to support those in need in Wantage and Didcot. Please continue to put items for the Didcot Food Bank in the box by St Mary's church door or give them to Veronica.

OUR CHURCHES

St Patrick's remains closed for the time being. Though there are no services in St Mary's, the church will be open during the day for private prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament reserved. If you happen to see someone else in church when you are there, please maintain 'social distance'.