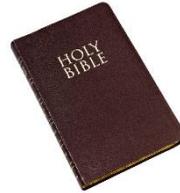




LENT 4

MOTHERING SUNDAY – SUNDAY 14TH MARCH

Church is open today for **private prayer only, between 10 and 11am** and will be again next week if you prefer to come into church to worship. Here below we have an outline of our service for you to follow at home. Choose a quiet reflective space and to make it more meaningful have a cross, bible and candle to make your sacred space.



INTRODUCTION

At last, we begin steps to get back to worship, although we are only open for private prayer it is a start and helps us assess our procedures for keeping everyone safe. Mothering Sunday has always been a lovely occasion and the Mothers Union usually take an active role in the service and we are gifted flowers and bookmarks. This time it is slightly different but hopefully you will still feel connected to us. Our first service will be on Palm Sunday taken by Revd Robin on the 28th March, if you don't feel ready to attend then we will make sure you get your palm cross via St. Max doorstep delivery service, a big thank you to all of you that are helping with this very important part of our church.

It's now been a full year since the first lockdown and hopefully won't be too long before we get back to some form of normality. Obviously, safety procedures will be in place but I think if we stick to them, we will be fine. So just a reminder that if you do come to church don't forget your mask, the medical ones are the best and keep to the safety guidelines both in and outside the building.

Our reflection today is by myself and the intercessions by Arthur Greaves, our Mothers Union have been asked to do the prayers for the team service and Peter has sent out some prayers for Mothering Sunday.

Jan B.



PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God is spirit – **Let us worship him in spirit and truth**

The Lord is with us – **Let us praise his name together**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE



Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this: “Hear O Israel the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength”.

The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. **Amen Lord have mercy.**

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world and knows our every word and deed. Let us then open ourselves to the Lord and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

KYRIE ELEISON

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

Lord have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

THE COLLECT

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING EXODUS 2, 1-10



Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among

the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**

THE NEW TESTAMENT READING COLLOSSIANS 3, 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**

THE GOSPEL JOHN 19 25-27

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory. Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. **Glory to you O Lord.**

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

This is the Gospel of the Lord – **Praise to you O Christ.**

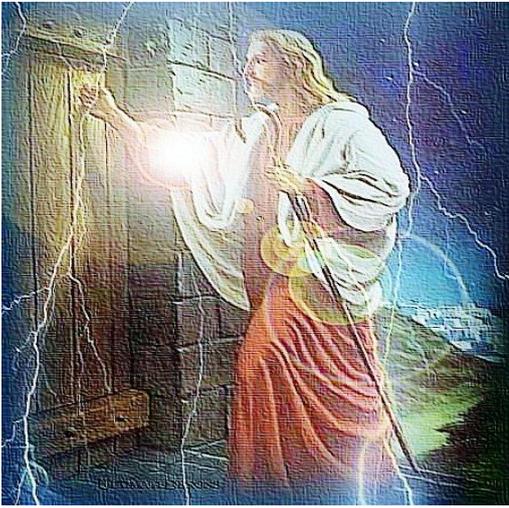


REFLECTION

Some very powerful testimonies in the readings today, all linked of course to Mothers. Of course, Mothering Sunday didn't always concentrate on Mothers but it was a time in Lent when people who had moved away from their homes through work or marriage would return to their Mother church (Parish) to worship and to eat simnel cake, which was a treat in Lent as they were supposed to be fasting. It was celebrated firstly in the 17th Century and in the early 20th century; an American woman called Anna Jarvis started the idea of Mother's Day when she held a memorial service for her own mother. Obviously, this deviation was not a religious one but it certainly links in with the Virgin Mary and we can try and understand the trials she had to go through as the mother of Jesus.

The Old testament reading looks at the story of Moses, his mother thought to be Jochebed did everything she could to save him from murder by the Pharaoh, she was taking a risk putting him in a basket among the reeds but had faith that he could be saved. To make sure, she entrusted Miriam his sister to watch what happened to him and as she saw the Pharaoh's daughter take him, she told her of a wet nurse (his mother) which enabled them to share this precious child in secret. This was a pivotal role for his mother, as he would later of course lead the Israelites out of slavery and to the Promised Land. All part of God's plan.

The letter of Paul to the Colossians tells of attributes needed to be part of God's Kingdom and does describe all those given by unconditional love of a mother, forgiveness, compassion, humility, meekness, patience the list goes on. Mothers just do these things without fuss, without thanks and with no expectations but just want the best for their child.



We finally come to Mary the mother of Jesus in the gospel reading, how she could stand to watch her son suffering is incomprehensible, she must have been in torture herself. Several references in the gospels show her involvement in his life and his care for her, at the temple when he was a baby it is said that she carried the words said by Simeon and Anna in her heart. The words of Angel Gabriel, it sounds like she took all these things in and just managed things in a quiet and calm matter. She truly was a remarkable lady. Even at the end of Jesus' earthly life he thought of her and told the

disciple he loved to accept her as his mother and her as his son. I once visited a place called the house of Mary in Turkey supposedly where she was taken by one of the disciples to keep her safe. It was near Ephesus and we had to go on a mountain road up high into the hills. A little bit touristy but when we walked to the little chapel there it was very spiritual. There was a sense of calm and peace places in the shade to light candles and a prayer wall, everyone around was silent and respectful and it gave you a feeling that this was a very special place. Of course, there is no evidence that it is all true but I suppose if any place makes you closer to God it is a good place.

We remember today our Mother's and can make a fuss of them or of course many have lost their Mother's but I hope this day is a time to reflect on what they have done for us and put up with without fuss or expectations and a day when we can look at others and be grateful for what we have. We don't always realise God's plan for us or our Mothers but we are comforted in knowing that God is there in our prayers and in our lives and we have guidance if we look for it.

Happy Mothering Sunday.

Take care.

Jan B.

THE CREED

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life

INTERCESSIONS

During the intercessions, we pray for the church, our country, our government, people in difficulty and those who have died. You can use your own prayers or if you *prefer here are some on today's theme.*



Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us come to the Lord in hope, let us pray to the Lord in faith, let us hold to the Lord in all our lives.

Glorious God, as a mother loves her child, so you love us. For that great truth we praise you.

Lord in your mercy –**hear our prayer**

Loving God trusting in your promises to hear us when we pray in faith, we ask you to bless our relationships in the families of our homes, our church and our communities so through our lives our loving will for us may be done.

Lord in your mercy –**Hear our prayer**

A prayer for Lent. As the days lengthen and the earth spends longer in the light of day, may we spend longer in the light of your presence Lord. May the seeds of your word that have long been buried within us grow like everything around us into love for other people. Grant Lord that there may be a springtime in our lives this Lent.

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayer**

A prayer from Hulme deanery

T each us to love patience

H elp us to listen to others

A nd learn from our mistakes

N ever to give up hope

Y ou will always be with us

O ften silently waiting

U nderstand our fears Lord.

Lord in your mercy –**hear our prayer**

Living Lord, we pray for the needs of your whole world. We remember especially the families who have lost loved ones due to this pandemic and those who work in hospitals. We pray for those nations torn by conflict, violence and poverty and thirsting for the knowledge of your love. May those who suffer know of your presence. Heavenly Father we bring before you all those in this community who have asked for our prayers and who carry heavy burdens – those known or unknown.

We remember especially today Don Priestley, who died earlier this week, we are thinking of his family at this time. We remember too those whose anniversaries fall at this time and those who have died unknown to us but known and loved by you. Grant us, with all who have known you in their hearts, a share in your eternal kingdom. From our book of remembrance- Douglas Robert Anderton, Alice Thompson, Robert Goff Pearce.

Equip us Father to build bridges, prepare us to reach out and touch lives, guide us out of darkness in our world, that we may become beacons of love and hope. Set us alight we pray that we may start today.

Merciful Father, **Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER



Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us this day 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 forever.

Amen.

THE BLESSING

May the spirit, who overshadowed the Virgin when the eternal Son came among us, make you joyful in the service of the Lord, and the blessing of God almighty the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with us all and evermore. **.Amen.**

