

SERVICE OF THE WORD – 3 MAY 2020

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Preparation

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Through him you have come to trust in God,
who raised him from the dead and gave him glory,
so that your faith and hope are set on God.

1 Peter 1: 3, 21

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
risen from death to life in the Father's love,
raise us to share in the new life,
that we may know your presence among us now,
and serve you in the power of the Spirit. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: 336 *“Jesus, where're thy people meet”* (vs. 1, 2, 4 and 5)

Listen to and sing along with this hymn at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6ytM9DwOWs>

Jesus, where'er thy people meet,
there they behold thy mercy seat;
where'er they seek thee, thou art found,
and every place is hallowed ground.

For thou, within no walls confined,
inhabitest the humble mind;
such ever bring thee where they come,
and going, take thee to their home.

Here may we prove the power of prayer
to strengthen faith and sweeten care,
to teach our faint desires to rise,
and bring all heaven before our eyes.

Lord, we are few, but thou art near;
nor short thine arm, nor deaf thine ear;
O rend the heavens, come quickly down,
and make a thousand hearts thine own.

William Cowper (1731-1800)

CONFESSION

‘The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews; Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”’
John 20:19

In this Easter season we bring our fears and failings to the risen Christ:

When we are faced with a challenge, but retreat into old attitudes ...

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

When we allow past hurts to undermine our present relationships ...

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

When we face difficult times but fail to trust in your loving purposes ...

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

When we look inwards to our selfish concerns rather than outwards to a world in need ...

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

When we are agents of gloom rather than messengers of hope ...

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May Almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins

and bring us to everlasting life,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

JUBILATE: *Psalm 100*

Listen to and sing along with this canticle at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sb-CQjkHnZc&t=2s>

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands :

serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God :

it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise :

be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting :

and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father,

and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning,

is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Let us pray that we may experience transformation in our own lives:

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 and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Ministry of the Word

The First Reading: Acts 2: 42-47

The reading below may be read, or an audio version listened to at
<https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/acts/2/>

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The Psalm: T&P 147 "The Lord's my shepherd"

Listen to and sing along with this hymn at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eIQQayhpak>

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
his goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in you alone,
And I will trust in you alone,
For your endless mercy follows me,
your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,
and He anoints my head with oil,
and my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
for You are with me, and Your rod and staff
are the comfort I need to know.

*Stuart Townend (b.1963)
based on Psalm 23*

The Second Reading: 1 Peter 2: 19-25

The reading below may be read, or an audio version listened to at

<https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/1-peter/2/>

For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,

and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Hymn before the Gospel: CH644 “Faithful Shepherd, feed me”

Listen to and sing along with this hymn at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YY8hlC1VleU>

Faithful Shepherd, feed me
in the pastures green;
faithful Shepherd, lead me
where thy steps are seen.

Hold me fast, and guide me
in the narrow way;
so, with thee beside me,
I shall never stray.

Daily bring me nearer
to the heavenly shore;
may my faith grow clearer,
may I love thee more:

Hallow every pleasure,
every joy and pain;
be thyself my treasure,
though none else I gain.

Day by day prepare me
as thou see is best,
then let angels bear me
to thy promised rest.

Thomas B. Pollock (1836-96) altd.

The Gospel: John 10: 1-10

The reading below may be read, or an audio version listened to at

<https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/john/10/>

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

SERMON

Revd Rob Clements has prepared a sermon podcast which you may listen to at:

<https://www.dublinandglendaloughsermons.com/sermons/searching-for-meaning-and-living-abundantly-rob-clements>

COLLECT OF THE READINGS

God of all power,
you called from death our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep;
send us as shepherds to rescue the lost, to heal the injured,
and to feed one another with understanding;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Responding

ACCLAMATION OF FAITH

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

**Christ died for our sins
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers, and to all the apostles:
this we have received,
and this we believe.**

1 Corinthians 15: 3-7

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

INTERCESSIONS

Our loving Father in heaven, as we recall the change that came over the disciples when they met the risen Christ on that first Easter Day, we pray for the renewal of faith, hope and love among your people today:

We pray for our fellow human beings living in fear of persecution and violence ...
Strengthen their hope that peace and justice will prevail.
Guide our President Michael D and the leaders of the nations.
At Easter, Lord,
renew our hope in your victory over evil.

We pray for those who, like Thomas, struggle with doubts and hard questions ...
Make yourself known to them through the good news that Christ is alive, and through the witness of his followers.
At Easter, Lord,
renew us by your Spirit.

We pray for those who, like the disciples, are burdened by guilt, failure or grief ...
Give them a fresh awareness of Christ's love and forgiveness.
At Easter, Lord,
renew our joy in your amazing grace.

We pray for all who are sent into the world to bear witness to Christ;
for bishop Michael, for ministers and missionaries ...
Lead us by your Holy Spirit into new ways of serving you.
At Easter, Lord,
renew our commitment to your service.

We pray for those who are ill or frail ...
Grant them healing and encouragement.
At Easter, Lord,
renew our trust in your fatherly care.

We remember those who have died ...
We join with all Christians in lifting our voices
to proclaim the living Christ as
our Lord and our God. Amen.

PRAYERS ABOUT THE CURRENT CRISIS

Merciful God,
we entrust to your tender care
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there to hold.
In your will, comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gracious God,
give skill, sympathy and resilience
to all who are caring for the sick,
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.
Strengthen them with your Spirit,
that through their work many will be restored to health;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GENERAL COLLECT

Heavenly Father,
in whom we live and move and have our being:
We humbly pray that your Holy Spirit
may so guide and govern us
that in all the cares and occupations of our daily life,
we may never forget your presence
but may remember that we are always walking in your sight,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us sum up our prayers and praises in the words our Saviour Christ has taught us and say:

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.

Going out as God's People

Closing Hymn: CH593 *"O Jesus, I have promised"* (vs. 1-4)

Listen to and sing along with this hymn at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rC-2Ss9tg7I>

Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
be thou forever near me,
my Master and my Friend;
I shall not fear the battle
if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if thou wilt be my guide.

O let me feel thee near me!
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but Jesus, draw thou nearer,
and shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear thee speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self will.
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
O speak and make me listen,
thou guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, thou hast promised
to all who follow thee,
that where thou art in glory
there shall thy servant be;
and, Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend.

John E. Bode (1816-74)

DISMISSAL PRAYER

**May the road rise up to meet us.
May the wind be always at our backs.
May the sun shine warm upon our faces;
the rains fall soft upon our fields
and until we meet again,
may God hold us in the palm of his hand. Amen.**

BLESSING

God the Father,
by whose glory Christ was raised from the dead,
strengthen you to walk with him in his risen life:
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be with you and remain with you always.
Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia!