

PERSONAL SERVICE. 3 April 2022
5th Sunday in Lent Passion Sunday



Call to Worship

Waking up we see that a new day has dawned.
Let us raise our hands in thanksgiving
for the wonders of being alive,
for the 24 brand-new hours in which we are now living
and the possibilities of many more.

In a moment of quiet be still in this moment and pray

Wonderful God

thank you for the sensations of sacred breath,
your miraculous gift of life to each one of us.

We lift our hearts to you.

Our souls sing with joy

May we know your presence in all our challenges
and may our thankfulness pour out of our lives.

In the name of Jesus. Amen

StF 20, MP 50 'Be still for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here'

Prayer of Approach and Confession

Loving and gracious God,

in this time of worship may we sense your presence near.

May we find space and time to look around us and see beauty;

in nature and the seasons;

in people around us;

In a word of welcome ;

In a smile, a hug or a handshake ;

May we find forgiveness for the things we do wrong;

a word spoken out of turn ;

a word we fail to speak ;

an action we regret ;

someone we have failed to greet and meet.

May we find ourselves restored and renewed in strength

on our continuing journey through Lent
May the stories we hear and share be an inspiration
O God , be near us . Amen

Lord Jesus you gave everything for us
With our money and resources
With our time and talents
In friendship and fellowship
In worship and service
In what we offer and who we are
Help us to be generous, responding to your extravagant love
by sharing your love with you and one another in the
name of Christ. Amen

Reading Gospel of John Ch12 v1-8
Mary Anoints Jesus at Bethany

In the pattern of our lives we have times of intense busyness when we are coping with the distractions of the world around us. During these challenging times John's Gospel tells us to take a break and focus on 'making time' for God. Some might say 'wasting time' but this 'quality time' is connecting with time preparing for 'things to come' ,journeys we can't travel alone.

On the eve of Palm Sunday, Jesus and his disciples visit Bethany a village just a couple of miles outside Jerusalem and a recognised place of hospitality when the city was overloaded with pilgrims at festival time, such as 'Passover'.

It is a journey full of meaning. Recently Jesus had spent time at prayer on the wilderness side of the river Jordan before answering a call for help from Mary and Martha to heal their brother Lazarus.

Jesus waited to be inspired for a greater task; to raise Lazarus from death. From a belief in the healing power of Jesus they witness a resurrected life, a restoration, a confirmation of trust in Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

In the excitement of the moment amongst the crowds thronging around the village Jesus withdraws to the wilderness for a greater journey; to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover to witness again a resurrected

life, a restoration, a confirmation of trust in Jesus Christ, the Messiah. They return to Bethany for a night amongst friends. John paints a picture of Jesus and Lazarus reclined at the dining table with the disciples and onlookers gathered around a scene of activity with Martha serving the food

but Mary isn't helping but sits at the feet of Jesus. There is an understanding, Mary offers to wash his feet and dries them with her loose hair. A sign of giving herself to him that would outrage the other guests. Then, using the expensive perfumed nard ointment on our Lord's feet rather than his head Mary remembers and predicts the burial on Good Friday. This act which connects with Jesus would block out the noise of the meal and focus his thoughts on the events of Holy Week ,another Supper ,another washing of feet another death, another resurrection.

When Judas Iscariot complains about the cost of this devotion(a years wage) he cannot understand the value (everlasting life) Jesus reprimands him for knowing the cost of everything but the value of nothing.

So we are reminded to value the time we 'waste' with Jesus that Resurrects Restores and Confirms our relationship with God

StF 489, MP 799 All I once held dear built my life upon

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord God, we give you thanks for your overwhelming gifts:

the people we love and those who love us,

and the time we spend with them ;

the glorious earth with its many creatures, colours and fragrances;

the food we enjoy;

the times of celebration, music and dance;

our homes our church fellowship and above all, your Son, our taking our nature Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Prayers of intercession

On this Passion Sunday let us bring our concerns to the cross

Jesus Saviour of the World hear us and help us

Holy yet merciful God we give thanks that you were content to involve yourself in the affairs of the world, coming yourself and giving up your life for us. When we are discouraged, help us to never imagine that you are not interested; and by your Spirit prompt us to bring our concerns to you, that we may see your goodness in our lives.

God of action, you work by your Spirit in our world and you created us to work and tend your creation. Give us satisfaction in our work; help us to be good employers and employees, to do an honest days work for a fair days pay and to use what we have for others good as well as our own.

Give us Lord God, politicians and representatives who will put others good before their own, who will seek peace and justice in our world and be models of your compassion.

We bring before you Lord God, our parents and children, our wider circle of family and friends, and the communities in which we live.

As Jesus bore our burdens, help us to bear one another's and so fulfil your law of love

Lead us Lord God in the paths of service and righteousness, and grant that we may discover your plans to give us a future and a hope. As Christ died to make us new, help us to live in anticipation of greater things than we have yet seen

Jesus Saviour of the world hear us and help us. Amen

StF 78, MP 170 Give Thanks with a grateful heart

Let us share the grace together

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen