



Morning Prayer

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Passion Sunday

29th March 2020

An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

29 March 2020

Fifth Sunday of Lent

† Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Prayers of Penitence

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.

God shows his love for us
in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Let us then show our love for him
by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

cf Romans 5.8

**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 to us the joy of your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the Father of all mercies
cleanse us from *our* sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through 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 will we praise our God.

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
creator and redeemer of all;
to you be glory and praise for ever.
From the waters of chaos you drew forth the world.
and in your great love fashioned us in your image.
Now, through the deep waters of death,
you have brought your people to new birth
by raising your Son to life in triumph.
May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts
as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
Blessed be God for ever.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

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.

¶ The Word of God

Psalmody

Psalm 130

- 1 Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;
 Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
- 2 If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?
- 3 But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you shall be feared.
- 4 I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.
- 5 My soul waits for the Lord,
 more than the night watch for the morning,
more than the night watch for the morning.
- 6 O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;
- 7 With him is plenteous redemption
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now:
and shall be for ever. Amen.

First Reading

Ezekiel 37.1-14

¹The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, ‘Mortal, can these bones live?’ I answered, ‘O Lord GOD, you know.’ ⁴Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.’

⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.’ ¹⁰I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹Then he said to me, ‘Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.” ¹²Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Old Testament Canticale

A Song of Humility

Hosea 6.1-6

- 1 Come, let us return to the Lord
who has torn us and will heal us.
- 2 God has stricken us
and will bind up our wounds.
- 3 After two days, he will revive us,
and on the third day will raise us up,
that we may live in his presence.
- 4 Let us strive to know the Lord;
his appearing is as sure as the sunrise.
- 5 He will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.
- 6 'O Ephraim, how shall I deal with you?
How shall I deal with you, O Judah?
- 7 'Your love for me is like the morning mist,
like the dew that goes early away.
- 8 'Therefore, I have hewn them by the prophets,
and my judgement goes forth as the light.
- 9 'For loyalty is my desire and not sacrifice,
and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.'

Hosea 6.1-6

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Second Reading

John 11.1-45

¹A certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' ⁴But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' ⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' ⁸The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' ⁹Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. ¹⁰But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' ¹¹After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' ¹²The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' ¹³Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' ¹⁶Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at

home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' ²³Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' ²⁴Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' ²⁵Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' ²⁷She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

²⁸When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.'

²⁹And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.

³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out.

They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' ³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' ³⁷But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.'

⁴⁰Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that

you sent me.’ ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’

⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead
And Christ shall give you light.

You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God.
Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.

Set your minds on things that are above,
not on things that are on the earth.
And Christ shall give you light.

When Christ our life appears you will appear with him in glory.
**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,
and Christ shall give you light.**

Gospel Canticle

Benedictus

- 1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,
who has come to his people and set them free.
- 2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,
born of the house of his servant David.
- 3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,
- 4 To show mercy to our ancestors,
and to remember his holy covenant.

- 5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
- 6 Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.
- 7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
- 8 To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
- 9 In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
- 10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Sermon

(If required there is a reflection at the end of the service)

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;
he 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 everlasting.
Amen.**

¶ Prayers

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, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

For the isolated and housebound,
that we may be alert to their needs
and care for them in their vulnerability:
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

For our homes and families,
our schools and young people,
and all in any kind of need or distress:
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

For all those of our congregation worshipping at this time,
that we may be supported by our common prayer
and soon return to worshipping together
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

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, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

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.**

The Collect is said.

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:

grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;

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 for ever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer is said

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.**



The Conclusion

The Blessing

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life.
Amen.

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5th Sunday of Lent
by Angus Ritchie
Ezekiel 37.1-14; John 11.1-45

JOHN speaks of Jesus being “disturbed” on three occasions: here; at the grave of Lazarus, when he prophesies his own Passion; and at Judas’s betrayal. “These are moments when Jesus encounters the majesty of death and rubs against the might of darkness, which it is his task to wrestle with and overcome” (Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week*).

The miracles of Jesus are signs of his overcoming that might. Each, however, is a partial and temporary victory. Lazarus, although raised by Christ, will die again. Like all of Jesus’s miracles, this foreshadows something greater: his paschal triumph over sin and death, and the new creation that it inaugurates. We receive the first-fruits of that new creation in the work of the Spirit and the life of the Church.

In his miracles and his paschal triumph, Jesus confronts us with good news, not merely moral exhortations. The Kingdom is a dawning reality: a divine gift, not a human achievement. Our calling is to receive and participate. It is only after their desertion and denial — only after he has been enthroned at Calvary — that Jesus’s disciples will understand this. Each Passiontide, we make their journey our own so that we can understand these truths at a new depth.

As we have seen in our readings from John’s Gospel this Lent, it is those who know the greatest vulnerability who are most receptive to this dawning reality of God’s Kingdom. That seems true of this family at Bethany, who are particularly close to Jesus. When they send for Jesus, the sisters describe Lazarus as “he whom you love”. Lazarus may have been profoundly disabled: he does not speak at any point in John’s Gospel, unlike the two unmarried sisters with whom he lives. As Jaime Clark-Soles explains, the use of the imperfect tense in verse 1 of our reading also suggests a chronic condition (“John” in Sarah Melcher et al., *The Bible and Disability: A commentary*).

Martha tells Jesus that she believes in the hope of an eternal future for her brother: “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” In the miracle of raising Lazarus, she experiences the dawning of that future within human history. John’s narrative emphasises the

materiality of the death as Martha exclaims, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.” Jesus responds by proclaiming that his eternal Kingdom is about to become visible within our current existence: “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”

Precisely because it takes flesh within human history, the dawning of the Kingdom disturbs its hierarchies of status and power, provoking often violent resistance. The life that really is life opposes death and overcomes it. Not coincidentally, the reaction of earthly hierarchies is to put that life to death. It is Jesus’s raising of a man from the dead that makes the chief priests and Pharisees plot Jesus’s death, and we are later told that “the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well”, because the miracle of his raising was leading so many to faith. The Kingdom of God may be a gift, but it is costly to receive.

Like the raising of Lazarus, Ezekiel’s vision in the valley of bones foretells the dawning of God’s new creation. It comes at a moment of utter desolation. Mary and Martha lament Jesus’s absence at the moment of greatest need. As the bones of Israel’s armies lie scattered in the valley, the Lord seems to have forgotten his people.

Here, too, the timing and nature of God’s deliverance is unexpected: an astonishing disruption of the old order of sin and death. The Lord declares “I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live” (Ezekiel 37.14). At the moment of greatest desolation, a new light dawns that will overcome “the might of darkness”.

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

At this time of need

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

Dear Lord,

weave a silence on to my lips;

weave a silence into my mind;

weave a silence in my heart.

Calm me as you stilled the storm.

Still me, and keep me from harm.

Let all the tumult within me cease

Enfold me, Lord, in your peace.

Psalm 130

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord!

² O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplication

³ If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins

O Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But with you there is forgiveness,

so that we can with reverence serve you

⁵ I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits

and in his word I hope;

⁶ my soul waits for the Lord

more than the night watch waits for the morning,

more than the night watch waits for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is unfailing love,

and with him is full redemption.

⁸ He himself will redeem Israel

from all their iniquities.

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray.

That is the heart of today's psalm on this 5th Sunday of Lent - Passion Sunday.

That is the ongoing task for us all at this time of deep need and anxiety in our communities, locally, nationally and globally.

We don't know the exact background of the Psalmist's situation, but clearly it is very severe, for he says, '*Out of the depths have I cried to you O Lord, hear my voice.*'

We are beset by a new virus that threatens us all.

It is time to connect with our loving God more than ever, to cry out daily in our prayers, but our cry, as the Psalmist's, is not a forlorn or uncertain one. Rather, it is a cry of sure and certain hope that the God who came to us in Jesus Christ is in the midst of our sufferings, our grieving, our worries and our serving: for he is our hope and we who are in Christ are the hope of the world, now and always.

So, we wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

Like the Psalmist we wait for the Lord *more than watchman for the morning.*

For most of us the waiting is hugely frustrating: I know it is for me! We know we are only at the beginning of this demanding journey of restriction; we do not know when it will end or what the new normal of life will be when we come out the other side.

Though our church buildings are closed, and we are waiting and worshipping at home very differently to normal we remain united in Christ: praying and serving differently. Through our care for the isolated and vulnerable and daily prayers we must be beacons of light and hope as that wait continues. The real necessities of life are now more apparent than ever: love, kindness, human contact and serving one another, especially those in need.

Over the next two weeks we go 'back to the future'; we are invited to

walk with Jesus the way of the cross, to see again the whole of his life, the whole of our lives, the whole of the world's life telescoped into 14 days: Passion Sunday to Palm Sunday to Good Friday to Easter Day; Jesus weeping at a graveside, joy at his coming into the city, terror at his arrest, suffering on a cross and a mighty resurrection.

This year we cannot make that journey as we have done in the past, but let's all know afresh that the crucified and risen Jesus comes to us and walks with us ... as **we wait, we watch, we hope, we pray.**

Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life,
and we have believed and have come to know
that you are the Holy One of God. **Amen.**

John 6:68

A Postscript *Written by Laura Kelly Fanucci*

When this is over
may we never again
take for granted:
a handshake with a stranger
full shelves at the store
conversations with neighbours
a crowded theatre
a Friday night out
The taste of Communion
A routine check up
The school run each morning
Coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring
Each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself.

When this ends
May we find
That we have become
More like the people
We wanted to be
We were called to be
And may we stay
That way- better
For each other
Because of the worst.

Peter & Ellen Hill Passion Sunday 2020