



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (B) Sunday 21st March 2021

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

In Church this Sunday crosses, statues and images can be covered with purple cloths. You may wish to do this at home, to mark these last two weeks of Lent, once called "Passiontide."

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

A: 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.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: As our Lenten journey continues, we are closer to the cross: Jesus knows this, and even though his heart is troubled, he nevertheless entrusts himself to his Father's will, who glorifies him through his selfless sacrifice. We too must be selfless, so that God's glory – not our own – may dwell in us. Humbly we think of our sins and failings, and ask for God's forgiveness:

Penitential Act

L: You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

A: Lord, have mercy.

L: You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

A: Christ, have mercy

L: You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

A: Lord, have mercy.

Opening Prayer

L: Let us pray.

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, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading

John 12:20-33

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them: 'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!' A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.' Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.

'Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.' By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection

The Gospels are often full of paradoxes: we hear that the first will be last, that anyone who wants to be great must be a slave, and today in Saint John's Gospel two profound paradoxes – the wheat grain dies to yield life, and Jesus acknowledges his troubled soul, while asking for his name to be glorified! The message is that if we try to read the Gospel in the "world's way", these paradoxes will make no sense. In fact if we look at the Passion and death of the Lord in the "world's way", it will look like failure and loss, and will make no sense. We need to embrace the paradox, trusting in Jesus who draws us to himself. All of this is pointing toward the cross, which is both a sign of sorrow and a sign of triumph. This is how we "see Jesus", as the Greek visitors asked at the beginning of this Gospel – it is through the very paradox of death (when Jesus is "lifted up" from the earth), that Jesus draws all who seek him to himself.

For our Younger Friends

Today is quite a difficult reading: there is a lot going on! Perhaps one moment to focus on is when Jesus admits how scared he is. This is important. Jesus was just like us in everything, except that he never sinned. But he was afraid of what they would do

him. Sometimes we are scared about things – what’s happening in our world, or at school, or tests or exams, or in our families. It’s OK to be afraid: remember Jesus was! But what did he do? He admitted it, and trusted in God his Father: God spoke, saying he would “glorify” Jesus’ name! When we are afraid, trust God, share your fears with those who love you, and let God help you!

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Profession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and 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 into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there 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 life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

L: As we prepare in this Lenten season to renew our baptism at Easter, let us pray that we may die to sin so as to be reborn to eternal life.

We pray for the Church, that all its members may die to self and rise again in Jesus. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for our young people, that they may not submit to the wisdom of the world, but allow the words of Jesus to speak to them. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: Let us pray for all who are searching for meaning in life, that they may find Jesus. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for all who suffer and sorrow, that they may see in the glorification of Jesus hope that they too will share his glory. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord’s Prayer

L: At the Saviour’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

L: Hear us, almighty God, and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith, graciously purify them by the working of this sacrifice. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: Loving Father, you have given your children a sacred time for the renewing and purifying of their hearts, that, freed from disordered affections, they may so deal with the things of this passing world as to hold rather to the things that eternally endure. At the Last Supper the Lord Jesus, your Beloved Son, showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church today, and not able to receive communion, we now open our minds and hearts to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of

the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: A pure heart create for me, O God.

A: A pure heart create for me, O God.

L: Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offence.

O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin.

A: A pure heart create for me, O God.

L: A pure heart create for me, O God,

put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence,

nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

A: A pure heart create for me, O God.

L: Give me again the joy of your help;

with a spirit of fervour sustain me, that I may teach transgressors your ways

and sinners may return to you.

A: A pure heart create for me, O God.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

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.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!