

**The Rectorial Benefice of the East Vale
Morning Prayer
Sunday 21st March 2021
Lent V | Passion Sunday**

Hymn

**Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
re clothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives your service find,
in deeper reverence praise,
in deeper reverence praise.**

**In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord
let us, like them, obey his word:
'Rise up and follow me,
rise up and follow me!'**

**O sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with me
the silence of eternity
interpreted by love,
interpreted by love!**

**Drop your still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of your peace,
the beauty of your peace.**

**Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire,
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm,
O still small voice of calm!**

The Collect

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**

First Reading

(Jeremiah 31. 3-34)

A reading from the Book of Jeremiah
The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for

they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

(51: 1-12)

R:/ Make me a clean heart, O God

Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness; according to the abundance of your compassion blot out my offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin. **R:/**

For I acknowledge my faults and my sin is ever before me. Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and righteous in your judgement. **R:/**

I have been wicked even from my birth, a sinner when my mother conceived me. Behold, you desire truth deep within me and shall make me understand wisdom in the depths of my heart. **R:/**

Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the bones you have broken may rejoice. **R:/**

Turn your face from my sins and blot out all my misdeeds. Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. **R:/**

Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy spirit from me. Give me again the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your gracious spirit. **R:/**

Second Reading

(Hebrews 5.5-10)

A reading from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews
Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'; as he says also in another place, 'You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.' In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel

(John 12.20-33)

**Glory be to Jesus,
who, in bitter pains,
poured for me the lifeblood
from his sacred veins!**

**Blest through endless ages
be the precious stream,
which from endless torment
doth the world redeem.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Listen to the gospel of Christ according to St John

Glory to you, O Lord.

Among those who went up to worship at the Passover festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. 'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – "Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

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

**Abel's blood for vengeance
pleaded to the skies;
but the blood of Jesus
for our pardon cries.**

**Oft as it is sprinkled
On our guilty hearts,
Satan in confusion
Terror-struck departs**

The Homily

Bishop June

Croeso and welcome to this reflection for the fifth Sunday of Lent, sometimes called Passion Sunday.

That's because we begin to anticipate the Way of the Cross, the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. And our readings have that feel of anticipating what is to come. Jeremiah chapter 31, verses 31 to 34, where God speaks of his determination to forgive our failures and wrongdoings, and St. John's gospel, chapter 12, verses 20 to 33, where Jesus sees in his growing fame and popularity, the beginnings of his end. Foreigners to the Jewish faith, and to Israel, come requesting to meet Jesus. He's the talk of the festival and the city of Jerusalem. But Jesus knew that such interest would only lead him on the road to Golgotha. "The hour has come", he declares.

Last week, someone sent me a photo of "Reflecting Absence", which are the huge granite basins which stand on the spot where the Twin Towers, the World Trade Center once stood. I've actually visited this memorial Plaza in Manhattan, and know that it is indeed a solemn place. Many of those who were killed

on that day were crushed into the ground. So these dark walls have their names engraved on them, and in the centre, as water falls, it then disappears down a further square space, a void, as if vanishing into nothingness. When this design, I suppose we would call it a memorial water sculpture, when the design was first proposed those responsible for deciding what should happen there, modified the proposal, and they added some 400 trees around the great voids, making the experience of them a little less bleak, and proclaiming life, growth, renewal and rebirth. Even in the very embodiment of mourning, there's the affirmation of life.

Because this is Passion Sunday, and we start to turn our faces to the cross of Christ, I chose as the theme for today in our series on endurance, enduring death. Of all the things that we find ourselves enduring loss and dying is, of course, the most certain and possibly the most difficult. It also happens to be that this weekend, it coincides with the anniversary of the very first lockdown, of our start of the COVID virus. The charity Marie Curie, who do such an important work supporting the bereaved have invited us to use this anniversary as a national day of reflection for us to remember those who died in this last year, whether of COVID or of some other cause, and especially to remind ourselves of all those who are bereaved. The charity calculates that more than 3 million people in the UK have had some direct experience of grief in this one punishing year. And so they invite us on Tuesday, March the 23rd to reflect with a minute's silence at midday, with daffodils in our windows and for us to stand on our doorsteps with candles. A reflection. There will be sadness for those lost to us. There will be regrets of the way we've said goodbye. And there will be unresolved feelings that are still hurting as we reflect as a nation on a year of endurance, of enduring death. Let us also reflect on what the Christian view of death tells us and be ready to offer it to our neighbors. For in it, there is eternal hope. The best is yet to come.

Three Christian convictions on which we might reflect this week. Firstly, that every life is unique and special. As he considers his own death, Jesus in that passage from St. John says, "My soul is troubled". The loss of any life is painfully troubling, and most deaths change the lives of those around them. Just as New York treats the ground of 9/11 as a sacred Memorial, so we treat the mortal remains of every individual with a sense of their sanctity. For a number of years, I served on the Government's Advisory Committee for the commemoration of World War One. And I came to admire the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. In every corner of the globe, the remains of those who served their country are honored: no discrimination is made. Whether these people were rich or poor, known nor unknown, mere privates or generals, every life, every death is so precious, and thus profoundly painful.

Following from that regard for the sanctity of human life, made in the image of God, we Christians believe that wherever possible, people should die with dignity. Jesus said, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself". And he said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. We know that the manner of Jesus's dying was vicious and humiliating, demeaning, because it was both public, and meant to be a warning to others. And we know too, that many of the deaths of this last year have been unbearably cruel. The kind

of death matters, and no one should travel their journey to death, alone, or afraid, away from their loved ones. But that declaration, 'I will draw all people to myself', also promises the third element of Christian hope in our dying. We are not immortal creatures. From dust we come, unto dust we shall return. We're not reincarnated creatures. When we are dead, we are truly dead, until God raises us from the dead as he raised Jesus from his grave, and conquered the final enemy, which is death itself. Our hope lies not in our nature, as immortal or reincarnated, our hope lies only in God.

Now not everyone will share our faith in that resurrection hope. But here then is what we believe: that no death is insignificant. It is right that we reflect, remember, and we celebrate the lives lost in this last so cruel year. That no death should be without dignity. And we do well to plan well for dignified and loving farewells wherever we can. And no death leads to immortality. In our human weakness, we rely utterly on the resurrection power of Jesus's victory over sin and death.

So as our nation reflects in these days, and has to live with some deeply painful experiences, let us proclaim once again, that which we know to be true, that good is stronger than evil. Love is stronger than hate. Light is stronger than darkness, and life is stronger than death. And in death, victory is ours, through Him who loves us. Let us thank God this week for those who have died in the faith of Christ, knowing that victory, and let us hold on to the conviction, the habit of living with eternal life, pressing on through the Way of the Cross, to the hope of resurrection. Amen.

Hymn

**All ye who seek a comfort sure
in trouble and distress,
whatever sorrow vex the mind,
or guilt the soul oppress:**

**Jesus, who gave himself for you
upon the cross to die,
opens to you his sacred heart;
oh, to that heart draw nigh.**

**Ye hear how kindly he invites;
ye hear his words so blest:
'all ye that labor come to me,
and I will give you rest.'**

**O Jesus joy of saints on high,
thou hope of sinners here,
attracted by those loving words
to thee I lift my prayer.**

**Wash thou my wounds in that dear blood,
which forth from thee doth flow;
new grace, new hope inspire, a new
and better heart bestow.**

The Intercessions

Let us pray that Christ shall be glorified in the Church and in the World

We come to meet us, O Lord, long before we search for you. Make your church a gateway to encountering your presence and glory in this world. We pray for June our Bishop and Carin the Bishop of Uppsala; we remember our brothers and sisters in the Lagunda parish. We pray together for our families, both near and far in this difficult time. May we show forth your love and always direct our hearts to you.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You come to meet us, O lord in the struggles and tensions of life. Give all people the courage to stand for justice and peace, working for the common good. We pray for those countries in conflict and violence, particularly Myanmar and the Yemen at this time. Bring in your kingdom of truth and liberty.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You come to meet us, O Lord, in faithfulness and failure. Give us the grace to confront the darkness within and to embrace new life. Help victims and offenders to be set free from all that burdens them.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You come to meet us, O Lord, in strength and weakness. As you share our frailty, give comfort to all in distress or adversity, thinking for all those who have asked for our prayers..... In all our infirmity we share in your passion.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You come to meet us, O Lord, in your cross and resurrection. Draw to yourself all who have died, the recently departed thinking particularly of....., our loved ones departed and all whose anniversary of death occurs at this time. As we sing the praise of him who died, so may we come to triumph in his victory.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In a moment of silence, we offer our personal needs and concerns to our heavenly Father.

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

We offer these prayers in the name of Christ, who was lifted on the cross for our salvation.

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

Hymn

**Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:**

**Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name.**

**Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:**

Yours the glory...

**Suffering servant, scorned, ill - treated,
victim crucified!
death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:**

Yours the glory...

**Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:**

Yours the glory...

**So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:**

Yours the glory...

Prayers for the sick this week:

Elizabeth Thomas
Kath Loughor

Betty Hicks
Colin Bailey

Eunice Wood
Catherine Brynach
Margaret Price
Orla Elizabeth O'Grady
Brendan
Barbara Goodway

Sophie Sabit
Helen
Kevin Hurst
Ian Dixon
Lorna Powell
Mollie Nottage

Prayers for the recently departed:

Roy Williams
Bethan (the daughter of Mike and Wendy Jones)
Wendy Taylor

Mary Wines
Pat Evans

Hymn Requests

If you have any hymn requests for our Zoom worship, please send them to one of the clergy team.

Bible Study Group

Our next Bible study is on Wednesday 31st March at 6-7pm, please email Rev Angela for the link.

Children's Saturday Club

Children's club on Zoom every Saturday at 10am during term time. If you would like to join want to join, please email Rev Angela at angelacooper03@gmail.com

Lent Charity

Our Lent Charity this year is Huggard, the Cardiff Homeless Shelter. A list of these items is available. Items will be collected across the East Vale on the week beginning 22nd of March. People may prefer to give a cash donation.

The East Vale Ministry Area

HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2021

Why do you look for the
living among the dead?

He is not here...
...but has risen!

PALM SUNDAY | 28th March
Holy Eucharist with Blessing of Palms
9am | Llancarfan, Bonvilston and St Bride's Churches
10.30am | Zoom Worship

HOLY MONDAY | 29th March
12.30pm | Holy Eucharist | Welsh St Donats

HOLY TUESDAY | 30th March
12.30pm | Holy Eucharist | Llancarfan

HOLY WEDNESDAY | 31st March
12.30pm | Holy Eucharist | Peterston

MAUNDY THURSDAY | 1st April
12.30pm | Holy Eucharist | St Bride's
7pm | Zoom Worship with Watch of the Passion

GOOD FRIDAY | 2nd April
10am | Zoom All Age Stations of the Cross
12.30pm | Good Friday Liturgy | Bonvilston

HOLY SATURDAY | 3rd April
8pm | Solemn Easter Vigil | Llancarfan

EASTER SUNDAY | 4th April
Holy Eucharist of the Resurrection
9am | Llantrithyd, Welsh St Donats and Peterston Churches
10.30am | Zoom Worship

For more information or to book a place at in-person services please contact:
Canon Martyn Davies | fr.martyn@sky.com | 01446 760498