

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year B • Psalter Week 1



JESUS' INNER EMOTIONAL SELF

(JOHN 12:20-33)

"Agony in the Garden", a wall-painting from about the year 1500, in the Church of St Mary, Elsinore, Denmark

When he is told that "some Greeks", who have come to Jerusalem for the festival of Passover, want to see him, Jesus tells his disciples that "the hour" for him to be glorified has arrived. The period of his revealing his glory, which began with the first sign at Cana and ended with the final one of the raising of Lazarus, is over, and his passion is about to begin.

One of the features of the Fourth Gospel (John) is that some of the most dramatic scenes which we encounter in the three Synoptic Gospels are missing: these include the testing of Jesus in the wilderness (the temptations) and the agony in the garden (better expressed as the struggle in Gethsemane). However, we find the components of these episodes scattered in the Johannine account. The scenes mentioned present Jesus struggling with what it means to be the Son of God and to be faithful to his mission. They show Jesus in a very human light: in our Gospel reading today, Jesus realises that his hour, the complex events of his passion and exaltation on the cross, has arrived and the possibility of praying to be spared it comes to his mind. However, he overcomes this understandable reaction and accepts the Father's will, since this is the purpose of his coming. The voice from heaven then vindicates Jesus' choice. There is a tendency sometimes to play down the human aspect of Jesus, to eliminate any hesitation or struggle on his part: although the Fourth Gospel views the crucifixion as the lifting up of Jesus in glory, this passage reminds us of the enduring dark nature of the cross. ■

DO

Take the crucifix in your hands: reflect on the figure on the cross and on the human nature of Jesus.



LEARN

The Gospel of John does not contain some dramatic scenes which we find in the Synoptic Gospels:

These include the temptations of Jesus, the agony in the garden, and the trial before the Sanhedrin.

The agony in the garden is more accurately understood as the struggle in Gethsemane of Jesus to remain faithful to the ultimate act of obedience to his mission from the Father.

SAY

Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears.
(Hebrews 5:7)

REFLECT

It is difficult to keep in balance the two natures of Jesus, the divine and human aspects of his being. The Gospel traditions about his being tested and his final test before the passion, described by the Synoptics in the Gethsemane scene and hinted at in our Gospel reading today from John, suggest that we should not forget or play down Jesus' human nature. The Gospel of John shows Jesus as being well aware of his divine nature and relationship with the Father, but the temptation to take shortcuts to fulfil his destiny as the Messiah or to avoid the supreme test of the passion altogether is still there, albeit in a much more subtle, but no less real, form.

If it is true, as the letter to the Hebrews tells us, that Jesus "has been put to the test in exactly the same way as ourselves, apart from sin", then we should not be afraid to imagine Jesus as being moved in much the same way as we would be in his shoes: for example, the Fourth Gospel tells us that Jesus is "troubled" when confronted with death. If Jesus is to be our model, then we need to know that he understands our human condition from his own experience and can sympathise with us in our difficulties and fears. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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.

COLLECT

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.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:31-34

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah.

See, the days are coming – it is the Lord who
speaks – when I will make a new covenant
with the House of Israel and the House of
Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made
with their ancestors on the day I took them
by the hand to bring them out of the land of
Egypt. They broke that covenant of mine, so
I had to show them who was master. It is the
Lord who speaks. No, this is the covenant I
will make with the House of Israel when those
days arrive – it is the Lord who speaks. Deep
within them I will plant my Law, writing it on
their hearts. Then I will be their God and they
shall be my people. There will be no further
need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour,
or brother to say to brother, “Learn to know
the Lord!” No, they will all know me, the least
no less than the greatest – it is the Lord who
speaks – since I will forgive their iniquity and
never call their sin to mind.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 50

Response:

A pure heart create for me, O God.

1. 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. **(R.)**
2. 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. **(R.)**
3. 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. **(R.)**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 5:7-9

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

During his life on earth, Christ offered up
prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears,
to the one who had the power to save him
out of death, and he submitted so humbly
that his prayer was heard. Although he was
Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but
having been made perfect, he became for all
who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of
God!

If a man serves me, says the Lord, he must
follow me
wherever I am, my servant will be there too.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of
God!

GOSPEL

John 12:20-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
John.

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.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

(all bow during the next two lines)

**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.**

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

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.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Amen, Amen I say to you: Unless a grain of
wheat
falls to the ground and dies, it remains a
single grain.
But if it dies, it bears much fruit.**

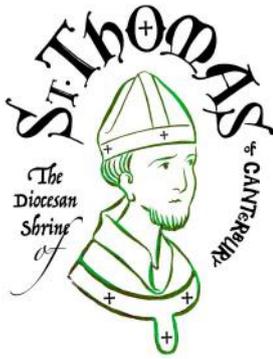
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.
Amen.

Many people seem to think that true religion
is defined by “giving up things”. In a sense it
is far easier to deny one’s body than quietly
and soberly to surrender your whole self for
God’s possessing. In Lent, how much easier
to give up wine or chocolate than seriously to
tackle our impatience. A friend of mine who
was prepared to fast most rigorously in Lent
was horrified when I suggested daily Mass
and half an hour’s prayer instead.

Sister Wendy Beckett

NEWSLETTER



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

59 Burgate Canterbury Kent CT1 2HJ

Telephone: 01227 462896 Email: canterbury@rcaos.org.uk

Web Site: <https://stthomasofcanterbury.com> St Thomas of Canterbury

Parish Priest: Canon Anthony Charlton email: anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Fr John Howard

email: johnhoward@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Administrator: Miss Linda Scott

St Thomas' Shop (01227 462896): OPEN SUNDAYS FROM AFTER 9.30 MASS UNTIL 12 NOON

University of Kent Chaplaincy: Fr Tom Herbst (01843 230 774) email: tjherbst@gmail.com

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School: Head Teacher: Miss Lisa D'Agostini (01227 462539)

St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School: Exec Prin: Mr M Walters; Academy Prin: Mr J Rowarth (01227 826200)

The Parish Office is Closed & Linda is working from home. Linda can access emails via the church email so please contact her this way initially.

ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED

6pm (Vigil): F Robert (Bob) Pugh - RIP (Erica & Tony Grace)

Sunday 21st Mar: 5th Sunday of Lent Jn 12: 20-33

8.00am: Pam Dodds - RIP (1st Anniv.) (Roberta Johnson)

9.30am: Brendan Ugwuonuoha & Verol Mere - RIP (Family)

11.00am: Welfare of Roy Olesn (Martina Clark)

12.15: Baptism of Milo Kohut

3.00 pm: Stations of the Cross

6.00 pm: People of the Parish

RCIA: Third Scrutiny

2nd Collection: SVP

Monday 22nd Mar: Feria

Jn 8: 1-11

7.30 am: Brendan Ugwuonuoha & Verol Mere - RIP (Family)

10.30am: Church open for private prayer & adoration

12 noon: Pam Dodds - RIP (1st Anniv.) (John Renn)

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

Tuesday 23rd Mar: Feria

Jn 8: 21-30

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Hardy Family Welfare (George & Frances Cockayne)

6.00 pm Live-streamed Prayer

Wednesday 24th Mar: Feria

Jn 8: 31-42

7.30 am: Brendan Ugwuonuoha & Verol Mere - RIP (Family)

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

10.30am: Reconciliation

12 noon: Welfare of Marie Strong on her birthday (Mark Bateson)

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

Thursday 25th Mar: Annunciation of the Lord Lk 1: 26-38

7.30am: Sheila Charlton - RIP (Fr Anthony)

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Brendan Chima Ugwuonuoha - RIP (Family)

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

7.30 - 8.30pm: Adoration for Young Adults with Fr John

Friday 26th Mar: Feria

Jn 10: 31-42

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Deceased members of the Egan Family (Noreen)

1 - 3 pm: Church open for private prayer and adoration

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

7.30pm: Aley Ulahannan - RIP (Jomon Family)

Saturday 27th Mar: Feria

Jn 11: 45-56

10.30am: Reconciliation

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Pat and John Ware - RIP (Annie Judge)

6pm (Vigil): Ray Scott - RIP & Bertha Pople - welfare (Betty)

Sunday 28th Mar: Palm Sunday

Mk 14:1 - !5:47

8.00am: People of the Parish

9.30am: Welfare of Ellen Reynolds (Mary Reynolds)

11.00am: Catherine (Kath) Packer - RIP (Bernard Packer)

12.15 Baptism of Zayne Cabulo

3.00 pm: Stations of the Cross

4.00 pm Polish Community Mass

6.00 pm: Todd Family welfare (Jenny Todd)

PARISH MATTERS

Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Angeline Frizell, Alan Skeet, Louisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Barbara Brett, Mary Dittrich, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Bill Parker, Lucy Purbrick, Josie Carr, Simon Lam, Sr Anne Bross (formerly of our parish), Pippa Swan, Fr John Slater, Jennifer Lang, Pauline Lilford, Barbara Markham, Patricia Gray, Patrick Sellars, Fr Kevin Alban O.Carm, Sr Margaret McGrath, Angela Nichols, Jean Boyce

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Carol Mary Kidby, Anna Hesketh, Tom Hodges, Rebecca Judge, Gertraude Katherine Brock, Vera Fletcher, Maria Daniels, Maria Prado, Hannelore Hall, Bernie Fisher, Joseph McKee, Tony Kenny, Michael Jones, Douglas Ricketts, Maurice Crosland, Patricia Collins, Andrzej Czupkowski, Chris Bateman, Pia Iannacci, Antonio Iannacci, Ellen Fitzgerald, Anna Koeller, Fr Michael Gwinnell, Ann Sexton, Paulina Manfredini, Fr Michael Boland, Fr George Webster, Theresa Ramsundar, Canon Frank O'Sullivan, Margaret Willis, Rev Paul Saunders, Sylvia Guy, Pat Gill, Baby Layla Green and Paul Card

Please pray for those whose 1st anniversaries are this month:

Danielle Rosher, Maria Bryant, Roberto di Paco & Pam Dodds

SECOND COLLECTIONS: Our retiring collections:

This weekend: 20/21 Mar: Second Collection for SVP

Next weekend: 27/28 Mar: No Second Collection

Church Shop Fundraising This Weekend 20/21 March

The Church Shop has been closed for most of the last 12 months. We are updating the stock we currently have. Please help us achieve this by supporting our table-top fundraiser weekend.

After all Masses this weekend goods will be on display in the Saint's Chapel.

You are asked to donate in the Honesty Bucket or our contactless machines that will be there. Some prices will be shown - others will be for your generosity!

Our shop is unique in Canterbury - in what you can buy and as a sign of our Christian presence. Thank you and God bless.

The Shop Volunteer Team

Get our Parish Newsletter emailed directly to you by subscribing at stthomasofcanterbury.com/newsletters/
This weekly eNewsletter also shares additional information from around the Parish.

This past week I have been on a five day retreat, not in some far off place in the countryside, but here in Burgate in the Priests house. It was a time to be quiet and become more aware of how God is prompting me. This was helped by having more periods of prayer each day. Each morning I met with a spiritual director on "Zoom" for about half an hour reflecting on my previous day's prayer. I found another person listening is helpful in reflecting back to me any perceived movements of the spirit, pointing out any ways in which God might be nudging me. I was encouraged to look back at notes I had made many years ago on a 30 day retreat I made using Ignatius Spiritual exercises. I was reading my notes on the period when I was reflecting on the passion of Jesus, known in the spiritual exercises as the Third Week. We were encouraged to pray for the grace "to grieve over Jesus suffering and death." It was focusing on the "sufferings of my beloved, Jesus." One writer has said "A great emptiness of self and ego is required if this grace is to be effective. Such a grace is never easy, especially in our twenty-first-century culture of self-absorption. As you prepare to ask for the grace suggested, you should appreciate, as much as you can, what it is you are asking of God. The consolation you seek comes from entering the suffering of Jesus. This ability to get out of your own suffering and to enter his teaches a very important lesson: "to enter the suffering of other people you must get free of the all-absorbing clutches of your own." For several centuries the Fifth Sunday of Lent (this coming Sunday) was known as "Passion Sunday" and marked the beginning of a special sub-season called Passiontide, which extended up until Holy Saturday. During this time the Church's liturgy becomes more sombre and a sorrowful mood was reflected in the various practices that occurred in the liturgy. The most obvious example of a more sombre mood is the veiling of statues and images, which remains an optional practice in the current Roman Missal: "...the practice of covering crosses and images throughout the church from [the fifth] Sunday [of Lent] may be observed. Crosses remain covered until the end of the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, but images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil". This would be a good time for us to make the Stations of the Cross. You don't have to do this in Church of course. The website "Pray as you go" have a good set of reflections: <https://pray-as-you-go.org/article/stations-of-the-cross>. Another activity is to prayerfully read one of the Passion accounts in the gospels. Fr Gerard M. Fagin SJ wrote: "To enter into the dying of Jesus, we must give up attachments that divide our hearts. We must let go of egoism and individualism, of prejudices and biases, and of insensitivity to the suffering of the world around us. We begin to understand the cross of Christ only when we participate in it in our everyday lives." *Putting on the Heart of Christ: How the Spiritual Exercises Invite Us to a Virtuous*.

I think that coming out of a period of retreat is like Peter James and John coming off Mount Tabor after experiencing Jesus being transfigured. Jesus had revealed himself to them in his glory. They had wanted to remain there but this experience was preparing them to face the passion and death of Jesus. I pray that God gives us the grace to accompany Jesus through his passion and death

A message from our East Kent Catholic Secondary Schools.

As a community, during Lent, we are supporting Cafod and 'Walking For Water' so families like Abdella's don't have to. Some of our staff & students are Walking/ Hopping/Skipping /Cycling/Dancing/Chairdancing/ DogWalking and even taking Cafod's '10,000 Steps Everyday in Lent challenge'.

Find out why we are Walking For Water this Lent, here <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/School-fundraising/Water-Droplet-Trail>

If you would like to support us in raising money for Cafod's Walk For Water, please go to our JustGiving Page here: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ursuline-college-st-edmund-s-st-anselm-s-catholic-schools?newPage=True>

Thank you for your support.

#WalkingTogetherThrough Lent 2021 #WalkForWater

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:

Monday, 29 March - Parish Reconciliation Service at 7.30pm
Sunday, 18 April - Parish Annual General Meeting at 4.30pm

THE BIBLE TIMELINE COURSE

Understand the Bible from start to finish, the Old and New Testament, with this **FREE OF CHARGE**, worldwide-famous course delivered online LIVE by Mauro Iannicelli. Starts on **7th April 2021** at 7pm (Eight Wednesday evening sessions). Info & Registration: www.comeandsee.org

EASTER SERVICE BOOKINGS:

We are now fully booked for many of the Easter Services with waiting lists; so if you have tickets but cannot attend, please cancel the tickets online to allow others to get a seat. Thank you