

HAPPY EASTER! The joy of Easter bubbles over into this Sunday's Mass. This feeling of elation which the early community felt is one which we can emulate by being bearers of the Risen Christ to each other.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Forgive us, Lord, when we reject the new truth you offer us as your Sons and Daughters. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

Forgive us, Lord, when we reject the sure hope you have given us by rising from death. Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

Forgive us, Lord, for not being open to the spirit of peace and joy that you want to give us. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

OPENING PRAYER: *Let us pray for a deeper awareness of our Christian baptism.*

God of mercy, you wash away our sins in water, you give us new birth in the Spirit, and redeem us in the blood of Christ. As we celebrate Christ's resurrection increase our awareness of these blessings, and renew your gift of life within us. Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading – Acts 2 v. 42-47. *Luke gives us a summary of the first Christian community in Jerusalem. They hold everything in common, worship together in the Temple, and celebrate the Eucharist in their houses.*

'The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.'

Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 117 (118):2-4,13-15,22-24

® Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end '

Let the sons of Aaron say: 'His love has no end '

Let those who fear the Lord say: 'His love has no end.' ®

I was thrust down, thrust down and falling but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour.

There are shouts of joy and victory, in the tents of the just.. ®

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes. ®

Second Reading –1 Peter 1 v. 3-9. *We hear an early hymn which celebrates the new life that comes from the risen Jesus. We are in the same situation as those early Christians who had not seen Jesus but loved him.*

'Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.'

Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen me and yet believe.' Alleluia!

Gospel –John 20 v. 19-31. *Jesus gives to the disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit by the symbolic gesture of breathing upon them and then instituted the sacrament of reconciliation. Eight days later his appearance to Thomas reminds us that so much of our faith is based on trust in God.*

'In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you', and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.'

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL Celebrant : St.Peter reminds us of the joy we should have because we are Christians as we know Christ is risen. Let us now turn to God in prayer.

Reader: We pray that the Church will remain always faithful to the teaching of the apostles and see Christ in the signs he left us: giving us life in baptism, forgiving us in confession and nourishing us in the breaking of Bread.

Let us pray for all joining us for our celebration today online. May we cease doubting and believe, as Jesus commanded Thomas.

We pray that God's people will recognize and accept his call in their daily lives, as they carry out the mission they are called to perform, especially all government leaders and key workers.

We pray for all those who are ministering with the hands of Christ to those suffering in the world; doctors, nurses, healthcare and relief workers and for all who support them; may they be encouraged by the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray for all those whose lives are overshadowed by the darkness of grief, loneliness, pain and despair, that Christ may bring them light – especially the bereaved and relatives and friends of sick people.

Let us pray for the sick and housebound; for all whose pain and anguish cause them to doubt God's love: that by faith they may see the wounded hands of the risen Jesus which will reach out to them in love We pray for all suffering in the current pandemic and also for Peter Wyatt, Billy Carter, Michael Denny, Janice Ross, Jessica Mercer, Rebecca Pipe and Nichola Berry

Let us pray for all those who have died. May they experience the life of Easter and the peace of dwelling forever in the presence of the Lord, especially Bishop John Dennis, recently departed and James Farmbrough, Ada Penton, Johnny Buckle, Patricia Studden, Madge Bird, Phyllis Falco, Dennis Neal, Francis Mapson, Kathleen Last, Henry Syrett, Fr Michael Smith, Gordon Goodwin, Jim Sanders, Emma Emery, Russell Parker, Tom Cooke, Olive Partridge and John Donoghue whose anniversaries of death are this week.

We share our faith in the risen Christ with Mary, his Mother, and with all the saints.– **Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.**

SILENCE

ALL: God our Father, you have given your people new birth as your sons and daughters, so that they might have a sure and firm hope. We pray that we may always enjoy this hope through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ACT OF SPIRITUAL HOLY COMMUNION

Dear Lord, since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. Let nothing ever separate me from you.

EASTER ANGELUS (Regina Coeli). *Joy to thee O Queen of Heaven. Alleluia!*
He whom thou wast meet to bear. Alleluia!
As he promised hath arisen. Alleluia!
Pour for us to God thy prayer. Alleluia!
V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary. Alleluia!
R. for the Lord has risen indeed. Alleluia!

Fr Philip writes:

I continue to offer Mass, Morning and Evening Prayer, the Divine Office and Shrine Prayers daily in the Vicarage. Please join with me in spirit, and try to make the Act of Spiritual Holy Communion each day. You can phone or email with any Prayer requests or send a message via the website (contact page).

A Thought for this Week:

What did Thomas really doubt? Was it the resurrection of the Lord or the attitude of the others? They said they had seen Him but did not give any sign as yet that His resurrection meant anything in their lives. When Thomas saw his Lord he fell on his knees and said, "My Lord and my God!" His life was changed totally. Jesus is not a dead memory but a living presence. To what extent has he changed our lives?

Mass Readings this week

MONDAY: Acts 4 v.23-31; John 3 v 1-8 Intention: courage to pass on our faith

TUESDAY: St Anselm. Acts 4 v 32-37; John 3 v 7-15. Int: Christian Unity

WEDNESDAY: Acts 5 v 17 -26. John 3 v 16-21. Int: Walsingham

THURSDAY: St George, Patron of England. Rev. 12 v. 10-12; John 15 v 18-21

Int: HM Queen Elizabeth & the people of England

FRIDAY: Acts 5 v 34-42. John 6 v 1-15. Int: Christian Aid

SATURDAY: St Mark, Evangelist. 1 Peter 5v.5-14; Mark 16 v.15-20.

Int: greater love of Scripture

Next Sunday: THIRD OF EASTERTIDE. Acts 2 v. 14, 22-28; 1 Peter 1 v. 17-21; Luke 24 v. 13-35.

We are glad that many of you have been helped by the YouTube videos of recent liturgies. We hope to upload the video of Sunday's Mass as near to noon as possible; thank you for your patience.

Please continue to pray for one another, as we pray for you. It is good to hear from so many of you and know you are keeping in touch with each other using the phone tree or email.

More resources can be found on the following page of the church website:

<https://www.stmarysmendlesham.org.uk/worship-during-current-crisis.html>