

East Hendred Catholic Parish



**Fourth Sunday in
Lent (A)**

22nd March 2020

Mothering Sunday

Antiphon

Lætare Ierusalem

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

cf Is 66:10-11

Collect

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever

First Reading

1 Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13 (RSV)

16 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."....⁶ When they came, he looked on Eli'ab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him."⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because

I have rejected him; for the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ...¹⁰ And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." ¹¹ And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he comes here." ¹² And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want;
² he makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters;
³ he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I fear no evil;
for you art with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
⁵ You prepare you anoint my head with oil,
my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
for ever.

Second Reading

Ephesians 5:8-14 (RSV)

Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹² For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; ¹³ but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴ Therefore it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light."

Gospel

John 9:1-41 (RSV)

As Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. ² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, ⁷ saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Silo'am" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. ⁸ The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." ¹⁰ They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Silo'am and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." ¹² They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." ¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶ Some of the

Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. ¹⁷ So they again said to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, ¹⁹ and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹ but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him." ²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered, "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become his disciples?" ²⁸ And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰ The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if any one is a worshipper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and

having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of man?"³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you."³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe"; and he worshiped him.³⁹ Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind."⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this, and they said to him, "Are we also blind?"⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains.

Reflection

The long story of the Man born Blind who receives his sight is one of the masterpieces of St John's Gospel. It is a mistake to read it just as a disagreement between Jesus and the Jewish religious authorities of his day – though it is that. More importantly it is the story of how someone blind receives not only sight but also insight. The man journeys from being cured of his blindness to recognising Jesus not just as healer and teacher but as Lord. This is the faith-journey each one of us, in our own way, makes and the incident is therefore part of the journey of those preparing for Baptism and Confirmation at Easter. The world is full of people who regard the teaching of Jesus as admirable and who can even see that those who focus on the search for healing often find peace and relief. But this story takes us – each one of us – further than that and it challenges us to take a view of how we are doing. Can we get beyond Jesus the Good Rabbi and First-Century Healer to Jesus the Living Lord, who brings us out of darkness into his marvellous light?

Prayers

Father and Lord of all, you sent your Son into the world, that your name might be glorified in every place,

- strengthen the witness of your Church among the nations.

Bless Francis, our Pope, and Philip, our Bishop, and teach us to be obedient to the teachings of your apostles

- and bound to the truth of our faith.

As you love the innocent and render justice to those who are wronged.

- free those in bondage, give sight to the blind, raise up the fallen, and protect the stranger.

Bless all doctors and nurses, all health care workers, and those at work in medical research.

- save and defend the sick and those need.

As we pray for the health and safety of our families and friends,

- we ask for your special blessing this day on all mothers.

Fulfil your promise to those who already sleep in your peace

- through your Son grant them a blessed resurrection.

Our Father....

Act of Spiritual Communion *St Alphonsus Liguori (18th cent.)*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Prayer after Spiritual Communion

O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into this world, illuminate our hearts, we pray, with the splendour of your grace, that we may always ponder what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty and love you in all sincerity. Through Christ our Lord.

Prayer for the Parish Community

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.
Amen. *cf 2 Corinthians 13:14*

Ave Regina cælorum

*Ave, Regina caelorum,
Ave, Domina Angelorum:
Salve, radix, salve, porta
Ex qua mundo lux est orta:*

Hail, O Queen of Heaven enthroned.
Hail, by angels mistress owned.
Root of Jesse, Gate of Morn
Whence the world's true light was
born:

*Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa,
Vale, o valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.*

Glorious Virgin, Joy to thee,
Loveliest whom in heaven they see;
Fairest thou, where all are fair,
Plead with Christ our souls to spare.

Scripture Reading (Lent Week 4)

Monday	Isaiah 65:17-21	John 4:43-54
Tuesday	Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12	John 5:1-3, 5-16
Wednesday	Isaiah 49:8-15	John 5:17-30
Thursday	Exodus 32:7-14	John 5:31-47
Friday	Wisdom 2:1, 12-22	John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
Saturday	Jeremiah 11:18-20	John 7:40-52

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT (A)

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Romans 8:8-11

John 11:1-45

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Christ in the United States of America.*

NOTICES FOR THE WEEK

PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Sr Catherine, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Angus Clark, Karen Greig, Kitty Teasdale, Mary Mc Nichol, Andrew Gunn, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol.

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Those who have died recently and those with anniversaries at this time: *Ernest Couling, William Carter, Winifred May Goodman, Claire Vaughan, Kathleen Ballard, Ann Ansell.*

HOLY FATHER'S MARCH PRAYER INTENTION

We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

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DIDCOT FOOD BANK

We are still doing our best to support those in need in Wantage and Didcot. Please continue to put items for the Didcot Food Bank in the box by St Mary's church door or give them to Veronica.

OUR CHURCHES

St Patrick's remains closed for the time being. Though there are no services in St Mary's, the church will be open during the day for private prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament reserved. If you happen to see someone else in church when you are there, please maintain 'social distance'.