

“Every day, as long as this ‘today’ lasts,
keep encouraging one another” (Heb 3:13)

17th March 2024
5th Sunday of Lent
Readings p. 170

Jeremiah 31:31-34

God will plant his law deep within us, writing it on our hearts.

Hebrews 5:7-9

Christ through his suffering became the source of salvation for us all.

St. John 12:20-33

Jesus is glorified through his death, drawing all humanity to himself.

“If a grain of
wheat falls
on the
ground
and dies,
it yields a
rich
harvest.”



Those poor Greeks. Did you notice that they never actually get to meet Jesus? At the start of today’s gospel some Greeks who are followers of Jesus come to Jerusalem. They are travellers, outsiders, and would like to meet Jesus in person. But when Philip and Andrew relay the request, Jesus begins to talk about how his ‘hour’ is coming. It is the last we hear of the Greeks, who disappear from the story altogether.

But they are important nonetheless. Firstly, they indicate that word about Jesus is spreading, that in the words of the Pharisees, ‘the world has gone after him’. More importantly, they prompt Jesus to reveal that, when his hour comes, he will draw ‘all people’ to himself. In the space of a few short verses, we go from a brief mention of a group of foreigners seeking Jesus, to Jesus making it crystal clear that his saving mission is for all people, of all nations, both Jews and Gentiles – including those Greeks! There is no suggestion from Jesus that some groups are ‘in’ and others ‘out’. All are included. All are invited. All are welcome.

I remember once hearing someone describe their home as a domestic church, a place of ‘indiscriminate welcome’. As we continue our journey through Lent, and soon into Holy Week, let us listen carefully to these words of Jesus. He came for all. He wishes to draw all people to himself. Are our churches, parishes, communities and homes open to all, outsiders included? Are they places of welcome and inclusion, where all who enter experience God’s love? Triona Doherty

Today’s Psalm
Psalm 50

The Lord spoke through Jeremiah: ‘They broke the covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master.’ but a new covenant is promised. ‘Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it in their hearts. Then I will be their God and they will be my people.’

The psalm of David’s repentance is the perfect response to the reading. He too recognises his need for a new heart as he turns away from his shameful infidelities.

*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.*

In contrast to the darkness of his offences, the words he uses about God refer to kindness, compassion, cleansing and joy. He prays for *joy of your help* and a *spirit of fervour* to sustain him so that he may be an inspiration to other sinners to return to God.

The humble repentance of the sinner is like the seed decaying in the ground before the new life flourishes.

**Fr. Silvester O’Flynn OFM
Cap.**

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Euxton - Tel: (01257) 262665

Sun: **5th Sunday in Lent**

8.30.am. Parishioners
10.30.am. Malcom Sutcliffe

Mon: St. Joseph

9.30.am. Private Intention

Tues: St Patrick

9.30am: World Peace

Wed: Lenten Weekday

9.30.am. Private Intention

Thurs: Weekday No Mass

Fri: Lenten Weekday

7.pm John Taylor

Sun: **Palm/Passion Sunday**

8.30.am. Parishioners

10.30.am. Sean Toman

0771 942 7926 (only for emergency use)

Confessions

At your request

Stations

Friday 7.00 pm.

On Admittance to Hospital or Nursing Home

Staff need to be made aware by you: that you, or the member of your family, or the person you accompany, are Catholic, and require the services of the Catholic Chaplaincy.

Cemetery

All visitors are asked to help keep the Cemetery tidy and to use the appropriate waste bins.

We pray for the Sick, especially the sick of the parish including- Catherine Thompson; Ryan Troop; Thomas Halligan; William (Bill) Drinkwater

Monday–St. Joseph Husband of Mary Joseph was wholeheartedly obedient to God In marrying Mary, in naming Jesus, in shepherding the precious pair to Egypt, in bringing them to Nazareth, in the undetermined number of years of quiet faith and courage. The Bible pays Joseph the highest compliment in calling him a “just” man. This just man lived his life by faith, seeking to do good in every concrete circumstance of life ... a model for fathers everywhere.

Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal We have all been shocked and saddened by the devastating conflict in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. After weeks of intense conflict, over 18,000 Palestinians and 1,400 Israelis have been killed, thousands more injured, and over 1.9 million people in Gaza are displaced. Food, water and fuel are in increasingly short supply. Families need urgent help. You can donate online at www.cafod.org.uk/give/donate-to-emergencies/israeli-palestinian-crisis-appeal

Wednesday–International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. How can we create a future free of racial discrimination? The first thing is not to see it as an insurmountable problem. There are things that every generation can do to bring about racial harmony. Here are a few starters.

- Aim not to laugh at jokes that perpetuate discrimination.
- Educate yourself. Learn something new about someone else's culture.
- Read up on the political background of the countries of our refugees and asylum seekers.
- Give the children of the family the opportunity to mix with children of other backgrounds.
- Don't be put off befriending neighbours, just because their accent is difficult to understand.

The Lent collection for CAFOD raised a fantastic £723, including the amount claimed from gift aid donations. On behalf of CAFOD, I would like to thank all those who contributed. It is much appreciated

"Don't compromise yourself. You're all you've got." (Janis Joplin)