

Reflection for the 5th Sunday of Easter

Sunday, 10th May 2020

If you do not have a copy of the missalette, you can find today's readings at www.universalis.com

We now know many people have died in Britain because of Covid-19, more than any other country in Europe. However, for me even sadder is the fact that many of these have died without the support of a loved one. There is a basic human need, both for the one who is dying, but also for the ones who are left behind, to be able to say last farewells. We need closure. We need to be surrounded by loved ones in these final moments.

Our gospel today is part of Jesus' last farewell to his disciples. When he actually dies on the Friday afternoon, most of his friends have run away. He dies abandoned, alone. At the foot of the cross are a few women and his youngest disciple, John. The rest – where are they? Gone!

However, the evening before, at his last supper, together with his closest friends, Jesus does have a chance to say goodbye. This is why this part of John's gospel is sometimes called the "farewell discourse". Jesus needs to strengthen the disciples for what is about to happen.

Many things happen to disorient us. In a large city when some central buildings are demolished, people feel lost and lose their way. They are accustomed to navigating by these landmarks, and all of a sudden they are not there. The same happens to us when an important landmark of our emotional scenery disappears. We have a feeling of loss, and we don't know what to do. In the case of a bereavement, other people in our lives suddenly become important to us as we begin to negotiate life without the one we have loved.

Jesus knew that after his death, the disciples would feel lost and frightened. This is how he finds them on the day of the resurrection – running away to Emmaus or hiding away in the upper room. So how does Jesus prepare his disciples for life after the crucifixion?

He knew they would feel lost, so he tells them: "I am the way". He knows they will feel beset with doubts, so he tells them: "I am the truth". He knows they will feel listless, so he tells them: "I am the life". Jesus provides the disciples with an emotional compass to help them over their sense of desolation. He is the one who can help them find their sense of direction once more.

The Jesus who is our way, our truth and our life is not the Jesus left dying on the cross abandoned and alone; the Jesus who gives us new purpose is the risen Lord who seeks out and finds the disciples to give them new heart. The crucified one becomes the risen Lord.

The aftermath of the Coronavirus, and the weeks of self-isolation, has left many of us feeling disoriented and unhappy. Locked away in our houses, frightened of becoming unwell, cut off from friends and the activities which we enjoy – we feel empty and desolate. In such a state, we should not be surprised that Jesus comes and looks for us. He is our way. By deepening our friendship with him, he can help us go forward in these unfamiliar times. Our relationship with him is the anchor to which we can hold fast.

He is our truth. We are bombarded by fake news, biased opinions and "spin" every single day. By holding on to the authenticity of Jesus' message we can begin to make sense of everything else that is happening around us.

He is our life. Our love of Jesus gets us out of bed each morning, sustains us through the day, and, living that love makes us thankful each evening for a day spent with him. He makes every day worthwhile.

We are looking forward to the announcements which will relax some of our current lockdown rules. Hopefully our churches will be open as sacred places of prayer soon. Hopefully we can gather as a Eucharistic community, seated around the table of the Lord. As we navigate an uncertain and even threatening future, we can do so with confidence knowing that Jesus is our way, our truth and our life.

St Peter's/St Joseph's Bidding Prayers

9th / 10th May 2020

Priest:

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. He shows us the path of true love. We make these prayers to assist us on our journey.

Reader:

We pray for those who have lost loved ones. May the support of their families and of the community help them find new purpose in their lives.

Lord in your mercy.

We pray for those who are unwell at the moment and for those on the road to recovery. We commend to the Lord those who are caring for them.

Lord in your mercy.

We pray for those who find lockdown difficult. May the risen Lord Jesus overturn their sorrow and bring them joy.

Lord in your mercy.

We pray for our children and grandchildren, some trying to learn through the internet, some eager to get back to their classrooms. May they continue to grow in mind, body and spirit.

Lord in your mercy.

We commend to the loving mercy of God those who have died recently and those whose anniversaries occur at about this time: May they all rest in the peace of the Lord.

Lord in your mercy.

Each day let us find that quiet moment when we can be alone with the Lord. Now we let him speak to us in our hearts.

[After a pause]

Lord in your mercy.

Mary taught Jesus about the Father who loves us all. Let us ask her to intercede on our behalf.

Hail Mary....

Priest:

We have made our prayers knowing that God listens to us. We present them to the risen Lord Jesus, for he lives now and forever.

Amen.

ST PETER'S CHURCH

(with St Joseph's, Hurst Green)

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10th May 2020

THE NEWSLETTER

5th Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Mass Schedule for this week

Fr Tim will offer a private Mass each day for the following intentions

| Date | Time | Fr Tim's Private Mass Intention | Feast |
|---------------------|------|---------------------------------|--|
| Sa 9 th | | Gordon Nicholson L | Vigil of 5 th Sunday of Easter (Yr A) |
| Su 10 th | | For the parish | 5 th Sunday of Easter (Yr A) |
| M 11 th | | Private Intention | Weekday in the Easter Season |
| T 12 th | | Derrick Arner L | Weekday in the Easter Season |
| W 13 th | | Margaret Hughes L | Our Lady of Fatima |
| Th 14 th | | For SMH | St Matthias, apostle |
| F 15 th | | Simon Jon Thomasson A | Weekday in the Easter Season |

(No Holy Hour or Benediction until further notice.)

L = Lately Dead, A = Anniversary of Death, R = Remembrance

M = Martyr, V = Virgin, B = Bishop, Pp = Pope

P = Personal Intention, S = Sick, B = Birthday F = Founders Mass

D = Doctor, P = Priest, R = Religious

Please pray for the following, the anniversary of whose deaths occur at this time: Fr John Duggan SJ, Joseph Livesey, Margaret Rawcliffe, Denis Lakeland, Margaret Mary Shuttleworth, Fr John Griffin SJ, Veronica Cooper, Ann Earnshaw, Winifred Bolton, Joseph Duckett, Veronica Duckett, William Brown and Simon Jon Thomasson. *May they rest in peace.*

Readings at Mass

| | 5 th Sunday of Easter (yr A) | 6 th Sunday of Easter |
|--------|---|----------------------------------|
| First | Acts 6; 1 - 7 | Acts 8; 5 - 8, 14 - 17 |
| Second | I Peter 2; 4 - 9 | I Peter 3; 15 - 18 |
| Gospel | John 14; 1 - 12 | John 14; 15 - 21 |

Diocesan Website:

<http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk>

for information on our Diocese and what is happening.

Praying with the Pope in May 2020

We pray that deacons, faithful in their service of the word, and the poor, may be an invigorating influence in the church.

Look at www.ThePopeVideo.org for more information



I am the way, the truth and the life.

We shall continue to send out the newsletter until we are able to gather again in church. Together with other resources, it is also available on line on the parish website and in the parish resources box by the Cenotaph.

Corona Virus Latest

We are looking forward to the announcement from the Government on Sunday. As the lockdown is eased, we hope that soon our churches and chapels will be able to open once more, and that, keeping social distancing, Masses will resume. For the latest on this, see the parish website, or give Fr Tim a ring.

Fr Tim's availability

Each day Fr Tim will be in the Parish Office from 9am to 10am and available on the parish number (01254 826268).

At other times, leave a message on the parish answer machine, which will be responded as soon as possible.

A daily prayer sheet is now available on-line and in the box by the cenotaph in the village.

Resources for children

St Anselm's, our Jesuit church in Southall have a great video on their homepage suitable for younger children: click on the link

<http://stanselmchurchsouthall.com>

Live Streaming of Mass

Many people have been able to find a Mass on line. Jesuit parishes that do this are Farm Street, Southall and the Oxford Chaplaincy. You can also try www.churchservices.tv.

Buddies

The "buddies" system seems to be working well. Knowing that someone will call every day is a great way to combat loneliness. If you need a buddy, or help with anything else, please contact Fr Tim!

Today

Is the Fifth Sunday of Easter. At the Last Supper, Jesus reveals himself to his disciples as the Way, the Truth and the Light. As usual, Fr Tim celebrates the Vigil Mass in St Peter's at 5.30 on Saturday and at 9.30 on Sunday in St Joseph's. I'm glad that many people have Mass on line.

Rosary Group

A group of parishioners are saying the rosary each Wednesday during May through Zoom. This Wednesday the time will be **5pm**. If you would like to join this group, let Fr Tim know and he will send you the link.

Next Sunday

Is the Sixth Sunday of Easter. In the gospel, Jesus promises to send the second Advocate, the Holy Spirit, to the disciples.

Book of remembrance and prayer

Fr Tim has opened a book of remembrance and prayer for those connected with the parish and the Stonyhurst/SMH community who are sick or who have passed away. If you would like some names to be added to this book, let Fr Tim know. They will be remembered at Mass every day.

Stonyhurst and SMH

Are offering a full curriculum through the internet called "Stonyhurst Anywhere". Reports so far indicate that pupils are engaging well with this new way of learning.

St Joseph's Primary

It is hoped that our primary school will reopen in the not too distant future.

Donating to the parish on line

The Diocese of Salford has put a donate button on their website, so that you can donate to individual parishes. Click on the link, and type "Stonyhurst" in the parish box, and your donation will end up in our parish bank account. Go to <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/>

Message from the bishop's conference of England and Wales

As the Government's restrictions are relaxed step by step, we look forward to opening our churches and resuming our liturgical, spiritual, catechetical and pastoral life step by step. This will also be of service to those beyond the Catholic Church who depend on our charitable activity and outreach through which much goodness is shared by so many volunteers from our communities... Together with Catholics across England and Wales, we desire the opening of our churches and access to the sacraments. Until then, we are continuing to pray and prepare.