

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth: The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

## COLLECT

Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honour of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do. 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 8:5-8.14-17

*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles*

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 65

**Response:**

**Cry out with joy to God all the earth.**

1. Cry out with joy to God all the earth,  
O sing to the glory of his name.  
O render him glorious praise.  
Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds!' (R.)

2. 'Before you all the earth shall bow;  
shall sing to you, sing to your name!'  
Come and see the works of God,  
tremendous his deeds among men. (R.)

3. He turned the sea into dry land,  
they passed through the river dry-shod.  
Let our joy then be in him;  
he rules for ever by his might (R)

4. Come and hear, all who fear God.  
I will tell what he did for my soul:  
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer  
nor withhold his love from me. (R)

## SECOND READING 3:15-18

*A reading from the first letter of St Peter*

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

*The word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,**

**and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.'**

**Alleluia!**

## GOSPEL 14:15-21

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father,  
and he will give you another Advocate  
to be with you for ever,

that Spirit of truth  
whom the world can never receive  
since it neither sees nor knows him;

but you know him,  
because he is with you, he is in you.

I will not leave you orphans;

I will come back to you.

In a short time the world will no longer see me;

but you will see me,

because I live and you will live.

On that day

you will understand that I am in my Father  
and you in me and I in you.

Anybody who receives my commandments  
and keeps them

will be one who loves me;

and anybody who loves me will be loved  
by my Father,

and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May our prayers rise up to you, O Lord, together with the sacrificial offerings, so that, purified by your graciousness, we may be conformed to the mysteries of your mighty love. Through Christ our Lord.

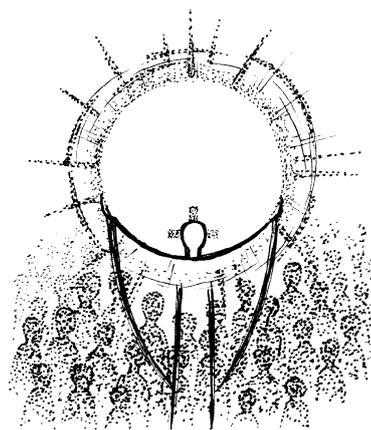
## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty and ever-living God, who restore us to eternal life in the Resurrection of Christ, increase in us, we pray, the fruits of this paschal Sacrament and pour into our hearts the strength of this saving food. Through Christ our Lord.

## GOSPEL REFLECTION



How can you be more open to the Holy Spirit working in you?

How much of your life are you willing to turn over to the will of God?

*Imagine what might happen if everyone who professes to be Christian decided to let their lives be guided by the will of God through the Holy Spirit. What kinds of changes might we see in our world?*

As an adult, how can you pass on your trust in God and your desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit to young people and to others around you?

In which sacraments is the Holy Spirit invited to dwell with us? How can the sacraments change us? How can Eucharist change us?

## GOSPEL ACTION

*Pick out the most difficult area in your life right now, and turn it over to God. Find time this week to specifically pray for the Holy Spirit to grace your life and your actions.*

## Readings:- Ascension of the Lord Yr A

**First Reading:** Acts 1:1-11

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 1:17-23

**Gospel:** Matthew 28:16-20

## Homily

17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

### **'Loving the Lord, even in the Supermarket!'**

Dear friends, in the Gospel today we have another section from the final discourse of Jesus to his disciples on the night before he died. As I said last week he is preparing them for the future and for life without him. **'If you love me you will keep my commandments'** says Jesus to them, or to put it another way when you keep my commandments, I will know that you love me.

As followers of Christ we seek to follow his example of love, Jesus the one who literally poured himself out in love for his friends. In his Gospel and epistles John uses the word 'love' often; *'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son', 'God is love', 'love one another as I have loved you.'* The commandment to love sounds quite simple, straightforward and easy, it isn't.

I think that we can fail to love in so many ways. This week when I was out for my weekly shop, sadly I confess, I lacked love when I came to the till. I had waited patiently(ish) in the queue and had identified the till I wanted; alas I was sent to the one furthest away and was behind a customer who was shopping for what seemed like the whole of Wirral, as well as being the slowest bag-packer in Wirral! While I waited, not very patiently now, at least four people from behind me sailed through the other tills, two through my 'preferred' till. Eventually it was my turn so I moved forward and confidently started placing my items down for scanning when the till assistant decided to turn off the belt, deciding that it was a good moment to carry out repairs to the aforementioned belt, with a semi-apologetic *'won't keep you waiting for long'*!

A silly example I suppose but one that shows even in the simplest, most ordinary of circumstances we can lack love. We are called to be people of love and follow the commandments as Jesus himself taught us and this is how we show that we love Jesus, especially in the most difficult and challenging times in our lives. When we continue to develop into loving people, who express our love in charity and service of one another, we ourselves in our turn experience the love of God. I think that the whole Gospel can be summed up by John's emphasis on love, of God and of one another.

Jesus tells the disciples that he is not going to abandon them and leave them as orphans; for the first time here in this discourse we have the promise of the Holy Spirit.

## Homily

17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Jesus speaks of a profound intimacy that the disciples will share with God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Advocate); the Spirit of truth that will be with them for ever; in a couple of weeks we will celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples on the great Feast of Pentecost. Jesus reassures them that they will not be left on their own, but they will receive the Spirit, so that they may always remain united with him and the Father. Although Jesus will not be physically present as he has been before, it seems like they are somehow being offered a greater connection that is permanent; **'...you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you...anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father.'** Jesus encourages the disciples to enter into that special relationship that he has with his Father.

Like the disciples we too are invited into and to be part of this Trinitarian relationship of divine love. The mystery of the Trinity and this divine relationship of love is not an easy concept to understand, the theology of the Trinity has taken hundreds of years to develop and is still developing; but it is something real that we are all called to be a part of.

This week let's reflect on how we see and understand God not as someone far-off and distant but as someone who is very close to us, a divine relationship of Trinitarian love who calls each one of us into that loving relationship. The keeping of the commandments of love of God and of one another is the proof that God is living in us. Let's try and show our love for the Lord by living out those commandments, even in the supermarket!

Dear friends, take care and stay safe.

Sending you my love, prayers and best wishes.

May God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who loves us more than we could ever imagine, be with you and bless you and your families this coming week.

**Fr Phil x**

**One final thing** - To celebrate the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si' (Pope Francis' encyclical asking us to care for Our Common Home) we are making a parish video to share our actions. If you have free time this week why not write a story, prayer, song or poem; draw, paint or photograph nature around or maybe knit or sew to celebrate the beauty of God's creation.

More information on the parish website or by calling Anne on 200 7184.

**Ps.** Please pray for me, especially that I may receive the gift of patience! 😊

## **Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion**

**17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

Jesus calls us to keep the commandments and be people of love; in love and in faith we offer our prayers to the Father:

For the Church; may the Holy Spirit guide her and all God's people to faithfully follow the commandments of love. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Government leaders; may they always make wise decisions for the right reasons and for the common good of all, particularly those who are most in need in society. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are sick, especially those affected by the coronavirus; may they know the grace and healing of Jesus, the Risen Lord of love. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For families of those who have died recently and those who are sick; may they experience the love and peace of Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all who work in the NHS, all medical & social care staff, emergency services and key-workers; may they be granted health and strength in their continued generous service of their sisters and brothers. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the faithful departed, especially **Miriam Bridson, Alun Thomas** and all who have died recently: **"Eternal rest..."**

In this month of May we ask Mary Our Mother to pray with us and for us: **"Hail Mary..."**

Loving Father,

We offer these and all our prayers to you, both spoken and unspoken, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, through your Son Jesus who is Christ Our Lord, **Amen.**

## **Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion**

**17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

### **Spiritual Communion**

*Prayer of St Alphonsus*

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things and

I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,

come spiritually into my soul

so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever.

Amen.