

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Give me justice, O God,  
and plead my cause against a nation that  
is faithless.

From the deceitful and cunning rescue  
me,  
for you, O God, are my strength.

## COLLECT

By your help, we beseech you,  
Lord our God,

may we walk eagerly in that same charity  
with which, out of love for the world,  
your Son handed himself over to death.  
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

31:31-34

*A reading from the prophet Jeremiah*

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who  
speaks - when I will make a new covenant  
with the House of Israel and the House of  
Judah, but not a covenant like the one I  
made with their ancestors on the day I took  
them by the hand to bring them out of the  
land of Egypt. They broke that covenant of  
mine, so I had to show them who was  
master. It is the Lord who speaks. No, this is  
the covenant I will make with the House of  
Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord  
who speaks. Deep within them I will plant  
my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I  
will be their God and they shall be my  
people. There will be no further need for  
neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or  
brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the  
Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least  
no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who  
speaks - since I will forgive their iniquity  
and never call their sin to mind.

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 50

Response:

**A pure heart create for me, O God.**

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offence.

O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)

2. 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. (R.)

3. Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.

that I may teach transgressors your ways  
and sinners may return to you. (R.)

## SECOND READING

5:7-9

*A reading from the letter to the Hebrews*

During his life on earth, Christ offered up  
prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent  
tears, to the one who had the power to save  
him out of death, and he submitted so  
humbly that his prayer was heard. Although  
he was Son, he learnt to obey through  
suffering; but having been made perfect, he  
became for all who obey him the source of  
eternal salvation

*The word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word  
of God!

If a man serves me, says the Lord, he  
must follow me;

wherever I am, my servant will be there  
too.

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word  
of God!

## GOSPEL

12:20-33

*A reading from the holy Gospel according  
to John*

Among those who went up to worship at the  
festival were some Greeks. These  
approached Philip, who came from  
Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to  
him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus'. Philip  
went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip  
together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to  
them:

'Now the hour has come  
for the Son of Man to be glorified.

I tell you, most solemnly,  
unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and  
dies,

it remains only a single grain;

but if it dies,

it yields a rich harvest.

Anyone who loves his life loses it;

anyone who hates his life in this world

will keep it for the eternal life.

If a man serves me, he must follow me,

wherever I am, my servant will be there too.

If anyone serves me, my Father will honour  
him.

Now my soul is troubled.

What shall I say:

Father, save me from this hour?

But it was for this very reason that I have  
come to this hour.

Father, glorify your name!

A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified  
it, and I will glorify it again.'

People standing by, who heard this, said it  
was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an  
angel speaking to him'. Jesus answered, 'It  
was not for my sake that this voice came,  
but for yours.

'Now sentence is being passed on this world;  
now the prince of this world is to be  
overthrown.

And when I am lifted up from the earth,  
I shall draw all men to myself.'

By these words he indicated the kind of  
death he would die

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Hear us, almighty God,

and, having instilled in your servants

the teachings of the Christian faith,

graciously purify them

by the working of this sacrifice.

Through Christ our Lord.

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Amen, Amen I say to you: Unless a grain  
of wheat falls to the ground and dies,  
it remains a single grain.**

**But if it dies, it bears much fruit.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We pray, almighty God,  
that we may always be counted  
among the members of Christ,  
in whose Body and Blood we have  
communion.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

## GOSPEL REFLECTION



How do you witness to the saving power of  
Jesus? Is serving those in need something  
that should bring joy? If so, why do so few  
follow that prescription?

Do you search for the will of God as the  
Greeks searched for Jesus in the gospel  
reading? What will you do if you find him,  
and he tells you what he wants of you? Do  
you have the courage to follow God's will?

How can we submit to God's will and still  
be a part of the world?

How do you live out God's will in your  
relationship with Jesus?

*What does it mean to "die" in order to  
fulfill God's will? Do you find it frightening  
to think about turning control of your life  
over to God? Why or why not? Is there a  
sense of peace that might come from doing  
God's will?*

Are you willing to follow Jesus wherever he  
goes and minister as he ministers?

What are the real treasures on this life? How  
can you share the real treasures of life as  
one might share temporal treasures?

Does society attempt to drive Jesus out of  
the world today? How can we counter  
attempts to make Christianity less effective  
in the world today?

## GOSPEL ACTION

*Make a list of ways you have been called by  
God. Reflect on these to discover areas in  
your life where greater spiritual growth can  
occur. Pray to know more clearly God's will  
for you. Can you invite someone to share  
their talent with your faith community?*

## Readings – Passion Sunday

Procession: Mark 1:1-10

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel: Mark 14:1-15:47

## Homily

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, Year B**

Dear friends, this Tuesday, 23rd March, is a National Day of Reflection to mark the anniversary of the first national lockdown with a minute's silence at midday and doorstep vigils of light at 8pm.

We are encouraged to make this not only a Day of Reflection but also a Day of Prayer. In reflection we ponder on all that has taken place; in prayer we bring this to our Heavenly Father, let us make Tuesday truly a day of prayer. You are invited to come to church, if you are able, to reflect and pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament; church will be open from **6-7.30pm**, with Mass at 6.45pm. If you are not able to come to church please join us in prayer from home.

There is so much to reflect on and include in our prayer as we look back on the last 12 months. We reflect on all those who have died and we pray for them, asking our Father to welcome them into their heavenly home. We reflect on all those who have suffered; we pray for their ongoing resilience, courage and healing. We reflect on the generosity and self-sacrifice shown by so many in this most difficult of times and we pray for them, thanking God for their service and dedication. We reflect in hope that, as the pandemic is controlled and we continue to rebuild our lives again, we will learn from our experiences and build our society and communities into better ones that are more compassionate, less marked by inequalities and more responsive to needs and deprivation. We ask for the help and inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in this endeavour. We pray with Jesus, the one who carries us, and our prayers, into the embracing presence of his Father; Jesus is our comfort, our strength and our hope.

May Tuesday be a great day of prayer that this pandemic comes to an end and that the gift of God's Holy Spirit will carry us all forward to a new and better life.

Reflecting on the Gospel this weekend, the wheat grain is a parable of how death opens up an expansion of new life. It was the path taken by Jesus in obedience to his Father, and it is our way to eternal life. A grain of wheat has to die in order to bear fruit, if it didn't die no new life would come forth. But when it dies, from the grave of the old grain, a shoot of new wheat miraculously springs forth; an amazing paradox – life coming from death.

## Homily

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, Year B**

Jesus uses this image to help his listeners and subsequent believers understand that it was necessary for him to die on the Cross, so that he could rise again in order that people may believe in the Son of God and enjoy new life; through his death and Resurrection he won for us eternal and everlasting life.

Like the wheat grain we have to die to self, to all selfishness in our lives in order for us to have fullness of life, in order for us to live fully and fruitfully as God's children and reach our full potential. This dying to self is a gradual process and happens in very ordinary ways, Lent is a great time for this dying to self to take place as we reflect on our lives.

Jesus gave us an example, he gave his life in service of his Heavenly Father and of us, but it wasn't easy, as we hear in today's Gospel. There is no Garden of Gethsemane in John's Gospel, Jesus spoke about his **hour**. He spoke about it several times during his public ministry, but he always spoke about it as not having come yet. However, in today's Gospel he speaks of it as having come at last, the time has come, it has arrived. The hour in question was the hour of his death, it was the hour of supreme self-giving in which he made a complete sacrifice of himself for us.

In purely human terms it may seem like an hour of failure, but that was not the case. By raising him from the dead God turned it into an hour of triumph for Jesus, and an hour of grace for us. This indeed was Jesus' finest hour when all he had come to do on earth was in fact accomplished, his life had led him to and prepared him for this hour.

As we come to this fifth and final week of Lent our focus turns now to next weekend and the beginning of Holy Week next Sunday. Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday as it is known is the beginning of the great week, Holy Week, when we are invited to journey with Our Lord as he takes the road to Calvary when the hour finally comes and where he will be lifted up on high; where he will die in triumph on the Cross, in the same way as a wheat grain dies, only to enable him to be raised up to new life.

Sending love and prayers, **Fr Phil x**

## **Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion**

### **21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, Year B**

We bring all our prayers to God our Father and we pray that we may follow the light of Jesus this Lent :

We pray for Pope Francis as he asks us to reflect on Jesus' identity and urges Christians to welcome his light to open our hearts to the love of God.

**Lord, in your mercy...**

We pray for Sarah Everard and her family and friends and all victims of violence and abuse: may women, across the globe, be safe to live their lives without the threat of violence or harm. **Lord, in your mercy...**

We pray for those who are sick, housebound or struggling in any way: that they may experience the healing love and grace of the Lord. **Lord, in your mercy...**

We pray for our parish and our local community: that through the grace of God we may hear the urgent cry of the earth and of the poor and be inspired to respond at this crucial time. **Lord, in your mercy...**

We pray for world leaders: that God may grant them wisdom to make just decisions which respect the earth and all that lives in it, especially those who are poorest and most vulnerable. **Lord, in your mercy...**

We pray for all the faithful departed especially **Yvonne Craven, George Dittman, Ronald Garnell**, those who have died from Covid-19 and all those who have died recently: **"Eternal rest grant unto them..."**

We pray for those who mourn the loss of loved ones; may Christ's message of hope in eternal life bring them comfort and consolation.

**Lord, in your mercy.....**

We ask Our Lady and all the Saints to join their prayers with ours as we say: **"Hail Mary..."**

God our loving Father,  
as we journey to Easter we offer these and all our prayers  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
**Amen.**

## **Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion**

### **21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, Year B**

## **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.

## **CAFOD Prayer for Glasgow**

Creator God,  
We cry out to you  
The earth is damaged and in chaos  
People in poverty are suffering the most  
Greed and consumerism are a disease  
And your Church is too often asleep

Merciful Lord,  
Protect your people and restore your earth,  
Embolden governments to take action,  
Awaken Church leaders  
Give the youth influence  
And guide businesses to change

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord  
May we unite and be bold  
Take heart and find hope in you,  
Worship you with our lifestyles  
Walk in your truth  
and see justice and renewal in the earth

**Amen**



## CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

### Statement from the Presidency of the Bishops' Conference on the National Day of Reflection for COVID-19 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

We welcome the designation of Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March as a National Day of Reflection to mark the anniversary of the first national lockdown with a minute's silence at midday and doorstep vigils of light at 8pm.

We ask you all to make this not only a Day of Reflection but also a Day of Prayer. In reflection we ponder on all that has taken place; in prayer we bring this to our Heavenly Father. For all who live by faith in God, reflection and prayer always go hand in hand. Prayer completes reflection. Reflection informs prayer. Prayer opens our life to its true horizon. Without prayer we live in a foreshortened world and are more easily swamped by its clamour and tragedy. Throughout this difficult year, so many have been inspired by prayer, so much effort sustained in prayer, in every place. So let us make the 23<sup>rd</sup> March truly a day of prayer.

March 2020 was the first time our churches had to be closed. It is our hope that on this day, every one of our churches will be open. We invite everyone to enter a church on this day, to reflect and pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. We know this will involve an extra effort, but this can be part of our important contribution to a significant moment in the life of our country. Indeed, we ask that you might invite a friend, neighbour or colleague to come to church with you as you make this visit.

There is so much on which to reflect and include in our prayer.

We reflect in sorrow on all those who have died, whether family members, friends or those unknown to us personally. We pray for them, asking our Father to welcome them into their heavenly home, the destiny for which God first gave us the gift of life.

We reflect with compassion on all those who have suffered during this last year, whether through illness, stress, financial disaster or family tensions. We pray for their ongoing resilience, courage and capacity to forgive.

We reflect with thanksgiving for the generosity, inventiveness, self-sacrifice and determination shown by so many in this most difficult of times. We pray for them,

thanking God for their gifts and dedication, whether they are scientists, politicians, health workers, public servants of every kind, community leaders or steadfast family members and friends who continue to show such love and compassion.

We reflect in hope that, as the pandemic is controlled and we open up our lives again, we will gather in the lessons we have learned and build our society into a better shape, more compassionate, less marked by inequalities, more responsive to needs and deprivation. We ask for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in this endeavour, whether we are focussing on overcoming family breakdowns, economic recovery, or building political consensus.

Christian prayer is, of course, centred on Jesus Christ, the one who is “lifted up” before us “so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him” (John 3.13). We pray with Jesus, in him and through him, for he is the one who carries us, and our prayers, into the embracing presence of his Father. He is our comfort in sorrow, our strength in the face of need, our rejoicing in the gifts we celebrate and our hope in the face of the weighty darkness of death.

May Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March be a great day of prayer that this pandemic comes to an end and that the gift of God’s Holy Spirit will carry us all forward to a new and better life, both here and in the world to come.

+ Vincent Nichols

Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
President

+ Malcolm M<sup>c</sup> Mahon OP

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP  
Vice-President