

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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

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

5:9.10-12

A reading from the book of Joshua

The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you'. The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening in the plain of Jericho. On the morrow of the Passover they tasted the produce of that country, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn, that same day. From that time, from their first eating of the produce of that country, the manna stopped falling. And having manna no longer, the Israelites fed from that year onwards on what the land of Canaan yielded.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 33

Response: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

1.I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad.

(R.)

2.Glorify the Lord with me.

Together let us praise his name.

I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

(R.)

3.Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.

This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress.

(R.)

SECOND READING

5:17-21

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

For anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here. It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on this reconciliation. In other words, God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not holding men's

faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!
I will leave this place and go to my Father and say: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.'**
Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!

GOSPEL

15:1-3.11-32

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking his company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me". So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.

'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father.

'While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property - he and his women - you kill the calf we had been fattening."

The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it is only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We place before you with joy these offerings, which bring eternal remedy, O Lord, praying that we may both faithfully revere them and present them to you, as is fitting, for the salvation of all the world. Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

You must rejoice, my son, for your brother was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.

PRAYER AFTER 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.



Readings – 5th Sunday of Lent Yr C

First Reading: Isaiah	43:16-21
Second Reading: Philippians	3:8-14
Gospel: John	8:1-11



A PASTORAL LETTER

On Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

To be read at all Masses on 4th Sunday of Lent

27th March 2022

My dear brothers and sisters,

The suffering of the people of the Ukraine and the dark clouds of war over Europe, lead me to write on this mid-Lent Sunday. On a Sunday which rejoices in motherhood, I invite you to call on the mother who was given to us at the foot of the Cross. On Calvary, the Crucified Lord entrusted to His beloved disciple His mother Mary saying, "*This is your mother*".ⁱ Saint John Paul II reflected that when Jesus then said, "*Woman, this is your son*" He opened His Mother's heart, the Immaculate Heart of Mary "... revealing to it the new dimensions and extent of the love to which she was called in the Holy Spirit and by the power of the sacrifice of the Cross".ⁱⁱ This mother's love extends to all, as Pope Francis has prayed "*We turn to you and knock at the door of your heart. We are your beloved children*".ⁱⁱⁱ It is to Mary and for a mother's help that we now turn at this troubled hour of history. We cannot forget that the peoples of the Ukraine and Russia have been united over the centuries in great love and veneration for the Holy Mother of God who is also our mother.

On Friday, in union with all the bishops of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis consecrated humanity and especially Russia and the Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Holy Father was consciously responding to the Gospel message of prayer and repentance that was entrusted to the children of Fatima during the Great War of 1914-1918. This is the same message which Saint Paul announces for us at this halfway point of Lent, "*In Christ's name ... be reconciled to God*".^{iv} It is the message of the parable of a lost son returning to his father's embrace saying, "*Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you*".^v We recognise that it is human sin which takes away the peace of the world, the peace of families and of whole societies. Sin takes away our own peace and when this rejection of God becomes definitive, it removes our hope of everlasting peace.

Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary means returning to the open Heart of her Son on the Cross. It is an invitation for all our hearts to be open to Divine love and the grace of repentance.

The prayerful entrustment of humanity to Mary's Immaculate Heart, calls us to accept her motherly help in returning to the very source of redemption and never to lose hope.

In the face of the violence and agony of war we have witnessed a greatness of heart in the generous response of so many people, not least in our Shrewsbury Diocese. Before the daily scenes of anguish in the Ukraine, we have sought to support the victims of this conflict and have prayed for peace. In seeking the intercession of the pure heart of Mary we are led to trust that the power of Redemption is greater than all the destructive power of sin and evil. The Immaculate Heart leads us unfailingly to the fountain of redemption and grace flowing from the sacrifice of the Cross and the Eucharist, which is Christ's one sacrifice.^{vi} This is the profession of faith we make whenever we kneel to confess our sins; or to adore, receive and share in the offering of the Holy Eucharist.

We each have our part in this consecration, by accepting Our Lady's motherly help in opening our hearts more fully to the grace of God and all that is asked of us in the duty of each day. The children of Fatima had no human means to overcome war and bring peace to the world. Two of these children would die in the global pandemic of a century ago and are numbered among the Saints. Yet, by a renewed love for the Eucharist and a new faithfulness to prayer, especially the prayer of Mary's heart in the Rosary;^{vii} and by the offering of the small sacrifices of each day, these children sought to follow the path of Mary's heart and open the way for the world to receive God's gift of peace.

This is the invitation now given to us as we entrust ourselves and our world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In Pope Francis's words addressed to Our Lady, "*The 'fiat' (let it be done to me according to your word) that arose from your heart opened the doors of history to the Prince of Peace. We trust, that through your heart, peace will dawn once more ... To you we consecrate the future of the whole human family ...*".^{viii} On this Sunday, it is truly for a mother's help that we call.

United with you in this prayer and consecration,

+ Mark

Bishop of Shrewsbury

ⁱ Jn. 19:26

ⁱⁱ Homily of Pope Saint John Paul II at Fatima 13th May 1982

ⁱⁱⁱ Act of Consecration 25th March 2022

^{iv} II Cor. 5:20

^v Lk. 15: 21

^{vi} Catechism of the Catholic Church no. 1367

^{vii} Cf. Lk. 2: 19

^{viii} Act of Consecration 25th March 2022

Bidding Prayers

27th March 2022 – 4th Sunday of Lent, Year C

Priest: In this Season of Lent as we are invited to come back to the Lord with all our hearts, we place all our prayers before our heavenly Father.

Reader:

For our Confirmation candidates who are being enrolled this weekend.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those in our parish who are sick or housebound: may they come to know the love and healing presence of Christ. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the faithful departed especially **Tony Fraser, Noreen Evans, Pat Lawler** and all who have died recently and those whose anniversaries occur around this time: "**Eternal rest grant unto them...**"

We pray through the intercession of Mary our mother: “**Hail Mary...**”

In silence we bring our own private prayers and intentions before the Lord.

Priest:

Loving Father,
we offer these and all our prayers to you,
through your Son Jesus,
who is Christ Our Lord, Amen.