

Sunday 22nd March
Fifth Sunday of Lent

Today's Collect

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

Next Week Services: Sunday 29th March

10:00am Harvington Holy Communion

Mid-week Eucharist: 11:00am Wednesdays at St James', Harvington

Notices:

- **Messy Church Today!** 3:30pm at Church Lench
- **Last Lent Luch at the Lenches Club** 25th March
- **EGGHEADS Easter Quiz!** 27th March - £6 per person.
- **Scratch Performance of Stainer's Crucifixion** 29th March
Free to attend – looking for singers! 2:30pm rehearsal for 4pm same day performance. Please contact Mark Blackwell at markblackwell96@gmail.com if your interested.

This Week's First Reading: *Ezekiel 37.1-14.*

1 The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones.² He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry.³ He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know."

⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! ⁵ This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶ I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.' "

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.⁸ I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.⁹ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.' "

¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

¹¹ Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.'¹² Therefore prophesise and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.¹³ Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.¹⁴ I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord.' "

This Weeks Psalm: *Psalm 130.*

- 1 Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
- 2 If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?
- 3 But there is forgiveness with you, so that you shall be feared.
- 4 I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.
- 5 My soul waits for the Lord, more than the night watch for the
morning, more than the night watch for the morning.
- 6 O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy;
- 7 With him is plenteous redemption
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

This Week's Second Reading: *Romans 8.6-11,*

⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law-indeed it cannot,⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *John 11.1-45.*

1 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.² (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.)³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days,⁷ and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea,"⁸ "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?"⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world's light.¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light."¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

¹² His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better."¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.¹⁸ Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem,¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” ²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they may die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.” ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. ³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

³⁴ “where have you laid him?” he asked. “Come and see, Lord,” they replied. ³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Jesus came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone.” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you’ll see the glory of God?”

⁴¹ So they took away the stone as Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”

⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Next Weeks Readings: *Isaiah 50.4-9, Psalm 31.9-16, Philipians 2.5-11, Matthew 26.14 - end of 27.*

Prayer of Intercession

Gracious God In St. Matthews Gospel Jesus reminds us "that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." And so we thank you for Jesus' presence here with us today in this place as we raise our hearts and voices in worship, praise and thanksgiving.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Father God drive away despair from our politics, help our dreams of justice and truth become a living reality in your name. Restore our passion for what is good and right. Let your love establish your just and gentle rule throughout the world where there is conflict and where peace has been powerless and violent people hold sway.

We pray for all those who lead our nations of the world and for those in authority that they may always work for peace and for the good of their people.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Loving God, touch, heal and restore all who are ill. Open their hearts and their minds to welcome your restoring power so that their sickness ends and your healing begins. Give strength to all those who work in the NHS, doctors practices, dentist, pharmacysts and hospitals. In testing times may we find your inner strength.

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Help us through Jesus' example to recognise that our tears are natural and bring healing. When the death of Lazarus felt like the end it was your power that found life again. Help those who are struggling to find inner strength, and us, their family, to recognise where our support is needed.

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer