

**Holy Communion
for the 4th Sunday of Lent
(Mothering Sunday)**

Mothering Sunday



The Stour Valley Benefice

*The Parishes of Cavendish, Clare, Hundon, Poslingford,
Stoke-by-Clare & Wixoe*

- A short introduction to the Season -

The characteristic feel of Lent is one of self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, almsgiving, in preparation for Easter. It lasts for forty days and forty nights reminding us of Jesus' time spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan.

It was also the traditional time when candidates for baptism were instructed, and those penitents prepared themselves, through fasting and penance, to be readmitted to communion. The whole Christian community were also invited to join them.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Laetare or Refreshment Sunday*) was allowed as a day of relief from the rigour of Lent, and is the background to the modern observance of Mothering Sunday.

This season of penitence is demonstrated in our use of the simplest vestments, and many churches are kept bare of flowers and other decorations. The predominant colour of this season is Purple or Violet, although Rose was permitted for Laetare Sunday.

Growing in God

Spiritual Communion

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ.

In joining with Revd Mark today as he celebrates the Eucharist from his own home, you too are able to join with him in communion. The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

Welcome and Introduction

Hymn – Tell out, my soul

sung by St Martin's Voices

- 1 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.
- 2 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.
- 3 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.
- 4 Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore!

*Timothy Dudley-Smith (born 1926) from Luke 1 vs46-55
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The Gathering

Priest: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The Greeting

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: and also with you.

Prayer of Preparation

All: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from who no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Priest: Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All: **Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

Priest: The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart God will not despise. Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion, and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

Kyrie Confessions

Priest: We confess to you our selfishness and lack of love: fill us with your Spirit.
Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Priest: We confess to you our fear and failure in sharing our faith: fill us with your Spirit.
Christ, have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Priest: We confess to your our stubbornness and lack of trust:
fill us with your Spirit.
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Absolution

Priest: Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all
your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our
Lord.

All: Amen.

(Note: During Lent the Gloria is not said)

The Collect

Priest: God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of
Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the
cross drew the whole human family to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence to bind
together and to heal; 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.

All: Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading – Exodus 2.1-10

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman.
The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a
fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no
longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen
and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the
bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would
happen to him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the
river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket

among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

Priest: This is the word of the Lord
All: Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading – Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Priest: This is the word of the Lord
All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading – Luke 2:33-35

Reader: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
All: Glory to you, O Lord.

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary,

'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed

All: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray for the Church and the world, cherished in the tender love of God.

As our Lord grew to manhood under a mother's care, may his Church be as a mother to her children. Bless her ministers with the gift of compassion, to offer themselves in service to all who come to seek their help.

We pray for the world, that all its people may be as one family in harmony and peace. Let motherly love be the desire and the ideal of all the human race. Bless those in positions of power, that they may seek to serve and protect those under their authority.

Bless our homes with care and concern for one another. May our families be as the Holy Family in shared love and worship. Be ever close with the gift of your unfailing love to the mothers and children in our community.

Have mercy on the mothers who are in distress, those who have lost children through death or estrangement, those whose children are sick in body or mind. Grant them strength in their affliction and healing for those they love.

We pray for the departed who have known human love on earth and have passed into the divine love of heaven. May they be in peace and joy with the blessed Mary and all the saints.

We pray in the name of Christ, who loves us as a mother loves her children.

Intercessor: Merciful Father,

**All: accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,**

**our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Priest: Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with god through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace. *(Romans:5:1,2)*

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All: and also with you.

Preparation of the Altar

Priest: God of our journey as we walk with you on your path of obedience, sustain us on our way and lead us to your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Priest: The Lord be with you

All: and also with you.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: it is right to give thanks and praise.

Priest: It is indeed right and good, to give you thanks and praise, almighty God and everlasting Father, through Jesus Christ your Son.

For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance that through a pilgrimage of prayer and

discipline we may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again.

Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you bring us back to your generous heart.

Through study of your holy word you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love.

As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast with joyful hearts and minds we bless you for your mercy and join with saints and angels for ever praising you and singing:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

Priest: Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father, we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross; we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; we look for the coming of your kingdom, and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

All: Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

Priest: Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

**All: Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Priest: Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All: Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.

The Agnus Dei

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

Giving of Communion

Priest: Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

All: We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Priest: Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

The Dismissal

Priest: God, who from the death of sin raised you to new life in Christ, keep you from falling and set you in the presence of his glory; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

Priest: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn – For Mary, Mother of our Lord

sung by St Martin's Voices

- 1 For Mary, Mother of our Lord
God's holy name be praised,
who first the Son of God adored,
as on her child she gazed.
- 2 Brave, holy Virgin, she believed,
though hard the task assigned,
and by the Holy Ghost conceived

the Saviour of mankind.

- 3 She gave her body as God's shrine,
her heart to piercing pain;
she knew the cost of love divine,
when Jesus Christ was slain.
- 4 Dear Mary, from your lowliness
and home in Galilee
there comes a joy and holiness
to every family.
- 5 Hail, Mary, you are full of grace,
above all women blest;
and blest your Son, whom your embrace
in birth and death confessed.

John Raphael Peacey (1896-1971)
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Although not all of us are able to meet in church for services, it is important to remember that the work of the Church continues, as do many of the ongoing costs in maintaining our historic buildings as well as supporting the ministry in this benefice and the wider church.

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