



Please share this bulletin as far and wide as you can – thank you.

9th April – Maundy Thursday
10th April – Good Friday



View Inside a Vicarage

Hello and welcome to Part 1 of this week's special editions of the Bulletin. It is of course Holy Week and under normal circumstances there would be lots of different services happening in our churches this week, but of course not this year as we journey through this most holy of weeks in isolation.

It has proved very challenging to think about how we can be Church together as we all spend our days dispersed and in our own homes, and never more so than this week. I hope that you managed through some means to join in an act of worship for Palm Sunday. As well as joining in the 8.10am Radio 4 Sunday Worship, the 8.30am live stream of Holy Communion from Worcester Cathedral, and a Zoom Café Church service with a church in Redditch, I made some paper palm crosses with my family, and have duly stuck them on the fence posts outside the garden. They were not up to professional standards, and there is perhaps not the same level of consistency between them that I would have wished, but they are there in the garden to see, as people walk past on their daily exercise. If anyone wishes to make one, there are many examples on websites giving practical demonstrations of how to do this, so do have a go if you would like one.

Doing this has made me think that this year in particular, we need to be creative in the ways we express our Christian faith. For during these times of isolation, some of the

most moving expressions of solidarity and support have been in what is now becoming a weekly clapping on Thursday evenings for workers in the NHS and other key services, and in the placing of rainbows and teddy bears in home windows, as a way of communicating expressions of love and hope. For it is out of these small, and yet significant expressions of emotion, that we can come together and are united in sharing our love and compassion for all that we are going through.

Therefore, each day of Holy Week, I will be putting up on my garden fence, alongside the palm crosses, a picture which speaks of the last week of Jesus' life. They are not works of art or "high tech" ways of worship, but they will be a symbol for all those who walk past my house, of what this week means, a week which is both holy and sacred, and may cause people to ponder on the journey of Christ to the cross.



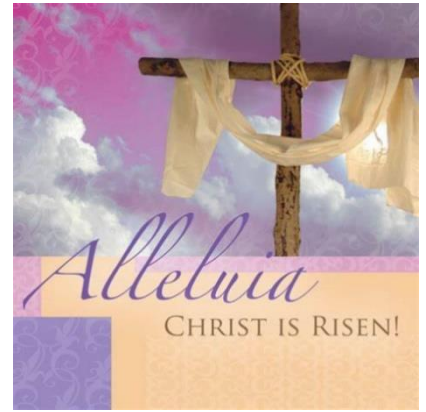
By Easter Sunday, I will also hope to have created a small Easter Garden which will finish the Holy Week story, and which will symbolize the hope of all Christ achieved through the Resurrection.

So if you are able, and would like to, then please join me in making a small Easter Garden with things you have lying about in your house or garden, as a faith gesture; And if you send me or email me a photo of your garden with your name, address and telephone number, when this is all over, I will give a prize to the best Easter Garden to both an adult and a child.



In terms of worship this week, please find within this Bulletin a service of Spiritual Holy Communion which you may like to join in with me on Maundy Thursday at 7.00pm, and a Service of The Cross at 12.00pm on Good Friday. I will also be saying the Office of Evening Prayer at 4.00pm every afternoon of Holy Week, the words of which can be found on the Church of England website. It would be lovely if we could share some of these services together and if you wish to join me, then at the appropriate time, find a quiet place and light a small candle as we journey and worship together in this most special of weeks.

On Easter Sunday, for those who get up early, we are being encouraged to light a candle at dawn on Easter Sunday to celebrate the arrival of Easter, and then at 10.00am to join in a national initiative called "Sing Resurrection", where we are invited to go outside and sing the hymns "*Jesus Christ is Risen Today* and *Thine be the Glory*". The words for these hymns are at the end of this bulletin and will also be published in the Easter Bulletin, which will be sent out later in the week. There will also be the weekly 8.10am sung Sunday Worship service on Radio 4 and Sunday and a Details of other services across the diocese, including Holy Communion led by the Bishop of Worcester, can be found on the Diocesan website, so do please check



As we journey with Christ towards the cross, and as we seek to serve Him in faithful love, may we be filled with the joy and hope of the Resurrection, now and always.

Allison

Reverend Allison Davies

Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the churches of the Bredon Hill Group

Reflection on Holy Week by Rev. Roger Spiller

We're living through surreal times. Who could have imagined that our whole way of life would be so comprehensively shaken? An invisible virus is rampaging indiscriminately across our world. Its toll of victims is bringing loss and desolation to families and devastating businesses and economies. And now our Prime Minister himself has become a victim of the disease he was energetically leading huge efforts to defeat. For every one of us the simple everyday tasks have become more difficult, living in isolation and containment for a prolonged period. We thought we could 'take back control', but instead we are discovering our powerlessness and vulnerability. Thankfully we have science of course, but that can only react and struggle to catch up with events for which we could never have been fully prepared.

It's Holy Week, when Christians follow the story of the betrayal, arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. In this week Jesus is no longer the master of events. Up to this week, Jesus has been the one who has made things happen; the powerful, authoritative, public figure surrounded by crowds who hung on his every word and who healed those suffering from sickness and fear. But now Jesus is passive, which is what we mean when we speak of his 'passion'. He places himself in the hands of people who will determine his destiny. He is someone to whom things are done, not the one who is powerful and in control anymore.

This speaks directly to our global sense of powerlessness in the face of the power of an invisible enemy stalking the earth. It finds an echo in our own experiences of helplessness, confinement and dependence upon others during these challenging times.

Where is God? God is suffering too. He's 'taking his own medicine', as one writer put it. In the Cross, God's powerlessness confronts and unmasks our human pretensions to power. Jesus accepts, absorbs and neutralises the worst that human beings can inflict upon one another, and breaks the vicious cycle so that we can be free.

This strange truth is being embodied in the lives of many front-line workers today. Most of us have had to put our own safety and well-being first, but many thousands of people have done the opposite; they've made themselves vulnerable to suffering and death in order to serve others. More than 900 people have offered to trial new drugs. Thousands of volunteers will support the effort to defeat the Coronavirus. Neighbours shopping for older people in communities across the country are also taking risks in their care for others. Teachers are distributing meals to children who were dependent upon school dinners and many others are developing innovative ways of bringing cheer and sustenance to we who are confined to our homes. Jesus shows that willingness to suffer is the price that has to be paid to bring life to others. As Jesus said, 'those who lose their lives will find them'.

'We'll get through this'. Yes we will. But we can't, nor should we, expect to resume unchanged the life we had before. This generation-defining event should change us and our world for ever. It must exorcise the malign and violent language of public discourse. Our polarities, tribalism and class divisions should be dissipated by the experience of being in the same boat together. We recognise we are as dependent upon long distance drivers, cleaners, fruit pickers and other workers as we are on health workers and carers, and incomes should reflect this. We can take comfort that the Health Service will not be left short of funds for at least a generation; it has already benefited from fundamental changes to the way it is run, which it's estimated would otherwise have taken another 20 years to be introduced! Meanwhile, the massive government debt should also favour greater reliance on home produced food and investment in technologies in which we are market leaders. The dramatic reduction of noise, pollution, traffic, and the increase in flexible working patterns in the last few weeks must entice us to continue to make lifestyle changes that will help to safeguard our endangered planet.

Holy Week speaks to those of us who are isolated, laid aside, and powerless. It enables us to edge closer to Jesus in his passion and powerlessness. We have more time on our hands to do the things we've always said we've wanted to do. That may be, as the Queen suggested, to be still, reflect and think. Our physical separation is also the opportunity so many are grasping to extend our social engagement, enquiring after former colleagues through emails, Facebook etc. Even my dentist and fellow tennis players have been delighting us by sharing some of their own stories. Then, too, there's time to be creative and adventurous. It's good that many more people have begun to listen to bird song in the quietness, to look more intently at nature, or see the stars in the clearer skies. The media are providing opportunities to feed our souls with poetry, music, art and theatre. And for those missing worship at this momentous season we may be discovering afresh how important the members of our faith community are to

our lives. Meanwhile, through the rich programme of streamed services and talks our spiritual horizons can be extended.

Jesus reigns, albeit from a tree, and he reigns through invincible love. Let's live these traumatic days in praise for the selfless service we see and in hope that through, not despite, suffering God is at work redeeming his world and healing our beloved nation that has been so deeply divided. 'All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well'.

Thursday 9th April – Maundy Thursday

Collect for Maundy Thursday

God our Father, you have invited us to share in the supper which your Son gave to his Church to proclaim his death until he comes: May he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love; Who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, now and for ever.

Amen

Exodus 12: 1-14

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean." After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Service of 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. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their

communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist.

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. Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion 'regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost' (Canon B 15).

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'.

In making a Spiritual Communion, we now pray the following as we are able:-

An Act of Spiritual Communion

Find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, or a special place.

Reflect on the day and on your relationships. - What good things have come from God today? - Where have I fallen short? - What might I do tomorrow?

Words from Scripture

Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.' John 6.35

Prayers

Pray for the needs of the world, for your local community, and for those close to you. End with the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father...

We give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus and ask him to be with us now.

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. **Amen.**

(Prayer of St Richard of Chichester)

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples, 'I am with you always'. Be with me today, as I offer myself to you. Hear my prayers for others and for myself and keep me in your care. **Amen.**

Lord, in these days of mercy, make us quiet and prayerful; in these days of challenge, make us stronger in you; in these days of emptiness, take possession of us; in these days of waiting, open our hearts to the mystery of your cross. **Amen.**

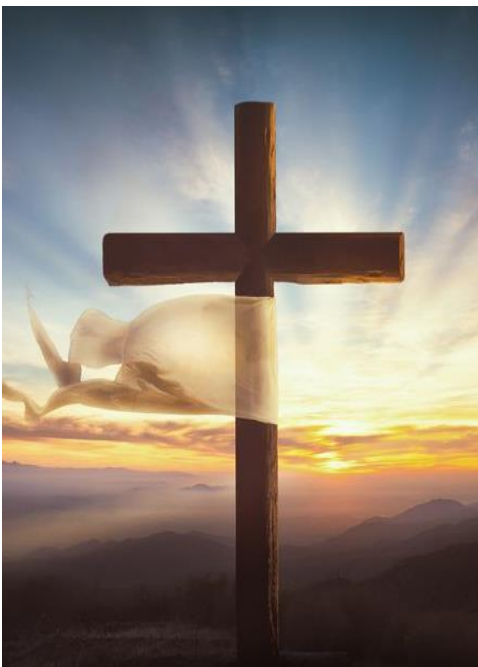
(Angela Ashwin)

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you most humble and hearty thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And give us, we pray, such a sense of all your mercies that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth your praise, not only with our lips but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

We conclude with the following:

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life. Amen.

Service of the Cross for Good Friday 2020 - Bredon Hill Group



Hymn: When I survey the wondrous cross

When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

The Collect for Good Friday

Almighty Father, look with mercy on this your family for which the Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed and given up into the hands of sinners and to suffer death upon the cross; who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reading: Isaiah 52: 13 – 53:12

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him —so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance and his form beyond that of mortals— so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground, he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

At the end the reader says

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Silence is kept

The Passion of Our Lord According to St. John:

John 18: 1 – 19, v 42

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a disciples detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people. Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself. Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear

Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed. Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.) Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you Barabbas was a bandit. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

If you have a cross to hand, gaze on it and reflect as we say:

We glory in your cross, O Lord.

And praise you for your mighty resurrection; for by virtue of your cross, joy has come into our world.

God be gracious to us and bless us: and make his face shine upon us,

Let your ways be made known on earth; your liberating power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God:

Let all the peoples praise you.

We glory in your cross, O Lord,

And praise you for your mighty resurrection; for by virtue of your cross, joy has come into the world.

Reflection on Good Friday

This Good Friday is unlike any that many, if not all of us, have ever experienced. We approach it with the reality we are unable to attend church and worship physically with others, on one of our most holy of days, in this most special of weeks in the church's year.

It feels odd; It feels lonely; And I guess it plays deeply into the emotions of what many of us are feeling in terms of desolation and bereavement, as the escalation and worsening of the COVID 19 crisis continues.

Isaiah, the Old Testament prophet, in Chapter 52, wrote the Song of the Suffering Servant, some 600 years before Jesus lived. But it sounds uncannily like an eye-witness account of the events of Good Friday. This beautiful and deeply moving piece of scripture, provides a vivid picture of the sufferings of Jesus, but it also gives us an understanding of the reasons for them, as He lives out His destiny as a Saviour of the world.

Isaiah mentions screening our faces from the man of sorrows; And yet on Good Friday, we turn our faces **towards** the cross, for it is only as we memorially take part in the suffering of Jesus, that we begin to understand and comprehend, both the sorrow and joy of the cross.

Good Friday, is not called "**Good**" for nothing; For however reflective we make this day, it should not be a day of mourning or guilt. Instead it should be a day when we react and respond out of the same love which has been shown to us by Christ's ultimate sacrifice. A day when we question, "*How we will respond to the call of Jesus on the cross, as Jesus says, "I thirst"*".

For God loves and thirsts for his people; And He calls them to come back to Him, to see Him, to listen to Him and to respond to Him.

Delia Smith, a famous cook, a major shareholder of Norwich FC and a writer, wrote back in to the 1980's, that "*today we must, like Mary, decide to say "Yes". If we are nominal Christians, we must become committed; If we are committed Christians, we must become disciples; And if we are disciples, we must become saints. We must (as Paul says) "shine like bright stars", and give light to this darkened, confused and insecure world.*"

We are living in a very darkened world at the present time; And on this Good Friday, as we turn our faces towards the cross once again, reflecting on our own sinfulness, weakness and indeed that of the whole world, we need to react and respond to the One who is not dead on the cross, but who is the very source of Light, Life and Love. We can do this by bringing to Him today and every day, in prayer, the problems, sufferings and sorrows blighting our lives, and those across the world today.

Having done so, we need then to give thanks, because on Jesus, the Suffering Servant, who we remember today, there will forever lie a punishment, which continues to bring us an everlasting peace, and through His wounds, we, and the whole world around us, will be healed.

Currently the whole world is being cast into suffering and sorrow as a result of the Corona Virus. Therefore, on this Good Friday, what greater need is there than to join together and bring our global suffering and need for healing, in prayer, to the foot of the cross, as we gaze on the face of the Man of Sorrows. For never was there such love or obedience than in the One who offered His life for us. It is only as we reflect on this and give thanks, that as we leave our prayers with Jesus, we can look forward with hope to the dawn of Easter, the Resurrection of Christ crucified, when all the pain and tears will be wiped away, and we shall see once again the sacrificial Lamb lifted up on high, reigning in great power and glory, sat at God's right hand.

Let us therefore journey through this Good Friday and challenging time of isolation, in the knowledge that just as Jesus continues to offer comfort to us, may we seek to offer others, in all their sorrows, that same consolation which we have received. May we then respond and react with joy and love, by giving thanks to Jesus for all that He has accomplished on the cross, and may we seek to share that same love and compassion with all who cross our paths in life, now and always. Amen.

Prayers

Let us pray for those who suffer – for those who are deprived and oppressed;
for all who are suffering from the effects of the Corona virus and all those seeking to care for them;
for the sick or handicapped and those in isolation;
for those who are in darkness, in doubt and despair;
for those who are lonely, fearful and anxious;
for prisoners, for the victims of false accusations and violence;
for all those at the point of death and those who watch beside them. We pray that God in his mercy will sustain them with the knowledge of his love.

Lord hear us

Lord graciously hear us

Almighty and everlasting God, the comfort of the sad, the strength of those who suffer; hear the prayers of your children who cry out of any trouble: and to every distressed soul grant mercy, relief and refreshment, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lords' Prayer

Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom in the words our Saviour taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed by your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
Now and for ever. Amen.**

Hymn: My Song is Love Unknown

My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me,
Love to the loveless shown,
That they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake,
My Lord should take frail flesh and die?

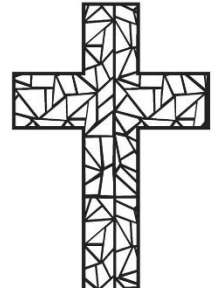
Sometimes they strew his way,
And his sweet praises sing:
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King:
Then "Crucify"! is all their breath,
And for his death they thirst and cry.

They rise, and needs will have
My dear Lord made away;
A murderer they save,
The Prince of Life they slay,
Yet cheerful he to suffering goes,
That he his foes from thence might free.

Here might I stay and sing,
No story so divine;
Never was love, dear King,
Never was grief like thine.
This is my friend in whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend.

Final Prayer

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved mankind: Grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross, we may triumph in the power of his victory: Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



General Prayers for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday

With faith and love and in union with Christ,
Let us offer our prayer before the throne of grace.

Have mercy on your people,
For whom your Son laid down his life:

Bring healing and wholeness to people and nations,
And have pity on those torn apart by division:

Strengthen all who are persecuted for your name's sake,
And deliver them from evil:

Look in mercy upon all who suffer, especially those affected by the Corona virus,
And hear those who cry out in pain and desolation:

Bring comfort to the dying,
And gladden their hearts with the vision of your glory:

Give rest to the departed
And bring them, with your saints, to glory everlasting:

Let us commend the world, for which Christ died,
To the mercy and protection of God.

Prayers

Please pray for the ill and isolated, hospital and medical research staff, all those working on the frontline and those who have died. We pray for all whose anniversary of death falls at this time and for all who have been bereaved.

Please pray for:

Those on the frontline: Alison Herbert a nurse who has been working with the DART (Disaster and Relief Team) and the Mercy Ships in Italy

Those who have died and their families: Jon Doney

If you would like to include anybody in these prayers please email us at eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com

Sing Resurrection Hymns to sing on Easter Sunday morning at 10.00am

Jesus Christ is Risen Today

1 Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia,
our triumphant holy day; alleluia,
who did once upon the cross; alleluia,
suffer to redeem our loss; alleluia!

3 But the pains which he endured; Alleluia,
our salvation have procured; alleluia,
now above the sky he's King; alleluia,
where the angels ever sing: alleluia!

2 Hymns of praise then let us sing; Alleluia,
unto Christ our heavenly king; alleluia,
who endured the cross and grave; alleluia,
sinners to redeem and save: alleluia!

4 Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as his love; Alleluia!
Praise him, all you heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

From *Surrexit Christus hodie*, anon., C14, trans. John Baptist Walsh in *Lyra Davidica*, 1708

Thine be the Glory

1 Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

2 Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb.
Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let His church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting. [Refrain]

3 No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life!!
Life is nought without Thee; aid us in our strife;
make us more than conqu'rors, through Thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above. [Refrain]

(With thanks to Hymns Ancient & Modern)

Prayer Diary – April from the Diocese of Worcester



Recent events have meant that many of our prayer diary entries are out of date. We will therefore be issuing monthly pdf updates. Download the [updated prayer diary for April 2020](#).

Updated prayers will also be available on our website 'prayer for the day' and our social media streams.

Digital Resources from the Diocese of Worcester

What is currently available?

There are a range of new and existing Christian resources available for people to engage with at this difficult and challenging time in the life of the nation and the world:

- **Weekly service broadcasts** - these be made available each Sunday through [the Church's Facebook page](#).
- **Time to Pray app** - everything you need for Prayer During the Day, with variations according to the day of the week and the season of the Church's year. [Download for free](#).
- **Daytime prayer and Night prayer service audio** - building on the existing [daily prayer feed](#), this includes [daytime prayer and night prayer for each day](#). It will be available as a downloadable app in the coming weeks.
- **Live streaming services from churches** - AChurchNearYou.com now lists hundreds of churches offering livestreams of services from across the country. Churches need to add the 'Livestream' tag to their services and events that will be broadcast. Remember to add into the description how people can watch this. You add a link to the platform you're using to stream, such as your Facebook Page or YouTube Channel. [Find out more about live streaming services and events](#).
- **Increasing the number of training webinars** - to help churches stream sermons, events and make the most of digital platforms. [Sign up for free](#).
- **#LiveLent: Care for God's Creation** - the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2020. With weekly themes shaped around the first Genesis account of creation, it explores the urgent need for humans to value and protect the abundance God has created. This daily audio content is available via the app and daily emails. [Sign up for free](#).
- **The BBC's Daily Service and Sunday Worship** - radio programmes will be using some of the [themes from #LiveLent as part of their broadcasts](#).
- **Prayer for the day** - each day the Church of England [publishes audio and text of the Prayer for the Day](#).
- **Smart speakers** – daily prayer and #LiveLent audio content can be [accessed via our smart speaker apps](#).
- **Mental health reflections** – [13 daily reflections](#) that seek to provide hope, reassurance and comfort. We have also [published five tips](#) to help tackle loneliness and isolation.

Pershore Foodbank

Due to the coronavirus, our churches have had to suspend the collection of food items for the Foodbank. However, we would still encourage you to donate, by giving money in lieu of food gifts. Therefore, if you can help, please send directly to:



Pershore Foodbank
Sort code 20-98-61
Account number 50714356

Food collections are still being made at Asda and Co-op in Pershore

Thank you

Reverend Allison Davies

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