

**Collects and readings for
The Triduum & Easter**

MAUNDY THURSDAY COLLECT & READINGS

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.

OT, Exodus 12: 1-4, [5-10], 11-14; Psalm 116: 1, 10-17;
NT, 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26; Gospel: John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

GOOD FRIDAY COLLECT & READINGS

Almighty Father,
look with mercy on this your family
for which our 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.

OT, Isaiah 52: 13 - 53: 12; Psalm 22;
NT, Hebrews 4: 14-16; 5: 7-9; Gospel, John 18: 1 - 19: 42

HOLY SATURDAY (EASTER EVE) COLLECT & READINGS

Grant, Lord,
that we who are baptised into the death of your Son our
Saviour Jesus Christ
may continually put to death our evil desires and be buried
with him;
and that through the grave and gate of death
we may pass to our joyful resurrection;
through his merits, who died and was buried and rose again
for us,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OT, Lamentations 3: 1-9, 19-24; Psalm 31: 10-4, 15-16;
NT, 1 Peter 4: 1-8; Gospel, John 19: 38-42

EASTER DAY COLLECT & READINGS

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things
new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus
Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour,
glory and might,
now and in all eternity. Amen.

1st reading, Acts 10: 34-43; Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24;
2nd reading, Colossians 3: 1-4; Gospel, John 20: 1-18

A message from Revd. Maureen



In these readings we are offered
a whole range of emotions
concluding, thankfully, on Easter
Day with joy and hope. I say
"concluding", but actually Easter

Day is surely the beginning of something – new life in
the resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus
Christ. I encourage you to sit down at some point
across Thursday, Friday, Saturday and particularly
Sunday and read the Collect for each day and read at
least the Gospel for each day, as well as the other
readings and the psalm if you can.

As I write this on Monday in Holy Week, there is a
sense of disappointment that – having preached in the
service at St Mary's on the third Sunday of Lent about
the happenings of Holy Week and the Triduum - I am
not going to be able to share all that with you this year.
I think my sense of disappointment is compounded by
the fact that I shall probably not have this opportunity
again in the years to come, in view of my intended
retirement by the end of this year.

There is also a sense of abandonment, too, as many
of our benefice congregations seem to have dispersed
– a bit like the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane
on the night of Maundy Thursday – and are
worshipping in new and various ways in little groups.
Whilst I comfort myself that this must have been how
the early church worshipped after the Resurrection, in
people's homes in small groups it does feel very much
like a scattering of the faithful when we would –
normally - be coming together to worship and to
remember all that our Lord offered us at the Last
Supper and went through for us on Good Friday.

I have also been told that a dear and long-standing
friend of mine, who is a parish priest in Sussex, lost
one of his daughters on Sunday to an aggressive and
rare brain tumour against which she had been fighting
for almost a year. My heart goes out to my friend and
his family with love and prayers – but what a day to
go – Palm Sunday! I hope and pray that Eleanor is now
at rest in the heavenly Jerusalem, in God's presence
and that her family will know the peace and presence
of God with them in these difficult days when those
who mourn are kept at arm's length from saying
goodbye to their loved ones.

Continued...

Rev'd. Maureen's message (continued)

Whilst we rejoice on Easter Day and remind ourselves that "We are an Easter People, and Alleluia is our song", let us continue to remember those who are mourning their loved ones or are anxious about someone in hospital and perhaps in intensive care – particularly those who are known to us personally. And let us commend them – the sick, the dying and those who mourn to the mercy and protection of God at this time of celebration.

The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia! We pray that Jesus has taken all those who have died in the last year - either from natural causes or from the Coronavirus – with him in his Resurrection life and to be with him in Heaven where, one day, we believe that we shall be reunited with them. I wish you a happy, peaceful and joy-filled Easter.



The Risen Christ Appears by He Qi

Palm Sunday at West Bagborough



Thank you to Frances and Philip for sending this lovely picture of the lych gate at the Church of St. Pancras, West Bagborough decorated with bamboo fronds.

This will have been a perfect reminder of the significance of the day to anyone out for their permitted daily exercise.

Our prayers



Our Father by Jen Norton

In our prayers this week, we are asked to pray for the parish of Lydeard St. Lawrence; for all those in the benefice who assist with fundraising and organising social events; the staff and children of the schools at Bishops Lydeard and Lydeard St. Lawrence; the staff, residents and volunteers of Dunkirk House and for the Royal British Legion.

Our prayers are also asked for those in the benefice who are unwell: John, Gwen, Joan, Bobby, Lucinda, Norma, Marissa, Roger and Wendy and for all others known to us.

We pray for all those who are working so hard and with such commitment to guide and sustain us through this most challenging time: for our Prime Minister and all Members of Parliament and their advisers; for all in the National Health Service; for all key workers; for those who ensure that we are fed; for all volunteers and good neighbours.

We remember those who mourn Eleanor: her family and many friends.

We pray for those who mourn the victims of Covid 19 throughout our nation and our world.

A message from Peter



My sincere thanks to all those friends who contributed to the recent celebration of my 80th birthday. Your cards, phone calls and gifts were most gratefully received in these limited communicative times. You all made my day. Thank you.

Peter Harrison

From Katharine



*"I've got to hope that somehow all this misery will be redeemed, but hope's hard sometimes particularly when you're in pain. It's hard when you're enduring Good Friday to imagine the dawning of Easter day."**

It's Good Friday 1994 and Adrian and I are driving from Taunton to Truro in truly terrible wet and windy weather. What makes it worse is that we don't know if my father, in intensive care after suffering a major heart attack while in hospital for tests, will still be alive when we eventually get there. When we join my mother and sister at his bedside my mother says very firmly "He won't die on Good Friday" and she's right! My father, a priest, was not going to die on Good Friday!

Adrian and I stay at a B&B near the hospital and on Easter Sunday, early in the morning while it is still dark, we get a phone call to say that my father's condition has deteriorated, he is distressed and we should go there at once. We're able to see my father and talk to him for a short time before we're asked to go and wait outside the ward while more emergency treatment is given. We know just how serious his condition is and when one of the doctors comes to tell us that my father has died I feel strangely peaceful and even have a sense of rightness about it. It seems to me that my father, who would not die on Good Friday, waited until the dawning of Easter Day before letting go of this life and entering into eternal life with his Lord whom he has faithfully loved and served as a priest for over fifty years.

This Holy Week I've been thinking a lot about that weekend in 1994 and how we're living now, in these extraordinary times, with the pain and misery of the Coronavirus. It has changed so many lives in so many different ways. This is a time when the way ahead isn't clear, when we don't know who among us may contract the virus and how it will affect them and us. And we have no idea how long this is going to continue. Somehow perhaps we are more in tune with the events of that first Holy Week, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday because of what's happening around us this year. Perhaps the expressions of doubt, fear, pain and devastating loneliness and the sense of being abandoned which

we find in those ancient stories, somehow ease our hearts and minds a little. We are not alone in this darkness.

But what are we to do, think or feel on Easter Sunday, the great and joyful Day of Resurrection that will be proclaimed, somehow, across the whole earth. Because also on this Easter Sunday men and women everywhere will let go of this life and enter into a new dimension of being in a place where there is no more pain, tears are dried and hearts are mended. And those who love them will be left grieving, exhausted, confused and maybe very angry.

It has always been so. This is not new to 2020 and the coronavirus is not the only cause of suffering or death. We live constantly with the extreme tension of having faith in a loving God who raises his Son from the dead whilst at the same time being confronted with the unimaginable suffering of innocent people. Perhaps this year, though, we are confronted with that tension on a scale never experienced before in the lives of most of us.

But we are together in this even though we are unable to hug each other, hold each other's hand, speak words of understanding and comfort face to face. But there are so many ways of communicating now, from a simple phone call to an online "meeting" of several people who can see as well as hear each other. Let's use all that modern technology to ease our isolation and to share in each other's lives. As we reach out to help and support each other we will also be reaching out to help and support our Lord Jesus as every day, even Easter Sunday, he walks the way of the cross alongside us until at last it is our Easter Sunday.

Continued...



From Katharine (continued)

I'd like to finish with this quote from my book "Angels in the wilderness – hope and healing in depression" which seems appropriate for this week.

"A thought that I still hang on to is that it was only from the tomb that Jesus could rise to new life; it is only from the darkness of night that a new day can dawn; it is in the wilderness that God does a new thing in our lives and his angels minister to us even, or especially, when we feel most alone and isolated.

The prayer of all who care for (and about) you is that you will be brought safely through the wilderness and that you will walk, wounded but also renewed, into the sunrise of Easter Day.

*One day we too will speak of the dawning of Easter Day and the resurrection that God has brought about in our lives. We will speak and say that Christ has risen, he has risen indeed. Alleluia." ***

My love to you all and if you'd like a chat at any time it would be lovely to talk with you!

May God bless you.

Katharine Smith

** Susan Howatch: "A Question of Integrity"
Warner Books 1998 ISBN 0 7515 2280*

*** Katharine Smith. Angels in the Wilderness – hope and recovery in depression.
Redemptorist Publications 2010 ISBN 978 0 85231 374 9*

A request from The Open Door



Please may I ask for your help in finding a new Treasurer for The Open Door (Taunton)? Open Door is a local charity providing a day centre for people who are homeless

and sleeping rough. Our organisation was set up by local churches 20 years ago and retains a strong support from churches and schools in and around Taunton.

We would like to ask local churches if they could inform people with a financial background about the impending vacancy of Honorary Treasurer.

I'd be happy to have an informal chat with anyone interested in learning more about this voluntary post. Our website has details of what would be involved <https://www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk/news/>

Thank you for helping in our search to find someone who could help us in this important role.

Jonathan Sladden
Chair of Trustees
01823 288973 or 07745 406419

From David Smart

David spotted this poem in 2007 and would like to share it with you. A little research reveals that it was written by Tom Wright. He is an English New Testament scholar, Pauline theologian and Anglican bishop. He was the Bishop of Durham from 2003 to 2010.

"On the seventh day God rested
in the darkness of the tomb;
Having finished on the sixth day
all his work of joy and doom.

Now the Word had fallen silent,
and the water had run dry,
The bread had all been scattered,
and the light had left the sky.

The flock had lost its shepherd,
and the seed was sadly sown,
The courtiers had betrayed their king,
and nailed him to his throne.

O Sabbath rest by Calvary,
O calm of tomb below,
Where the grave-clothes and the spices
cradle him we do not know!

Rest you well, beloved Jesus,
Caesar's Lord and Israel's King,
In the brooding of the Spirit,
in the darkness of the spring."

N.T. Wright, The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is



A prayer before silence

Loving God,
we seek your presence in the silence beyond words
looking to you for comfort,
strength, protection and reassurance
breathing with gratitude
holding on to hope
trusting with faith
that you are still God
in the midst of the turmoil
and that your love reaches
to the ends of the earth.
Be present with us now.

Amen.