

Service for Week 11th -17th March
2024 Sunday 5th week in Lent By
Chaplain Andy.



Opening Prayer

Living God, despite our faith there are times when situations seem hopeless, when we look

to the future fearfully wondering what good it can possibly hold. Help us to understand that the truth of resurrection is not limited to the future, to life after death, but is about the present, life now!

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

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

**Bible Reading John 12:20-33, and
v35&36 Jesus Predicts His Death**

Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."

Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. Jesus replied,

"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Verses 35 & 36

Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.

Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light."

Amen

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

As we approach Easter our bible reading tells us how Jesus knew what was going to happen to him. In his ministry travelling around the country with his disciples teaching and healing he had avoided going to Jerusalem because he knew that it was there that he would meet his fate. He tried to tell and warn his disciples about the future. How he would be put to death, the thought of which they found very hard to comprehend and accept.

Jesus explains this using an example which being from a rural, agriculturally based society they could understand. He tells them that it is like a kernel (seed) of wheat which unless it dies and falls to the ground will not produce new wheat plants. (In fact, seeds do not actually die but remain dormant. The oldest seeds ever found remained dormant for 32,000 years buried in permafrost in Siberia.)

Jesus goes on to explain that our selfish ego's must 'die' in order to find a new way of living both when we are alive in this world and forever in eternal life with God when we die.

Jesus then has a conversation with himself which takes the form of questioning why he should go to Jerusalem when he knows full well what is going to happen to him there. Should I ask God to save me? he asks himself. The answer that he gives is 'No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour' In other words he is going to Jerusalem and he is not going to ask God to save him, because he is now at that point in his life and mission when he must submit to the will of the people and authorities which is a vital part of why he came.

A final part of Jesus' teaching is that like the wheat seed that, although it has fallen lifeless from the plant it will in time produce many new plants. Jesus says – 'when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself' to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Then Jesus told his disciples and tells us today as we approach this time of Easter. 'Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The person who walks in the dark does not know where they are going.'

Amen

Closing Prayer.

Lord Jesus, teach me to put my hand in yours and to walk with you wherever you may lead, knowing that you will walk by my side, this day and always. **Amen.**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett