

Service for Week 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter By Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ

We were not there as they pressed a crown of thorns on your head. As you suffered on the cross, or as you appeared to the disciples following your resurrection, yet we can know you as much as any who were there for you are with us now. Thank you for your living presence.

**Amen**

*Say to yourself- The Lord's Prayer  
Our Father who art in heaven.....*

**Amen**

**Bible Reading Acts 3:12-19**

### **Peter heals a man and the people are surprised.**

When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you.

You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through

him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

"Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

**Second Reading 1 John 3:1-7**

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.

But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

*Holy words, Holy wisdom,*

***Thanks be to God.***

**Reflection**

After the events of last week when we heard that the disciples were locking themselves away, in time they came

out of hiding and started their own ministries by telling people about Jesus.

Following Jesus' example, they travelled about preaching and healing the sick. But in doing this they made it very clear they were doing it not to gain status for themselves but doing it in God and Jesus' name. And this is how the Christian faith grew before they had New Testament bibles or churches to meet in. They met in houses belonging to those that would listen to their message and there they repeated the teachings of Jesus. They told those that would listen that they should repent of their sinful ways and put their faith and trust in God.

Our second reading is from letter that the apostle John wrote to the early Christian believers and John tells them that if they repent and are sorry for their sinful ways then God will forgive them. He says if they live 'in God' they will be incapable of committing sin. They will become as John puts it 'children of God' That is not to say they will be in any way immature. It is more about the relationship that they now have with God. A relationship which can be compared to the relationship a loving parent has to their own child.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, the disciples spread the good news that recent events, rather than being the death of Jesus and the ending of

Christian faith it was just the beginning. Because Jesus resurrection opened up a way for those early Christians gathered in each other's houses, and for us today to find a special loving relationship to God. It also showed us a way of living without sin, because as John says 'no one who lives in him keeps on sinning'

From the disciple's early teaching and mission, today Christians make up to 2.38 billion of the worldwide population of about 8 billion people which represents nearly one-third of the world's population and is the largest religion in the world. In recent times there has been a drop in the number of people in the UK that would call themselves Christians or go to church, but numbers are increasing in other areas of the world.

It helps us if we can meet together in groups to learn through the teachings of Christ like the early church did. But when we are unable to do this, we can still enjoy a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. When we do, we become as John described it - 'Children of God' **Amen**

### **Closing Prayer.**

Loving God teach me to trust you always, to love you unswervingly and to honour you each day. Help me to know that though I may be tempted to give up on you, you will never give up on me. **Amen.**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett