

Service for Week 25th- 31st March 2024

By Chaplain Andy



Our Opening Prayer. Loving God in this Easter week we come to worship you and to remember everything that Jesus went through for us.

We marvel again at your astonishing love, how you endured the humiliation of Gethsemane, the agony of the cross. Not because you had to but because you chose to, you chose the way of humility, service and self-sacrifice.

Receive our praise and accept our worship as we to dedicate our lives afresh to you. In the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen**

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

Amen

Bible Reading Jn 19:1-8 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face. Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." When Jesus

came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

Jn 19:17-19

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle. Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Jn 19:28-30

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Jn 20:10-16

Then the disciples went back to their homes, but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (Which means Teacher).

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

We started this week hearing about Christ triumphantly entering Jerusalem on a donkey – but on this Friday all hope seems to have gone and it has ended with Christ's agonizing death on the Cross.

The account of Jesus suffering and dying on the cross is a very powerful one – although it is a harrowing and awful account –and we can hardly bring ourselves to think about it – we know that Christ suffered as we humans suffer – and because of this he knows our pain, knows our suffering – and many people draw great comfort from this fact. The fact of knowing the God is not some remote super power that has no understanding of us. Because he lived through Jesus a human life he understands us and is with us in times

of extreme depression and real physical suffering that we sometimes go through in life.

But we would be without hope, sad and depressed if the gospel account did end there with the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. But it doesn't end there! In our reading from John's gospel, we hear how Mary encounters the risen Jesus at the tomb, having at first mistaken him for a gardener. What convinced Mary that it was Jesus and that he had indeed risen from the dead was when Jesus says her name "Mary." He called her by her name just as he calls each one of us by our names.

We look forward to Easter Sunday and the knowledge that through Jesus' resurrection and His returning to God something wonderful happened, which gave us the reassurance that when we come to the end of this life we also will return to God in eternal life. Jesus' death and resurrection opened up a way for us all to experience a direct relationship with God which requires no intermediary 'a new and living way' (Heb 10:20)

Amen

Closing Prayer.

Loving God, help us today to use the message of the cross-
to remind those around us that your death was not the end-
only the beginning of new life.
In Jesus' name. **Amen.**