

Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

10th May 2020 - Fifth Sunday of Easter

Collect: Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

Psalm 31.1-5,15-16

- 1 In you, O Lord, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.
- 3 You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me,
- 4 take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.
- 5 Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.
- 15 My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.
- 16 Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.



A reading from Peter's first letter:

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation - if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Peter 2.2-10)

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (14.1-14)

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the

Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. **This is the gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, o Christ.**

Reflection:

1 Peter 2.5: *Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a royal priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

Our gospel reading today is familiar to many of us as we often hear it read at funerals. Jesus' words 'In my Father's house there are many dwelling places' offer comfort and reassurance that Jesus has prepared a place for us when we die. But, if we carefully listen to Jesus' words, he offers us a dwelling place already in the *here and now*. In our readings on previous Sundays, he has said to us: I am the resurrection and the life; I am the bread of life; I am the gate into rich pasture; I am the good shepherd – surely, all of these are intended for our lives now, into eternity.

Jesus' disciples struggled to get this. And perhaps, we do, too. So, Thomas and Philip are asking the questions on their behalf. And Jesus replies to them: 'How can you say, 'Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? ...Believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.' (14.9,11) Jesus is trying to get them to understand that when he goes to prepare a 'dwelling place' for us, for his disciples, it is for him to dwell in us so that we can dwell with him in the Father.

That's what Peter's words, in his letter, mean: 'Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a royal priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.' How can you and I be 'living stones', a dwelling place for Jesus, so that we, with him, dwell in the Father'? This is such amazing, mind-blowing stuff, that we struggle to get our heads round it, to understand it, believe it, trust and live it. I offer you a meditation, to ponder prayerfully, to notice what it stirs in you, in the hope that you find yourself more deeply drawn to Jesus. *Rev Jutta*

Meditation: A dwelling place: I like what I see

The father knocks on my door. Seeking a home for his Son.

Rent is cheap, I say.

I don't want to rent, I want to buy, says God.

I'm not sure I want to sell, But you might come in to look around.

I think, I will, says God.

I might let you have a room or two.

I like it, says God. I'll take the two. You might decide to give me more someday.

I can wait, says God.

I'd like to give you more but it's a bit difficult. I need some space for me.

I know, says God, but I'll wait; I like what I see.

Hmm. Maybe I can let you have another room. I really don't need that much.

Thanks, says God. I'll take it. I like what I see.

I'd like to give you the whole house, but I'm not sure.

Think on it, says God; I would not put you out.

Your house would be mine and my son would live in it.

You'd have more space than you've ever had before.

I don't understand at all.

I know, says God, but I can't tell you about that. You have to discover it for yourself. That can only happen if you let me have the whole house.

A bit risky, I say.

Yes, says God, but try me.

I'm not sure. I'll let you know.

I can wait, says God. I like what I see.

May you may know the Peace of the risen Christ, who came and stood among his disciples and said 'Peace be with you'. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. **Alleluia! The peace of the risen Christ be always with you.**

Here are the words of two hymns you may like to sing or pray this week

1. Be thou my vision,
O Lord of my heart,
Naught be all else to me
Save that thou art;
Thou my best thought
In the day and the night,
Waking or sleeping,
Thy presence my light.

2. Be thou my wisdom,
Be thou my true word,
I ever with thee
And thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father,
And I thy true heir;
Thou in me dwelling,
And I in thy care.

3. Be thou my breastplate,
My sword for the fight,
Be thou my armour,
And be thou my might,
Thou my soul's shelter,
And thou my high tow'r,
Raise thou me heav'nward,
O Power of my power.

4. Riches I need not,
Nor all the world's praise,
Thou mine inheritance
Through all my days;
Thou, and thou only,
The first in my heart,
High King of heaven,
My treasure thou art!

1 There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One.

*Thank you, Oh my Father,
for giving us your son,
and leaving your Spirit,
'til the work on earth is done.*

2 Jesus, my Redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb Of God, Messiah,
O for sinners slain.

3 When I stand in glory,
I will see his face,
and there I'll serve my King forever,
in that holy place.



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

If you would like to chat, please give us a ring:

Revd Jutta: 07958 360 564 Rev Cat 07530 412988 Roger Elmer 07810 274586
Sylvia Dickerson 07903 739487 Malcolm Gibbs 07906 663530 Mary Bullass 625135
Gloria Elmer 745590 Rev Jackie Sears 07962172639 Revd Pat Wright 01473 464748

Please pray for:

Those with chronic or long-term illness: Eric Dickerson, Rosemary, Adam, Jenny and Andrew Barfield, Kathy Steele, Frank D., Andrew Derrett, Peggy (Covid 19), Pat, Natacha, Christine, Stephen, Julie, Samantha, Jill, Rex, Molly Johansen, Margaret Christian, Marion (Val's sister-in-law)

Those undergoing treatment or currently ill: Mike Harding, Emily & family (9 years old with cancer), Juliet Adams, Matthew Hare, Gloria Elmer, Helen Harlow, Jean Dominy, Leslie Bloomfield, Pete Tanced, Val's niece & Michelle (Covid19), Katie (cancer), Peter (suspected cancer), Hazel Messenger (cancer, very ill), Jim (severe back pain), Richard (June's nephew)

All who are affected by the Coronavirus, their families and friends, in the UK and around the world; **for all health care staff, esp. those in care homes, and all who are working long hours in the service of others.** For all who are living alone and self-isolating.

For the work of Christian Aid, for all victims of conflict and natural disaster around the world, support agencies and peacemakers.

Those who have recently died, and their families mourning their loss, among them: *Phyllis Meadows* (former organist at St Thomas); *Fr Daniel Gooderham* (curate at St Thomas from 1962-64; aged 95. Keith Brisland stayed in touch with him,) **R.I.P.**



Birthdays this week:

Pam Everett (16th): Many congratulations to Pam on her 90th Birthday

Pray for members of the St Thomas Congregation (each week we will include a dozen names)

Rosemary, Judith Scott, Shirley Vivian, Angela Wardridge, Brian Ward, Audrey West, Natacha & Amber, Jill Wilson, Pat & Jan Wright

Online Church Services:

Sunday 10 May - 10am ZOOM Worship

Tuesday 12 May - 7.30pm LiveStream

**Meditation on facebook/
StThomasPilgrimCommunity**

Wednesday 13 May:

10 am Livestream Eucharist

facebook/StThomasIpswich

Sunday Worship Video & other Worship resources on the church facebook page.

Church Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/stthomasipswich/>

Church website:

<http://stthomasipswich.org.uk/>

Christian Aid Week 10-16 May

Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.

Contacts:

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Jutta's days off are: Fridays & Saturdays

Assistant Curate: Revd Cat Connolly

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Cat's day off: Mondays

PLEASE, support Christian Aid as the Coronavirus is creating extra danger and hardship in developing countries.

Go their website: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Or send a cheque (payable to St Thomas PCC) to our Treasurer, Emma Knight, Rookery Nook, Bullen Lane, Bramford, Ipswich, IP8 4JD, to say it's for Christian Aid week. Emma will collect the cheques and pass the money on to Christian Aid.