

**Readings & Prayers for
5th Sunday of Easter
10th May 2020**

Collect

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Readings

Psalm 31 1 - 5

1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.

2 Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.

3 Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,
for you are my rock and my stronghold;
guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.

4 Take me out of the net
that they have laid secretly for me,
for you are my strength.

5 Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

1 Peter 2 v 2 - 10

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. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

John 14 v 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.

Intercessions for 5th Sunday of Easter by Tony Daniels

Risen Lord, you remain our rock and stronghold particularly in these times of anxiety, stress and worry. We put our trust and hope in You in the certain knowledge that You are the way, and the truth, and the life.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

Dear Father, we pray for the world's leaders that they may use these times to come together in a spirit of cooperation, collaboration and partnership. In particular we ask that the knowledge, skills and research of the world's medical scientists may be used to find answers to the world-wide coronavirus endemic. Help our leaders to put aside national insular thoughts, so that the expertise may be shared for the benefit of all humankind.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

Keep us dear Father under the shadow of Your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low, that we may rejoice in Your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

Dear Father, you taught us to love our neighbours and to care for those in need as if we were caring for You. Today give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick and to assure the isolated of our love, and Your love. We pray for our own community, for the churches in our

town and their congregations and church leaders, and for the families and folk who live in Gullock Tynning, Somer Court and South Road.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

Dear Father, we pray for all who have been and are affected by the coronavirus. We thank you for the skills and dedication of those who are caring for them in hospitals and in care homes and in the community. We pray for those on our prayer list, for Rachel MacFarlane; Rhoda, David, Evan and Annie Dwyer; Judy Flook; Miranda Cooper; Rose Stenner; Paul and Margaret Knott; Irene Leet; Faye McDermott; Anne Hatton; Rob and Glyn Gilliland; Gerrard Monks; Trevor and Elizabeth Bell; Fr Roy Boots; Nicholas Hambleton; Mary Hickmott; Helen Plummer and Daniel Plummer; and Betty Chiplin. We also pray for those known privately to us and we bring them to you in the confidence that you love them and know their every need and that your healing power is still the same today. Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit: give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

We pray for those who have recently died, for their families and friends. This week we pray for Eric Mitchard and Steven Hillier who have recently died and in our year's mind we pray for (S) Leslie Maggs (M) Leonard Gunnings, Albert Rogers (W) Hilda Swain, May Stockley, Herbert Lovell (T) Thomas Gregory, Peter Gaffney, Martin Sawyer, Matthew Eyles, Norman Voake, Kathleen Howells (S) Philip Mead.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

Rejoicing in the fellowship of Mary, John and all the Saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love. Merciful Father *accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.*



Picture from Tony Daniels

Thought for fifth Sunday of Easter by Father Tony

One of the joys of going for our daily exercise walk has been to see the rainbows in many a window. They have emerged as a sign of, and tribute to, the NHS, whose workers, along with all the others who maintain essential services, deserve our weekly applause and heartfelt thanks. I am not sure how the rainbow has become an NHS symbol but of course the rainbow is a significant feature in the story of Israel of old, and so of our Christian heritage.

At the end of the story of Noah and the ark (Genesis chapters 7- 9) God makes a new covenant with Noah, sealed with the rainbow. On their side Noah and the human family are to care for the world and all life; on God's side he promises never to destroy his creation. The rainbow acts as a sign – a sign of trust that mankind can have towards God.

Trust is at the heart of today's Gospel too. It begins with Jesus' words: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled'. These words are repeated later (after the end of today's reading) showing their importance as being the nub of the conversation. It is important not to think these words are the same as 'Don't worry'. 'Don't worry' is often a simplistic, trite, even flippant response to a difficult situation. There are many who feel worried, anxious, about many things in the present difficult circumstances. How easy – and ineffectual – to say 'don't worry'. But Jesus says: 'do not let your hearts be troubled', that is: 'in the midst of all these worries hold on to your trust in me. I am with you always, to the end of time'. That is his covenant with us: let the rainbows we see in the windows be a reminder to us of this covenant, the assurance of his presence.

There is a fable, of course, about the crock of gold waiting to be found at the end of the rainbow. I've no idea where that comes from (though I suppose it is Irish folklore, as it seems to be mixed up with leprechauns!) It's a good story, because no one can ever disprove it, since

the end of the rainbow is always beyond our reach. How different the covenant between Jesus and his followers! His promise is not beyond our reach ('pie in the sky when you die' as early communistic opponents of the Faith described it). The promise is for now – "I am the way". Our Lord is not only the destination; not just our present companion; he is the very road along which we travel. And the paving stones are 'truth' and 'life'

The resurrection is the guarantee of the covenant between Jesus and us: our rainbow, we might say. And resurrection is not a far-off dream, 'somewhere, over the rainbow', but a present reality. So amidst the uncertainties and worries of present times, 'let not your hearts be troubled'. Follow along the Way, with Truth to guide you, and the Light shining upon you.