

GRIDIRON

The Newsletter of **St Laurence Long Eaton**

An Ebbsfleet in Erewash Parish

May 2nd 2021

Fifth Sunday of Easter

The Parish Mass 11.15 am

This Week in our parishes

Monday **Sts Philip and James** 10.00am Mass *at St Laurence*

PLEASE NOTE BANK HOLIDAY TIME

Tuesday **The Martyrs of the Reformation** 9.30am Mass *at Holy Trinity*

Wednesday 10.00am Mass *at St Laurence*

Thursday 7.00pm Mass *at Holy Trinity*

Friday 12noon Mass *at St Laurence*

Next Sunday 9th May **EASTER 6**

9.30am THE PARISH MASS *at St Laurence*

11.15am THE PARISH MASS *at Holy Trinity*

The Hymn List up to Sunday 16th May can be found on the News page of our Website

About today's Mass readings: Easter 5

First Reading: Acts 9: 26-31

Today's first reading continues the Eastertide series from the Acts of the Apostles, and is the first news that we have had that the Church has spread beyond Jerusalem. St Paul has received his vision of the Risen Christ and has joined the disciples, being baptised at Damascus. Then, according to his letters, he went off to Arabia for three years before going up to Jerusalem. Paul's arguing with the Hellenists (or Greeks) is a foretaste of his bringing the Gospel to those beyond the borders of Judaism. His fearless proclamation of the gospel message, both in Damascus and in Jerusalem, is a characteristic of work of the early missionaries. We have already come across it in the fearless proclamation of the message by St Peter before the Jewish authorities. It will continue throughout the Acts of the Apostles, even till the end, when we see Paul proclaiming the message during his captivity in Rome. How are we to spread the gospel fearlessly? Perhaps mostly by sticking up for Christian principles in moral behaviour, such as the protection of life, the rights of the poor and disadvantaged, fearlessly facing the issues of justice, war and peace, and morality. But above all it must also be a proclamation in love and peace.

Second Reading: 1 John 3: 18-24

These two commandments will dominate the rest of the letter, the reading of which we continue from last Sunday. They are not exactly the classic two commandments of the Law, reiterated by Jesus, to love God above all and our neighbour as ourselves. The two commandments of God here are firstly to believe in the power or name of the Risen Christ, and secondly to love one another. One might say that belief in the power of the Risen Christ is an application of love for God, an aspect which is especially relevant during Eastertide. The saving power of Christ flows out from God's care for ourselves, and belief in it must both be a response in love and provoke love and gratitude. It must also make us fearless before God, full of the love which casts out fear, since the power of Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of God's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice for us. It saves us

from our own sin and disobedience. It brings also fearlessness before a hostile world, with the fearlessness of which we heard in St Paul's preaching in the first reading. It must also inspire fulfilment of the second commandment, love of neighbour. Such belief, issuing in love, form the criteria for knowing that the Spirit is dwelling within us, especially as we approach the fulfilment of the Easter message – Pentecost – at the culmination of the Great Fifty Days.

Gospel: *John 15: 1-8*

The Vine had long been a beloved symbol of Israel. It was used by the first Isaiah to express the Lord's complaint at the unresponsiveness of Israel; it was used by Ezekiel in his painstaking unpicking of the proud symbols of Israel; and then it was used by Jesus in the parable of the Wicked Vine-dressers (Mark 12:1-12) to shame the irresponsible current leaders of Israel. Now, in the Farewell discourse, prior to Gethsemane, it acquires a new dimension, the pain of pruning. The suffering of Jesus, however, is not the principal point here: disciples of Jesus must be prepared to bear the pain of pruning. The image is a powerful one. To an uninstructed onlooker the wretched, seemingly lifeless twigs left on the vines appear totally unable to burgeon in a few months into the rich harvest of grapes. The most powerful of all the aspects of the symbol is the sap pulsing through those apparently dead branches. There is all the difference in the world between those pruned shoots and the dead twigs scattered on the ground. Investigation into the heresies and divisions, the trials and persecutions symbolised by such pruning is all very well, but adherence to the vine, to Christ himself, alone gives life to the Church.

Collect:

Almighty ever-living God,
constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us,
that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism
may, under your protective care, bear much fruit
and come to the joys of life eternal.
Who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Fr David writes:

EASTER 5

SOCIAL DISTANCING ... A REMINDER

Please remember that we **MUST** adhere to the guidelines. You should only mix with others from your household in church, and there should be no social activity either before or after Mass. You should leave church quickly and orderly, avoiding any unnecessary interaction with anyone. Should you need to speak to Father David, for example, please stand aside, socially distanced from others. These instructions may appear difficult but, unlike the previous lockdowns, we are allowed to gather for worship, although many people, understandably, will decide to stay away. **Hand sanitiser** is provided in both churches, but **do feel free to use your own if you would prefer**. At St Laurence there is an automated dispenser for use on entry, but please sign the Track and Trace sheet before use, unless you 'check-in' with the NHS Track and Trace app, available in both churches. **Although we are now in the first stage of the easing of the Lockdown these regulations still apply.**

Please also remember ... that the communion greeting 'The Body of Christ', is said only once, and we all respond together, **Amen**. The instructions are that Holy Communion is then given in silence. **Please do not say anything when the priest gives you the host.**

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Until Covid restrictions are lifted there will be no set times for confession; please contact Father David for socially distanced appointments.

The May Intercessions List

is now available to aid our daily prayers – please take a copy.

Notices:

Requests for Prayers

The lists of the sick and those for whom we have been asked to pray include many names, some of which may no longer be relevant. Please look at the list for each parish and let me know if prayers are still required. If I haven't heard with regard to a name it will be removed from the list at the end of May. And don't forget to let me know of any new names that should be included. Too often someone will assume that someone else has told me if a person is ill or in need of prayers and I don't find out. **Father David**

Saints for this week:

Monday 3rd May

St Philip and St James, the Apostles

Philip was born at Bethsaida and started as a disciple of John the Baptist. After the Baptist's death he followed Christ. James the son of Alphaeus is also called 'James the Less', to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee. James, 'the brother of the Lord', was the first Bishop of Jerusalem after the events of Pentecost, wrote an epistle, led an austere life, and converted many Jews to the Faith. He was crowned with martyrdom in the year 62. St Jerome held these two Jameses to be the same person, and this was certainly the prevailing opinion when the feast of Philip and James was instituted in 560. Nowadays scholars prefer to divide them, in which case we could think of today as being the feast of Philip and James and James, but that might be a little confusing ...

Tuesday 4th May

The English Martyrs of the Reformation Era

On 4th May 1535, at Tyburn in London, there died three Carthusian monks, the first of many martyrs of the English Reformation. Of these martyrs, forty-two have been canonized, and a further 242 have been declared Blessed; but the true number of those who died on the scaffold, perished in prison, or were tortured or persecuted for their faith cannot now be reckoned. The persecution

lasted a hundred and fifty years and left a permanent mark on English culture. The martyrs celebrated today came from every walk of life. There were rich and poor; married and single; men and women. They are remembered for the example they gave of constancy in their faith and courage in the face of persecution. From 2001, there are also celebrated on this day the forty martyrs of England and Wales who were canonized on 25th October 1970 and formerly celebrated on that day. They include Saints Cuthbert Mayne, John Houghton, Edmund Campion, and Richard Gwynn, as well as Saints John Roberts and Ambrose Barlow from the Benedictine monastery of St Gregory at Douay (now at Downside Abbey in Somerset). To these recognised saints and blessed we must add the countless number of faithful Christians from all denominations during the dark days of the Reformation period who witnessed to their faith in the face of ignorance and bigotry.

A Spiritual Reading for the Fifth Sunday of Easter:

From a sermon by Saint Maximus of Turin, bishop

Christ is the day

Christ is risen! He has burst open the gates of hell and let the dead go free; he has renewed the earth through the members of his Church now born again in baptism, and has made it blossom afresh with men brought back to life. His Holy Spirit has unlocked the doors of heaven, which stand wide open to receive those who rise up from the earth. Because of Christ's resurrection the thief ascends to paradise, the bodies of the blessed enter the holy city, and the dead are restored to the company of the living. There is an upward movement in the whole of creation, each element raising itself to something higher. We see hell restoring its victims to the upper regions, earth sending its buried dead to heaven, and heaven presenting the new arrivals to the Lord. In one and the same movement, our Saviour's passion raises men

from the depths, lifts them up from the earth, and sets them in the heights.

Christ is risen. His rising brings life to the dead, forgiveness to sinners, and glory to the saints. And so David the prophet summons all creation to join in celebrating the Easter festival: *Rejoice and be glad, he cries, on this day which the Lord has made.*

The light of Christ is an endless day that knows no night. Christ is this day, says the Apostle; such is the meaning of his words: *Night is almost over; day is at hand.* He tells us that night is almost over, not that it is about to fall. By this we are meant to understand that the coming of Christ's light puts Satan's darkness to flight, leaving no place for any shadow of sin. His everlasting radiance dispels the dark clouds of the past and checks the hidden growth of vice. The Son is that day to whom the day, which is the Father, communicates the mystery of his divinity. He is the day who says through the mouth of Solomon: *I have caused an unfailing light to rise in heaven.* And as in heaven no night can follow day, so no sin can overshadow the justice of Christ. The celestial day is perpetually bright and shining with brilliant light; clouds can never darken its skies. In the same way, the light of Christ is eternally glowing with luminous radiance and can never be extinguished by the darkness of sin. This is why John the evangelist says: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to overpower it.*

And so, my brothers, each of us ought surely to rejoice on this holy day. Let no one, conscious of his sinfulness, withdraw from our common celebration, nor let anyone be kept away from our public prayer by the burden of his guilt. Sinner he may indeed be, but he must not despair of pardon on this day which is so highly privileged; for if a thief could receive the grace of paradise, how could a Christian be refused forgiveness?

Please remember in your prayers:

Those who are sick, especially: Kath Green, Jean & Alan Smith, Peter Wrathall, Syd Warren, Maria Perkins, Grace Fouracres, Emma Gallagher, Dexter, Vanessa Jackson, Jean Jarvis, Keith Hann, Ben, Jemima, and Kes Grant priest with cancer.

Those who have recently died : Keith Brocks, Rosemary Lancaster, Clive Henchcliffe and also those whose anniversary of death falls this week Edmund Walker, Cheverton Shrewsbury (p), Norah Elsie Hopkins, Arthur Summers.

Electoral Roll

The electoral roll is being revised this year, if anyone who is not on the roll wishes to be added please see Mary West as soon as possible because the revised roll has to be presented to the apcm on 16th May.

Contacts at St. Laurence

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Email. fatherdlm@icloud.com (Fr David's preferred means of contact is email if possible).

Churchwardens

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Website

For more about St Laurence, visit our website: www.st-laurence.net

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