

GRIDIRON

The Newsletter of **St Laurence Long Eaton**

An Ebbsfleet in Erewash Parish

May 9th 2021

Sixth Sunday of Easter

The Parish Mass 9.30am

This Week in our parishes

Monday 6.30pm Mass *at St Laurence*

Tuesday 9.30am Mass *at Holy Trinity*

Wednesday 10.00am Mass *at St Laurence*

Thursday **The Ascension of the Lord** 7.00pm Mass *at Holy Trinity*
and 7.00pm Mass *at St Laurence*

Friday 12noon Mass *at St Laurence*

Next Sunday 16th May **EASTER 7**

9.30am THE PARISH MASS *at St Laurence*

11.15am THE PARISH MASS *at Holy Trinity*

Hymns NEH (Green) :

Introit: 362 **Glorious things of thee are spoken**

Gradual: 143 **Spirit of mercy, truth and love**

Offertory 360 **Formly I believe and truly**

Communion 389 **Jesus these eyes have never seen**

Recessional: 377 **Immortal, invisible, God only wise**

(All can be heard sung on Youtube.)

About today's Mass readings: Easter 6

First Reading: *Acts 10: 25f, 34f, 44-48*

For the early Christians Jesus was seen as the Messiah of Judaism, bringing to completion the promises made to Abraham. It came as a surprise to the first Christians that the salvation brought by Jesus was meant not just for Jews alone but for all the peoples of the earth. This is the scene where it happens. St Peter has been prepared for it by a vision which annulled the Jewish food-laws. Then he was summoned to bring the Gentile Cornelius to the faith. Now, even while he is speaking to Cornelius and his household, the Spirit takes matters (so to speak) into his own hands and comes down upon Cornelius, almost a gentile Pentecost. Today also we are happy to think of our own group as the chosen ones, neglecting the breadth of God's love and desire that all people should turn to him and be saved. We can read again and again that Jesus actually went out of his way to welcome lepers, prostitutes, tax-collectors, and we still find it hard to believe that to God they are not 'undesirables'. God has no favourites, but it is much more comfortable for us to stay snugly wrapped up in our own neat cocoons.

Second Reading: *1 John 4: 7-10*

At the time of writing, the Jews regarded gentiles as 'dogs'. This did not mean beloved pets, for dogs were either frightening guard-dogs or filthy scavengers. The first reading today shows us God actually taking Gentiles to himself by sending the Spirit upon them. The second reading now meditates on the nature of that love. The old niggardly saying, 'I love him but I can't stand the sight of him', will not do if God is love itself and love itself is the nature of God. If God is not only the source of love and of life, but simply is love itself, even the distant 'wishing somebody well' from my heart is not enough. Would any of us be satisfied and comfortable with the idea that God doesn't actually like me but wishes me well in a distant sort of way? Love generates affection, respect, trust, a desire to come closer to the other. It is comforting to know that I am a child of God and can call God 'Abba', but the consequence is more daunting, that you too –

whoever you are – are also the closest member of my family, despite all your faults.

Gospel: *John 15: 9-17*

As we saw last week, the vine had long been a beloved symbol of Israel. It was used by 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. 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 Last Supper discourse, on the way 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 docked 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. The word 'commandment' often implies coercion and regimentation, and 'obedience' implies an unwilling or even a sulky child. In the case of God's commands, however, a commandment is a gift, indicating the way in which love can be expressed; and obedience is a way of seeking to draw closer to God by imitation. The lover seeks to act like the beloved, to be modelled on the qualities which are loved and admired. The commands of God are not random or domineering, but are indications of the ways in which we can draw just a little nearer to the infinite qualities which are seen in the creating and redeeming God. The generosity seen in the beauties of nature and humanity, in the beauty of tolerance and forgiveness are reflections of the divine qualities. This is how Jesus kept his Father's commandments and remained in his love, and how we too may do the same.

indications of the ways in which we can draw just a little nearer to the infinite qualities which are seen in the creating and redeeming God. The generosity seen in the beauties of nature and humanity, in the beauty of tolerance and forgiveness are reflections of the divine qualities. This is how Jesus kept his Father's commandments and remained in his love, and how we too may do the same. It might even be said that Jesus needed to suffer so that we might see that God too can endure suffering. Suffering and the supreme suffering of death are human experiences which cannot be predicated of God, and so Jesus himself took them on to share and ennoble these also. Jesus showed his love of the Father and his love of humanity by adopting and enduring the experiences which cannot touch an impassive God. Such is the full meaning of the love expressed by 'as the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.'

Collect:

Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honour of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Fr David writes:

EASTER 6

SOCIAL DISTANCING ... A REMINDER

Please remember that **we must still 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**.

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.

Gluten Intolerance/Coeliac sufferers

Ecclesiastically- and medically-approved communion hosts are now available in both churches. Please let a sidesperson/churchwarden know if you would like a gluten-free host. They will generally have been consecrated at an earlier Mass and kept securely in the tabernacle in both churches.

THURSDAY IS ASCENSION DAY

Mass in both churches at 7.00pm

ALAN SMITH

Alan died last Sunday, after a long stay in hospital.

Funeral arrangements will be announced in due course.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jean, Andrew and Edmund.

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**

Annual Meetings - Sunday 16 May following Mass

Please note that the Annual Parish Meeting (for the election of Churchwardens) and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held this year on Sunday 16 May immediately after Mass. The appropriate notices have been displayed on the church noticeboard.

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.

A spiritual reading for the sixth Sunday of Easter:

From the commentary on the second letter to the Corinthians by Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop

God has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation.

Those who have a sure hope, guaranteed by the Spirit, that they will rise again lay hold of what lies in the future as though it were already present. They say: “Outward appearances will no longer be our standard in judging other men. Our lives are all controlled by the Spirit now, and are not confined to this physical world that is subject to corruption. The light of the Only-begotten has shone on us, and we have been transformed into the Word, the source of all life. While sin was still our master, the bonds of death had a firm hold on us, but now that the righteousness of Christ has found a place in our hearts we have freed ourselves from our former condition of corruptibility.” This means that none of us lives in the flesh any more, at least not in so far as living in the flesh means being subject to the weaknesses of the flesh, which include corruptibility. Once we thought of Christ as being in the flesh, but we do not do so any longer, says Saint Paul. By this he meant that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; he suffered death in the flesh in order to give all men life. It was in this flesh that we knew him before, but we do so no longer. Even though he remains in the flesh, since he came to life

again on the third day and is now with his Father in heaven, we know that he has passed beyond the life of the flesh; for having died once, he will never die again, death has no power over him any more. His death was a death to sin, which he died once for all; his life is life with God. Since Christ has in this way become the source of life for us, we who follow in his footsteps must not think of ourselves as living in the flesh any longer, but as having passed beyond it. Saint Paul's saying is absolutely true that when anyone is in Christ he becomes a completely different person: his old life is over and a new life has begun. We have been justified by our faith in Christ and the power of the curse has been broken. Christ's coming to life again for our sake has put an end to the sovereignty of death. We have come to know the true God and to worship him in spirit and in truth, through the Son, our mediator, who sends down upon the world the Father's blessings. And so Saint Paul shows deep insight when he says: *This is all God's doing: it is he who has reconciled us to himself through Christ.* For the mystery of the incarnation and the renewal it accomplished could not have taken place without the Father's will. Through Christ we have gained access to the Father, for as Christ himself says, no one comes to the Father except through him. *This is all God's doing, then. It is he who has reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation.*

Please remember in your prayers:

Those who are sick, especially: Kath Green, Jean 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 : Alan Smith, and also those whose anniversary of death falls this week Alice Dole, Aleck Johnson, Sally Springett, Ron Guise, Sheila Fletcher.

Contacts at St. Laurence

Parish Priest Fr David Lawrence-March, Tel. 0115 946 4060

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

Churchwardens

Mr Simon Dew: 07970 397711

Mrs Jennifer Hulls 07971 478765

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Hall Bookings: Temporary Contact: Chris Ellis 07984 973983

Website

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

Contact us at: simondew.46@gmail.com