

# The Stratfield Mortimer Benefice of

St Saviour  
Mortimer West End

St Mary and St John  
Stratfield Mortimer

St John the Baptist  
Padworth

St Mary's Church of England School

St John's Church of England School

Diocese of Oxford



An El Salvador Cross as at Mortimer St Mary's School

## The Parish Sunday Eucharist *for* The Second Sunday of Lent 2024

25<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 10.00 a.m. at St John's Mortimer

and online at Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940>

A diagnosis of the end of a life is, of course, hard to hear and even harder to endure. At first it may seem that life is spinning with questions that are not easy to answer. And it may seem to call for an immediate new vision of life. There may be moments of disbelief: surely, this cannot be happening, not now, not to us. Inevitably, priorities shift and plans change and the days ahead are transformed. And perhaps a new piece of 'kit' may no longer seem so important. Time with family, friends and colleagues can seem to be a blessed gift and the news can draw people closer to one another. A diagnosis of 'mortality' has a way of stirring up even the last remaining embers so that we see things in a different light – perhaps not life as we wanted it to be, but life as it is. And, perhaps, in this light every day becomes again a treasure.

The Gospel story for this Second Sunday in Lent 2024 tells how the disciples first hear Jesus speak of his own persecution, suffering and death. And, of course, Christ found it necessary to repeat this message to his reluctant hearers. Although Jesus keeps, as it were, trying to open the door of understanding the disciples do not want to enter. Indeed, Peter responds by rebuking Jesus. So Jesus must in turn rebuke Peter for his crass and wilful misrepresentation. Mark's Gospel story recounts how Peter, who had just 'confessed' Jesus to be the Christ, soon went on to rebuke Jesus for simply explaining what being the Christ actually means. Clearly, Mark, the Gospel author, intends us to reflect on this moment when the impertinent disciple so wrongly undermines his teacher's message.

Jesus' teachings about his own forthcoming passion and death remind us how such moments can open before us a direction/a way we, like Peter, do not want to go. In such moments we can all find ourselves struggling with questions about 'existence' and 'meaning' and 'God' and, if he exits, what his 'ways' might possibly mean for us. Such 'conversations' can, of course, challenge us and change how we see things and change our values. Inevitably, it's a time to stop and look around and listen so that we can come to see and accept things, not as we might have thought, as they really are.

Mark's Gospel story does not see the need to record the details of Peter's behaviour because he trusts that the reader will quickly see through Peter and recognise what such misdirected and undermining 'resistance' looks and sounds like. It may sound plausible to Peter to say this will never actually happen. But why would it not? Perhaps Peter thinks it will not happen because Peter is convinced that the authorities could never allow such a thing to befall Peter. After all, Peter thinks he has given his everything and yet if what Christ predicts actually happens he would have to change his whole outlook and understanding of God, and of how God works in the world, and of what Christian priorities and Christian discipleship are all about, and of what the Church is actually for. Otherwise how could Peter possibly go on to have a future working relationship with the others as a disciple of Christ?

Of course, for Mark the Gospel story teller, Christ's 'diagnosis' of his death is a call for all his disciples to change the way they see God and Christ and the world and to acknowledge that, whilst the Church is made up of faltering disciples and is a 'gathering' of hypocrites and sinners, the Gospel story tells of a 'saviour' who is willing to suffer and die out of love for such sinners and then to rise again to show them the power of love and the possibilities of reorienting our world – which is, in part, what is meant by the Kingdom of God. Mark's simple Gospel message is that Christ's discipleship is not an easy road, but entails an inevitable loss of life, a dying to self, a carrying of a cross, yet though this authentic discipleship we can be brought closer to God, to others and to our own true selves.

Mark's Gospel story's simple message is that Jesus did not come to save our dreams of what the Messiah, the Christ and his Church and our discipleship should be, but of how he loves enough to suffer this world's sinfulness in order that that love might, ultimately, heal and 'save' and build a new community of forgiveness. Mark's Gospel story's simple message is that Jesus showed us how to face up to and bear the painful realities of this world in order that we may live life well and without fear.

A diagnosis which speaks to us of our mortality is hard to hear and even harder to endure, but the Gospel message is that in the face of death God can reveal to us a new vision of life. It may not be the life we imagined, but it can be a new vision for a new reality. God bless, Paul

# THE PARISH EUCHARIST FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 2024

A very warm welcome to the Parish Sunday Eucharist.

An induction loop is provided. To use, please turn your hearing aid to T.

Gluten free wafers are available for those who need them. Please inform one of the vergers who will pass the information on to the clergy.

**Online:** If you are not able to come to St John's you are warmly invited to share in the Parish's Christmas Day Eucharist online. And may God bless and renew us as we join together to worship. **Thank you.**

**THIS 'HOLY MEMORIAL' is known by various names: 1) 'The Eucharist' - which means 'Thanksgiving' - because Jesus offered himself in love; 2) 'The Lord's Supper' - or 'Breaking of the Bread' - because we celebrate it as a shared meal; 3) 'Holy Communion,' - because we become one with Christ by receiving him; and 4) 'Holy Mass' - holy sending - because it gives us a mission: to go in peace to serve the Lord.**

**The 'objectives' of the Eucharist:** The community gathers for the public celebration of the Eucharist in order to worship God; ask his forgiveness for sins; thank him for blessings received; listen to his voice in the Scriptures; present the needs of the world and our own needs too; offer our lives to him and his loving service; gain spiritual nourishment and recharge our weakened spiritual batteries by sharing life with him in Holy Communion. The simple structure of the Eucharistic celebration is organized around achieving these goals.

## THE GATHERING HYMN

**Praise to the Holiest in the height,  
and in the depth be praise:  
in all his words most wonderful,  
most sure in all his ways.**

**O generous love! that he who smote  
in Man for man the foe,  
the double agony in Man  
for man should undergo;**

**And in the garden secretly,  
And on the cross on high,  
should teach his brethren and inspire  
To suffer and to die.**

**Praise to the Holiest in the height,  
and in the depth be praise:  
in all his words most wonderful,  
most sure in all his ways.**

## THE GATHERING

Priest           + In the name of God - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
All                Amen.

## THE GREETING - Words of Welcome and Introduction.

*The greeting proclaims the presence of the Lord with us.*

*The Penitential Rite, the Gloria and the Opening Prayer follow. The purpose of these preliminary rites is to help the people, gathered for the celebration of the Eucharist, to join with each other as a worshipping community, and to prepare to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist - the Great Thanksgiving.*

Priest           The Lord be with you.  
All                **And also with you.**

*The priest may introduce the Eucharist.*

## THE PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

*The Invitation to Confession - we call to mind our sins that we may repent of them / turn from them and ask forgiveness of God and each other.*

Priest           My brothers and sisters, let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion,  
and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

*A pause for quiet reflection follows.*

All                **Lord, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour;  
we are sorry and repent of our sins.  
Have mercy on us according to your love.  
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.  
Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **KYRIE ELEISON** is sung.

*The word 'mercy' in English is the translation of the New Testament Greek word 'eleos', which has the same ultimate root as the old Greek word for oil, olive oil, which was used extensively as a soothing agent for minor wounds, thus soothing, comforting and making whole the injured part. The Hebrew word which is also translated as eleos and mercy is 'hesed', and means steadfast love. The Greek words for 'Lord, have mercy' are 'Kyrie, eleison,' that is to say, 'Lord, soothe me, comfort me, take away my pain, show me your steadfast love.'*

**Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.**

*The Absolution*

**+** Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All**            **Amen.**

## **THE COLLECT**

**Priest**            Let us pray.

*Together we spend a few moments in silence, realising, and giving thanks, that we are in the presence of God our Father to whom we make our prayers. The prayer 'collects' our thoughts.*

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth,  
that they may return to the way of righteousness:  
grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion,  
that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession,  
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**All**            **Amen.**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

*The Liturgy of the Word consists of readings from the scriptures; a sermon/homily, which expounds the readings; the Profession of Faith, which is the Creed of God's people; and the Prayer of the Faithful or General Intercessions in which the people of God intercede for all humankind and all creation.*

*In the Liturgy of the Word God speaks to us of redemption and salvation and nourishes us with his 'word.' We are not only listening to past history. The God who speaks to Israel and to the early Church speaks to us today through the power of the Holy Spirit working within us as we listen to him and as he reveals the pattern for our lives. 'The word of God is something alive and active: it cuts like any double edged sword but more finely...it can judge the secret emotions and thoughts' (The Letter to the Hebrews 4:12).*

### **THE FIRST READING – ROMANS 4: 20 – 25.** To be read by Sarah Theaker.

**Reader**            A reading from The Letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Abraham's faith did not leave him, and he did not doubt God's promise; his faith filled him with power, and he gave praise to God. He was absolutely sure that God would be able to do what he had promised. That is why Abraham, through faith, 'was accepted as righteous by God.' The words 'he was accepted as righteous' were not written for him alone. They were written also for us who are to be accepted as righteous, who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from death. Because of our sins he was handed over to die, and he was raised to life in order to put us right with God.

*At the end of the reading:*

**Reader**            This is the word of the Lord.

**All**                **Thanks be to God.**

*Now we prepare to hear the Gospel (the Good News) and acknowledge that we are his people and called to be part of his mission to the world inasmuch as we share his message and his life with faith, hope and love.*

### **THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Cantor**            Praise to you O Christ, King of eternal glory.

**All**                **Praise to you O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

Harden not your hearts,  
but listen to the Lord.

**All**                **Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

### **THE GOSPEL READING – ST MARK'S GOSPEL 8: 31 – 38.**

The Lord be with you.

**All**                **And also with you .**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Mark.

**All**                **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

*At the end of the Gospel:*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **THE SERMON**

*We are a Eucharistic community - united around word and sacrament. Through the readings God has spoken to his people of his redeeming love and of the nourishment which his Spirit gives. The sermon reflects on our readings and relates them to our Eucharistic celebration and to our ordinary daily life.*

*After the sermon there may be a short period of silent reflection.*

## **THE PROFESSION OF CHRISTIAN FAITH - THE CREED**

*We make the profession of faith in response to the word of God written in the Gospels and spoken in the sermon. We testify that God is our Father who gives us new life through his Son and who calls us together in the power of his Spirit to be a Eucharistic people, a 'thanksgiving people', a living community of his abiding self-giving love.*

**All We believe and trust in God the Father who made the world.**

**We believe and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world.**

**We believe and trust in the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God. Amen**

## **THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL OR GENERAL INTERCESSION**

*We are invited to pray for all people and for all creation and for the needs of the Church's mission in bringing Christ's Gospel to the world. Through baptism we have been made one with Christ, our great high priest, and we share in his prayer before the Father for the needs of the Church's mission to the world and for of people. Our prayer flows from our listening to the Gospel and sermon by which we have been made more aware of our Christian commitment.*

*This Prayer of the Faithful, or General Intercession, is announced and consists of a series of intercessions; we pray for the universal Church and its mission and for our bishop and for our benefice - our parishes and our two Church schools; for the world, for our Queen and country, for our local communities, families and friends; for the sick and suffering and for all in pain; and we remember those who have died. And in communion with Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all the Saints of God we entrust one another and all people and all creation to God's saving love.*

**Priest My brothers and sisters, in the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ Jesus,  
let us pray to our Lord and heavenly Father.**

*The deacon or minister continues:*

For the Church that it may be faithful to Christ and to the world it is called to serve. For Justin our Archbishop; for Stephen Archbishop of York; for Steven our bishop; for Olivia our area bishop; for our benefice and for our schools of St Mary's and St John's; for those considering their next step in faith and for those preparing for baptism and confirmation and new ministry in Christ and for their teachers and sponsors...

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of compassion,

**All Hear our prayer.**

For Charles our King; for our Government; for Parliament; for our District and Village Councils; for all in authority and for the peace of the world, that justice may prevail and that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among all peoples...

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of compassion,

**All Hear our prayer.**

For our families; for our friends; for our neighbours; and for all our relationships and that we may serve Christ in one another and love others as Christ loves us...

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of compassion,

**All Hear our prayer.**

For the poor; for the persecuted; for refugees; for all in danger; for all who suffer the consequences of conflict and war; for the bereaved and for all who mourn; for the sick and for all who suffer...

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of compassion,

**All** Hear our prayer.

For those who have died recently...; for all past parishioners; for all our loved ones gone before us... that they may know the joy of the resurrection,

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of compassion,

**All** Hear our prayer.

For ourselves and for grace to amend our lives that Lent 2024 may be a Springtime for our life in Christ,

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of compassion,

**All** Hear our prayer.

In communion with Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all the Saints,

Let us pray to the Lord

Lord of compassion,

**All** Hear our prayer.

Priest Merciful Father,  
**You have taught us through your Son to draw close to you  
in prayer, fasting and acts of generosity;  
bless our Lenten discipline and when we fall by our weakness  
raise us up by your mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**All** Amen.

## THE LITURGY OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

*At the Last Supper Christ "took some bread and when he had given thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying "This is my body which will be given for you; do this in remembrance of me". He did the same with the cup..." (Luke22:19-20). The Church, joyfully obedient to the Lord's command, celebrates the Eucharist taking care that our 'liturgy' corresponds to the words and actions of Christ: 1) Taking bread and wine - we take our own gifts to the Altar, such as our time and talents and our money for the poor and for ministry. 2) Giving thanks (the meaning of the word Eucharist) - in the Eucharistic Prayer the priest, in the name of us all, says the great hymn of our thanksgiving to God for the whole work of salvation, in which the offerings become the Body and Blood of Christ. 3) The breaking of the one bread is a sign of the unity of the faithful – a sign of the unity which comes through sharing in Christ. 4) And in Holy Communion we receive Christ. In this way, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, the Church tries to carry out what the Lord asked his disciples to do in remembrance of him.*

## THE PEACE

*We acknowledge and give thanks for our unity with one another in Jesus Christ our Lord, which his death and resurrection have brought to us. He is the peace between us. The sign of peace echoes Christ's own resurrection greeting to his disciples. Before we share in the same bread we express our love for one another in Christ and pray for peace and unity (cf Luke 1.78,79).*

Priest Since we are justified by faith,  
we have peace with God  
through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has given us access to his grace.

*Romans 5.1,2*

**All** The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**And also with you.**

## THE OFFERTORY HYMN

**Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,  
if thou wouldst my disciple be;  
deny thyself, the world forsake,  
and humbly follow after me.**

**Take up thy cross: let not its weight  
fill thy weak spirit with alarm;  
his strength shall bear thy spirit up,  
and brace thy heart, and nerve thine arm.**

**Take up thy cross then in his strength,  
and calmly every danger brave;  
'twill guide thee to a better home,  
and lead to victory o'er the grave.**

**Take up thy cross and follow Christ,  
nor think till death to lay it down;  
for only they who bear the cross  
may hope to wear the glorious crown.**

**To thee, great Lord, the One in Three,  
all praise for evermore ascend:  
O grant us in our home to see  
the heavenly life that knows no end.**

## **THE PRESENTATION AND PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS**

*The peoples' gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar. The offerings of money is made and promised to support the wider ministry and work of the Church. Taking the Gifts: We give thanks to God for the gifts in the following words.*

### **BREAD**

Priest Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.  
All **Blessed be God for ever.**

### **WINE**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the cup of salvation.  
All **Blessed be God for ever.**

### **OUR TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURE/MONEY**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have the gifts of our time, talents and money to offer. May our offerings of our gifts be a sincere sign of our gratitude and our dedication to your service.  
All **Blessed be God for ever.**

*The priest prays quietly: Lord God, we ask you to receive us and be pleased with the sacrifice we offer you with humble, contrite and thankful hearts.*

*The priest washes hands as an act of cleanliness and as an expression of the desire for inward purification, praying quietly: Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin.*

## **PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

Priest Pray my brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God,  
the Almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name,  
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

Priest Amen.

Priest Heavenly Father, strengthen us with the bread of life and so fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that we may undertake those Lenten works of penance and charity  
which transform lives and renew spirits.

All **Amen.**

## **THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

*The Eucharistic Prayer is the centre and high point of the whole Christian celebration. This great prayer of praise and thanksgiving proclaims the wonderful works of God and through it we join ourselves with Christ in praise and thanksgiving to God the Father and in offering ourselves to him in union with Christ's self-offering on the cross. We express our share in the prayer, which is said on behalf of all the people, by listening inwardly and joining in the acclamations (joyful shouts or songs) and the Sanctus (the Holy, Holy, Holy which concludes the preface), the memorial acclamation and the great 'Amen' which concludes our Eucharistic Prayer.*

Priest The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

*In the Preface we praise God for his mighty acts:*

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise  
almighty God and everlasting Father, through Jesus Christ your Son.

For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance  
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline  
we may grow in grace and truth  
and learn to be your people once again.

Through fasting, prayer and acts of generosity  
you bring us back to your generous heart.

Through study of your holy word  
you open our eyes to your presence in the world  
and free our hands to welcome others  
into the radiant splendour of your love.

As we prepare to celebrate the joy of Eastertide,  
with joyful hearts and minds renewed,  
we bless you for your mercy  
and join with all the company of heaven  
for ever praising you and singing:

**All**            **Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

*We pray to the Father for the sending down of the Holy Spirit and recall the Lord's Supper.*

**Priest**        We thank you, loving Father, because when we turned away  
you sent to us your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

He gave his life for us upon the cross. He shows us now the way to live.

Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine  
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

On the night before he died, when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks,  
broke it, and shared it with his disciples, saying:

‘This is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.’

After they had eaten he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples,  
saying:

‘This is my blood, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this to remember me.’

So, Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.

As you feed us with these gifts, send your Holy Spirit upon us and change us more and more  
to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Help us, Father, to love one another, as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended  
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.

And now with the Blessed Mother, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist,  
and all your saints, we glorify your goodness, through Jesus Christ  
and in the strength of your Holy Spirit,  
today and for ever and ever.

**All**            **Amen.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

*The communion rite lays strong emphasis on peace, unity and our prayer for forgiveness. We come together to the Lord's table in accordance with the Lord's command, 'Take, eat... take, drink', as a community bound together by the love of God manifest in Christ. We can all be confident in Christ's mercy as we respond to his call to come to his table. Our communal recitation of the Lord's Prayer - the prayer he taught us - prepares us for Holy Communion with our Lord.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*We bless God and pray for our world, our communities and our lives to be shaped by God's will; we pray for daily needs to be met, for forgiveness for wrongdoings, strength to resist temptation and protection from danger.*

Priest Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All **Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*The priest takes the host and breaks it over the cup, praying quietly: 'May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.' 'Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread' (1 Corinthians 10:17)*

*Christ's gesture of breaking bread with his disciples at the Last Supper gave the Eucharist the name of the 'breaking of bread.'. This gesture signifies that we who share one bread and one cup are made one. The breaking of the Eucharistic bread becomes a sign of unity and charity as the one bread is distributed to the family of God's people.*

Priest We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

*The priest prepares quietly for Holy Communion. We may all join quietly in this prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit your death brought life to the world. By your holy body and blood free me from all my sins and from every evil. Keep me faithful to your teaching, and never let me be parted from you. Amen.*

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Priest Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. *cf. John 1: 29*

Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

*The sign of communion is more complete when given under both 'kinds' since then the 'sign' of the eucharistic meal appears more clearly. However, we live in exceptional times when, if you think right, communion may be received in one 'kind.'*

*The priest takes the host, raises it a little and shows it saying: The Body of Christ. And the same with the cup saying: The Blood of Christ. When receiving Holy Communion the response and assent to Christ is:*

**+ Amen.**

## DURING HOLY COMMUNION *the Choir may sing anthems, hymns and songs.*

**Anthem: 'My peace I give unto you.'**

*At the end of Holy Communion:*

**I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,  
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth;  
at Bethlehem I had my birth.**

*Dance, then, wherever you may be;  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,  
and I'll lead you all wherever you may be,  
and I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.*

**I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,  
but they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me.  
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John –  
they came to me and the Dance went on.**



**I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;  
the holy people said it was a shame.  
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,  
and they left me there on a cross to die.**

**I danced on a Friday and the sky turned black –  
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back.  
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;  
but I am the Dance, and I still go on.**

**They cut me down and I leapt up high;  
I am the life that'll never, never die;  
I'll live in you if you'll live in me –  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.**

### **PRAYER AFTER HOLY COMMUNION**

Priest Let us pray.

*The priest invites us all to pray that the Holy Eucharist will have its effect in transforming our lives and bring us all to God's kingdom.  
We pray together silently for a while before the Post Communion prayer.*

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:  
keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls;  
that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body,  
and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

### **THE NOTICES FOR THE COMMUNITY ARE GIVEN.**

### **THE CONCLUDING RITE**

Priest The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

### **THE BLESSING**

Priest Christ give us grace to grow in holiness,  
to deny ourselves, to take up our cross, and to follow him;

✠ And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you for ever.

All Amen.

Let us go in the peace of Christ.

All Thanks be to God.

### **THE RECESSIONAL OR SENDING OUT HYMN**

**O Jesus, I have promised  
to serve thee to the end;  
be thou forever near me,  
my Master and my Friend:  
I shall not fear the battle  
if thou art by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway  
if thou wilt be my guide.**

**O let me hear thee speaking  
in accents clear and still  
above the storms of passion,  
the murmurs of self-will;**

O speak to reassure me,  
to hasten or control;  
O speak, and make me listen,  
thou guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, thou hast promised  
to all who follow thee,  
that where thou art in glory  
there shall thy servant be;  
and Jesus, I have promised  
to serve thee to the end:  
O give me grace to follow,  
my Master and my Friend.

O let me see thy foot-marks,  
and in them plant mine own;  
my hope to follow duly  
is in thy strength alone:  
O guide me, call me, draw me,  
uphold me to the end;  
and then in heaven receive me,  
my Saviour and my Friend.

Please donate regularly to support the Church's mission and work. *The church here needs your help in order to serve our villages, our diocese, our nation and our world in the future. Our doors were closed due to Covid 19 and with no regular Government or Church of England funding the parish lost significant income. Please see the website to see how to give efficiently. Thank you.*

## **THE STRATFIELD MORTIMER BENEFICE LENT PRAYER**

As the days lengthen  
and we spend longer in the light of day  
grant that I may spend longer  
in the light of your presence O Lord  
and may those seeds of your Word  
which have been long buried within me  
grow like everything around us  
into love for you  
and love for all your people.  
Grant, Lord, that this Lent  
there may be a Springtime  
for my life in Christ. Amen.

