The Stratfield Mortimer Benefice

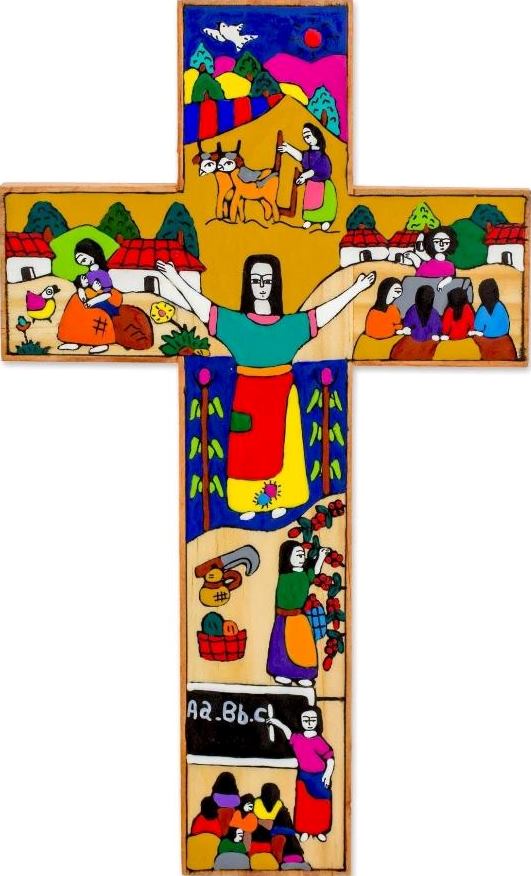
of

St Saviour St Mary and St John St John the Baptist

Mortimer West End Stratfield Mortimer Padworth

**St Mary’s Church of England School St John’s Church of England School**

##### Diocese of Oxford



The Salvadoran Cross was created in thankful remembrance of Maria Cristina Gomez, teacher.

##### The Parish Sunday Eucharist

##### The Second Sunday of Epiphany

##### 14th January 2024 at 10.00 a.m. at St John’s Mortimer

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

There is a legend that King Hieros II of Syracuse asked Archimedes – the mathematician, physicist, engineer, inventor, and astronomer, (287-212 BC) – to find a method to determine whether a crown was made of pure gold or of gold mixed with silver. One day when Archimedes sat down in his bath he noticed how the water rose and he got up and ran out into the street shouting, ‘Eureka!’ (‘I’ve found it!’)  Archimedes had found how to determine whether or not a crown was pure gold by comparing its weight to its volume. Thus, if one pound of gold and one pound of silver were submerged in water the silver would make the water rise higher than the gold because silver is less dense than gold and therefore, larger in volume, it displaces more water. So, Archimedes compared the volume of water displaced by the suspect crown with that displaced by a pure gold crown of equal weight to identify the pure gold crown. Archimedes might have spent hours thinking about a solution to his problem, but his ‘find’ came unexpectedly - as a joyful surprise. He must have noticed the water rise in his bath many times, but its significance didn’t ‘click’ in his brain – ‘the penny didn’t drop’ – until that ‘eureka’ moment.

The main theme for today’s readings is ‘vocation,’ which here means how a person is called to discern how to use his or her life and gifts to help others and build up our common life. And today’s readings remind Christians of their personal and corporate vocation to witness to Christ and his teaching through living whole, integrated and generous lives. And the NT makes clear that this vocation to Christ’s way, and to his discipleship, requires an ongoing response and commitment.

Our OT story describes how Samuel discovered he was called to God’s service and how he responded, *‘Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.’* There’s a simple message here which is whilst ordinary people, including the young, are called to serve within the community we all, like Samuel, need help and guidance in our discerning and responding.

Today’s Gospel story describes how John Baptist said to two of his disciples, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God’ as Jesus walked past and how he guided them to accept Jesus’ invitation to ‘come and see’ for themselves. Then, of course, Andrew brought his brother Simon along to meet Jesus and so the story goes on to describe the call of the first apostles. The point is that St John’s Gospel presents John the Baptist as a self-effacing figure whose role is to witness to Jesus by pointing him out and introducing him as the ‘Lamb of God’ **–** a powerful and meaningful title to his hearers. There will be a note about that ‘title’ below. Now, the Synoptic gospels simply recall that Jesus called the disciples away from their fishing to follow him (Mt 4:18-22), but in St John’s Gospel John the Baptist directed them to Jesus and so St John the Gospel writer appears to make clear his understanding of how faith develops in stages. First, we respond to the ‘testimony’ of others.  Then, having ‘seen’ for ourselves where the divine dwells - within individuals and communities - we move to ‘commitment’ which is based on our own experience.  Finally, our ‘conversion’ becomes apparent when we ‘witness’ through our lives and the giving of our time, talents and treasure for the common good. In St Andrew’s case his ‘conversion’ leads him to bring his brother Simon to Christ. And Jesus said, ‘You are Simon, son of John.  You are to be called “Cephas” / or “Peter.”’ Cephas is the Aramaic word for ‘rock’ while the Greek word for rock is ‘Petros.’ This kind of name-change was known in the ancient world (Gn 17:5, 32:28) and indicated the beginning of a new purpose with new relationships and new responsibilities. And so Simon’s new life is symbolized by his new name, ‘Peter.’ Perhaps we can see here a pattern for sharing Christ’s life and teaching **–** for ‘evangelization.’  The first people who came to know Christ well ‘introduced’ in turn their relatives, friends, neighbours and even strangers. Surely, according to that pattern we too must be ready for a lifetime of seeking and finding and growing in faith, with the help of our grace-discerning relationships, that we may come to new insights, eureka / penny dropping moments, and see new opportunities to celebrate and share the good news of the ‘Lamb of God’ and of the love, peace, justice, tolerance, mercy, and forgiveness that Jesus taught.

**‘Come and see’**

A famous sports coach was asked to speak about his leadership and he said the first thing he always did was to teach his team to behave as a family should and that meant loving each other, helping each other, and supporting each other. He told his players, ‘We are a family so use plural pronouns. It’s not about “me,” it’s about “us” and what we can do together… so don’t do anything detrimental to our family. If one of us fails we all fail. What happens to one of us… because we are a family. That’s my philosophy for sport and for life and that includes Church. We learn it from St Andrew. He teaches us that it’s our responsibility, our privilege and our joy to bring our brothers and sisters to meet Christ. That’s number one… And St Andrew brought along his brother.’

Two men, who had been business partners for many years met early one Sunday morning as they were leaving a coffee shop. One asked, ‘What are you doing this morning?’ The other replied ‘I’m going to play golf. What about you?’ The first man responded somewhat apologetically, ‘I’m going to Church.’ The other man said, ‘Why don’t you give up that Church stuff?’ The first man asked, ‘What do you mean?’ His partner said: ‘Well, we have known each other and been partners and friends for years and you have never asked me about going to Church. You have never invited me to go with you. Obviously, it doesn’t mean that much to you.’ That’s a fix we don’t want to be in. God bless, Paul

##### THE PARISH EUCHARIST FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

**14th JANUARY 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 CAROL**

**O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;**

**bow down before him, his glory proclaim;**

**with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,**

**kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.**

**Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:**

**high on his heart he will bear it for thee,**

**comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,**

**guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.**

**Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness**

**of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:**

**truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,**

**these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.**

**These, though we bring them in trembling**

**and fearfulness,**

**he will accept for the name that is dear;**

**mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,**

**trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.**

**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 fogiveness of God and each other.*

Priest My brothers and sisters, as we come together to celebrate the mystery of God’s love,

revealed to us in Word and Sacrament, let us call to mind our sins.

*A pause for quiet reflection follows.*

**All I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters,**

**that I have sinned through my own fault, in my thoughts and in my words,**

**in what I have done and in what I have failed to do.**

*The Absolution*

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

**All Amen.**

**THE GLORIA**

***Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.***

**Glory to God in the highest,  
 and peace to his people on earth.  
 Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
 we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
 Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
 have mercy on us;  
 you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
 receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,**

**you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
 with the Holy Spirit,  
 in the glory of God the Father. 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, in Christ you make all things new:

transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,

and in the renewal of our lives make known the glory of your goodness;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, 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 – SAMUEL 3: 3 – 10. 19.** To be read by Roger Jones.

Reader A reading from The First Book of Samuel.

*God calls Samuel.*

Samuel was lying in the sanctuary of Yahweh where the ark of God was, when Yahweh called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ He answered, ‘Here I am’. Then he ran to Eli and said, ‘Here I am, since you called me’. Eli said, ‘I did not call. Go back and lie down.’ So he went and lay down. Once again Yahweh called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, ‘Here I am, since you called me’. He replied, ‘I did not call you, my son; go back and lie down’. Samuel had as yet no knowledge of Yahweh and the word of Yahweh had not yet been revealed to him. Once again Yahweh called, the third time. He got up and went to Eli and said, ‘Here I am, since you called me’. Eli then understood that it was Yahweh who was calling the boy, and he said to Samuel, ‘Go and lie down, and if someone calls say, “Speak, Yahweh, your servant is listening”‘. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Yahweh then came and stood by, calling as he had done before, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ Samuel answered, ‘Speak, Yahweh, your servant is listening’.

Samuel grew up and Yahweh was with him and let no word of his fall to the ground.

*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 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

**All Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

We have found the Messiah *John 1: 41. 17*

–which means the Christ –

grace and truth have come through him.

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

**THE GOSPEL READING – ST JOHN’S GOSPEL 1: 35 – 42.**

The Lord be with you.

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

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

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

As John stood with two of his disciples, Jesus passed by, and John stared hard at him and said, ‘Look, there is the lamb of God.’ Hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, ‘What do you want?’ They answered, ‘Rabbi,’ – which means Teacher – ‘where do you live?’ ‘Come and see’ he replied; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day. It was about the tenth hour.

One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Early next morning, Andrew met his brother and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ – which means the Christ – and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked hard at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas’ – meaning Rock.

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

*The deacon or minister continues:*

Heavenly Father, strengthen your Church in the service of Christ that Christians everywhere may witness to the grace and compassion of Christ. Bless Justin our Archbishop, Steven our Bishop, Olivia our area Bishop, and our parishes and schools of St Mary’s and St John’s that we may be equipped for the mission before us**…**

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, bless Charles our King and give grace to our Government, to our Parliament, to our District and Village Councils, and to all in authority that they may govern with justice and wisdom and seek always the common good**…**

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we pray to you for all who are suffering the consequences of conflict and war**…**

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, bless us, and our families and friends, and all our relationships that we may serve Christ in one another and love others as he loves us**…**

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we pray to you for all who are suffering today**…** May the love of Christ bring them comfort and may the hope of the resurrection bring them peace

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we commend to you all who have died recently**…** As you have fulfilled in them the purpose of your love, so bring us, at the last, to be with them in love’s eternal joy.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, in communion with Mary, John the Evangelist, John the Baptist and all the saints, we commend all humankind and all creation to your unfailing love.

Priest Merciful Father,

**All Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. 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 Christ is the Prince of Peace.

*Of the increase of his government and of peace cf Isaiah 9.*

*there shall be no end.*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**All And also with you.**

**THE OFFERTORY CAROL**

**Bethlehem, what greater city**

**can in fame with you compare?**

**For the gracious God of heaven**

**chose to meet our people there.**

**From the East come men of learning,**

**rich the treasures that they hold** –

**tributes to a greater wisdom,**

**gifts of incense, myrrh and gold.**

**Sacrifice, redeemer, saviour!**

**Incense shows that God has come,**

**gold, our mighty king proclaims him,**

**myrrh foretells his silent tomb.**

**Jesus Christ, to you be glory,**

**Lord of lords whom we adore**

**with the Father and the Spirit:**

**God be praised for evermore!**

**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 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, nourish us with the bread of heaven

and so fill us with your Spirit that we may be one in Christ

and continue his work in peace and love.

**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.*

PriestThe 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:*

Father, we give you thanks because through Christ

a light has dawned upon our world,

that people everywhere may be delivered from darkness

to behold the radiant glory of your love.

Therefore we rejoice with all the company of heaven

to sing our joyful hymn of praise:

**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 Joseph, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist,

the Magi, 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: ‘The Time of Snow’ – Bob Chilcott

**Be still, for the presence of the Lord,**

**the Holy One, is here;**

**come bow before him now**

**with reverence and fear:**

**in him no sin is found –**

**we stand on holy ground.**

**Be still, for the presence of the Lord,**

**the Holy One is here.**

**Be still, for the glory of the Lord**

**is shining all around;**

**he burns with holy fire,**

**with splendour he is crowned:**

**how awesome is the sight** –

**our radiant King of light!**

**Be still, for the glory of the Lord**

**is shining all around.**

**Be still, for the power of the Lord**

**is moving in this place:**

**he comes to cleanse and heal,**

**to minister his grace.**

**No work too hard for him,**

**in faith receive from him.**

**Be still, for the power of the Lord**

**is moving in this place.**

**PRAYER AFTER HOLY COMMUNION**

Priest Let us pray.

*The priest invites us all to pray that the Holy Eucharist will have its effect in trsansforming our lives and bring us all to God’s kingdom.*

*We pray together silently for a while before the Post Communion prayer.*

Heavenly Father, you nourish us with your Word

who is the bread of life:

fill us with your Holy Spirit

that through us the light of your goodness

may shine in all the world.

We ask 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 The peace of God,

which passes all understanding,

keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God

and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

**+** 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 CAROL**

**As with gladness men of old**

**did the guiding star behold,**

**as with joy they hailed its light,**

**leading onward, beaming bright;**

**so, most gracious Lord, may we**

**evermore be led to thee.**

**As they offered gifts most rare**

**at thy cradle rude and bare,**

**so may we with holy joy,**

**pure and free from sin’s alloy,**

**all our costliest treasures bring,**

**Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.**

**Holy Jesus, every day**

**keep us in the better way,**

**and, when earthly things are past,**

**bring our ransomed souls at last**

**where they need no star to guide,**

**where no clouds thy glory hide.**

**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.***

**Note: The ‘Lamb of God’**

The ‘Lamb of God’ is one of the most meaningful titles given to Jesus in the NT.  It’s used 29 times in the book of Revelation alone. For the authors it sums up the love, the sacrifice, and the triumph of Christ.  For the Jewish readers and listeners it might have brought to mind five familiar ‘pictures’ of the ‘lamb’

1) The Lamb of Atonement (Lv 16:20-22).  A lamb was brought to the Temple on the Day of Atonement (‘Yom Kippur’).  Placing his hands over its head, the high priest ‘transferred’ all the sins of his people to the lamb.  It was then sent into the wilderness (as the lamb who takes away the sins of the Jews) to be killed by some wild animal.

2) The Lamb of Daily Atonement (Ex 29:38-42; Nm 28:1-8).  This was the lamb sacrificed on the ‘Black Altar’ of the Temple every morning and evening to atone for the sins of the Jews.

3) The Paschal Lamb (Ex 12:11ss.).  The Paschal Lamb’s blood saved the firstborn of the Jewish families in Egypt from the ‘Angel of destruction.’ The event was memorialized yearly in the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb at Passover.

4) The Lamb of the Prophets, an image portraying ‘One’ who, by dying a sacrificial death, would redeem God’s people: ‘But I was like the gentle lamb led to the slaughter’ (Jer 11:19.); ‘…like a lamb that is led to the slaughter’ (Is 53:7). Both, of course, Christians relate to the sufferings and sacrificial death of Christ.

5) The Lamb of the Conquerors.  The picture of a horned lamb on the Jewish flag at the time of the Maccabaean Liberation War was used as a sign of conquering majesty and power.  Indeed, the great Jewish ‘conquerors’ like Samuel, David and Solomon were described by the ancient Jewish historians as ‘horned lambs.’

And, of course, addressing Christ as ‘Lamb of God’ has become familiar to Christians as in the Eucharist when, at ‘the breaking of the bread,’ we address Christ in John Baptist’s words ‘Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy/ grant us peace.’  In this prayer Christians give expression to our deepest understanding of the identity and purpose of Jesus Christ who has come amongst us to be both our ‘Lamb’ and our ‘Lord.’ And, as he lived out his life humbly, lovingly and sacrificially, Christians believe and affirm that he came, in innocence, and continues to come into a broken world to ‘take sins upon himself’ and show us the way of forgiveness, healing and wholeness. And for Christians, of course, this is all celebrated, affirmed and ‘offered up’ in the Eucharist.

