

The Stratfield Mortimer Benefice of

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St Mary and St John
Stratfield Mortimer

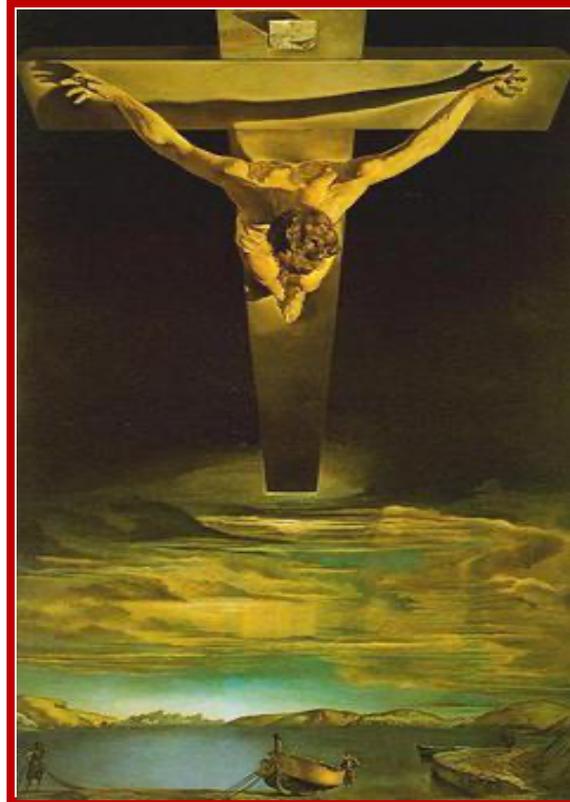
St John the Baptist
Padworth

St Mary's Church of England School

St John's Church of England School

Diocese of Oxford

The Celebration of the Lord's Passion



Good Friday 2021

2nd April 2021 at 2.00 p.m.

Online at zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940>

Prayer Thought: *Whenever we are in the presence of great suffering or death we find ourselves tongue tied, helpless, unable to find words that bring consolation. Yet, when we are brought to silence we know in our hearts that our 'presence' can be of much greater value than our words, both to those suffering and to ourselves.*

In such times we can only look in silence and share in the mysterious depths, the soul, of the other person. Something similar can take place within us on Good Friday as we remember the blameless Christ being taken to Calvary to be crucified, to suffer and to die. We can find ourselves seeking that same silence in our hearts so that we can be truly present to Jesus and to his mother in their suffering.

Of course, sometimes we might be baffled or even hurt when our reaching out and being 'merciful' brings misunderstanding and even suffering rather than the gratitude and acknowledgement for which we yearn. Yet, this happened to Jesus too, and, perhaps, when this happens to us we should understand that we are simply treading the path which Jesus took and taking up and carrying our own cross.

Whatever our shortcomings and misdeeds and sins when we find grace and trust enough to show mercy we are doing something which is Christ-like. For out of God's infinite mercy towards humanity he who was without blame took on himself our suffering and our sin.

When we ourselves do struggle to show mercy we can find ourselves in awe and wonder at the mysterious depths of divine mercy and astonished to discover how by his wounds we are healed. God bless.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION

GOOD FRIDAY 2021

This Good Friday 2021 we cannot gather together in our church buildings, but we can join online to hear the message of the scriptures about the Cross, to give thanks and to pray together for the needs of the world.

THE COLLECT

Priest Almighty Father, look with mercy on this your family
 for which our Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed
 and given up into the hands of sinners and to suffer death upon the cross;
 who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

PART ONE: THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 52:13 -53:12 - Read by Gwen Adshead

He was pierced through for our faults.

See, my servant will prosper, He shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights. As the crowds were appalled on seeing him - so disfigured did he look that he seemed no longer human- so will the crowds be astonished at him, and kings stand speechless before him; for they shall see something never told and witness something never heard before: 'Who could believe what we have heard, and to whom has the power of the Lord been revealed?'

Like a sapling he grew up in front of us, like a root in arid ground. Without beauty, without majesty (we saw him), no looks to attract our eyes; a thing despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering, a man to make people screen their faces; he was despised and we took no account of him.

And yet ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried. But we, we thought of him as someone punished, struck by God, and brought low. Yet he was pierced through for our faults, crushed for our sins. On him lies a punishment that brings us peace, and through his wounds are we healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each taking his own way, and the Lord burdened him with the sins of all of us. Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly, he never opened his mouth, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-house, like a sheep that is dumb before its shearers never opening its mouth.

By force and by law he was taken; would anyone plead his cause? Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living; for our faults struck down in death. They gave him a grave with the wicked, a tomb with the rich, though he had done no wrong and there had been no perjury in his mouth.

The Lord has been pleased to crush him with suffering. If he offers his life in atonement, he shall see his heirs, he shall have a long life and through him what the Lord wishes will be done.

His soul's anguish over, he shall see the light and be content. By his sufferings shall my servant justify many taking their faults on himself. Hence I will grant hordes for his tribute, he shall divide the spoil with the mighty, for surrendering himself to death and letting himself be taken for a sinner, while he was bearing the faults of many and praying all the time for sinners.

All This is the word of the Lord.
 Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 31: 2.6.12-13.15-17.25

**In you, O Lord, I take refuge.
Let me never be put to shame.
In your justice, set me free.
Into your hands I commend my spirit.
It is you who will redeem me, Lord. R>**

**In the face of all my foes
I am a reproach,
an object of scorn to my neighbours
and of fear to my friends. R>**

Those who see me in the street
run far away from me.
I am like a dead man, forgotten in men's hearts,
like a thing thrown away. R>

But as for me, I trust in you, Lord,
I say: `You are my God.
My life is in your hands, deliver me
from the hands of those who hate me. R>

‘Let your face shine on your servant.
Save me in your love.’
Be strong, let your heart take courage,
all who hope in the Lord. R>

SECOND READING: HEBREWS 4:14-16; 5:7-9 - Read by Viv Bailey

He learnt to obey through suffering and became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must never let go of the faith that we have professed. For it is not as if we had a high priest who was incapable of feeling our weaknesses with us; but we have one who has been tempted in every way that we are, though he is without sin. Let us be confident, then, in approaching the throne of grace, that we shall have mercy from him and find grace when we are in need of help.

During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard.

Although he was Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all that obey him the source of eternal salvation.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN

There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all.

O dearly, dearly has he loved,
And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming Blood,
And try his works to do.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory and praise to you, O Christ!
Christ was humbler yet,
Even to accepting death, death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name that is above all names.
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

+ GOSPEL: JOHN 18:1 – 19:42. - read by Alison Alderson & Peter Tanner.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN.

Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kedron Valley. There was a garden there, and he went into it with his disciples there, and he brought the cohort to this place together with a detachment of guards sent by the chief priest and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. Knowing what was going to happen, Jesus then came forward and said, ‘Who are you looking for?’ They answered ‘Jesus, the Nazarene.’ He said ‘I am he.’ Now Judas the traitor was standing among them. When Jesus said, ‘I am he’, they moved back and fell to the ground. He asked them a second time, ‘Who are you looking for?’ They said, ‘Jesus, the Nazarene.’ Jesus replied, ‘I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.’ This was to fulfil the words he had spoken, ‘Not one of those you gave me have I lost.’

Simon Peter, who carried a sword, drew it and wounded the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

The cohort and its captain and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him. They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had suggested to the Jews, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.'

Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who was keeping the door and brought Peter in. The maid on duty at the door said to Peter, 'Aren't you another of that man's disciples?' He answered, 'I am not.' Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together: I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught: they know what I said.' At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, 'Is that the way to answer the high priest?' Jesus replied, 'If there is something wrong in what I said, point it out; but if there is no offence in it, why do you strike me?' Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said to him, 'Aren't you another of his disciples?' He denied it, saying, 'I am not.' One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, 'Didn't I see you in the garden with him?' Again, Peter denied it; and at once a cock crew.

They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves or they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover. So Pilate came outside to them and said, 'What charge do you bring against this man?' They said, 'If he were not a criminal, we should not be handing him over to you.' Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.' The Jews answered, 'We are not allowed to put a man to death.' This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating how he was going to die.

So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him, and asked, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus replied, 'Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?' Pilate answered, 'Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?' Jesus replied, 'Mine is not a kingdom of this world: if my kingdom were out of this world, my men would have fought to prevent me being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.' Pilate said, 'So you are a king then?' Jesus answered, 'It is you who say it. Yes, I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this; to bear witness to my truth, and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.' Pilate said, 'Truth? What is that?' And with that he went out again to the Jews and said, 'I find no cause against him. But according to a custom of yours I should release one prisoner at the Passover; would you like me, then, to release the king of the Jews?' At this they shouted: 'Not this man, but Barabbas'. Barabbas was a brigand.

Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged; and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him and saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' and they slapped him in the face.

Pilate came outside again and said to them 'Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see that I find no case.' Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said, 'Here is the man.' When they saw him the chief priests and the guards shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him: I can find no case against him.' The Jews replied 'We have a Law, and according to the Law he ought to die, because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'

When Pilate heard this, his fears increased. Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus, 'Where do you come from?' But Jesus made no answer. Pilate then said to him, 'Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?' Jesus replied, 'You would have no power over me if it had not been given you from above; that is why the one who handed me over to you has the greater guilt.'

From that moment, Pilate was anxious to set him free, but the Jews shouted, 'If you set him free, you are no friend of Caesar's; anyone who makes himself king is defying Caesar.' Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and seated himself on the chair of judgement at a place called the Pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha. It was Passover Preparation Day, about the sixth hour. Pilate said to the Jews, 'Here is your king.' They said 'Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!' Pilate said, 'Do you want me to crucify your king?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king except Caesar.' So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be

crucified.

Then they took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull or as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle. Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross; it ran: 'Jesus the Nazarene, king of the Jews.' This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. So the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate, 'You should not write "King of the Jews", but "This man said: I am King of the Jews".' Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written.'

When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one another, 'Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to see who is to have it.' In this way the words of the scripture were fulfilled:

'They shared out my clothing among them. They cast lots for my clothes.'

This is exactly what the soldiers did.

Near the cross stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son.' Then to the disciple, he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home. After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly, he said: 'I am thirsty.' A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar, he said, 'It is accomplished'; and bowing his head he gave up the spirit.

We pause.

It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the Sabbath - since that Sabbath was a day of special solemnity - the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of one who saw this - trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth - and he gives it so that you may believe as well.

Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture: Not one bone of his will be broken, and again, in another place scripture says: They will look on the one whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus - though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews - asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate granted permission, so they came and took it away. Nicodemus came as well - the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time - and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, following the Jewish burial custom. At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a new tomb in which no one had been buried. Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was at hand, they laid Jesus there.

THE SERMON - Fr Jonathan SSM

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSIONS

For the Church

Minister Let us pray, dear friends, for the holy Church of God throughout the world, that God the almighty Father may guide it and gather it together so that we may worship him in peace and tranquility.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all the nations in Christ, your Son. Guide the work of your Church. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your name, and bring your salvation to people everywhere.

All **Amen.**

For every ministry of the Church

Minister Let us pray, for Steven, our bishop and Olivia, bishop of Reading, for all bishops, priests, and deacons; for the religious and for all monks and nuns; and for the ministry of each and every one of God's people.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy. Listen to our prayers and help each one of us in our own vocation to do your work more faithfully.

All Amen.

For those preparing for baptism

Minister Let us pray, for those preparing for baptism, that God in his mercy may give them grace to be responsive to his love, forgive their sins through the waters of new birth, and give them new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you continually bless your Church with new members. Increase the faith and understanding of those preparing for baptism. Give them a new birth in these living waters and make them members of your chosen family.

All Amen.

For the unity of Christians

Minister Let us pray, for all our brothers and sisters who share our faith in Jesus Christ, that God may gather and keep together in one Church all those who seek the truth with sincerity.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you keep together those you have united. Look kindly on all who follow Jesus your Son. We are all consecrated to you by our common baptism. Make us one in the fullness of faith, and keep us one in the fellowship of love.

All Amen.

For the tortured and the dispossessed

Minister Let us pray, for all who are ill-treated, for all who are tortured by the cruelty of others, for all who inflict pain, that God may comfort them and bring them healing.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you know the harm and pain which human beings inflict on one another. Help us to recognise the dignity of every person: stay the hand of cruelty; awaken in the hearts of persecutors awareness of the wrong they do, and in us all a hunger and thirst for justice.

All Amen.

For the Jewish people

Minister Let us pray, for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God, that they may continue to grow in the love of his name and in the faithfulness to his covenant.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and his posterity. Listen to your Church as we pray that the people you first made your own may arrive at the fullness of redemption.

All Amen.

For those who do not believe in Christ

Minister Let us pray, for those who do not believe in Christ, that the light of the Holy Spirit may show them the way to salvation.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, enable those who do not acknowledge Christ to find the truth as they walk before you in sincerity of heart. Help us to grow in love for one another, to grasp more fully the mystery of your godhead, and to become more perfect witnesses of your love in the sight of all people.

All Amen.

For those who do not believe in God

Minister Let us pray, for those who do not believe in God, that they may find him by sincerely following all that is right.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you created humankind so that all might long to find you and have peace when you are found. Grant that, in spite of the hurtful things that stand in their way, they may all recognise in the lives of Christians the signs of your love and mercy, and gladly acknowledge you as the one true God and Father of us all.

All Amen.

For all in public office

Minister Let us pray, for those who serve us in public office that God may guide their minds and hearts, so that all may live in true peace and freedom.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you know the longings of all people's hearts and you protect their rights. In your goodness watch over those in authority, so that people everywhere may enjoy religious freedom, security, and peace.

All **Amen.**

For those in special need

Minister Let us pray, dear friends, that God the almighty Father may heal the sick, comfort the dying, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and rid the world of falsehood and injustice.

Silent prayer.

Priest Almighty, ever-living God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. Hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need.

All **Amen.**

Priest Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Saviour gave us:

PART 2: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CROSS HYMN

**When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.**

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.**

**See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

A WOODEN CROSS IS PLACED IN THE SIGHT OF THE PEOPLE. THE FOLLOWING VERSICLE AND RESPONSE MAY BE SUNG OR SAID.

This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Saviour of the world.

All **Come, let us worship.**

THE REPROACHES - VICTORIA

**O, my people, what have I done unto thee?
Wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me!**

**Because I brought thee forth from the land of Egypt:
Thou hast prepared a cross for thy Saviour**

Hagios O Theos.

Holy God!

Hagios, ischuros

Holy, mighty!

Hagios, athanatos, eleison imas.

Holy and immortal,

have mercy upon us!

Because I led thee through the desert forty years,
and fed thee with manna,
and brought thee into a land exceeding good:
thou hast prepared a cross for thy Saviour.

Hagios O Theos.
Holy God!
Hagios, ischuros
Holy, mighty!
Hagios, athanatos, eleison imas.
Holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us!

What more could I have done for thee that I have not done?
I indeed did plant thee, O my vineyard, with exceeding fair fruit:
and thou art become very bitter unto me:
for vinegar, mixed with gall, thou gavest me when thirsty:
and hast pierced with a spear the side of thy Saviour.

Hagios O Theos.
Holy God!
Hagios, ischuros
Holy, mighty!
Hagios, athanatos, eleison imas.
Holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us!

HYMN

O sacred head, sore wounded,
Defiled and put to scorn:
O kingly head, surrounded
With mocking crown of thorn;
What sorrow mars thy grandeur?
Can death thy bloom deflow'r?
O countenance whose splendour
The hosts of heav'n adore!

Priest Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Saviour Gave 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.**

Priest **And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord from every evil, and grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety
as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All **For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Priest Almighty and eternal God, you have restored us to life
by the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ.
Continue this healing work within us.
May we who participate in this mystery never cease to serve you.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Priest Lord, send down your abundant blessing upon your people
 who have devoutly recalled the death of your Son
 in the sure hope of the resurrection.
 Grant them pardon; bring them comfort.
 May their faith grow stronger
 and their eternal salvation be assured.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

All leave in silence.

