



## 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



*'Ave Maria'*

# The Parish Eucharist

for the Second Sunday before Lent

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

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

**Prayer Thought:** How can we possibly relate to God? How can the divine relate to the human? How can the all-powerful relate to the vulnerable? What can the creator relate to the created? How can the infinite interact with the finite? The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke begin their poetic answer with the story of the birth of Jesus. But here's how John's Gospel puts it: *'The Word was made flesh and lived among us.'* Or as one Year 6 pupil at Mortimer St Mary's School once put it: *'Well, it's like the Word became flesh and blood and moved into the village and then came to our school.'*

For the Hebrew people it was the 'tabernacle' that represented the presence of God among them. The story tells how, on Mount Sinai, God told Moses to build a portable tabernacle where *'I will dwell among them'* and how, throughout the time of their wandering, the people carried the tabernacle with them as a sign of God's presence. Eventually they incorporated the tabernacle into the Temple building in Jerusalem to be the permanent sign of God's presence with them. Then, according to St John's Gospel, God chose to 'tabernacle' among us / to live among us in a new way - to *'become flesh.'*

But, when the 'tabernacle' of God's presence is a living, breathing, human being, you can't just cart God's 'presence' around from place to place or hide it inside the temple building and say who does and does not have access to that presence. It means that religious leaders can't pretend to be in control of God's presence or confine the peoples' encounters with God to times when they choose to open the doors and enter the temple building because Jesus might just show up at their daughter's wedding celebration or their friend's dinner party or their 'synagogue' - not if *'the Word became flesh.'*

But do we really want a God that personal? Do we want a God we run into while we're rushing to do our shopping? Who comes to see us unannounced? Who asks us to find time to do all sorts of strange things to help others? Who turns up and asks us to give and do good with our money and to pay it forward and encourage others to do likewise? Is that what 'paying it forward' means - that we are so thankful for the kindnesses and blessings we've received that we want to pay on those kindnesses and blessings to others? Of course, Jesus taught that - indeed, he taught that 'paying it forward' is a basic requirement for those who have received God's forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35). Do we want a God like that who lives in our villages, our work places, our communities, our friendships, our families, our homes? God bless, Paul

# The Parish Eucharist

*The present rules and guidelines about attendance, singing & speaking in churches will be followed carefully.  
This Sunday only the priest and the zoom operator may be at St John's church building.*

## HYMN

**The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;  
He makes me down to lie  
In pastures green; he leadeth me  
The quiet waters by.**

**My soul he doth restore again,  
And me to walk doth make  
Within the paths of righteousness,  
E'en for his own name's sake.**

**Goodness and mercy all my life  
Shall surely follow me;  
And in God's house forever more  
My dwelling place shall be.**

## THE GATHERING AND GREETING

*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 In the name of God - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

## PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

*We call to mind our sins to repent of them / turn from them and to ask forgiveness of God and each other.*

*The Invitation to Confession*

Priest *The grace of God has dawned upon the world through our Saviour Jesus Christ. cf Titus 2: 11*

My dear brothers and sisters, as we come together as God's family and prepare to celebrate the Eucharist, let us acknowledge and confess our sins and seek the forgiveness of God through Jesus our Saviour.

*A pause for silent reflection follows.*

Lord, we have sinned against you:

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Lord, show us your mercy and love.

All And grant us your salvation.

*The Absolution*

+ Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to everlasting life.

All Amen.

## THE GLORIA

*Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.*

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

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

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

### **THE COLLECT**

*Our priest invites us to pray.*

Priest            Let us pray.

*Together we spend a few moments in reverent silence realising that we are in the presence of God our Father to whom we make our prayers. The priest 'collects' our prayerful thoughts into theme of this Christmas Day celebration in the Opening Prayer, which is either sung or said.*

Priest            Almighty God,  
you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your hand in all your works  
and your likeness in all your children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,  
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.*

*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 of his plan 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 - The Book of Proverbs 8: 1, 22 – 31.**    Read by Peter Tanner

Reader            A reading from The Book of Proverbs.

Does not wisdom call,  
and does not understanding raise her voice?

*Wisdom's part in creation.*

The Lord created me at the beginning of his work,  
the first of his acts of long ago.

Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth,  
when there were no springs abounding with water.  
Before the mountains had been shaped,  
before the hills, I was brought forth -  
when he had not yet made earth and fields,  
or the world's first bits of soil.

When he established the heavens, I was there,  
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,  
when he made firm the skies above,  
when he established the fountains of the deep,  
when he assigned to the sea its limit,  
so that the waters might not transgress his command,  
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,  
then I was beside him, like a master worker;  
and I was daily his delight,  
rejoicing before him always,  
rejoicing in his inhabited world  
and delighting in the human race.

*At the end of the reading:*

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

*Now we 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**

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

In the beginning was the Word:  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

*John 1: 1*

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

### **THE GOSPEL READING - JOHN 1: 1 - 14.**

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

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.  
All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*The Word was made flesh, and lived among us.*

In the beginning was the Word:  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He was with God in the beginning.  
Through him all things came to be,  
not one thing had its being but through him.  
All that came to be had life in him  
and that life was the light of men,  
a light that shines in the dark,  
a light that darkness could not overpower.

A man came, sent by God.  
His name was John.  
He came as a witness,  
as a witness to speak for the light,  
so that everyone might believe through him.  
He was no the light,  
only a witness to speak for the light.

The Word was the true light  
that enlightens everyone;  
and he was coming into the world.  
He was in the world  
that had its being through him,  
and the world did not know him.  
He came to his own domain  
and his own people did not accept him.  
But to all who did accept him  
he gave power to become children of God,  
to all who believe in the name of him  
who was born not out of human stock  
or urge of the flesh  
or will of man  
but of God himself.  
The Word was made flesh,  
and we saw his glory,  
the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father,  
full of grace and truth.

*At the end of the Gospel*

**All** This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**  
**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

**THE SERMON**

*We are a Eucharistic community in word and sacrament. Through the readings God has spoken to his people of his redeeming and healing love and of the nourishment which his Spirit gives. Our priest now reflects with us on the readings of the day relating them to our Eucharistic celebration and to our ordinary life.  
After the sermon there is 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 love and care.*

**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 the needs of the Church and all people. Through baptism we have been made one with Christ, our great high priest, and we share in his intercessions before the Father for the needs of his Church and of all people. Our intercessions flow 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, our two Church schools; for the world, for our Queen and country, for our local communities and families; for the sick and all in pain, for all who are working on the front line at this time of Covid 19; and for the departed. And in communion with Blessed Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all the Saints of God we entrust one another and all people to God's saving love.*

**Priest** Let us pray for the Church and for the world and let us thank God for his goodness.

*The deacon or leader continues.*

Heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith, strengthen Justin our Archbishop, Steven our bishop, Olivia our area bishop, our benefice, our Church schools of St Mary's and St John's, and all your Church in the service of Christ, that we may be united in your grace and truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world...

Lord, in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen, our Government and our District and Village Councils. Give wisdom to all in authority and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and peace that people everywhere may honour one another and seek the common good...

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, Your Son shared the life of a family: protect in your love our families, our friends, our neighbours, and this community of which we are a part and may we serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us...

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we pray to you for all who suffer in body, mind or spirit...; give them hope; and bring them the joy of your salvation...

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we remember before you all who have died recently ...

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Heavenly Father, we rejoice in the fellowship of Blessed Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all your saints and we commend ourselves and all people 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...' (Luke 22:19-20). The Church, joyfully obedient to the Lord's command, celebrates the Eucharist taking care that our 'liturgy' corresponds carefully to the words and actions of Christ: 1) Taking bread and wine in The Preparation of the Gifts we take our gifts to the Altar. Gifts or money for the poor and the Church's ministry to the poor are also presented. 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. 4) And in the giving of Holy Communion we receive the Body and Blood of Christ as the Apostles did from his hands. In this way Sunday by Sunday and day by day the Church carries out in loving obedience to his command 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 and pray for peace and unity cf Luke 1.78,79.*

Priest            To crown all things there must be love, to bind all together and complete the whole.

*cf Colossians 3.14,15*

Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**All                And also with you.**

## **THE PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR**

*The peoples' gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar.*

*The offerings of money is made and promised to support the ministry and work of the Church.*

*Taking the Gifts: The priest gives thanks to God for the gifts in the following words.*

Priest            **BREAD**

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 expression of the desire for inward purification, praying quietly: Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin.*

## **PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

**We are all invited to draw near in prayer:**

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.

Gracious Father, accept the offering of your Church, the hearts of your people joined in praise and thanksgiving, and nourish us with the bread of heaven.

**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 by the priest 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.**

*The Preface praises God for his mighty acts:*

And now we give you thanks because you have revealed your eternal plan of salvation, and have shown your Son Jesus Christ to be the light to the peoples.

Therefore in our joy we sing to your glory with all the choirs of angels:

*The Acclamation    Sung by Sarah Theaker*

**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 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 Mary, the Blessed Mother of our Lord, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist, and all your saints, we give you glory, through Jesus Christ and in the strength of your Holy Spirit, today and for ever.

All **Amen.**

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

*The communion rite of the Church 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 love. We are 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**

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.  
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 entire Eucharist the name of the 'breaking of bread'. This gesture signifies that we who share one bread and one cup are made one. Through the breaking of the host the Eucharist is seen more clearly as a sign of unity and charity since the one bread is being distributed among the members of one family of God.*

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.*

## PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Priest Jesus is 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, for the time being, communion can only be given in one kind for those who can come to church. Whilst others join faithfully online. Please God, may we all soon be able to come together again to receive Holy Communion under both kinds at the Lord's table. 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.**

## ANTHEM DURING HOLY COMMUNION

**Ave Maria** (Gounod)

*The vessels are cleansed and put away. You may wish to join with the priest who prays quietly:  
Lord, may these gifts give me purity of heart. May they bring me healing and strength, now and ever. Amen*

*After Holy Communion we may keep a further period of silence.*

## 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 to God's kingdom. All pray together silently for a while before the Post Communion prayer.*

Priest God our creator,  
by your gift  
the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,  
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:  
may we who have been nourished at your table on earth  
be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross  
and enjoy the delights of eternity;  
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 May the light of the gospel of Christ shine in your lives and fill you with his joy and peace;  
+ and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

### HYMN

We have a gospel to proclaim  
Good news for all in all the earth;  
The gospel of a Saviour's name:  
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

Tell of His birth at Bethlehem,  
Not in a royal house or hall  
But in a stable dark and dim:  
The Word made flesh, a light for all.

Tell of His death at Calvary,  
Hated by those He came to save;  
In lonely suffering on the cross  
For all He loved, His life He gave.

Tell of that glorious Easter morn:  
Empty the tomb, for He was free.  
He broke the power of death and hell  
That we might share His victory.

Now we rejoice to name Him King:  
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.  
This gospel message we proclaim:  
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

