

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



Corpus Christi

The Parish Sunday Eucharist for Corpus Christi Sunday, 6th June 2021, at 10.00 a.m. at St. John's, Mortimer and online at zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940>

Prayer thoughts: This Sunday we celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi (the Body of Christ) and the Eucharistic life which is at the heart of the Christian way. Of course, we commemorate the institution of the Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, (see Mt 26; Mk 14; Lk 22; 1 Cor 11 cf John 6), but that's the solemn night before Good Friday and this extra celebration is a call to celebrate the sheer joy of Christ's Eucharistic presence with us.

Christians have always seen the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand as a 'prefiguring' of Jesus' giving of the Eucharistic Bread to nourish the spirits of those who believe and trust in him. That story tells, of course, of how it was only after the disciples had given Jesus what little they had that he could bless, break and give back to them in order that they could feed the hungry crowd around them. In other words, the message is that no matter how small or insignificant our gift or sacrifice may seem, nevertheless, when our giving and our sacrifice is united and at one with the self-giving sacrificial loving spirit of Jesus, it bears fruit. And it could actually be the very thing that Christ needs to use to satisfy the spiritual hunger of those around us. Perhaps St. Augustine said it best when he said of the Eucharist: *'It is your Mystery, the Mystery of your life that has been placed on the altar.'*

At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration is the Gospel message that true unity comes about through sacrificial love and that the true bond of community is the result of self-giving and sacrificial service. Perhaps St John Chrysostom gets to the heart of this message when he asks: *'What is the Bread actually? It is the Body of Christ. What do communicants become? Communicants become the Body of Christ. For just as the bread comes from many grains, which remain themselves and are not distinguished from one another because they are united, so we are united with Christ.'* In other words, just as many grains of wheat are pounded together to make the bread, and many grapes are crushed together to make the wine, so we are unified and made fit for Christ's purpose when we unite together with him in self-giving sacrifice. Simply put: our simple Eucharistic meal of bread and wine shows us how we need to seek and find union with God in Christ and with one another if we are to learn how to share life and allow God to transform us into being members together of the living Body of Christ - fit to continue his good mission. St Paul reminds us that it is when we come to see Christ as the 'Head' and one another as together members of his 'Body' that we become one in mission and purpose. In straightforward terms, what unites is the willingness to give lovingly and sacrificially of ourselves - and of our time and talents and treasure - for God's good work in the care of others and creation. All this is symbolized in the Eucharist and in our sharing in the same Bread and Cup. And, as our 'Holy Communion' strengthens our sense of unity with and love for God, for others, and for ourselves too, so we recognise just how it is that we need to bear/carry Christ and his blessings and gifts to others in agape/love, in mercy, in forgiveness and in humble, generous, and self-giving sacrificial service. Again, perhaps St Augustine put it best when, in giving thanks for Eucharistic life, he exclaimed: *'O Sacrament of devotion! O Sign of unity! O Bond of charity/love!'* God bless.

The Parish Sunday Eucharist for Corpus Christi Sunday 2021

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.

If you are not able to come to St John's please do share in this online service from your own home. May God bless us as we worship together. The present rules and guidelines about attendance, distancing, singing & speaking in churches will be followed carefully.

HYMN

**O thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray
that all thy Church might be for ever one,
grant us at every Eucharist to say
with longing heart and soul, 'thy will be done.'
O may we all one Bread, one Body be,
through this blest Sacrament of unity.**

**For all thy Church, O Lord, we intercede;
make thou our sad divisions soon to cease;
draw us the nearer each to each, we plead,
by drawing all to thee, O Prince of Peace;
thus may we all one Bread, one Body be,
through this blest Sacrament of unity.**

THE GATHERING

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

The priest may introduce the Eucharist.

THE 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.

All The Lord be with you
 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.*

As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of God's love,
revealed in Word and Sacrament,
let us call to mind our sins.

A pause for silent 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

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

THE GLORIA

**Glory to God, glory to God,
Glory to the Father!
Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to the Father!
To God be glory forever!
To God be glory forever!
Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, Amen!**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
Glory to Christ Jesus!
Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to Christ Jesus!
To God be glory forever!
To God be glory forever!
Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, Amen!**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
Glory to the Spirit!
Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to the Spirit!
To God be glory forever!
To God be glory forever!
Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, 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 priest 'collects' our prayerful thoughts this Corpus Christi Sunday 2021.

Priest Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament you have given us the memorial of your passion: grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries of your body and blood that we may know within ourselves and show forth in our lives the fruits of your redemption; for you are alive and reign with the Father 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 - 1 CORINTHIANS 11: 23 - 36. - Read by Gwen Adshead

Reader A reading from First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians. *Here St Paul 'hands on' the account of the Last Supper. Paul believes that, since Jesus gave us the Eucharist in the context of his dying for our sake, we should celebrate the Eucharist in the context of our 'dying to ourselves' and to self-centredness.*

This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.' In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.' Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.

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.

I am the living bread which has come down from heaven,
says the Lord.

Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.

John 6:51

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL READING - ST JOHN'S GOSPEL 6: 51 - 58.

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.

Jesus said to the Jews: 'I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.' Then the Jews started arguing with one another: 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' they said. Jesus replied: 'I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me. This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but everyone who eats this bread will live for ever.'

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 in word and sacrament. Through the readings God has spoken to his people of his redeeming 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 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 - Gwen Adshead

We are invited to pray for the needs of the Church's mission and for 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 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; for the departed. 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: In the power of the Holy Spirit of God, and in union with Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Father.

The deacon or minister continues:

Heavenly Father, hear the prayers of your people as we gather at your table. Here we celebrate Christ's gift of his body to be our spiritual food. We pray for his body the Church spread throughout the world.

Strengthen, in the service of Christ Jesus, Justin our Archbishop, Steven our Bishop, Olivia our area Bishop, the mission and ministry of this benefice - our parishes and our schools of St Mary's and St John's - that all those who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal the glory of your goodness...

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, here we recognize the presence of Christ who takes away the sin of the world. Hear our prayer for this world and for its peoples for whom His life was given. Bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen 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, wisdom and compassion and seek the common good...

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, here we come together to remember how Christ gathers his friends in this meal of holy fellowship. Hear our prayers for all whom you have given us - our families, our friends and all whose lives are joined with ours. May we serve Christ in one another and love as he loves us...

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, here we remember the night of Christ's agony and trial. Hear our prayer for all who now share in his sufferings through fear or pain or distress of any kind ... Give them hope in their troubles; and bring them the joy of your salvation...

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, here we join our praises with the whole company of heaven. We pray for all who have gone before us... May we be united for ever in the joy of heaven.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, here at your table you satisfy our hunger with the food that lasts - the bread of heaven which gives life to the world. Accept our humble thanksgiving.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, here we rejoice together in communion with Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all the Saints. Hear our prayers as we commend 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...' (Luke 22:19-20). 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 We are the body of Christ.

In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.

Let us then pursue all that makes for peace
and builds up our common life.

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 wider ministry and work of the Church. Taking the Gifts: We give 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

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.

God our sustainer, receive the gifts we bring before you,
and feed us continually with that bread which satisfies all hunger,
your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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 at the Last Supper, as he sat at table with his apostles, he gave us this memorial of his passion to bring us its saving power until the end of time. In this sacrament you feed your people and strengthen them in holiness, so that the family of humankind may come to walk together in the light of faith and in one communion of love.

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 Lord, you are most holy, enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ you reveal to us the power of your love made perfect in human frailty, brokenness and weakness.
Embracing our suffering humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us he gave himself to death for us; dying for his own, he set us free from the bonds of fear and pride and sin, that we might rise and reign with him in glory.
As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption, Father, by your life-giving Holy Spirit may these gifts of your creation be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.
On the night he gave himself up for us all he took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
+ Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

+ Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross, we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting forth from the dark of the tomb, we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high and we long for his coming in glory. Form us into the likeness of Christ Jesus and make us a perfect offering of love in your sight. Look with favour on all your people and in your great mercy hear the cries of the broken-hearted.

Bless the earth, heal the sick, let the oppressed and downtrodden go free and fill your Church with grace and courage and power from on high to do your loving will.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth to feast with Mary, the Blessed Mother of our Lord, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all your Saints at the table in your kingdom, where the new creation is brought to perfection in the love of Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father, 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

Priest Looking for the coming of his kingdom, as our Saviour taught us, so let us pray:

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.

PREPARATION FOR HOLY 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 communion can only be given in one 'kind' when we can come to church.

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

Panis Angelicus - *Cesar Franck*

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 all to God's kingdom. We pray together silently for a while before the Post Communion prayer.

Priest All praise to you, our God and Father, for you have fed us with the bread of heaven and quenched our thirst from the true vine: hear our prayer that, being grafted into Christ, we may grow together in unity and feast with him in his kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

THE NOTICES FOR THE COMMUNITY ARE GIVEN.

THE CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.

All and also with you.

THE BLESSING

Priest Christ, who has nourished us with himself the living bread, make you one in praise and love, and raise you up at the last day; + 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 the peace of Christ.

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN

**Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
first-begotten from the dead.
Thou alone, our strong defender,
liftest up thy people's head.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Jesu, true and living bread!**

**Life-imparting heavenly manna,
stricken rock with streaming side,
heaven and earth with loud hosanna
worship thee, the Lamb who died.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
risen, ascended, glorified!**

Please donate 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 have been closed due to Covid 19 and with no regular Government or Church of England funding we have lost significant income. Please see the website to see how to give efficiently.*

