

# SUNDAY TABLE SERVICE

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**Let us sit and watch Songs of Praise together on the ABC and then set the table for our Parish meal.**



- **Setting our table for our Sunday lunch service.**

Sometimes we eat, in front of the TV either together or alone; we eat on the run; we eat out in restaurants or even in our car; but today we sit at a table that we have set for our Sunday lunch meal. It is our everyday altar of life-giving food.

As we celebrate this Easter Season let us define the occasion by naming things on our table that bring us joy and which we can share with others in our community.

- **Prayerful and intentional preparation for a meal**



Let us set our meal for this day. Give some thought to the presentation of our meal as a meditation on the importance of the time we are setting aside for worship.

Everyone is afraid sometimes. We live in a world where there are plenty of uncertainties and we as humans use our creative thinking to predict possible dangers that may arise. This is a process that is supposed to prepare us before encountering a danger but can also suggest new things of which to be afraid. At this time of the corona pandemic we may be afraid of contracting an infection, afraid for our families and friends, afraid of losing our jobs and financial security. We see all these uncertainties before us. We can respond to this by being afraid of our future or to trust in our future with God. Maybe that's why one of the most oft-repeated commands in the Bible is **do not be afraid**. The disciples were uncertain about their future, seeing clear risks and dangers and their response was to be (afraid). They seemed to believe that if they did not have the physical presence of Jesus with them that they could not get through their fear. Instead of making their fear the response to uncertainty, Jesus calls them to faith as the response to uncertainty.



- **opening prayer — consciously drawing together in our mind our Parish community around our table.**

Be still and silent.

Visualise in your mind, those whom you invited to share with you.

Pray:



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

**Here, and throughout the world,**

**We adore you O Christ, and we bless you,**

**because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. Amen**

**Bless this food, both physical and spiritual.**

**Bless all who gather at your table, both seen and unseen, In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

- **Let us read and reflect on our cycle of readings**



## A reading from the Acts of the Apostles,

### Chapter 7 beginning at Verse 55

<sup>55</sup> But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" <sup>57</sup> But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. <sup>58</sup> Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup> While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." <sup>60</sup> Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

[NRSV Acts 7:55-60]

Hear the word of the Lord,

***thanks be to God***

**LORD,  
DO NOT  
HOLD  
THIS SIN  
AGAINST  
THEM.**

Acts 7:60



### Psalm 31:1-5, 17-18

1 To you, Lord, have I come for shelter: let me never be put to shame.

2 O deliver me in your righteousness: incline your ear to me and be swift to save me.

3 Be for me a rock of refuge, a fortress to defend me: for you are my high rock and my stronghold.

4 Lead me and guide me for your name's sake: bring me out of the net that they have secretly laid for me, for you are my strength.

5 Into your hands I commit my spirit: you will redeem me, O Lord God of truth.

17 All my days are in your hand: O deliver me from the power of my enemies and from my persecutors.

18 Make your face to shine upon your servant: and save me for your mercy's sake.



*In thee  
O Lord,  
do I put  
my trust: let me never be  
ashamed: deliver me in  
thy righteousness. Psalm 31:1*

## A reading from the first letter of Peter,

### Chapter 2 beginning at Verse 11

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul. <sup>12</sup> Conduct yourselves honourably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.

<sup>13</sup> For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. <sup>16</sup> As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. <sup>17</sup> Honour everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honour the emperor.

<sup>18</sup> Slaves accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh. <sup>19</sup> For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." <sup>23</sup> When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

[NRSV 1 Peter 2:11-25]

Hear the word of the Lord,

***thanks be to God.***



**The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John**  
*Chapter 14 beginning at verse 1*

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>1</sup> “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And you know the way to the place where I am going.” <sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup> If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”



<sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup> Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. [NRSV John 14:1-14]

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

***praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

Sentence

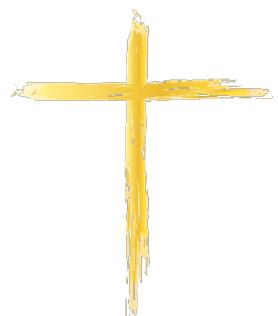
**‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life,’ says the Lord. ‘No one comes to the Father except through me.’**

• ***eating reflectively and responding to the passage***



Let us now engage in some quiet reflection, or conversation and sharing, responding to the Gospel passage. We may like to write down some key thoughts for further reflection.

Jesus speaks to his disciples as a caring parent preparing his children to leave the family nest. Knowing that they will be living apart without his physical presence, Jesus offers these words of comfort: **“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”** Words spoken with a deep sense of intimacy and love. Yes, they will be living apart, but Jesus will still be them in spirit. We can rest in the salvation that Jesus provides and rely on the Holy Spirit to help us in our fears at this time, we can keep from being troubled in our hearts. Let us explore the interplay between the words **Faith**, **Trust**, and **Belief**. I encourage you to now read the bible readings for today and replace the words Faith and Belief with the word **Trust** to examine the teaching in these texts afresh.



• ***prayer-time***

Let’s now offer our prayer for healing of the world; for those affected by coronavirus; for family; for members of the parish and wider community, Loving God, we pray today for all mothers, grandmothers, aunts, step-mums, foster mums, and special people who shaped our lives. They nurtured us when we were helpless, comforted us when we were hurt, and whose love and care we often took, and still take, for granted. Without them we would not be who we are, and so we give thanks for them and pray for your blessing upon them all. Amen.





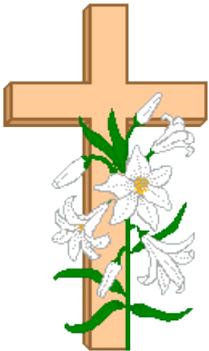
*Please pray alongside those in our parish asking for prayer ; Ron & Ann ; Les ; Tristan; Kathy; Mitchell; David ; Pat ;Izabelle ; Peta ; Mariette; Joanne; Peter G, Peter C; Nicholas B; Samantha; Fiona; Brenton; Sue; Brenda; Pat; Brendon, Fr Peter, Fr Percy & Betty, Bp David, Jill, Bill, David H, Petra, Miriam & family, Marjorie; Joyce; Diane; Jean; Mitchell and family; Kathy; Carolyn; Allison; Angela; Susie; Carol; Lucy Ann; Lyn; Ted & Joyce ; Irene; Linda; Jenny P's mother; Tina; Wendy; Chris; Trevor; Liz; Trish; Carole and family, Peter, Lainie, Nicholas and family, *and any others we wish to say either silently or aloud.**

**Let us say the Lord's Prayer Together.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Ever living God,  
whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life:  
give us grace to love one another,  
to follow in the way of his commandments,  
and to share his risen life;  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

**Conclude the meal with the following prayer together.**



***May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be amongst us and remain with us always.  
Amen.***

***Christ is Risen! Alleluia!  
He is Risen indeed! Alleluia! Alleluia***

**• intentional connection beyond your home**

After our Table Service, make contact via phone, email, letter, Messenger, Skype, Zoom, etc with a person who is on your heart and mind at this time. It might be one of the people you invited to your meal, or a member of your family, or someone who doesn't have family, or a friend,

Let God guide you to the person or people with whom you connect.

Contact the person.

Start a conversation: 'I was thinking of you.....' Or What did you think of..... in songs of praise etc

