

REFLECTION - FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

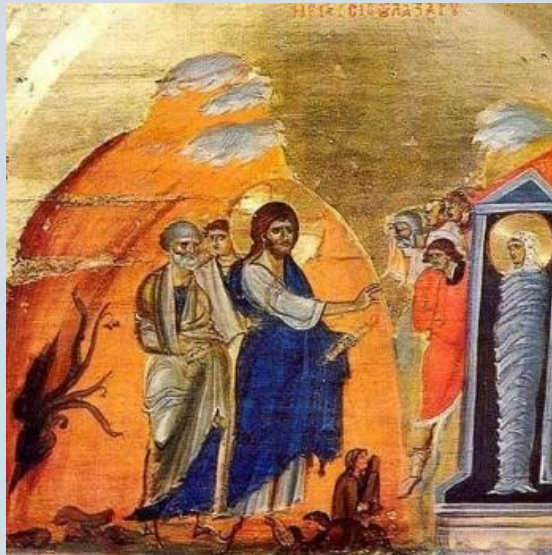
"The Raising of Lazarus"

"Though I lie in bonds, O Saviour," Lazarus cried from below to Thee his Deliverer, "yet shall I not remain forever in the depth of Hell, if Thou wilt only call to me, 'Lazarus, come out;' for Thou art my Light and my Life."

"I implore thee, Lazarus," said Hell, "Rise up, depart quickly from my bonds and be gone. It is better for me to lament bitterly for the loss of one, rather than of all those whom I swallowed in my hunger."

Shaking the gates and iron bars, Thou hast made Hell tremble at Thy voice. Hell and Death were filled with fear, O Saviour, seeing Lazarus their prisoner brought to life by Thy word and rising from the tomb.

from the Orthodox Church's Canon of the Raising of Lazarus,



The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON

**St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford
 with All Saints, Calverton**

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Passiontide)

2nd April AD 2017

Christ performed the great miracle of Lazarus' resurrection. He announced, through the work of the Father, that He, Himself, God made man, is the Resurrection and the Life. He is also the Lord of biological life. His voice can reach those who, like Lazarus, have exceeded the threshold of four days from their death and arrived at the point where bodily corruption commences. Faced with this sign, the words with which He foretold His Resurrection become clearer: 'I lay down my life, that I may take it again.' (John 10:17) He really can 'take up [His life] again' as He is the Word of Life. If Lazarus' resurrection didn't stop the Lord's beloved friend from embracing 'our sister death' - to use St Francis' expression - when God finally called him again from this life, then how much greater is the Life that the Lord has earned for Lazarus and everyone of us in the Pascal Mystery that we are preparing to celebrate a few days from now.



Welcome to the Parish Church where, after the example of the early church, we celebrate the Eucharist: the "apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42)



Rector: Fr Ross Northing SSC - Tel: 01908 562148
 Email: rector@parishstonystratfordcalverton.com - Mobile: 07718 884779

Associate Minister: Fr Tunji Adebisi - Tel: 01525 790954

Honorary Assistant Priest: Fr Joseph Loveday SSC - Tel: 01327 351511

Church Army Officer: Sister Janet Northing CA - Tel: 01908 562148
 Email: jf.northing@btinternet.com



Arrangements for Banns, Holy Matrimony & Baptisms:
 May be made by contacting Fr Ross on 01908 562148

Confessions: May be made after Masses or by appointment.

Parish Website: www.parishstonystratfordcalverton.com

To Hire the Parish Hall: 'phone Lesley Salter on 01908 567404

INFORMATION

The Order of Mass is on the laminated card. The references to the Scripture Readings, which may be either listened to or followed in the Bibles provided, along with the Psalm and the Prayer of the Faithful are also included in this Sheet. Hymns are unannounced but are indicated on the boards towards the front of the Nave.

AA Large Print Orders of Service are available at St Mary & St Giles. Please ask a Sidesman for a copy.



A Loop System is in operation at St Mary & St Giles - please set hearing aids to the "T" position.



Access for the Disabled at St Mary & St Giles is via the path on the north side of the church. **At All Saints** it is via the South Porch.



Gluten-Free Hosts: if you are on a Gluten-Free diet and would like a Gluten-Free Host when you receive Holy Communion please mention this before Mass to one of the Sidesmen who will arrange this for you. Please make yourself known to the Parish Priest so that he is aware of your need.



Collections: for the continuing mission of Christ are taken while the altar and gifts of bread and wine are being prepared. If you are a visitor and a taxpayer and would like to make a donation please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided at the end of each row - please fill in your details. This enables us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue, 25p for every £1 donated.



We observe a period of quiet prayer and reflection before the celebration of Mass, between the end of the Organ Voluntary and the Sacristy Bell being rung, in order that we may be better prepared to worship almighty God.

Reception of Holy Communion: All Baptised and Confirmed Christians are encouraged to receive Holy Communion. If you are unwell or uncertain about receiving the Precious Blood please do still receive the Host. Our Chalice Assistants are not authorised to permit the intincting (dipping) of the Host.

Please join us at the back of church for tea or coffee after Mass. A priest will be near the main door, shortly after the end of Mass, should you need to talk with one.

Please take this Service Sheet home with you and use as part of your devotions during the week.

At St Mary & St Giles this week:

Sidesmen	Team 1
Serving Team:	Team 4
Offertory bearers:	Sue Bates
Church Gardeners:	Team 3
Church Cleaners	Team 1

Worshipping Numbers Last Sunday: 123

Worshipping Numbers on the weekdays prior: 97

Prayer Thought: As we come nearer to the commemoration of the death and resurrection of the Lord, the Church places before us for our prayerful consideration the theme of new life out of death. Although this is the major theme of this season of the Church year, it is really the focus of every liturgical celebration. We enter into the death of the Lord only to rise to new life. The different aspects of the readings call us to see this reality from different perspectives and to appreciate more fully the profound implications of this truth.

The Collect

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading Ezekiel 37: 12-14

Reader at SMSG: Rosie Page
Reader at All Saints: Jonathan Dunn

(Old Testament Page 724 in the Bibles)
God promises to give his people a new lease of life. He will give us, too, new life and hope, if we let him.

The Responsorial Psalm (from Psalm 130)

R/. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading. ®

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?

But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you. ®

My soul is waiting for the Lord, I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak. (Let the watchman count on daybreak and Israel on the Lord.) ®

Because with the Lord there is mercy

weekly Sunday worship—and this is to be regretted as worship is “both our duty and our joy.”

Having said that, weekday worshipping numbers have increased significantly in real terms over the last two years with the introduction of the Tuesday morning Mass at All Saints and the early morning Mass on Friday's in our Church School. We are also seeing increasingly numbers at special weekday celebrations before Christmas and Easter. In fact, when filling in the online statistics form over the last two years I have been prompted to check the figures for some acts of worship as they have shown a significant increase on the year before. So we should take encouragement from the increase in weekday worshipping numbers, but remain concerned at our commitment to Sunday worship - which would appear to suggest that the 4th Commandment laid down by God (*Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy*) is a matter of whether we feel like it or not.

Over the course of 2016: at All Saints we were blessed in seeing such real growth and have all now benefitted from the new heating system which has not only made the building warmer, but safer and will have a beneficial effect on the long-term maintenance of the building. At St Mary & St Giles we were able to complete the refurbishment of the Pipe Organ, gain the necessary permissions for much needed works to the trees in the churchyard, and appoint a new Director of Music to start this September.

One of the highlights of the last two years has been the annual Parish Pilgrimage to the Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk. This has brought many blessings to the pilgrims, but also to our common life throughout the year as people continue to grow in faith.

The other important feature of the year has been the ministry of our Visiting Teams to the new residents.

We have much to build on.

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

TODAY: 5th Sunday of Lent
Passiontide begins

8:30am Morning Prayer at St Mary & St Giles
9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles
11:00am FAMILY MASS at All Saints
12:00n Annual Parochial Church Meeting at All Saints

Intention: Our Parish

Monday: Feria

Organ Tuning & associated works at SMSG
9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in the Parish Hall
8:00pm Bellringing Practice
Pray for: the Sick, Housebound & Handicapped

Tuesday: Feria

Organ Tuning & associated works at SMSG
10:30am Mass + Elevenses at All Saints
5:30pm Delegated Decision on School (North Site) Expansion
Intention: The Prime Minister & all Ministers of The Crown

Wednesday: Feria

7:30pm Mass at St Mary & St Giles
Intention: Fidelity to Christ & His Gospel

Thursday: Feria

10:30am Mass at St Mary & St Giles
7:00pm Stations of the Cross
Intention: The Unemployed

Friday: Feria

9:30am Mass at St Mary & St Giles (Ch)
7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
Intention: The Right to Life

Saturday: Feria

12:00n Lent Lunch in Parish Hall
2:00pm Marriage Rite at St Mary & St Giles
Pray for: Visitors to our Parish Churches

Next Sunday: PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY

8:30am Morning Prayer at St Mary & St Giles
9:30am Blessing of Palms, Procession PARISH MASS
Beginning at London Road Car Park (if raining: we meet in the Parish Church)

6:00pm EVENSONG at All Saints

Intention: Our Parish

Readings next Sunday: Passion Sunday

Palm Gospel:	Matthew 21: 1-11
1st Reading:	Isaiah 50: 4-7
Psalm:	22 (part)
2nd Reading:	Philippians 2: 6-11
Gospel:	Matthew 26: 14 - 27: 66

provide the highest standards of care and support for all our pupils.

Monday to Friday Term-time only 12:00pm to 1:30pm, Grade A Level 1, FTE Salary £16491, Actual salary £2777.07 (includes 5.2 weeks paid holiday). We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all our children. All applicants will be subject to a DBS (previously CRB) Check.

If you are interested in this post, please contact the school office (01908 562186) for an application form.

St Mary & St Giles School (South Site) - General Handyman: A general handyman is sought for the south site of our Church School. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, or know of someone who might be interested, then please have a word with Kieran Salter. Thank you.

St Mary & St Giles School Cleaners: We are looking to appoint part-time cleaners to help keep our school clean and tidy. Please contact the school for further details and an application form. Part-Time Cleaners Monday to Friday in Term-time only, for 2 or 3 hours per day between the hours of 3.00 pm and 6.00 pm. Salary Grade B1 £16781 pro rota Hourly rate £8.72 Plus 5.2 weeks paid holiday. To start asap The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Rector's Annual Report: as usual there have been so many people without whose help the running of both our Parish Churches would have been made all the more difficult in 2016. So I would like to thank the Churchwardens of our Churches for all their hard work, and the Sidemen who assist them. This year we pay an especial tribute to Jane Privett who has decided to not seek re-election to the PCC and relinquish her role as PCC Secretary. And of course, where

would we be without David Williams, our Treasurer and Steve Thompson and Clive Williams who assist him in maintaining the Parish Finances.

Then there are all those who do so many practical jobs behind the scenes: Mr & Mrs West at All Saints who do so much in the church and churchyard and all those who have taken on roles at All Saints during the course of 2016 as the congregation has tripled in size.

At St Mary & St Giles, there are many to be grateful for: the Hospitality and Gardening Teams; the Servers; the musicians and Singers, John, our Sacristan; and those who assist him with setting up and with laundry; our Church and Hall Cleaners; all those who are part of our Children's Ministry Team; and, of course, all those who lead the various groups in the life of our Parish.

There are an incredible number of people in both our Parish Churches who do so much and I am sure you all join me in wanting to express our gratitude to them.

In what are difficult times financially the Churchwardens and I are grateful to all those who contribute so generously to the funding of the Mission of the Church in our Parish. While we still struggle to pay the £54,000 the Diocese asks of us, we were able to pay more last year than the previous year. With your goodwill in response to the love of God revealed in the face of Christ we hope to be able to maintain this progress.

Over the course of 2016 we lost a number of members through death and one or two moved to other parts of the country, but there has been a real increase in the number of new people joining us. Talking with other clergy it seems as if where we all struggle is with not knowing how many people we are going to have at worship on a Sunday. It seems as if worship is becoming more inhabitual rather than the practice of

and fullness of redemption, Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity. ®

The Second Reading Romans 8: 8-11
Reader at SMSG: Isa Thomas

(New Testament Page 131 in the Bibles) reminds us that we have been given the Holy Spirit. If we pay attention to this Spirit who lives in us, we will really know that we belong to our Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory! I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord: he who believes in me shall never die. **Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory!**

The Gospel John 11: 1-45
(New Testament Page 89 in the Bibles) tells how Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. He has raised us, too, from the death of sin. And he will raise us, after our death, to new life with him forever.

The Prayer of the Faithful

(Intercessor at SMSG: Fr Ross)

Priest: My brothers and sisters, as Easter draws near, let us earnestly pray to the Lord that we may share more fully in the life of Christ that he brings us in his suffering, death, and resurrection.

Intercessor: That those who will be baptised at Easter throughout the Church may grow in faith and understanding; and for all Christians during Passiontide, that we may walk with Christ the way of the Cross..... let us pray to the Lord:

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. Lord, graciously hear us.

That those who are helpless and abandoned throughout the world may be given the blessings of peace and security....., let us pray to the Lord:

That those who are afflicted and tempted may be strengthened by God's grace; amongst the sick and afflicted we are

asked to pray for...*Fiddy Abraham, Polly Barclay, Gerry Bonner, Shirley Brown, Steve Cooper, Larry Francis, Russell Herbert, Jane Holman, Terry Mason, Sue Maton, Rosalie Osbourne, Pete, Ron Smart, Tony Oakley, Wendy...*, let us pray to the Lord:

That the faithful departed may be unbound by the Lord and set free in the kingdom of his glory, especially...*Rory, Tony Finnegan, Bob Gray, Cecil Tee...* and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week...*2nd Ruth Neal, Tony Doolan, John Ranson; 3rd Emily Mundy, Ann Butler, Ronald Cole; 4th Edward Albon, Doris Jackson, Terri Rixon; 5th James Bull, Siggie Vom Dorp, Connie Gascoine; 6th Mary Richardson; 7th Josephine Worley, David Meakins, Cyril Wood, Albert Wilde...*let us pray to the Lord:

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.
And let light perpetual shine upon them.

That we may all learn to set our interests aside, and reach out in love to our brothers and sisters....., let us pray to the Lord:

Priest: Father, have mercy on your Church in its need, hear the prayers we offer with all our hearts, and never abandon the people who share your life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Reflection: *The season of Lent is coming to a close and we will once again liturgically celebrate the death and resurrection of the Lord. Some among us will formally commit ourselves by renewing our baptismal promises wherein we renounce a life of sin according to the flesh and choose a life in the Spirit. This formal commitment is more than a ceremony. It is our entry into the challenge of daily conversion. We cannot make this change alone. We need the saving power of God and the loving support of each other. This liturgy has provided us with the divine help, let us come out from our life of sin, go forth in newness of life and offer the support that we can to others who so desperately need the love of Christ*

PARISH NEWS & NOTICES

Notice of Election of Churchwardens: At the *Vestry Meetings* last Sunday the following were elected as Churchwardens for the next twelve months:

At St Mary & St Giles -

Mr Kieran Salter & Mrs Louise Brown

At All Saints -

Mr Jonathan Dunn & Mrs Jillian Barby.

All four are Churchwardens for the entire Parish and are Trustees of the 'St Mary & St Giles Charity' (which owns the Curate's House) and our Church School's Charitable Foundation, but have particular responsibilities for their respective churches. Please pray for our Churchwardens and for all those who assist them in our Parish Churches.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting: takes place at 12:00noon TODAY at All Saints Church (this meeting alternates between our two Parish Churches on a bi-annual basis). The Agenda for this year's meeting, along with the Minutes of last year's meeting and the 2015 Annual Report and Accounts are available at the back of each Parish Church.

Planned Giving - Envelope Scheme: the new sets of envelopes for the next financial year are now available for collection in each of our Parish Church for those who regularly use them. If anyone not currently giving through the envelope scheme would like to do so please see David Williams, Our Treasurer for further details. Similarly, if anyone would prefer to give by Standing Order, David would be happy to talk this through with you.

The Rector, Churchwardens and PCC are very grateful to everyone who gives to the continuing mission of the Church within our parish. While the amount asked of the Parish by the Diocese continues to rise, it is good to be able to report that in 2016 we were able

send £1000 more to the Diocese than we had in 2015. There are leaflets (Giving in Grace) recommended by the Archdeacon in both of our churches to enable us all to prayerfully consider our giving to the mission of the Church *Thank you.*

An Appeal by our Young People: Following a discussion some of our young people are keen to help a Parish in Coventry Diocese raise funds to enable their participation in the Youth Pilgrimage to continue. They are keen to sell homemade Easter cards which Ray Rowlson is printing for them They are also going to make and sell homemade biscuits and cakes on the same stall after the Mass on a Sunday. They write:

"Last year at Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage Tile Hill's marquee blew away. Also last year at the youth pilgrimage the theme was acts of mercy. So we decided that as our act of mercy we would raise some money towards Tile Hill's new marquee. We are going to be selling Easter cards and cakes. Please bring along a little money to help with this worthwhile cause. *Jamie and Rosie*"

WEDNESDAY - A Journey to the Cross: starting this Wednesday evening at 7:15pm during Lent there will be a short DVD presentation of one of a series of images of Christ's journey to the Cross. Each one includes reflective words, scripture references, a short prayer and concludes with one verse of a hymn. Mass will then following church at 7:30pm. The same pattern will be followed with the evening Masses on the first three days of Holy Week.

Lent Lunches: are served on the Saturdays of Lent. Thank you to all those who have volunteered to host these. The lunch held at All Saints on Ash Wednesday raised over £80 for our Lent Appeal and was well; attended with tables and

chairs being set up down the aisle in the Nave.

The lunches held on Saturdays have been very well attended so far with receipts of over £100 at each of them. Thank you to all who have helped run them and supported them.

Tea Dance in SMSG School Hall: Sunday, 23rd April 3-5pm. Popular sequence and ballroom dancing accompanied by SMSG Church Band with an interval tea. £5 each in advance from Lesley Salter or any Band member.

Children's Activity Morning: All children are invited to come to the Parish Hall for an Activity Morning on Tuesday, 11th April. We will start at 9.30am and finish at 1.30pm, after a shared lunch. There is no charge for this event and nothing to bring, but booking is essential! Please see Ray, Jenny, Andrea, Richard, Sue or Lesley for more details and to book a place.

Thank you: to Eilish Friedman for organising what was a very successful outing to the Calcutta Brasserie in aid of the St Mary & St Giles Organ Fund. Seventy Five people enjoyed a wonderful Indian meal and a total of £668 was raised for the Organ Fund. It is hoped to repeat this event in the autumn.

Parish Weekend Pilgrimage to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham 2017:

Thank you to all those who have booked places so far. Please could all completed booking forms along with deposits of £30 per person be given to Fr Ross as soon as possible, so that we can give the Shrine an early indication of numbers and secure rooms. If you have not been to Walsingham before this is an ideal introduction to the wonderful ministry of the Shrine. Fr Ross or any previous pilgrims will be only to pleased to tell you more.

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers: It's that time of year again when our Church School is collecting Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers 2017. If you, family members or friends shop in Sainsbury's and receive any vouchers, then please pass them to Kieran or Fr Ross We are collecting vouchers until 2nd May. Once all the vouchers are in and collated they will be used to get equipment for P.E. Thank you.

Bible Reading at home: During the Confirmation Course this year, as I always do, I mentioned that the Bible is not a volume to be read from cover to cover because it is not written chronologically.

This year the obvious question was asked: "Is it possible to obtain a Bible that is laid out chronologically?"

The answer is that there is. It is called 'Cover to Cover Complete: Through the Bible as It Happened.' It is available on Amazon at £24.99 and can also be ordered through bookshops. However, I have discovered that bulk buying of the NIV Version from the publisher is cheaper, so if at least ten people would like a copy I can order them at a discounted price. Would all those interested please let me know if they would like to be included in such a group order.

This edition is designed to be read over the course of the year for about 15 minutes each day. It includes illustrations, maps, charts, diagrams, a timeline, and devotional articles; which are very useful aids to study and prayer.

St Mary & St Giles School (North Site) -

Mid-day Supervisor: Do you enjoy spending time with children? A permanent post is available for a Mid-day Supervisor starting 18th April 2017. We are ideally looking for a person experienced with looking after children and able to