

REFLECTION - 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

"And their eyes were opened"

It is the first day of the week after the great Jewish feast of the Passover and Jerusalem is trying to return to its normal routine. The shop keepers count their profits and the Temple priests congratulate themselves because they were able to kill the 'Galilean'.

Curtains were closed and lights were dimmed not only due to the celebration of Jerusalem's solemn festival but also because everyone had hope that the man Jesus 'would be the One to redeem Israel' (Lk 24:21). The two disciples from Emmaus are to be found, along their journey, talking to 'Jesus in person', 'but their eyes were prevented from recognising Him' (Lk 24:16).

Why did the Lord not tell the disciples straight away who He was? Indeed, in the dialogue that the liturgy presents to us today, it almost seems that Jesus did all He could to avoid revealing His true identity. Firstly, He pretended not to know what Cleopas and his companion were discussing and then He went on to 'explain to them the passages throughout scriptures that were about Himself' (Lk 24:27) but without making direct reference to Himself.

At the end of the journey, 'He made to go on' (Lk 24:28). Jesus didn't want to play games with His disciples, but He sought to educate their hearts, and also ours, so that we won't be 'slow'! In fact, when faced with the Lord's Presence, we find that the heart quickly 'burns' upon hearing His words as we are grateful of the fact that we were freed not by 'gold and silver but by the precious blood of Christ' who is the 'blameless and spotless' lamb (Cfr. 1 Pet 1:19).

The Risen Lord uses so much gentleness with us! He doesn't oblige us to 'believe.' As St Augustine extraordinarily wrote in the opening of his Confessions 'our heart is restless until it rests in you' (St. Augustine, Conf. 1.1.1:PL 32,659-661)

There is still one more detail that calls for our attention and raises many questions: why did the eyes of the disciples open to recognise Jesus whilst they were at table with Him? The Eucharistic context is undeniable. The disciples are at table, the Lord is with them; He took the bread and saying the prayer of benediction, broke it. It was during the last action of the breaking of the bread that the companions recognised Jesus. It was not only the action in itself but finally Cleopas and his friends could see, with their own eyes, the hands pierced by the nails of the passion that until that very movement had remained hidden from them during the long journey on the road.

It was in that very moment in which they recognised the presence of the Crucified One, that He 'disappeared from their sight' whilst their eyes remained fixed on the broken bread, that was left to fall 'onto the altar'. Is it not the same experience that every one of us can have every Sunday? So, 'they set out that instant' (Lk 24:33). They started to understand that death is not the last word on the life of each one of us as we can not be 'held in its power' (Acts 2:24). This is a sign of great hope that gives us wondrous joy! In so much as we journey to Jerusalem — each on his own road, it must often seem long and tiring. However, now with our eyes fully opened it appears that we have the privilege to say to all the world, 'the Lord has indeed risen' (Lk 24:34).



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



The Parish of
**STONY
STRATFORD**
with
CALVERTON

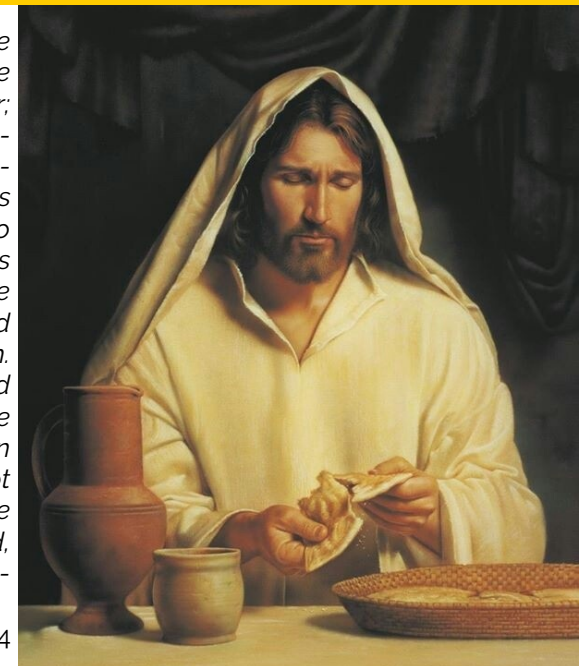
**St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford
with All Saints, Calverton**

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

30th April AD 2017

So they drew near to the village to which they were going, He appeared to be going further; but they constrained him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is towards evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was with them at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Luke 24



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)

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 4
Serving Team:	Team 1
Offertory bearers:	May Jacques
Church Gardeners:	Team 4
Church Cleaners	Team 4

Worshipping Numbers last Sunday: 111

Weekday Worshipping Numbers w/e 22 April: 310

Prayer Thought: Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of ours. Today we celebrate that eternal life which he offers us, of which we have a foretaste now in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; 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

Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 22-23

Reader at SMSG: David Scrutton
Reader at All Saints: Diane West

(New Testament Page 101 in the Bibles)
Peter blames the Jews for their failure to recognise Jesus as the Messiah, whose miracles were a proof that he had been sent by God. Peter quotes a psalm to show that the resurrection had been foretold in the Old Testament.

The Responsorial Psalm (from Psalm 30)

R/. Show us, Lord, the path of life.

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord: 'You are my God.'
O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize. ®

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm.®

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay. ®

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever. ®

One such dream is that of a Bosnian Muslim Emlonic who related his experience thus: "I was in the desert alone, lost. As far as the horizon, there was nothing in sight but sand. I felt the sand on my bare feet. Then I saw something extraordinary.

"In the midst of that barrenness, an immense wooden cross emerged from the earth, rising up with sand spilling from it back to earth.

"I felt then a spectator in my own dream, and the sight of the cross gave me neither fear nor joy. But I was a curious [sic] and began moving, almost floating, towards it, the most magnificent ... thing I'd ever seen or imagined, and as I came closer to the cross, I suddenly saw a man walking toward me: a broad-shouldered, long-strided man, with a dark complexion, long hair, and wearing a white robe.

"And just as suddenly I ceased to be a witness to my dream. I was in it, walking toward the man walking toward me. I knew him immediately. He was Jesus. Without knowing why, I fell to my knees. He stood over me and touched my face with his right hand.

Emlonic's dream was deeply personal, just like the other Muslims who were approached by Christ. As he appeared to people throughout the Bible, Christ met each person in a way they could understand and on their level of comfort. Jesus didn't appear in a storm or surrounded by flashing lights - he spoke to Emlonic through sight, touch, and, as is the way of dreams, with knowledge. And one of the common features of those reporting these dreams is that they know who this 'Man in white' is without being told. They just know he is Jesus!

Pray for those encountering Jesus Christ our Lord that they may follow Him and be welcomed into his Body, the Church.

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

TODAY: THE 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

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
Intention: Our Parish

Monday: St Joseph the Worker

Fr Ross on Post Easter Break until Tues 9th May
9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in the Parish Hall
8:00pm Bellingring Practice
Pray for: the Sick, Housebound & Handicapped, and for Fr Joseph on his Name Day

Tuesday: St Athanasius, Bishop

10:30am Mass + Elevenses at All Saints
Intention: For all those countering heresies

Wednesday: Ss Philip & James, Apostles

7:30pm Mass at St Mary & St Giles
Intention: The Parish of Up Hatherley

Thursday: The English Martyrs

No Mass today
Intention: those facing Martyrdom today

Friday: Feria

No Mass today
7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
Intention: The Homeless

Saturday: Feria

10:00am Coffee Morning in Parish Hall for SMSG Restoration Fund
Pray for: Visitors to our Parish Churches

Next Sunday: THE 4th SUNDAY OF EASTER

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
Intention: Our Parish

Readings next Sunday: 4th Sunday of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 2: 14a, 36-41
Psalm:	23 (part)
2nd Reading:	1 Peter 2: 20b-25
Gospel:	John 10: 1-10

Advance Notice: Jill Barby hopes to hold a Coffee Morning in the Parish Hall in aid of All Saints Restoration Fund on Saturday 20th May from 10:00am to 12:00noon. Offers of help, and of cakes and scones would be very much appreciated. If you can help please contact her on MK 569245. If this occasion proves to be a success it is hoped to hold further coffee mornings in aid of All Saints.

died also during the First World War. The survivors were driven eastward and escaped into Russia. On 29 November 1920, most of Armenia was annexed by the Soviet Union.

It is sometimes said that the issues here were national, political, and ethnic rather than religious, and that the victims therefore do not qualify as martyrs. However, many of the Armenians, when about to be killed, were given the option of saving their lives by converting to Islam. Few did.

These Martyrs are recalled on 24th April but the Observance was omitted this year in England due to the Feast of St George being transferred to the 24th - Sundays of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Eastertide taking precedence over Saints Days.

The Collect for the Armenian Martyrs:

O Almighty God, by whose grace and power thy holy martyrs of Armenia triumphed over suffering and were faithful even unto death: Grant us, who now remember them with thanksgiving, to be so faithful in our witness to thee in this world, that we may receive with them the crown of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Recently realised at the cinema is the historical film *The Promise*, which is about a love triangle that develops between Armenian medical student, Mikael, an American journalist based in Paris, Chris and an Armenian-born woman raised in France, Ana, during the final years of the Ottoman Empire, and during the Armenian Genocide.

Dreams of a "Man in white": Christian missionaries in the Islamic world, particularly in the Middle East, are hearing more and more reports are coming of Jesus is personally leading thousands if not millions of Muslims into the Christian fold,

appearing in their dreams and visions as the "Man in white."

Even when Muslims are observing their holy fasting month of Ramadan - a time when they are supposed to get them closer to Allah - many are getting closer to Jesus instead.

A recent study showing how Muslims are turning to Jesus in great numbers, with some of them saying Jesus Christ Himself made them to turn their backs on Islam.

From 1960 to 2010, the number of Muslims that have converted to faith in Jesus Christ has grown from fewer than 200,000 to some 10 million people. It seems that many Muslims have become disillusioned by the seemingly unending conflict and bloodshed in the Middle East.

In the last 10-15 years, many Muslims are deeply uncomfortable with the idea that ISIS, or Iran's leadership, or Assad are the type of people that represent Islam.

Despite the Muslim public's disillusionment, Christian missionaries are still finding it difficult to reach out to them because of the danger involved and the many restrictions imposed by Islamic rulers.

But now Christian missionaries and evangelists have found a most potent ally in spreading the faith—Jesus Christ Himself! Encounters with him include:

- Jesus showing Himself to Muslim families in refugee camps;
- Muslim refugees aboard a boat seeing Jesus among them while crossing a stormy Aegean Sea;
- Jesus appearing before an Islamic fighter and stopping him from killing a Christian pastor;
- Jesus showing Himself to a bedridden Muslim mother;
- A fiercely anti-Christian imam who turned to Jesus after seeing Him in his dream.

The Second Reading 1 Peter 1: 17-21

Reader at SMSG: Oliver Williams

(New Testament Page 196 in the Bibles) teaches that Christians must live as the obedient children of God, God who is at once a kind Father and strict judge. We who have been redeemed at the cost of Christ's blood must live in a manner pleasing to Christ.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us; make our hearts burn with love when you speak to us. **Alleluia!**

The Gospel

Luke 24:13-35

(New Testament Page 76 in the Bibles) shows how the disciples who had been saddened by the death of Jesus were overjoyed when they recognised him as he broke the bread.

The Prayer of the Faithful

(Intercessor at SMSG: Fiddy Abraham)

Priest: My brothers and sisters, conscious of our communion with all God's faithful people who have gone before us to be admitted into his presence, let us place our hopes and aspirations before him through Christ, the 'first-fruits' of those to rise from the dead.

Intercessor: We pray for the pilgrim Church on earth....., for the Church suffering in Purgatory, that we may all be united one day with the Church triumphant in heaven.

V/. Lord, in your mercy

R/. **hear our prayer.**

We pray that the hope of heaven will encourage and support us through life's trials and temptations.

We pray for the modern world that has no hope of life after death....., that many may find the way out of emptiness and despair through faith in the risen Christ.

We thank you for the gift of the Spirit, which is our guarantee of eternal life.

May the Spirit strengthen and sustain all those in need...; and all those who are sick...*Fiddy Abraham, Polly Barclay, Gerry Bonner, Doreen Brooks, Shirley Brown, Steve Cooper, Terry Crook, Larry Francis, Russell Herbert, Jane Holman, Terry Mason, Sue Maton, Rosalie Osbourne, Pete, Ron Smart, Tony Oakley, Wendy...* May the Spirit keep us firmly in the virtues which are of eternal importance, love and understanding of others, and compassion for the needy.

We pray for our relatives and friends who have gone before us to meet God... *Cecil Tee, Gill Tee...* and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week...**30th John Black, Audrey Lambert; 1st May Michael Turtill, Florence Brown; 2nd Harry Chown, Iris White, Shirley Cannon; 3rd Doreen Cowan; 5th William Mundy, Annie Morgan; 6th Walter Hind... and for all involved in disasters and accidents, for the victims of violence in our own country. May they enjoy the reward of eternal life.**

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

Priest: Lord God, you have prepared for those who love you what no eye has seen, no ear has heard. Fill our hearts with your love, so that loving you above all and in all, we may attain your promises, which the heart of man has not conceived, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Reflection:

Lord, stay with us as you stayed with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. As you broke bread and gave to them, you have given us the Bread of Life, yourself. You speak to us as you spoke to them. Stay with us, Lord, not just today but every day. Help us to hear and understand your word, and help us to put it into practice. Be near to those of us especially for whom "it is nearly evening and the day is almost over". With your presence to strengthen us and your example to inspire us, we offer ourselves today and every day into the hands of our loving Father. Amen.

PARISH NEWS & NOTICES

Lenten Appeal: Please do return your Lent Boxes by the end of April, so as to enable the funds to be sent to the Additional Curates Society.

Thank you to everyone who helped organise and run, or who participated in our Lenten Lunches this year. They were all very well attended and helped to raise almost £600 towards the total of our appeal for the Additional Curates Society. Once the Lent Boxes have all been returned and counted we shall be able to announce the final total. *Thank you.*

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.

N.B. All bookings to be made before May 15th.

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 too 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.

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 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.

Church Library: We are hosting another "reading day" on Thursday 4th May at Tricia's house, and would love you to join us. Relax with a good book and like-minded friends. Come for an hour, or come for the whole day, 11.00 till 3.00, to suit yourself. Bring your own book, OR borrow one from the church library in advance, OR we will have a small selection available on the day. Places will be limited, so please see one of us as soon as possible as we will need to know how many people are coming. We are looking forward to welcoming you for a relaxing, interesting and enjoyable time. Tricia & Jenny

Seats in Church: The practice of Pew Letting has, mercifully, disappeared from all but one Parish Church in the Church of England. My predecessor, I am given to understand, made it very clear, that was not something that he would countenance, and nor do I.

I was therefore, somewhat horrified to be told before Easter that someone had asked a person to move as "that seat is mine." That attitude is one sure way to discourage people from joining us for worship, and as I made very clear recently, I am not running a social club and especially not running a private members club.

All the seats in the nave and the gallery are available to anyone to sit in. While some may prefer to sit in a particular seat—I wish to make it very clear that no one is to be asked to move. If you arrive and someone is sitting in a seat you may usually sit in then there are plenty of other seats available.

Chalice Etiquette: I must remind everyone once more that the Chalice Assistants have been trained to administer the Precious Blood, and that no one should attempt to take the Chalice out of their hands, nor attempt to grab hold of it, as this could lead to the Precious Blood being spilt.

Similarly, the Chalice assistants have been trained to wipe the exterior and the top edge of the rim of the Chalice. They do not wipe the interior for two reasons: firstly because this can lead to the purificator (the small, folded linen cloth used to wipe the Chalice) becoming soaked in the Precious Blood, and secondly, because it is not necessary as when alcohol and silver meet germs cannot survive.

I also ask that everyone refrains from making requests of Chalice Assistants at the Altar Rails, as this disturbs the moment of Communion for the Communicants either side of you.

Christian Aid Week: is held this year from the 14th to the 20th May.

"Everything was a threat. They were putting bombs in the trees and on the roads" Nejebar fled Afghanistan with her family. This year's Christian Aid Week focuses on providing help to the thousands of families trapped in European refugee camps by providing family kitchen equipment to restore some normality to shattered lives. If you would like to be a house to house collector please sign up at the back of the

Church. You can raise funds in other ways too, such as hosting a coffee morning or a Christian Aid Big Brekkie for friends and neighbours. Please contact me for further information.

Richard Hearne Tel: MK 560895
Email: richardhearne@hotmail.co.uk.

The Martyrs of Armenia: Armenia is located at the east end of modern Turkey, with some of its traditional territory now in Turkey and some across the border in the former Soviet Union. The Armenians were converted to Christianity around 280 or 290, and are accounted as the first country to become predominantly Christian. Their country is located at a spot where empires have clashed for centuries, and they have often been caught in the middle. For centuries they have been dominated by their Islamic neighbours, most recently the Turks of the Ottoman Empire.

The Turks were concerned about the possibility of an Armenian revolt. In 1895 and 1896 the Turkish Army killed about 100,000 Armenian civilians. Then in 1915, early in World War I, with Turkey fighting on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and Russia fighting in alliance with the British and French on the other side, the Turkish government accused the Armenians of plotting with the Russians to assist a Russian invasion of Turkey. That spring, around 600,000 Armenians were killed by the Turkish Army, in an attempt to exterminate the Armenians completely. Much of the slaughter took place on 24 April 1915.

There are photos recently published on the internet of crucifixions of Christians in Armenia by the Turkish Army, that were in the custody of the secret archives of the Vatican. They did unspeakable things to the pregnant women and their infants. More than a million and a half Armenian Christians