

REFLECTION - 5th SUNDAY OF EASTER

"The Immensity of God's Love"

We may well wonder at the slowness of the Apostles in seeing in Christ nothing more than a man - a great man, a man with power from God, yes, but still a mere man. That He was the Messiah, they were convinced, but their idea of the Messiah was wrong. They thought He would free Israel from foreign domination (Lk. 24 21), and set up a new kingdom of God - a prosperous, earthly kingdom with God guaranteeing peace and plenty for all. If, therefore, He allowed His enemies to put Him to death, all their hopes would be dashed to the ground. Hence, the mention of His impending death at the Last Supper filled them with dismay and despair.

But we must not judge them too harshly. Christ had indeed often claimed to be God, but His words fell on deaf ears. It was only after His resurrection that they began to understand that He had spoken literally - it was only then they believed He was indeed the Son of God, in human nature.

For us today, the Incarnation is still a mystery, but it is not the "how" that should trouble us, we know that with God all things are possible. It is rather the "why" that should cause us amazement. Why should God go to that length for our sake - mere creatures, and sinful, ungrateful creatures at that? The infinite goodness and the infinite love of God are the answer, but still an answer which is mysterious to us. For we, with our limited capacity for love, can form no idea of infinite love.

Sin entered the world of man, as God had foreseen, but notwithstanding this ingratitude on our part, God's Son came in our lowly, human nature and suffered, even though sinless, all the effects of men's sins. He suffered in our name, and because He was God, His sufferings in His human nature made infinite atonement for the sins of all mankind.

His Incarnation had made us His brothers and sisters - co-heirs to heaven. His death on the cross wiped out, and gave us the means of wiping out, our sins, so that we would be capable of possessing our inheritance.

Knowing the story of the Incarnation therefore, we know of the love and kindness of God toward us. We need not ask, with Philip, "show us the Father," we have seen Him in His riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! "How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable are His ways!" (Rom. 11 :33).

"What return can I make to the Lord?" All the mortifications and good works of all the holy men and women that ever lived, or will live, would not be adequate a return to God for the miracle of love He has shown toward us. But He accepts the widow's mite, the little acts of love, the little proofs of gratitude, the willing acceptance of the crosses He sends us, to purify us. In one word, all He asks in return is that we try to live our Christian life day after day, ever thanking Him for the gift of Christ and the Christian faith.



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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

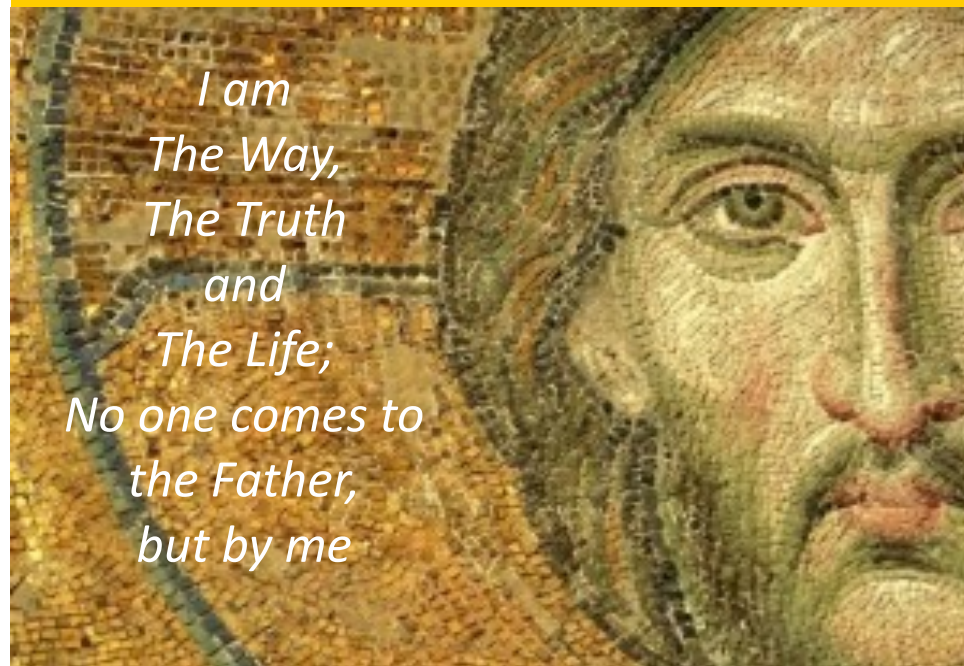
To Hire the Parish Hall: 'phone Lesley Salter on 01908 567404



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

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

14th May AD 2017



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 2
Serving Team:	Team 4
Offertory bearers:	Anna & Rosie Page
Church Gardeners:	Team 2
Church Cleaners	Team 2

Worshipping Numbers last Sunday: ?

Weekday Worshipping Numbers w/e 6th May ?

Prayer Thought:

Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me'. The Eucharist is the celebration of our being able to come to the Father because Jesus opened the way for us by his death and resurrection. Today as we celebrate the greatness of the Father's love for us in giving us his Son, Jesus, we pray that we may reveal this way to the world.

The Collect

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen 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 6: 1-7

Reader at SMSG: Eilish Friedman
Reader at All Saints: Jonathan Dunn

(New Testament Page 104 in the Bibles) felt that they were being neglected in the Christian community. Seven deacons were chosen to look after their material needs. The apostles were to be fully occupied in prayer and in preaching.

The Responsorial Psalm (from Psalm 33)

R/. May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.

Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; for praise is fitting for loyal hearts. Give thanks to the Lord upon the harp, with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs.®

For the word of the Lord is faithful and all his works to be trusted. The Lord loves justice and right and fills the earth with his love. ®

While Anthony Esolen's thoughts may be thought of as somewhat rose-tinted towards the end, what struck me was that the commonality of what he asks us to imagine had at their heart relationships based on meeting people in real life rather than on the face-less medium of the internet and social media. He also takes issue, with what are called 'identity politics' where pressure groups take centre stage, and there are few if any deep thinkers taking the long-term view. All of which were concerns that we were discussing in our Fraternal along with the loss of the National Story and the disappearance of the Christian Story from National and Local life. We all agreed that we needed to foster a rediscovery of 'Our Story' (National, Cultural and Judeo/Christian), but went on to agree that this could only be truly recovered as we rediscovered God's Story in the Scriptures—for *Our Story* is to be found in *God's Story*. To that end we were sharing ideas and pointing each other in the direction of resources. At the PCC Meeting on Thursday of this week we shall be considering the matter of: 'Knowing & Sharing the Story.' For to be able to share The Story we need to know The Story. Anthony Esolen ends his article by talking about leading people to the precincts and he rightly recognises elsewhere that the loss of culture and loss of even the appreciation of culture, has been a significant contributory factor in the disappearance of the Christian Narrative from public life. The fostering of culture and those elements of it that are particular to our national culture will not exclude the Christian Narrative for in large part our culture stems from it.

However, if we are to *share* The Story we need to *know* The Story. The PCC will be considering this on Thursday and what we might undertake to help us to know The Story in order that we might better share The Story. Please pray for the PCC as it meets. *Thank you.*

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

TODAY: THE 5th 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: **Feria**

9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in the Parish Hall
7:30pm Calverton Residents' Meeting
8:00pm Bellingring Practice
Pray for: the Sick, Housebound & Handicapped

Tuesday: **Feria**

10:30am **Mass + Elevenses at All Saints**
6:00pm St Mary & St Giles Charity Meeting
Intention: Local Charities

Wednesday: **Feria**

A.M. DAC Visit to All Saints re: Bells
6:00pm Rector in Parish Office for the arrangement of the Occasional Offices & Parish Business
7:30pm **Mass at St Mary & St Giles**
Intention: The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches

Thursday: **Feria**

10:30am **Mass at St Mary & St Giles**
2:30pm Calverton Almshouses Charity
7:30pm Parochial Church Council - All Saints
Intention: The PCC Meeting this evening

Friday: **St Dunstan, Bishop**

9:00am SMSG School Yr5 visit Church for Music Lessons
8:00am **Mass at St Mary & St Giles (Sch)**
7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
Intention: For young musicians

Saturday: **St Bernardine of Sienna, Priest**

7:30pm Polymnia Concert in SMSG Church
Pray for: Visitors to our Parish Churches

Next Sunday: THE 6th 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**
2:30pm Holy Baptism at All Saints
Intention: Our Parish

Readings next Sunday: 6th Sunday of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 8: 5-8, 14-17
Psalm:	66 (part)
2nd Reading:	1 Peter 3: 15-18
Gospel:	John 14: 15-21

ception. Our grandparents did not have ultrasounds, so they wondered about the sex of a child before it was born. We are more sophisticated now. We wonder about it after.

What we say about nature we may say also about culture, by analogy. It is natural for human beings to dwell in a culture; it is natural and good for them to revere their forebears, to remember the deeds of heroes, to cherish works of beauty and truth that have been bequeathed to them, to order their days by feasts that elevate them above their own time, and to bend their knees together in prayer to God who has blessed them.

In man there is no nature without culture, and all cultures build upon human nature. Any division between them is factitious: as if you could talk about the nature of the wolf as separate from the pack.

Now, we are fallen creatures, and our cultures also are fallen; and in our time, we risk falling beneath fallenness itself, falling into the void. Never in the history of man has there been a people without culture, without any strong memory of what has come before them: without folk art and music, without the common lived experience of poetry, without heroes that everyone honours, and without the communion of worship.

We are wealthy enough to survive without those things, but no wealth can replace them. We may love mammon, but mammon will not love us back.

Many young people have never watched one film from the golden age of that art form.

Imagine then, every weekend, as part of an educational program, The Informant, You Can't Take It With You, It Happened One Night, How Green Was My Valley, Foreign Correspondent, I Remember Mama; or maybe we could focus on a single artist, and watch the opera omnia Francisci Capreae.

Imagine dances in a great ballroom built just for such a thing; and im-

agine that the young people learn to dance as their grandparents may have done, with innocence and the natural attraction that boys and girls are meant to have for one another.

Imagine that you get people from the community who can play the fiddle, attracted despite themselves to the beauty of what is normal. People used to play musical instruments, for the pleasure and mirth of it, and not for pursuing a career.

Imagine a place for regular concerts, big and small, "professional" and amateur, by people young and elderly. All of the arts have gone sour; poetry, the first and highest art of man, has degenerated into political posturing, in verse without form and metre

Imagine poetry readings, not "slams" or shouting matches; imagine young people reciting, for audiences who have never heard the like, dramatic monologues by Browning or Tennyson; imagine people who were born in New Hampshire hearing, for the first time in their lives, the narrative poetry of Robert Frost performed by youngsters who have learned to love it.

Imagine exhibitions by the Audubon Society, lectures on classical sculpture and sacred architecture, Bach chorales, re-enactments of the oratory of Daniel Webster, displays by collectors of coins and other memorabilia - imagine memory returning, culture returning, all the things that you would have to move heaven and earth to accomplish behind the barred gates of the typical college today.

And remember that it leads, not to the sanctuary of the Temple, but to the precincts; and that is not a bad place to begin.. *Anthony Esolen*

N.B. I discovered this article following on from a discussion at the Stony Stratford Ministers' Fraternal last week, where Priests and Ministers from the town's Churches and Chapels meet together.

The Lord looks on those who revere him, on those who hope in his love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine. ®

The Second Reading 1 Peter 2: 4-9
Reader at SMSG: Rosie Page

(New Testament Page 196 in the Bibles) tells us that Christ gives us a share in his divine life. He makes us members of his Mystical Body. As such we must worship God in our whole life and activity.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the way, and the truth, and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, but by me. **Alleluia!**

The Gospel John 14: 1-12

(New Testament Page 92 in the Bibles) reminds us that Christ has prepared a place for us in heaven. This thought should give us confidence and joy. Christ himself teaches us the truth and points out the way that leads to eternal life.

The Prayer of the Faithful

(Intercessor at SMSG: John Hickman)

Priest: My brothers and sisters let us pray in the Spirit of the Lord Jesus who is risen from the dead.

Intercessor: For the community of believers in Jesus' resurrection, that it will remain strong in love and faithful to the gospel of salvation.....

V/. Let us pray to the Lord....

R/. **God of love, hear us.**

For newly baptised adults, that they will continue to draw on the life of the risen Christ who abides among us in word and sacrament.....

For those who doubt the good news of salvation, that the Spirit will guide them into the truth of faith.....

For those who continue to suffer for the faith, especially in areas hostile to Christianity, that they will be guarded with

God's saving power.....

For those who are sick and confined by fear... *Fiddy Abraham, Polly Barclay, Gerry Bonner, Doreen Brooks, Shirley Brown, Steve Cooper, Russell Herbert, Jane Holman, Terry Mason, Sue Maton, Rosalie Osbourne, Pete, Ron Smart, Tony Oakley, Wendy...*, that God's freeing love will lead them to the peace of the risen Christ.....

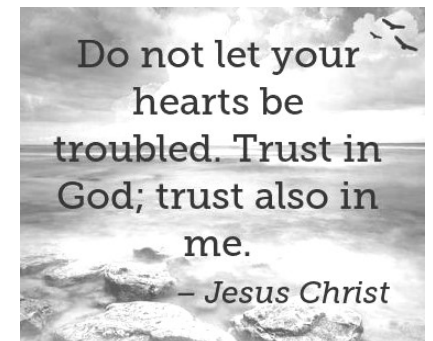
For those who have believed in Christ's resurrection and have died, that they will be counted among the blessed in the reign of glory, particularly... *Terry Crook, Larry Francis, Cecil Tee, Gill Tee...* and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week...**15th** Brian Williams, John Spencer; **16th** Patricia Bonham, Laurie Pell; **17th** Lawrence Clarkson; **18th** Gladys Goodger; **19th** Sarah Bennett; **20th** Mary Barry...

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

Priest: O God, in your abounding mercy, sustain in your Church the gifts of faith, hope, and love which give us new life in Christ, who lives and reigns forever and ever. **Amen.**

Communion Reflection:

Lord Jesus Christ, we believe in you, we believe in your Father. Do not let our hearts be troubled. Help us to continue your work. May the lives we live point to the power of your redeeming love. Prepare us for the day when you will come again. Take us to that place which you have prepared for us, Come Lord Jesus, come!



PARISH NEWS & NOTICES

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.

Lenten Appeal: If you haven't returned your Lent Box yet, please do so by today (14th May) at the latest. Thank you.

Funeral of Larry Francis R.I.P.: Larry died peacefully in his sleep at Caton House on the 2nd May. His mortal remains will be received into St Mary & St Giles at 4:30pm on Wednesday 24th May, and the evening Mass that day will be celebrated as a Requiem Mass for the repose of his soul. His Funeral Rite will be held at 3:30pm in St Mary & St Giles on Ascension Day (Thursday 25th May) followed by the Committal in the Oak Chapel at Crownhill Crematorium. *Jesu, mercy. Mary, pray.*

All Saints Coffee Morning: will be held 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 Jill Barby on MK 569245. If this occasion proves to be a success it is hoped to hold further coffee mornings

in aid of All Saints.

Ascension Day: As is our custom the Parish Mass on this Holy Day of Obligation will be celebrated at 7:30pm followed by a Bring & Share Supper.

Thy Kingdom Come: included with NEXT week's Newsletter will be a Novena Prayer Leaflet and a bookmark for your Bibles so that we can all participate in the Archbishops of Canterbury & York's global prayer movement, 'Thy Kingdom Come.' This initiative invites Christians around the world to pray between Ascension Day (25th May) and Pentecost Sunday (4th June) for more people to come to know Jesus Christ. What started out as an invitation from the Archbishops' of Canterbury and York in 2016 to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

The hope is that:

- people will commit to pray with God's world-wide family - as a church, individually or as a family;
- churches will hold prayer events, such as 24-7 prayer, prayer stations and prayer walks, across the UK and in other parts of the world;
- people will be empowered through prayer by the Holy Spirit, finding new confidence to be witnesses for Jesus Christ.

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses ...to the ends of the earth. When he had said this...he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight...Then they returned to Jerusalem ... and were constantly devoting themselves to prayer...

When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit... and that day about three

thousand persons were added." Acts 1.2

"In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities." Archbishop Justin Welby



25th May - 4th June 2017

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 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.

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.

The Need for a Renewal of Culture:

Grace builds upon nature, as Thomas Aquinas teaches us, and we can draw a few conclusions from that dictum. The first is that if the natural has been denied or depraved or reduced to rubble, the evangelist must set about rebuilding that foundation. You can preach to a heroin addict, but you must at the same time be re-forming him, so that he will be addicted to heroin no more, and will instead be an ordinary human being who can breathe freely with a sound mind and a sound body.

The second is that nature is our ally. She is not omnipotent. Tolkien's figure of uncorrupted nature, Tom Bombadil, though he is not tempted by the rings of power, is not sufficient to destroy the evil. But we do not require that nature be omnipotent. We require only that she be herself.

Consider how many of our political conflicts are predicated upon denying nature, or upon embracing the unnatural and perverse. Any farmer's child could tell you the difference between a cow and a bull, but we pretend for political purposes that it is all a matter of per-