

Worship for 25th April

EASTER 4

Let us worship God in pureness of heart, ready to present our minds and bodies as a living sacrifice.

Invitation to Confession:

We bow our heads to confess our sins and shortcomings, seeking the Father's mercy and healing.

When our preoccupation with worldly activities
interferes with our prayers and worship.
Lord, have mercy.

When earthly pleasures allure and distract us from our rightful purposes.
Christ, have mercy.

When worship is not wholehearted and our minds wander onto other things.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Collect of the Day

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:
raise us, who trust in him,
from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,
that we may seek those things which are above,
where he reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A reading from the the Book of Acts (4:5-12 NRSV)

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of

a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is “the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.”

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.’

Psalm - 23 (NRSV)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name’s sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my own sheep and my own know me. Alleluia!

A reading from the Gospel according to John (10:11-18 NRSV)

‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the

Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.’

Thought for the Day

God’s call to us comes clearly and unmistakably through the din of modern living, asking us to respond as Jesus wishes. So may we always try harder with everything we do for Jesus, our Good Shepherd, but above all may we, like the sheep, draw closer to him.

Intercessions

Take some time to reflect on your life this week. Where do you need God’s presence and help? Give thanks for where you feel you have received it and pray for those situation - places and people - who are in particular need at this time.

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

An Act of Spiritual Communion

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Act of Reception

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Final Prayer

Merciful Father,
you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd,
and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again:
keep us always under his protection,

and give us grace to follow in his steps;
through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

Blessing

May the God of power and mercy
nourish and protect us,
keep us from wandering
and direct us in the ways of love and peace.
And may the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us, now and evermore. Amen.