

Beaminster Area Team

God our Father, renew our hope. By the Holy Spirit's power, strengthen us to pray readily serve joyfully and grow abundantly rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Week: 21st March 2021, the Fifth Sunday of Lent, Passiontide begins

Old Testament: Jeremiah 31: 31-34

Psalm: Psalm 51:1-13

New Testament: Hebrew 5:5-10

Gospel: John 12: 20-33

Reflection on the Gospel reading, Reflection by Mark Oakley, Copyright ©The Archbishops' Council 2017.

In today's passage, Jesus interprets his death and begins to reveal the cost of his Kingship. He teaches that a grain dies in order to be fruitful, suggesting that his death will bring life to the world. This can seem as dark and impenetrable as the ground the seed is sown in. Jesus talks of how those who hate their life will keep it for eternal life. What does it mean to hate one's life? Is it to be able to deny one's own self for the sake of a greater good? Is it then a Christian truth that the human self is most itself when not being selfish? Certainly, teaches this Gospel, a Christian would be following their Lord if this truth were lived out: 'Whoever serves me must follow me'.

As Jesus talks in this passage, the Gospel becomes shadowed as Jesus' forthcoming death comes into focus. For whom will the sacrifice be made? When he preached in Pasadena in 2005, the Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu gave the answer:

'When Jesus said, "I, when I am lifted up, will draw ..." Did he say, "I will draw some"? "I will draw some, and tough luck for the others"? No. He said, "I, when I am lifted up, will draw all". All! All! All! – Black, white, yellow; rich poor; clever, not so clever; beautiful, not so beautiful. All! All! It is radical. All! Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, Bush – All! All! All are to be held in this incredible embrace. Gay, lesbian, so-called "straight". All! All! All are to be held in the incredible embrace of the love that won't let us go'.

Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

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.

Worship to enjoy at home

BBC Radio 4, 8.10am Sunday Morning Worship; Lent Worship BBC 1, 11.30 am; Songs of Praise BBC1 1.15pm.

A Useful Telephone Link from The Church of England. This is a free number where you can listen to prayers, reflections and hymns and join in worship with others.

