



**A SERVICE OF MORNING PRAYER  
FOR USE AT HOME  
The Fourth Sunday of Easter  
Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020**



**THE EASTER ACCLAMATION**

Christ is risen!

**The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. *1 Peter 1:3*

Beloved in Christ, we come together to offer to Almighty God our worship and praise and thanksgiving, to confess our sins and to receive God's forgiveness, to hear his holy word proclaimed, to bring before him our needs and the needs of the world, and to pray that in the power of his Spirit we may serve him and know the greatness of his love.

Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

*Silence is kept.*

**Heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault; by what we have done and by what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ who died for us, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Merciful Lord, grant to your faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**PROCLAIMING AND RECEIVING THE WORD**

O Lord, open our lips

**and our mouth will proclaim your praise.**

God, make speed to save us.

**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;  
**as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Praise the Lord.

**The Lord's name be praised.**

**PSALM: 23**

The Lord is my shepherd; ♦

**therefore can I lack nothing.**

He makes me lie down in green pastures ♦

**and leads me beside still waters.**

He shall refresh my soul ♦

**and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; ♦

**for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; ♦

**you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.**

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, ♦

**and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son;

and to the Holy Spirit;

**as it was in the beginning, is now,**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**FIRST READING: Acts 2:42-47**

The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**CANTICLE: The Easter Anthems (*1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Romans 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22*)**

Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us:

**therefore let us celebrate the feast,**

Not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness:

**but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

Christ, once raised from the dead dies no more;

**death has no more dominion over him.**

In dying, he died to sin once for all;

**in living, he lives to God.**

See yourselves therefore as dead to sin;

**and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Christ has been raised from the dead:

**the firstfruits of those who sleep.**

For as by man came death,

**by man has come also the resurrection of the dead.**

For as in Adam all die,

**even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son;**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning, is now,**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

## **SECOND READING: John 10:1-10**

Jesus said: 'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.' Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.'

## **REFLECTION**

### **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Show us your mercy, O Lord,  
**and grant us your salvation.**

O Lord, save the Queen  
**and grant her government wisdom.**

Let your ministers be clothed with righteousness  
**and let your servants shout for joy.**

O Lord, save your people  
**and bless those whom you have chosen.**

Give peace in our time, O Lord,  
**and let your glory be over all the earth.**

O God, make clean our hearts within us  
**and renew us by your Holy Spirit.**

#### **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 and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

#### **COLLECTS AT MORNING PRAYER**

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life, and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us in all assaults of our enemies, that we, surely trusting in your protection, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everliving God, we give you thanks for bringing us safely to this day: Keep us from falling into sin or running into danger, and in all things guide us to know and do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **PRAYERS**

Let us pray for faithful following of the will of God:

Heavenly Father, guard the Church from false teaching and from all error. Lead your pilgrim people in the right way to follow their Lord through the gate that leads to abundant life, and in turn to lead others to find the way to eternal life.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Shield the peoples of this world against those that would destroy the innocent and lead astray the vulnerable. Grant us all wisdom to discern and follow the true way, and to find the fullness of living, which is your will for all creation.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Make us good shepherds in places where we may have influence, helping our families, friends and neighbours and those with whom we work in these challenging times. Bless all who are leaders in our community, praying especially for Bishop David and Bishop-elect George and grant them grace to work for the common good. We pray also for our political leaders, for the Prime Minister and Government at Westminster, and for the First and Deputy First Minister and Executive at Stormont, in each of the difficult decisions they must make daily

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Have mercy on those who are struggling through Lockdown, and all tempted to bad choices or actions that will harm them or others. May each find again that abundant life which is in Christ alone, and may his voice bring peace and healing to their wounded souls.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for those who have passed through the gate of death and entered into eternal life. We pray especially for all who have died to Coronavirus, whether as patients, medical staff or carers. We pray that they have entered into the promise of life more abundant than this world can give, where Christ calls his flock to be with him in glory.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

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

**A PRAYER FOR THE 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF VE-DAY ON FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY:**

Lord of the nations, in this week we honour the bravery and the sacrifice of those who served this nation in the armed forces or as civilians throughout the Second World War. Grant us similar courage to recognise and restrain evil in our own day. May those who lead the nations of the world work together to defend human liberty, that we may live peaceably one with another. This we ask in the name of the Prince of Peace, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**A PRAYER FOR CARE WORKERS:**

O Heavenly Father, who by your Son Jesus Christ has taught us the glory of self-sacrifice and service: bless all doctors, nurses, anaesthetists and hospital personnel who are called to care for the sick, especially those suffering from the Coronavirus. Give your strength to all who work in Nursing homes, and who attend those in need of care in the community. Protect all who work in essential shops, and businesses and supply companies. Help each to remember that they are fellow-workers with you; and give them such patience, skill and love that they may bring healing and comfort to those who they serve, and their loved ones. Guard them in their work from themselves contracting the virus, and watch over their families and loved ones in their anxiety for them. We ask this in the name of the one who spent himself for others with no thought for himself, even our Great Healer, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**PRAYER OF EASTER BLESSING**

May God the Father,  
by whose glory Christ was raised from the dead,  
raise us up to walk with him in the newness of his risen life:  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be with us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

**THE EASTERTIDE DISMISSAL**

Go in the peace of the Risen Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Belfast Cathedral Closure**

We regret that, due to current restrictions  
as a result of the Covid-19 virus, Belfast Cathedral is closed to  
services, tourism, events and as a public gathering venue.

However, please continue to watch the cathedral website ([www.belfastcathedral.org](http://www.belfastcathedral.org)) or  
our Facebook Page "Belfast Cathedral" for up to date news and online prayer resources.

*Bible passages in this service are from the New Revised Standard Version.  
Material in this service is reproduced from the Book of Common Prayer copyright © RCB 2004.  
Belfast Cathedral text, music and live streaming licence numbers CCL 8124, MRL 1049409  
belfastcathedral.org*

**HYMNS THAT CAN BE USED AT HOME:**

**ICH 286:**

The strife is o'er, the battle done;  
now is the victor's triumph won;  
O let the song of praise be sung:

*Alleluia!*

Death's mightiest powers have done their worst,  
and Jesus has his foes dispersed;  
let shouts of praise and joy outburst:

On the third morn he rose again,  
glorious in majesty to reign;  
O let us swell the joyful strain:

He broke the bonds of death and hell,  
the bars from heav'n's high portals fell;  
let hymns of praise his triumph tell:

Lord, by the stripes which wounded thee  
from death's dread sting thy servants free,  
that we may live, and sing to thee:

*Words: From the Latin Symphonia Sirenum Selectarum (Cologne 1695) tr. Francis Pott (1832-1909)  
based on 1 Corinthians 15:53-57*

*Tune: VULPIUS (GELOBT SEI GOTT) Melody from M. Vulpius's Gesangbuch (1609)  
harm. Henry G. Ley (1887-1962)*

**ICH 20:**

The King of love my shepherd is,  
whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am his,  
and he is mine for ever.

Where streams of living water flow  
my ransomed soul he leadeth,  
and where the verdant pastures grow  
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,  
but yet in love he sought me,  
and on his shoulder gently laid,  
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill  
with thee, dear Lord, beside me:  
thy rod and staff my comfort still,  
thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight,  
thy unction grace bestoweth,  
and O, what transport of delight,  
from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days  
thy goodness faileth never;  
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise  
within thy house for ever.

*Words: Henry Williams Baker (1821-77) metrical version of Psalm 23  
Tune: ST COLUMBA Irish traditional melody (Petrie Collection)*

**ICH 281:**

Rejoice, the Lord is King,  
Your Lord and King adore;  
Mortals, give thanks and sing,  
And triumph evermore:

*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.*

Jesus, the Saviour, reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When he had purged our stains,  
He took his seat above:

His kingdom cannot fail;  
He rules o'er earth and heaven;  
The keys of death and hell  
Are to our Jesus given:

He sits at God's right hand Till all his foes submit,  
And bow to his command,  
And fall beneath his feet:

Rejoice in glorious hope; Jesus the Judge shall  
come, and take his servants up, to their eternal  
home: *We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;  
the trump of God shall sound: Rejoice!*

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88) based on Philippians  
Tune: GOPSAL G. F. Handel (1685-1759)*