



Benefice of the Piddle Valley, Hilton & Ansty, Melcombe Horsey and Cheselbourne

Sunday 10th May 2020
Easter 5 (Altar Colour White/Gold)

Readings: *Acts 7:55-end, Psalm 31: 1-5, 15-16, John 14: 1-14*

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**

Acts 7:55-60 (ESV) - The Stoning of Stephen

But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

COMMENT: The brutal end of the story of Stephen's martyrdom introduced the young man Saul, soon to be converted as the apostle Paul. The main character of the whole narrative of The Acts of the Apostles, however, was not any one of the named or unnamed apostles who carried the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. That hero role belonged to the Holy Spirit. This story told of the first Christian martyr to illustrate how challenging and dangerous that mission would be. Stephen was one of the seven Hellenistic leaders in the Jerusalem church chosen to assist the apostles. Their primary role was as stewards commissioned to distribute food to the needy (6:1-6). Stephen, however, had a special gift for preaching and soon ran afoul of the Sanhedrin, the supreme religious court of the Jews, (6:8-15) where he was convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to death by stoning. This story presented the first evidence in Acts that the Spirit was motivating the apostolic church to reach out beyond the narrow confines of Judaism and Palestine to the vast Hellenic world with new insights of who Jesus Christ was for them too. It was there that the church was to find its earliest successes as a result of its first missionary efforts. Throughout its history the church has had a tradition honouring human heroes, and yet the real agent of God's mission in the world is still, as always, the Spirit of God who was in Christ.

John 14:1-14 (ESV) - I Am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."

COMMENT: The several long discourses in John's Gospel always raise the question whether these are actual words of Jesus or only attributed to him by the Gospel writer. Christian scholarship almost universally accepts attribution and that most likely that the passage contains remembered sayings of Jesus. Either way this passage contains important theological truths as valid today as for the second or third generation of believers for whom it was written. Most notable in the passage is that Jesus is the only way to God. However, claims in this passage for Jesus and Christian faith cannot be isolated from the rest of this discourse, especially the life of obedient love which Jesus commanded his disciples to follow. This, perhaps, is the clue to a more satisfactory interpretation of the uniqueness of our faith.

Short Preface: But chiefly are we bound to praise you because you raised him gloriously from the dead. For he is the true paschal lamb who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has restored to us everlasting life.

Post Communion: Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Blessing: The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Benefice Prayer list

In your prayers, please will you pray for our friends and neighbours throughout the benefice. For the couples who are awaiting the ban marriages to be lifted, in order to re-arrange their service of holy Matrimony. For the sick, the grieving, the lonely. For all key workers; including our Clergy and Funeral Directors, NHS staff and community support groups,



For those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit, through illness or recovering from hospital treatment: *Sara Milne, Ann Lambert, Geoff Harris, Ruth Tutt, Bernard, Alex Bexon, Fr. Damian Feeney, Wakeham family, Jeanes Family, Michelle Simpson, Giles Maber and Robyn Kotze.* For those in care homes: including *June Kelloway and Roger Gray.*



Requiescat in pace

Fay Lord (Piddlehinton)
Nicola Kelloway (Cheselbourne)
Dawn Wheeler (Formerly Alton Pancras)

Any additions or amendments to the prayer list, please email the Rector.

Benefice Notices



Foodbank: Donations for Dorchester Foodbank can be left at The Vicarage - Piddletrenthide, Orchard Cottage - Melcombe Bingham; or at the Bromilow's gate - Hilton for Blandford Foodbank. Thank you for continuing to support this cause during the current pandemic.

Funerals: During the current Pandemic, graveside or crematorium funeral services are strictly private and therefore will not be advertised on the weekly church notices. Memorial Services will be arranged at some point in the future.

For your information, Fr. Roger is also assisting the Dorchester Churches undertake funerals due to a lack of available clergy.

Saturday Devotions 6pm. If you would like to join Fr. Roger to pray the Roman Rosary each Saturday in the month of May, you are most welcome. An explanation will be given as the service is streamed live; He will attempt to point out some of the theological difficulties. The point here is simplicity and not to pray the system of prayer, rather it is a tool to deepen our relationship with God. Pope Francis is inviting the Apostolic Churches to pray the Rosary over the month of May. The rosary is dedicated for Mary and a Marian prayer is used at the end of the rosary.

Live Streaming: Please drop into our live streamed services, order of services are available on the website home page for download for Communion and Rosary.

Sunday Communion Services are now being uploaded to YouTube after the livestreaming has taken place. Search 'Fr. Roger Butcher' within YouTube or use this link

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0ru_v3_1MZyzz72ka63g4A

To access the live streamed services, please go to the benefice facebook page at the time of the service, and the live stream will appear. If you 'like' the benefice facebook page, you will receive notifications on live services and other information posted to the facebook page.

You can use this link, log in or follow the instructions to setup an account:

https://www.facebook.com/piddlevalley/?eid=ARAxIQNj5mPHQUQD2hKEx_uzUyyf17basudX3D22bYJx4HsCh7ByYB8lltrMbHhsARvgwbTqvapn-Glq

Rector - Fr. Roger J. Butcher SSC KSJ
The Vicarage, Church Lanes, Piddletrenthide. DT2 7QY. Tel. 01300 348211 / 07502 118210
Email. rector.piddlevalleybenefice@gmail.com

 Facebook: @piddlevalley

 Website: <https://piddlevalleybenefice.com>