

POST COMMUNION

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

FINAL HYMN: 'Christ be our Light' – (401)

On this our Patronal festival some thoughts of St George:

The Feast of St George is celebrated on 23rd April all around the world, by various Christian groups and by different countries too. He is remembered on this day as it largely believed to be the day of his death. So who was he? According to legend, he was a Roman soldier of Greek origin who lived around 256—303 AD. Aged 17 he travelled and joined the Roman army. He was quickly promoted and eventually reached the rank of legatus. However, in 303, Emperor Diocletian decreed that all Christian soldiers should renounce their faith and should offer up gifts to the Roman Gods. George heard of this and knew he couldn't give up his faith. Instead, he freed his slaves, distributed his wealth to the poor and awaited his fate. Diocletian tried to convert him but failed, so George was arrested and sentenced to death. He was executed in 23rd April 303 and his body taken back to Lydda for burial. He was revered as a martyr. He is now the Patron Saint of over 23 countries. In Medieval legend he is said to have slain a dragon.

What does this day mean for us? St George is known for his courage and for not giving up his Christian beliefs, even when he faced death. We don't risk death, but how many times have we been tempted to give in, or to not do what we believe is right? Let's reflect on what we believe God is asking of us. In coming weeks can we stand up for what we know is right? Can we live by our Christian values as George did and help those in need? Can we confront evil?



4th Sunday of Easter & Patronal Festival

21st April 2024

GATHERING HYMN: 'Here in this Place' – (261)

COLLECT:

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

FIRST READING

Acts 4: 5—12

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.'

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God



SECOND READING

1 John 3.16—24

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

For the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

GOSPEL HYMN— ‘In Christ Alone’ – (310)

We sing the final verse after the Gospel Reading

GOSPEL

John 10: 11-18

‘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.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE GIFTS:

‘The Lord’s My Shepherd’ – (637)

COMMUNION HYMNS:

‘Faithful Shepherd Feed Me’ – (138)

‘Bread of Life, Hope of the World’

***Bread of life, hope of the world,
Jesus Christ, our brother:
feed us now, give us life,
lead us to one another.***

As we proclaim your death,
as we recall your life,
we remember your promise
to return again. **Refrain**

The bread we break and share
was scattered once as grain:
just as now it is gathered,
make your people one. **Refrain**

We eat this living bread,
we drink this saving cup:
sign of hope in our broken world,
source of lasting love. **Refrain**

Hold us in unity,
in love for all to see;
that the world may believe in you,
God of all who live. **Refrain**



Bernadette Farrell