

## A CALL TO PRAYER

**Begin as we always do with the Sign of the Cross.**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Prayer to gather our thoughts:**

God of the home and God of the pilgrim, we begin to dig in for an uncertain season, and embark on a journey together. This is a path we haven't been on. Yet we know in each step you are there alongside us: a guide, a protector, a friend. May each day on the road bring us closer together, closer to a land of grateful reunion, closer to the place you call home.

Amen.

**A Word of Scripture:**

**Saturday 28 March 2020 4th week of Lent**

**From Gospel of John: Ch 7**

Several people who had been listening to Jesus said, 'Surely he must be the prophet', and some said, 'He is the Christ', but others said, 'Would the Christ be from Galilee? Does not scripture say that the Christ must be descended from David and come from the town of Bethlehem?' So the people could not agree about him. Some would have liked to arrest him, but no one actually laid hands on him.

The police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees who said to them, 'Why haven't you brought him?' The police replied, 'There has never been anybody who has spoken like him.' 'So' the Pharisees answered 'you have been led astray as well? *Have any of the authorities believed in him? Any of the Pharisees? This rabble knows nothing about the Law – they are damned.*' One of them, Nicodemus – the same man who had come to Jesus earlier – said to them, 'But surely the Law does not allow us to pass judgement on a man without giving him a hearing and discovering what he is about?' To this they answered, 'Are you a Galilean too? Go into the matter, and see for yourself: prophets do not come out of Galilee.'

Pause and sit quietly and allow the Word of God to take root.

Deacon John writes:

This passage is best understood in the context of the whole of chapter 7 of John's gospel. From that we know that Jesus believed that the chief priests wanted him dead and although he went to Jerusalem 'privately' his teaching soon attracted the attention of his enemies and the ordinary people. So far as the authorities were concerned his defiance was a situation that they could not tolerate and there was also some conflict of opinion amongst the people who debated Jesus' origins and his right to say the things he said.

But there were those who were clearly affected by his teaching and saw him as a legitimate prophet and more – they saw him as the Christ.

Even at a human level the response of the priests is extremely arrogant. Those who disagreed with them are said to be uneducated fools and their disdain is palpable. Anyone who took Jesus' teaching to heart (like us) was part of an ignorant 'rabble', and of no consequence. Quite literally they could go to hell, as much because of their ignorance as their beliefs about Jesus. And yet, while claiming total knowledge of the Law, they were acting against it, as Nicodemus points out.

Perhaps this evening we could consider/meditate on the differences in the way that Jesus responded to 'the rabble'.

(The rest of the readings are at the end of this liturgy.)

### **Prayer**

In silence let us pray for this who are ill, those who are anxious, those are isolated or just feel isolated and for those who are working to care for all in need..... Now let us gather all our separate prayers into one community prayer in the words Jesus taught us.

### **Our Father.....**

Mary watched her Son suffer but she also witnessed his Resurrection, so she knows what it is to suffer and she knows that we can rise again from suffering. Let us ask her to pray with and for us.

### **Hail Mary.....**

### **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour. In this time of anxiety, give us strength, to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake.

Amen.

<http://stpatrickscofe.org.uk/call-to-pray/>

### **First reading**

**Jeremiah 11:18-20** The Lord revealed it to me; I was warned. O Lord, that was when you opened my eyes to their scheming. I for my part was like a trustful lamb being led to the slaughter-house, not knowing the schemes they were plotting against me, 'Let us destroy the tree in its strength, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name may be quickly forgotten!'

But you, the Lord of Hosts, who pronounce a just sentence,  
who probe the loins and heart,  
let me see the vengeance you will take on them,  
for I have committed my cause to you.

### **Responsorial Psalm**

### **Psalm 7:2-3,9-12**

Response

*Lord God, I take refuge in you.*