



**The Smestow Vale Team Ministry**  
**St Benedict's and the Venerable Bede**  
**Keeping in Touch with our Church Family**

**Sunday 10th May**

**The Fifth Sunday of Easter**

Risen Christ,  
Your wounds declare your love for the world  
And the wonder of your risen life:  
Give us compassion and courage  
To risk ourselves for those we serve,  
To the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**St. Stephen faces martyrdom and sees heaven waiting for him.**

Standing before the high priest and the council, Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

*Acts 7:55-end*

**Jesus the Way the Truth and the Life.**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. 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, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place 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 know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know

him and have seen him.' Philip said to him, 'Lord, the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? 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; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in

*John 14:1-14*

**A Reflection for the Fifth Week of Eastertide.**  
**Revd Richard Fisher.**

Our Gospel will be familiar to you if you have attended funeral services as it is often read on those occasions. It begins with a statement of eternal hope: Jesus declares that "in my Father's house there are many dwelling-places" and promises his disciples that he goes to "prepare a place" for them. Christ teaches us that we are loved and that in the Father heart of God we can have a sense of security in this world and the next.

In his replies to Thomas, Christ says he is "the way, and the truth, and the life". He is the "way"

because he is the one with whom we travel and shows us also the direction of travel. He is the "truth", because, in seeing him, we see perfectly what God is like (I find these words of Archbishop William Temple helpful "God was in Christ and in God there is nothing unChristlike at all"). And he is the "life" because our sharing in the life of his Son brings joy to the Father.

St Augustine wrote: "we are wholly incapable of being what Christ is, in ourselves"; we depend upon his help. In our life on earth, it may sometimes be possible to evade the reality of our finitude and entertain a fantasy of complete autonomy. If we have not had to do so before, at some point the ageing process will compel us to reckon with our Interdependence and mortality.

The good news is that Christ's resurrection has turned death into "the gate of everlasting life". In this pandemic, we are all being forced to contemplate our lack of being in control and mastery, perhaps for the first time. It is a time to dig deeper and discover a new reliance on the gracious God whom Jesus reveals to us.

### **Prayer During the Week**

**Please remember those who have asked for our prayers** Sarah Stephenson, David Kingston, Lisa, Julia McCormick, Morgan, Michael Concannon, Heather Gent, Jean, and Margaret Hatton

**Those who have died recently and their families:**  
Margaret Sthamer, Joyce Cort, Phyllis Huntley, Jean Nightingale, Joyce Cort, Edna Tromans, Beryl Allen.

#### **Sunday**

Pray for confidence to trust in God and in his Son Jesus Christ. (John 14: 1)

#### **Monday**

Thank God that the peak of the epidemic appears to have passed.

#### **Tuesday**

Pray for all who are working on finding ways to end the lockdown.

#### **Wednesday**

Pray for wisdom and skill for those educating children at home.

#### **Thursday (St Matthias)**

Pray that we will remember Jesus' commandment to love one another. (John 15: 12)

#### **Friday**

Pray for all who need medical treatment but are concerned about visiting the surgery or the hospital.

#### **Saturday**

Commend to God those who have died from the virus in our own community..

#### **Good News**

The Rector has become a Grandad again. Roanna was born on Tuesday morning. Congratulations to Alice, Alan and Henry.



#### **A Prayer for when life is difficult**

Prayer is often born out of the rough and difficult times of our lives. When we offer these times to God he will help and support us.

*O Lord God, creator of all  
Open my eyes to beauty  
Open my eyes to wonder  
Open my ears to others  
Open my heart to you.  
Amen*

#### **Sunday Worship**

Thank you to Preb Ben from Penn for all the help with last Sunday's service and to everyone who has made appreciative comments. There were over 400 views. There will be a service led by Paul on Facebook this Sunday from 10.30am.

#### **Share the Good News**

You are very welcome to share Keeping in Touch with others. If you know of anyone who would like it emailing to them direct please let Maxine know.

#### **Sunday Worship for the Firth Sunday of Easter 10.45am BBC 1**

Please join in prayer and worship on Sunday Morning The bishop of Dover, the Right Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin, leads the service for VE Day from Hereford Cathedral, filmed before the closure of all church buildings was announced. Featuring hymns recorded for Songs of Praise in 2017.