



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION**  
**SUNDAY 17 MARCH 2024 – LENT V (Passion Sunday)**

**COLLECT**

Most merciful God,  
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
delivered and saved the world:  
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross  
we may triumph in the power of his victory;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Psalm 119.9-16**

- 9 How shall young people cleanse their way ♦  
to keep themselves according to your word?
- 10 With my whole heart have I sought you; ♦  
O let me not go astray from your commandments.
- 11 Your words have I hidden within my heart, ♦  
that I should not sin against you.
- 12 Blessed are you, O Lord; ♦  
O teach me your statutes.
- 13 With my lips have I been telling ♦  
of all the judgements of your mouth.
- 14 I have taken greater delight in the way of your testimonies ♦  
than in all manner of riches.
- 15 I will meditate on your commandments ♦  
and contemplate your ways.
- 16 My delight shall be in your statutes ♦  
and I will not forget your word.

## The Prophecy of Jeremiah, 31.31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the LORD', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

For the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

***At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:***

The second reading is from John, chapter 19, verses 25-27.

***and then at the end:***

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

***For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel and it is introduced with an Acclamation, as below:***

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory.

**Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory.**

I am the light of the world, says the Lord. Whoever follows me has the light of life.

**Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John 12, verses 20-33.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

***And then at the end:***

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—"Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

### *A Reflection from Peter...*

There are times when some of the story lines in *The Archers* seem to get stuck. You don't listen for a couple of weeks and when you tune in again things are at almost exactly the same place... Today we are witnesses as the story of God, the story that God tells us, shifts up a gear. The prophet Jeremiah talks of a new covenant, not like the covenant that led to the exodus from Egypt. This is a new moment, one that makes a dramatic shift in the fabric of the world. Our Gospel reading takes us into still deeper mysteries. Jesus say, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit.' At one level, this makes perfect sense. We all know about planting seeds – but we don't generally think of it in terms of dying in order to live, not least because there appears to be little connection between the tiny seed and the sweet peas (or whatever it may be) that emerge. It is Jesus who is the model for this new covenant. Jesus dies. His followers and friends grieve, not understanding. But God raises Jesus. Jesus' death is the planting of the seed. What emerges is new, full of life – and it is different: people don't recognise Jesus at first. And that is God's promise to every part of creation. And so it is that, with an ironic reference to Moses holding up the bronze serpent so that all those who had been bitten by poisonous snakes would be healed, Jesus says, 'I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' Being lifted up on the cross, being put to death, is God's declaration of enduring life – and not a continuation, not a prolongation of life as we know it now, but a fullness of being alive that we cannot yet imagine.