



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION**  
**SUNDAY 4 MAY 2025 – Easter 3**

**COLLECT**

Almighty Father,  
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples  
with the sight of the risen Lord:  
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,  
that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life  
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;  
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.

**Psalms 30**

1 I will exalt you, O Lord,  
because you have raised me up ♦  
and have not let my foes triumph over me.  
2 O Lord my God, I cried out to you ♦  
and you have healed me.  
3 You brought me up, O Lord, from the dead; ♦  
you restored me to life from among those that go down to the Pit.  
4 Sing to the Lord, you servants of his; ♦  
give thanks to his holy name.  
5 For his wrath endures but the twinkling of an eye,  
his favour for a lifetime. ♦  
Heaviness may endure for a night,  
but joy comes in the morning.  
6 In my prosperity I said,  
'I shall never be moved. ♦  
You, Lord, of your goodness,  
have made my hill so strong.'  
7 Then you hid your face from me ♦  
and I was utterly dismayed.  
8 To you, O Lord, I cried; ♦  
to the Lord I made my supplication:  
9 'What profit is there in my blood,  
if I go down to the Pit? ♦  
Will the dust praise you or declare your faithfulness?  
10 'Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me; ♦  
O Lord, be my helper.'  
11 You have turned my mourning into dancing; ♦  
you have put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness;  
12 Therefore my heart sings to you without ceasing; ♦  
O Lord my God, I will give you thanks for ever.

A reading from the book of Acts, chapter 9, verses 1-6.

Acts 9. 1-6

### **The Conversion of Saul**

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.'

This is 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 21, verses 1-19.

**and then at the end:**

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):**

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

**Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, Chapter 1, verses 1-19.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

**And then at the end:**

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## John 21. 1-19

### Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

### Jesus and Peter

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes,

Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

## ***A Reflection from Hannah***

A friend of mine whose elderly mother lived with dementia, told me the story that as she came to the end of her life and was in residential care, she would say to whoever settled her into bed 'wake me up if there are any babies going to be born in the night.' She had been a midwife- that's what she was good at, that's what she knew how to do, and she was trying to make sense of her situation- she'd worked in residential homes for unmarried mothers many years earlier, so perhaps something of a care home reminded her of that season. She drew on something she knew well from the past to try to explain the present.

What are you good at? Where does your expertise lie? We all have something we can do well, something we feel confident in- that if someone asked us to do, we'd not feel the slightest anxiety or hesitation.

It's a bit like that for the disciples in our reading. There are seven that go out on the boat, and at least some of them (Peter being one) are fishermen by trade. They know what they're doing. They know how to fish. Yet they catch nothing. What's brought them to this moment? Well, amazing things have happened- they have encountered the risen Jesus and their world has been turned upside down. It's been breathtaking, joyful, profound, yet.... Confusing. In a way it's similar to that lady with Dementia I described- they are trying to make sense of a reality that doesn't (to them at that moment), make any sense. How do they respond? Well, they've gone fishing.

They've run to their riches. Peter and the others have gone back to the thing they feel confident in, back to the old ways. But it doesn't work. The world has changed, and now, out on the boat in the night, there are no fish. Sometimes the old strategies don't work, especially in the light of the resurrection- nothing is what it was.

And so, in the story of the miraculous catch of fish where Jesus (the BBQ king!) stands on the shore and cooks breakfast, we learn that life with the risen Jesus is new. The old ways have gone. And yet, paradoxically, they are more real than they've ever been, through the transforming power of Christ. When those words ring out 'throw your net on the right side of the boat'- the disciples bow to a higher authority than themselves. Even though they are fishermen and know that water well, they put their trust in God and they catch more fish than they needed or imagined. There is something in this story that reminds us that no matter how accomplished we are in anything, God will work through us to do more than we could ever ask or imagine.

And there's even more beyond that. Peter was a fisherman. He knew how to haul in a catch. But Jesus uses those same skills and concepts to accomplish through Peter the very beginnings of the church. Our presence here today is built on those early disciples, which included a man who was told he would be a 'fisher of people.' The beautiful and profound moment which we know as Jesus' reinstatement of Peter follows directly on from the miraculous catch of fish and, in doing so, shows us that who we are, the very essence of our unique character and skills is brought to bear on our calling out, and on the life and work that God asks us to do.

May we be encouraged by this story, that nothing on our journey of discipleship stands still, but also nothing is wasted. Everything that Peter was already good at fed into a commission that founded the church- a full life lived to the glory of God and in response to that love. So, let's take what we have- what we've learned, what we're good at, all the mistakes we've made- and bring them to God, expectant that by God's Holy Spirit we can live, and continue to live, transformed lives where the authority of Jesus allows our little to become more than we could ever have asked or imagined.