



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 3 MAY 2026 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

COLLECT

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 31. 1-5, 15-16

- 1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame; ♦
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; ♦
make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,
for you are my rock and my stronghold; ♦
guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.
- 4 Take me out of the net
that they have laid secretly for me, ♦
for you are my strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, ♦
for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.
- 15 'My times are in your hand; ♦
deliver me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.
- 16 'Make your face to shine upon your servant, ♦
and save me for your mercy's sake.'

A reading from the first epistle of Peter, chapter 2, verses 2-10.

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner',

and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

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 John, chapter 14, verses 1-14.

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 14, verses 1-14.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

‘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, 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 the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

A Reflection from Dave

Some famous last words are so good, they are hard to believe.

For example the words “I told you I was ill!” are often attributed to the comedian Spike Milligan. What a final punchline! However these words weren’t his last. Instead they are what he chose for his gravestone, capturing something of the jolly fullness of who he was in life, even after he died. It’s the privileged few who get to choose their last words, and fewer still have ones worth writing down.

But in our gospel passage we have words of Jesus that would have been understood by his disciples as his farewell address. They follow a typical Jewish pattern that involved the dying person surrounding themselves with close friends and family, showing concern for the comfort of those left behind, leaving instructions on how to continue living, and passing on their spirit to their successor. And Jesus, surrounded by his closest friends at the last supper, is here giving words of comfort and instruction, before promising the gift of the Holy Spirit. The shape of the farewell was typical, but the content was not.

It is unusual for the one dying to speak of their return. Yet Jesus not only promises to prepare the place for all who follow him into death, he also promises to return to be with those who continue to live, so that they can always be with him.

It is a confident thing for the one dying to claim access to God. Yet Jesus claims more than just personal access to God the Father, but instead proclaims himself to be the one, true, living way to God, as well as his clearest image, so that whoever has seen Jesus has seen the Father!

It is normal for the one dying to point to things they have done in their lifetime. But Jesus talks of his continued works, not only through those who follow him, but also that he will do in answer to their prayers, even after he is gone.

Some last words seem too good to believe, but in Jesus’ words we have hope of a life beyond death, his presence with us even today, assurance that we cannot miss God if we come to Jesus, and permission to bring all we have in prayer to him as he continues to work with us and for us. These are not words on a dead tombstone, but words from him who Peter calls ‘the living stone.’

And the thing he asks of us, even in the midst of all the worries and concerns in our lives and the world, is that we do not allow our hearts to dwell in the trouble around us, but to hold onto what he says, by finding our rest in that belief in him.