

Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 9th 2021



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Opening

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

May his grace and peace be with you.

May he fill our hearts with joy.

Sentence

If you love me, you will keep my word, and my Father will love you, and we will come to you.

See John 14.23

Collect

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love your riches beyond imagination. Pour into our hearts such love toward you, that we, loving you above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Reading

ACTS 10:44-48;

PSALM 98;

1 JOHN 5:1-6;

JOHN 15:9-17

Reflection for 6th Sunday of Easter from The Rev'd Dr. Justin Comber

Last fall, when the skies were first beginning to grey, and before there was a real bite in the air, many of you planted your wheat. Each grain lay in the ground, buried the dark and cold, and, soon enough, by the cold snows of winter. This spring, already what was dead and buried has sprung from the ground, green with its new life. In Holy week and an Easter, the Christian church uses this metaphor, borrowed straight from our Christian Scriptures, to describe resurrection. It's understood that the workings of the natural world teach us something about what God is doing in creation. It is understood that the inner workings of the natural world are signs that point us to something deeper and truer, that the image of death and resurrection in planting and growing illustrates the truth of human death and the hope of resurrection.

We celebrate resurrection at Easter because Christ has died and Christ has risen. Christ is the first fruit of the grave, the first to emerge from death into resurrected light. In Christ, through the metaphor of wheat, we understand that there is life still to come. In revelation, though, our bible turns again to be natural world for explanation. But this time it isn't necessarily metaphor. At the very end of the book of revelation we are shown in the image of a garden. This is the natural world perfectly adapted to life. We understand its purpose as sustaining human life. There is fruit, there is water flowing like a river from the throne of God. And there is light. This time it isn't metaphor, because Revelation offers a perfect image of God's resurrected, born anew, perfect creation.

This image, in Revelation, happens at the end of the end. To understand it we need to turn to the beginning of the beginning. In the book of Genesis, creation unfolds in perfect stages of creating space and then filling it with life. The light is separated from the darkness, the heavens are separated from the earth, the land is separated from the sea. And when each of these spaces have been shaped out of one another they are filled with life. The light is filled with the sun, moon, and stars, the sky with birds, the sea with fish, and the land with all manner of life. We understand most of the creation story as a depiction of God in relationship with the humans, Adam and Eve. We also know the story of the fall of humanity. And with it enters life at a cost, life through struggle, inevitable decay, and ultimate death. But none of that is limited to humanity. The whole of the creation suffers. Death and decay, life at a cost become the new reality in the whole of the creation. The first to feel the sting of death are the animals who give their lives for human sustenance and their skins to cover humanity's newly discovered shame. From that point forward, death and decay become the new reality for the whole of creation. Which makes our image of a garden in revelation all the more incredible.

The Christian Hope, the hope for humanity, is not celestial so to speak. We don't hope for a new home apart from the home created for us. We do not look to life in a far off heaven. Christian hope is terrestrial. God will remake, will resurrect the whole of creation; both humanity and their home. The image of a perfect garden is telling. This is not just the image of a sin for humanity resurrected from their death separated from the creation, or even placed back into the world as it is. The whole of creation is tainted by death, subject to death, experiences death, and has its hope in the resurrection.

The whole of creation, including the natural world, is the work of God's hands. And, in the book of revelation it, like us, is undone. Creation plays out in reverse. Whereas in Genesis space was separated from space (light separated from darkness, each from the heavens, land from the sea), and each new space was filled with life, here the living sun moon and stars are emptied from the sky. The sea and skies and land are all emptied of their life, too. Creation falls into itself. The mountains fall into the sea and the light descends into darkness and all of creation is undone. Until, like us, it is reborn in resurrection. St Paul tells us that the whole of creation groans for this day. We see the image of new creation in our garden; perfect, full of life and unspoiled. The natural world does provide us with the metaphor we need to understand resurrection, but also shares with humanity, as the co-creatures of God, in resurrection.

And so today we hold two things together—the realized hope of resurrection in Christ at Easter and the blessing of soil and seed, field and boundary in rogation. We offer the natural world around us back to God its creator. We ask him to sustain us, in the present, and to hold death and decay at bay. We ask God to illustrate resurrection for us in the growth of new life from seed and soil, giving us both the image and hope of resurrection, and food to sustain us. And, at Easter, we look forward to resurrected life, and we give thanks to God for God's creation, our home. We offer God our praise in anticipation of the hope that awaits us and the whole of creation.

The Rev'd Dr. Justin Comber
Rector
The Anglican Parish of the Transfiguration

justincomber@diohuron.org

(519) 809 9452



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Prayers of the People for 6th Sunday of Easter - by JoAnne Easton - joeaston@kwic.com>

Dear Lord, today, our culture designates this day to remember Mothers. Bless every mother and every grandmother with the finest of your spiritual blessings. Confirm in her heart and spirit the work of her hands and the love that she has so freely given to those children under Your care. Validate her worth daily so she has no reason to doubt whether she is loved, valued, and cherished in the eyes of her Heavenly Father. Lord when Mother's Day is upon us, a lot of us remember our mothers who have died and we give thanks for her life. Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of earthly life, in particular for the life of our mothers. Thank you for all the years we enjoyed with her. We praise you that she stood with us through the good times and the bad times. We cherish, the memories of times of joy and times of sorrow. As she is now at rest with you, we thank you for the hope of a future in your presence that we will share together.

Lord, you spoke to us today in John 15, about the love you have for us and the relationship of friendship with you. That we are not servants but friends and this is very revealing. You focus on the love we should cultivate towards each other. As a mother/father loves her/his child before she/he ever sees it, and then embraces it gently from the moment of its birth, so you love us—and we thank you. Help us dear God to love one another in this way. We thank you God for loving us when we are unloving, for caring for us when we are uncaring, and for calling to us when we go far away. Help us dear God to love one another in this way.

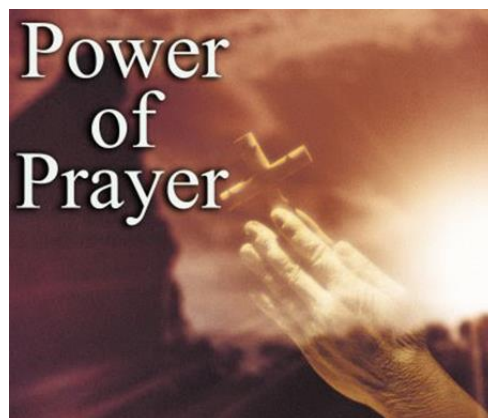
Lord hear our prayers of love this day for those around us, for our journey through this Pandemic, keep us safe and for those we have thought of in our moments of caring, for those wanting our prayers and our love. We ask this prayer in Jesus' name, AMEN

We pray for: - Todd our Bishop, Anne our Metropolitan, Linda our Primate, Mark National Indigenous Archbishop, Marinez Bishop of Amazonia. AD Rick Jones, Rev. Enrique Martinez, Rev. Jack Cox.

For the week beginning 9 May 2021, we will be praying for the **Rev. Canon Tony Bouwmeester** (interim) and the people of **St. Paul's, Port Dover**

We pray for our shut-ins at home, hospital and in local nursing homes.
Especially remembering: June, Shirley, Iris, Julie, John, Sheila, Sylvia, Anna and Jack B.

We pray for the ones who have asked for your healing touch upon their lives: Betty F., Don G., Franz and Elaine Z., Steven K., Rebecca M., Trista P., Bill MC., Dwayne M. and Andrea B., Susan A., Olivia H., Karen M., Delores B., Dale & David F, Rose G, Julie, Janice S., Barbara S., Ian M., Carol H., and anyone known to you.



It is important that we keep the prayer list and shut-in list up to date. If you know of any changes to these lists, can you please email Anne at lpbparishsecretary@gmail.com or Enrique at enrique6921@hotmail.com

If you know of anyone that has asked you to pray for them during this pandemic, we will put on the prayer list for a month.

Prayer of Confession

Search us O God and know our hearts today
Try us and know our anxious thoughts,
see if there are any hurtful ways in us
and lead us in your loving and life-giving Way

Words of Assurance

God knows our secret fears, ignorance & selfish ways.
God forgives, forgive yourself, forgive others
Amen

Closing Prayer

God our strength and salvation, receive all we offer you today, and grant that we who have confessed your name, and received new life in baptism, may live in the joy of the resurrection, through Jesus Christ the Lord, Amen

Doxology

Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.
Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Please click on the link to watch this week's Parish video

<https://youtu.be/HsgTilc3-J0>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Due to the continued threat of COVID-19 in our area, in person Church services remain suspended. We will continue with our online services.

If you have anything you would like to contribute or comment on, regarding the newsletter, please do not hesitate to let Rev Enrique or myself know.

Any birthdays in May – Let me know for the newspaper. We can celebrate you and add some facts that happened on that day in history. I don't need your year of birth, just the month and date. Of course, if you have a special age birthday and want to celebrate it just let me know. If you are interested in the birthday section, please send me details.

Sing along to this morning's hymns

Hymn Texts – Sunday, May 9, 2021

461 – Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus

1. Stand up, stand up for Jesus, you soldiers of the cross!
Lift high his royal banner, it must not suffer loss.
From victory on to victory his army he shall lead
Till evil is defeated, and Christ is Lord indeed.
2. Stand up, stand up for Jesus! The trumpet call obey;
Then join the mighty conflict in this his glorious day.
Be strong in faith and serve him against unnumbered foes;
Let courage rise with danger, and strength to strength oppose.
3. Stand up, stand up for Jesus! Stand in his power alone,
For human might will fail you – you dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armour, keep watch with constant prayer;
Where duty calls or danger, be never failing there.
4. Stand up, stand up for Jesus! The fight will not be long;
This day the noise of battle, the next the victor's song.
To everyone who conquers, a crown of life shall be;
We, with the king of glory, shall reign eternally.

631 – The Kingdom of God Is Justice and Joy

1. The kingdom of God is justice and joy,
For Jesus restores what sin would destroy.
God's power and glory in Jesus we know,
And here and here after the kingdom shall grow.
2. The kingdom of God is mercy and grace;
The captives are freed, the sinners find place.
The outcasts are welcomed God's banquet to share,
And hope is awakened in place of despair.
3. The kingdom of God is challenge and choice:
Believe the good news, repent and rejoice!
His love for us sinners brought Christ to his cross,
Our crisis of judgement for gain and for loss.
4. God's kingdom is come, the gift and the goal,
In Jesus begun, in heaven made whole.
The heirs of the kingdom shall answer his call,
And all things cry "Glory!" to God All in All.



CONTACT INFORMATION:

At this extraordinary time if you wish a telephone visit, please call Enrique. If you have any other announcements or news contact Anne Halls at the contacts below.

Enrique Martinez can be contacted by email at enrique6921@hotmail.com or by phone at 519 586 3401 – Please note that Enrique’s day off will be Fridays

Our parish assistant Anne Halls can be contacted by email at lpbparishsecretary@gmail.com or by phone @ 519-586-7034

Please visit our website parishoflongpointbay.com and Facebook page