

THE PARISHES OF S MARY THE VIRGIN, SUNDON & S SAVIOUR, LUTON

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894/425– 22<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER 2020 – CHRIST THE UNIVERSAL KING.

My dear people of S Mary's and S Saviour's.

I hope that you are keeping well and continuing to take care.

It has been good to see people at the live-streamed masses and to have people along for private prayer.

Please continue to join us on line, and to pop along to church at the various times. On the reverse side of this sheet are the readings for this week; please use them as an aid to making a spiritual communion at least on Sundays, and use the Collect in your daily prayers along with the Mass Intentions

**Mass livestreamed each day at 10:00am from S Mary's – facebook st mary the virgin sundon.**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Observance</u>	<u>Mass</u>	<u>Intention for Mass &amp; Prayer</u>
Sun	– Christ The King	Solemn Mass & Benediction	– Pro Populo
Mon	– S Clement I	Low Mass	- People of the Philipines
Tue	– S Andrew Dung-Lac	Low Mass	- People of Vietnam
Wed	– S Catherine of Alexandria	Low Mass	- Local schools
Thu	– Feria	Low Mass	- Scientists working towards covid vaccine
Fri	– Feria	Low Mass	- Those facing economic hardship
Sat	– Of Our Lady	Low Mass	- Churches dedicated to Our Lady

Churches will be open for private prayer at the following times:

Sunday – S Mary's – 11:15am – 12:15pm

Wednesday – S Mary's – 10:30am – 11:00am – S Saviour's – 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Please sanitise hands on entry and exit and observe social distance.

Thoughts on the Gospel for this week:

This week we see the end of the Liturgical year, as Ordinary Time will give way to the joyful season of Advent next Sunday. On this Sunday the Church gives us this wonderful feast of Christ The King and it's a bit like the year going out with a bang! Mass concludes with Benediction, one of very few Sundays in the year when this happens.

Recently we remembered our war dead on Remembrance Sunday, and as always Her Majesty The Queen featured in our hearts and minds as well as on our TV screens; the image of her standing at the tomb of the unknown soldier was a powerful one: as someone old enough to remember the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war very clearly, we can only imagine her private thoughts. Our Queen has had an incredibly long reign and has weathered the odd storm, and one of the greatest things she has given is constancy – many of us have known no other monarch, and even my mother was quite young when the coronation took place – stability in our lives is more valuable than we often realise. One image of Our Queen which often comes to my mind is of her visiting victims of the Manchester bombings back in 2017 – a visit which would have meant so much to those she visited, but also illustrated that despite her great age she knew her duty and she got on and did it. She went and visited them.

As Head of the Church of England, Her Majesty doesn't speak that often; yet when she does, it is with a wisdom and insight which only comes from her many years in the role, and her words during the previous lockdown, and especially at Easter were sparing yet incredibly profound. She gave us hope, and she gave us encouragement: the things we all needed at the time, and still do.

When we look at Our Lord the King of the Universe, we are not thinking of a king of great power in the worldly sense – rather we are identifying with a King who has great compassion and who cares for the people under his care, showing us the greatness of His glory in heaven.

One of the most difficult things about the present lockdown is how we cannot physically see each other. As a priest a lot of my time is spent visiting people – calling round for a natter and a catch up. This year I haven't been able to do that, and I have had to think not so much of whether it might be nice to catch up with so and so, but rather do I actually 'need' to see so and so for some specific reason? Not being able to have a congregation present at Mass is strange – but at the same time we all realise that combating the virus and lowering the rate of infections is far more important than a temporary inconvenience. What IS important is that the Mass is said – the great sacrifice is offered in Church, and even though only the priest is present (and the organist at Solemn Mass) the Mass is offered for the whole parish; and those who would wish to be there but aren't able to be share in the offering by making a spiritual communion. Christ the universal King is with us when we offer Mass, and he is a king of compassion, love and of hope. As we live through some of the most difficult times we have known, His strength and love carry us as we hold to the hope of a soon to be available vaccine, and the chance to return to normality with friends and relatives.

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*How worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
to receive power and divinity,  
and wisdom and strength and honour.  
To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.*

**COLLECT**

Almighty ever-living God,  
whose will is to restore all things  
in your beloved Son, the King of the universe,  
grant, we pray,  
that the whole creation, set free from slavery,  
may render your majesty service  
and ceaselessly proclaim your praise.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

*Amen.*

**FIRST READING** Ezekiel 34:11-12. 15-17

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel.

The Lord says this: I am going to look after my flock myself and keep all of it in view. As a shepherd keeps all his flock in view when he stands up in the middle of his scattered sheep, so shall I keep my sheep in view. I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered during the mist and darkness. I myself will pasture my sheep, I myself will show them where to rest – it is the Lord who speaks. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.

As for you, my sheep, the Lord says this: I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and he-goats.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

**PSALM** Psalm 22

**RESPONSE:** *The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.*

1. The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose. **R.**
2. Near restful waters he leads me,  
to revive my drooping spirit.  
He guides me along the right path;  
he is true to his name. **R.**
3. You have prepared a banquet for me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing. **R.**
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for ever and ever. **R.**

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 15:20-26. 28

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. Just as all men die in Adam, so all men will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order: Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, having done away with every sovereignty, authority

and power. For he must be king until he has put all his enemies under his feet and the last of the enemies to be destroyed is death. And when everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!*

*Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!*

*Alleluia!*

**GOSPEL** Matthew 25:31-46

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.' Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?' And the King will answer, 'I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.' Next he will say to those on his left hand, 'Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.' Then it will be their turn to ask, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?' Then he will answer, 'I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.' And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life."

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

As we offer you, O Lord, the sacrifice  
by which the human race is reconciled to you,  
we humbly pray  
that your Son himself may bestow on all nations  
the gifts of unity and peace.  
Through Christ our Lord.

*Amen.*

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*The Lord sits as King for ever.*

*The Lord will bless his people with peace.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Having received the food of immortality,  
we ask, O Lord,  
that, glorying in obedience  
to the commands of Christ, the King of the universe,  
we may live with him eternally in his heavenly Kingdom.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

*Amen.*