

Morning Prayer: Readings and Reflections

For Monday 15th to Saturday 20th April 2024

Monday 15th April

Exodus 19

Luke 1:1-25

The Angel of the LORD (God the Son, sent by the Father) leads Israel to Sinai to meet the LORD. This passage makes more sense when you realise that here, and in many other places in the Bible, there are two divine persons called "LORD" at work: the Son is leading his Church to meet the Father. Heaven comes down to earth as the Father descends. Mountain and people both tremble at the holiness of God. Do you? This third-day encounter with heaven is why the people must be consecrated, cleansed and abstain from sexual relations (Luke 20:34-36). The "eagles wings" speech (19:4-6) is foundational for Israel's identity and ours (1 Peter 2). As God's treasured possession we are royal priests, a holy nation. The Law will be given so that Israel might exercise her priestly ministry of showing God's character to the world. Often they would fail. In Luke 1 we hear of one Israelite who will fulfil his calling: John the Baptist. He will point to Jesus.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

PRAY: Pray that you would hallow God's holy name by dedicating your life to holiness, and that your life might contribute to the royal priesthood that is Jesus' church.

Tuesday 16th April

Exodus 20:1-21

Luke 1:26-38

In Genesis 1, God created the world in 10 acts of speech. In Exodus 20 God gives the "Ten Words" (their actual name, not "Ten Commandments") because this Law is given to create a people who look like the world as it was meant to be. The Ten Words are not a way to be saved. They are a way for saved people to reflect the God who saved them. Each "you shall not" is like a sculptor carving away unwanted marble. When finished, we see a glorious image. We see Jesus. He is 1) the saving God, 2) the true Image, 3) the bearer of God's Name, 4) the true worshipper who gives rest, 5) the man who honours the Father, 6) the giver of life, 7) the faithful Husband, 8) our fountain of generosity, 9) the True Word, 10) the source of true contentment. Listen to him – for "no word from God will ever fail" (Luke 1:38).

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven."

PRAY: Ask God to renew the church worldwide as a people who keep his commandments.

Wednesday 17th April

Exodus 24

Luke 1:39-56

This chapter describes three zones to the mountain. The people are at the base, at a distance. Moses and the elders go up part of the way. Only Moses, as mediator, can climb to the top. These three zones will soon be reflected in the tabernacle (Courtyard, Holy Place, Most Holy Place). But what is happening in this chapter? Mary describes God as one who "fills the hungry with good things". This is more than a metaphor. In Exodus 24 the seventy elders see God; they eat and drink with him. Jesus loves eating with his family! Every time we share the Lord's Supper we ascend to eat and drink with Christ. The Blood of the Covenant is given to us. We do not, however, see God: not with our physical eyes. That privilege is yet to come. When Jesus returns, God's people from every nation will ascend the mountain of the LORD to enjoy a feast of rich food, a banquet of aged wine (Isaiah 25:6-9). The hungry will be filled with good things. Forever.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

PRAY: Pray for the church worldwide, that through her actions hungry people would find food for the body, and many people would find the Bread of Life.

Thursday 18th April

Exodus 25

Luke 1:57-80

Exodus 25 is the first of 7 consecutive speeches by God, finishing with one about the Sabbath (the 7th day) in Exodus 31:12-18. This echo of the 7 days of creation is deliberate. The system of tabernacle, sacrifices and priests give us a theological model of the whole creation and every detail in these verses finds significance throughout the Scriptures. For now, notice the curious nature of Exodus 25: why does God start describing furniture before the house is made? Answer: before we are given a model of creation we are first told about the Creator. The Ark, a symbolic heavenly throne, represents God our Father in heaven. The Table shows us Jesus, the Bread of God's Presence. The Lampstand represents the seven-fold Spirit (Zechariah 4:1-6, Revelation 1:4). God is building "a House for my Name". We are now that house (Hebrews 3:6, 1 Peter 2:5). The church is called to be a people who reveal the pattern shown in heaven (Exodus 25:9, 40). One day the whole world will become God's dwelling (Revelation 21). The "boring" details of Exodus are actually rich seams of Jesus-centred theology for us to mine; they connect us to the greatest story ever told – a story to make us sing (Luke 1).

"And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."

PRAY: One of the great sins of the 20th & 21st century church (in the West, at least) is that we have been so trivial in our Bible reading. Ask God to forgive us and change us.

Friday 19th April

Exodus 28:1-4, 29-38

Luke 2:1-20

Jesus is the Messiah, the king from David's line. He is fully man and fully God, qualifying him to be our Great High Priest. This means that every detail of Exodus 28 is important. But after yesterday's densely-packed reflection, today simply take note of Exodus 28:29. Do you matter to Jesus? Yes! He bears your name on his heart. Do you feel far from God? He carries you on his heart before the Father. Is your heart a mix of turmoil, fear, sin and anxiety? Jesus' heart is perfect and that is where you are found. When your emotions fail you, he prays for you with his perfect emotions. Right now, Jesus your High Priest prays for you (Hebrews 7:25). If your name is on his heart then you can be sure that the favour of God rests on you. Look to your High Priest. Trust... and find peace (Luke 2:14).

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

PRAY: One particularly dangerous temptation is to despair at our inadequacy, sin and weakness. To fight that temptation, meditate on the wonder of Jesus as your High Priest.

Saturday 20th April

Exodus 29:1-9, 35-46

Luke 2:21-40

Given the importance of the tabernacle (later the temple) it is no surprise that Luke records two significant events in the temple (v21-40 today, Luke 2:41-52 next Monday). In Exodus 29, tabernacle, priest and sacrifice combine so that sinners can come to a "tent of meeting" with God (v4). The gospels show us the reality: Jesus is how we meet with God. Jesus is the sacrifice to remove our sins. His cross is the altar that makes us holy. Jesus is how God speaks to us. Jesus is how we become priests. Jesus is God who dwells among us. Jesus is how we know the saving God. Jesus is the Lord our God.

"For the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory are yours, now and forever. Amen."

PRAY: Imagine the wonder of Simeon and Anna as they saw Jesus. Read carefully what they say about him. Turn those words into prayers of thanks for God's glory in Jesus.

Collect for 3rd Sunday of Easter (use it every day):

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 Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Prayer: Readings and Reflections

For Monday 22nd to Saturday 27th April 2024

Monday 22nd April

Exodus 32:1-14

Luke 2:41-52

"I like to think of God like this...." What a dangerous phrase! What a scandal – using our own imagination to decide what the living God is like. Today we read about the original golden-calf. Aaron and the Israelites have no intention of starting a new religion: they make an image and decide *this* is the God who brought them out of Egypt. It is perfectly possible to use Christian language but our faith is corrupted and distorted when we decide for ourselves what God is like, rather than look to Jesus the Revealer. Instead of turning towards God we can act like stiff-necked bulls, refusing to be corrected by the reins of the Master. By verse 6 the people are indulging in sexual immorality. Whenever the Church modifies the Bible's teaching about human sexuality it is because a false 'god' has been created – one that fits in with our pre-conceived ideas and indulges our desires. We need Jesus to drive away idols from our mind, heart and imagination.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

PRAY: Pray that the church in this country would hallow God's name by making sure all our thoughts about God come from Jesus as he is revealed in the Bible by the Spirit.

Tuesday 23rd April

Exodus 32:15-34

Luke 3:1-14

In Exodus 32:7 the LORD seems to nudge Moses towards acting as a mediator and making an appeal on behalf of the Israelites; God says "your people" and Moses replies "No, they are *your* people, whom *you* brought out of Egypt" (v11). He shows us a good model of prayer: asking God to act on his promises (v13). Moses fulfils his role as a Mediator: standing between Israel and God, and as an Atonement: offering his life on behalf of the people (v30-32). He points us to Jesus. Christ alone is the true Mediator. He alone can make Atonement (at-one-ment) as he dies in our place, bearing the punishment that we deserve because of the sin we have committed. 50 days after Passover the Law came down; soon 3,000 sinful people died. 50 days after Easter the Spirit came down and soon 3,000 repentant people found life (Acts 2). Grace wins!

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven."

PRAY: John the Baptist instructed people about repentance. Reflect on his words to the crowd, tax collectors and soldiers. Pray that you will fulfil God's will through repentance.

Wednesday 24th April

Exodus 33

Luke 3:15-22

Moses asks "Who will go with us?" The LORD says "My Presence will" (v14; see also Exodus 23:20-23). The Hebrew for 'Presence' is the same as 'Face'. The LORD says "you cannot see my face" (v20) yet we've just been told that Moses would speak to the LORD "face-to-face" (v11). What is going on? No one can approach the unseen Father and live. Rather, he is known through his Son, the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), the radiance of God's glory (Hebrews 1:1). God has always only been revealed through his Son, beloved of the Father (Luke 3:22). If we have seen the Son, we have seen the Father (John 14:5-14). Do you want to know God and find favour with him (Exodus 33:13)? Look to Jesus. At his baptism the descent of the Spirit and the voice of the Father declares that he is the Son. He is the bright shining Face of God.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

PRAY: The Lord's Prayer helps us focus on God's purposes without ignoring our daily needs. Take time to worship Jesus. Then ask your Father for what you need today.

Thursday 25th April

Exodus 34:1-10, 27-35

Luke 4:1-13

How do we grow as Christians? How can we become more glorious? One twisted version of Christianity always says “Jesus is your example. Do what he did.” But this message does not recognise our frequent failure to follow his example! In Luke, Jesus “the Son of God” is contrasted with Adam “the son of God” (3:38). Adam yielded to temptation in the garden; Jesus resisted temptation in the wilderness. The Bible – and our experience – tell us clearly: we naturally follow Adam’s example. The Law reveals our Adam-like nature but Jesus reveals our Salvation. Moses’ face was radiant not because he was a Law-keeper or Law-giver but because he entered the LORD’s presence. Fundamentally, we grow as we consider Christ. The apostle Paul reflects on this passage from Exodus and concludes “And all we, who with unveiled faces contemplate/behold the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18). The true version of Christianity is “See who Jesus is and what he has done!” That is what makes us grow.

“And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.”

PRAY: When you struggle with sin take even more time to meditate on God’s goodness.

Friday 26th April

Exodus 35:20 – 36:7

Luke 4:14-30

The Holy Spirit empowers Bezalel and Oholiab to build the beautiful tent of God. The Holy Spirit empowers Jesus to build the beautiful kingdom of God. The people willingly and generously give their treasures to build the tent of God, these treasures having been given to them by Egyptians (36:3-7). Centuries later, Israelites would wholeheartedly and generously give their treasures to build the house of God (1 Chronicles 29:1-16), supplemented by wealth given by surrounding nations (2 Chronicles 2). Centuries later, returning exiles would generously give freewill offerings to re-build the house of God (Ezra 3:68) supplemented by treasures given by Cyrus, King of the Persian Empire. Today, Christians give generously to build up the church: the temple of the Spirit, the house of God made up of people from every nation on earth (Acts 4:32-35, 2 Corinthians 8-9).

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

PRAY: In the West, Christians are particularly tempted to use our money to invest in our own comfort more than Christ’s Kingdom. Pray that God will deliver us from this evil.

Saturday 27th April

Exodus 40

Luke 4:31-37

In the presence of Jesus, impurity flees. As Jesus travelled the people saw a glimpse of the Garden of Eden – the world as it should be. Or rather, as Jesus travelled and spoke it was as if people saw a glimpse of the New Creation – the world as it will be! On the first day of a new year (Exodus 40:1) Moses sets up the tabernacle, a building that points forward to the New Heavens and New Earth. Eight times we read the phrase “as the Lord commanded” – the number 8 being symbolic of the New Creation. Perfection is set up – and impure Moses is shut out (v35). However, since then Jesus has come. His death has made his people clean (see: all of Leviticus!). When perfection comes, impurity is kept out but forgiven people are invited in (Revelation 21:27). The glory of God is your future.

“For the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.”

PRAY: Give thanks that, in Jesus, you are invited into God’s Kingdom, Power and Glory!

Collect for 4th Sunday of Easter (use it every day):

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Morning Prayer: Readings and Reflections

For Monday 29th April to Saturday 4th May 2024

Monday 29th April

Numbers 9:15-23 & 10:33-36 Luke 4:38-44

The Lectionary jumps from the end of Exodus to Numbers chapter 9 but you will benefit from reading chapters 1-8. The lists might not seem exciting but you don't want to miss out on the Israelite camp shaped like a giant cross (ch2), the intriguing Nazirites (ch6), the glorious Aaronic blessing (6:22-27) or the inspiring generosity of the people as they worship God (ch7). The passage in Numbers 9 seems a bit excessive – after verse 17 you might want to say “we get the point already!” But do we? The Israelites finally leave Sinai (10:11-13) and they are marching for battle: they march in “divisions” and the trumpets that call people to start travelling are also trumpets of war (10:9). The Church on earth is “The Church Militant”. Do you see the Christian life as a battle? It is. But we must also see that victory depends on the LORD! When we “fight the good fight” we *must* follow Jesus closely. However he leads, we must follow (9:15-23). Do you get the point: make sure you are following Jesus! Whenever the ark set out, Moses prayed (10:35, cf. Psalm 68). In our own spiritual warfare, prayer is essential (Ephesians 6:18).

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”

PRAY: Pray that you will hallow God's name by fighting the enemy of sin in your life.

Tuesday 30th April

Numbers 11 Luke 5:1-11

As followers of Christ, do we lose or gain? Jesus says “Follow me” and the fishermen leave everything behind (Luke 5:11). The Israelites are focussed on what they left behind (Numbers 11:5) rather than the LORD who is with them (11:20). What do you want most of all: cucumbers or Christ?! Our grumbling hearts easily fixate on created things, not the Creator. What we want is very often NOT what we need, and it is entirely possible to have too much of a good thing. When each day becomes a bit same-y, when you get bored of daily faithfulness to God and forget that it is a miracle that he gives you new mercy every morning (11:6) remember that the Father has given you his Son. And his Spirit! (11:29 cf. Acts 2). When we follow Christ we might lose the world but we gain *him*, and with him, the very life of God.

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.”

PRAY: Pray that our love of God's King would triumph over the alluring love of the world and that we would trust God in the day-in day-out task of faithful obedience.

Wednesday 1st May

Numbers 12 Luke 5:12-26

Moses had a Cushite wife – she was a foreigner who probably had black skin. Miriam and Aaron clearly do not like her; they complain about Moses (v2) but this is a cover-up for racist attitudes (v1). Problems of racism in the church go back a long way. God is angered and paler-skinned Miriam ends up deathly white with leprosy. In the Old Testament the disease labelled ‘leprosy’ brought defilement when sores were more than skin deep, when raw flesh was exposed (Lev. 13). We try to put on appearances but when our real nature, our ‘flesh’ is exposed, sin is revealed in all its ugliness (Mark 7:20-23). Only Jesus can make us clean on the outside and inside (Luke 5:13). We need Jesus to forgive his church from the sins of racism and arrogance.

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

PRAY: Pray that God will provide for the poorer nations of the world and the many communities that may be overlooked because of the racism and arrogance of the powerful.

Thursday 2nd May

Numbers 13

Luke 5:27-39

Numbers 13-14 record a colossal failure of faith. In Acts 14:22 Paul and Barnabas tell the disciples to remain true to the faith: "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God". What do you focus on? The size of the hardships, or the glory of the kingdom of God? Twelve spies spend 40 days in the Promised Land. Ten of them focus on the size of the hardships: "We can't do it, we're not strong enough!" Two of them focus on the glory of the kingdom: a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of extravagant fruitfulness. We can follow their example by allowing the Luke reading to inspire us. Take time to think about the glory that is coming when Jesus returns to bring us into the promised New Creation. Consider the great feast he will prepare for repentant sinners. Anticipate the wedding of Christ the Bridegroom to his Bride the Church – and the quality of the wine he will serve... The resurrected Jesus is the firstfruits of the New Creation, the promise of unimaginable joy!

"And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."

PRAY: What sins of unbelief or grumbling do you need to confess to God?

Friday 3rd May

Numbers 14:1-25

Luke 6:1-11

The Church is constantly tempted to go back to Egypt – thinking that God's ways are not as good as the world's ways. We frequently turn away from the way of the cross, forgetting the Lord of the cross and the life he offers. Here Israel refuses to trust in the LORD their God (14:11) and an unbelieving generation is doomed to die in the wilderness. If only they – and we! – would listen to the gospel and combine it with faith (Hebrews 4:1-3). We need to believe the good news from Numbers 14: Jesus' promised future is amazing (v7); he will lead us (v8); he is with us now (v9); he has proven himself with miracles (v11); he has been seen face-to-face (v14 see 1 John 1:1-2); he is slow to anger, abounding in love, pardoning all who repent (v17-19).

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

PRAY: Where are you tempted to complain against God, thinking that the world offers a better life than the one offered by Jesus? Ask for deliverance from unbelief.

Saturday 4th May

Numbers 14:26-45

Luke 6:12-26

With their wicked grumbling and complaining, the unbelieving generation of Israelites condemn themselves to die in the wilderness. This passage should make us tremble. Jesus pronounces great blessings but also delivers fearful woes (Luke 6:20-26) and we need to listen to both. If Christ's call to "follow me" should lead us into poverty, hunger, weeping or exclusion – do we still believe that our Saviour is of infinitely more value than the treasures and attention of the world? Hebrews chapters 3 and 4 reflect on this story. Make a priority of giving time to read those two chapters. Listen to the warnings and the exhortations. Allow the word of God to uncover your heart and open your eyes to a sympathetic and merciful High Priest. Trust Joshua/Jesus; hold firmly to the faith, so that you may enter the Rest he provides.

"For the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory are yours, now and forever. Amen."

PRAY: After a prayerful reading of Hebrews 3-4, make sure you end with praise.

Collect for 5th Sunday of Easter (use it every day):

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. Amen.

Morning Prayer: Readings and Reflections

For Monday 6th to Saturday 11th May 2024

Monday 6th May

Numbers 16:1-35

Luke 6:27-38

Can unholy people approach a holy God without a mediator? Numbers 16-17 gives us an emphatic “No”. Fallen humanity *cannot* approach the blazing purity of God’s holiness unless we have a High Priest, a mediator to bridge the gap. Korah and company want to bypass Aaron and approach God on their own terms (look ahead to Numbers 16:40). The ground opens up and swallows them all down to the grave. We fall into their error today when people imagine they can bypass Jesus and approach God on their own terms – perhaps trusting in their own goodness or religiosity. Other religions do not have Christ as Mediator, which means no other religion can give people access to the one true God. But God invites everyone to simply trust in Jesus. All we need is God’s mercy, freely given in Christ, and we can live. Many Psalms were written by “The Sons of Korah” – perhaps, even as the ground opened up, some called for mercy and were spared.

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”

PRAY: God is holy – so we should hallow his name. Pray that friends you know will hallow God’s name by recognising God’s holiness and approaching him with faith in Christ.

Tuesday 7th May

Numbers 16:36-50

Luke 6:39-49

The importance of Jesus, our Mediator and High Priest, is seen dramatically in today’s passage. Wrath comes out from the LORD but Aaron makes atonement. “He stood between the living and the dead, and the plague stopped” (v48). Jesus our High Priest made atonement for us as, on the cross, he placed himself between us and the holy-wrath of God. Jesus became sin for us and was swallowed up by the grave; the earth covered over him as he lay in the tomb. The incense-censers became part of Israel’s altar and we have a true altar in Jesus. In his death for sinners we find healing and life: when we recognise we deserve death we are humbled and able to acknowledge the plank in our own eye; when we trust Jesus our hearts are changed; when we see the grace of our High Priest we are more willing to build our lives on his word.

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.”

PRAY: God’s will is that people are saved (read 1 Timothy 2:3-6). Pray that churches in your area will proclaim Jesus, the one mediator between God and humanity.

Wednesday 8th May

Numbers 17

Luke 7:1-10

The Israelites cry out “We shall die! We are lost!” Our answer is “No! Have you learned *nothing?*!” Left to ourselves we are lost, that is true. But we have a High Priest. Aaron’s staff buds and blossoms to prove to all of Israel that God has given them a High Priest, and also the tribe of Levi, precisely so that they *can* approach the tabernacle-dwelling of the LORD. Numbers 18:1-7 emphasises that priests and Levites are there so that they – *in Israel’s place* – will bear the consequence of Israel’s sin. But they must fulfil their task properly for this is a matter of life and death. Jesus came to seek and save the lost by bearing the consequence of your sin. In the wood of the cross we find life: abundant, fruitful life (Numbers 17:8). So follow the example of the centurion (Luke 7): in the face of death, trust that life is found in Jesus and his Word.

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

PRAY: Pray about your church finances, asking that (i) God will inspire generosity, so that (ii) our needs will be met, so that (iii) we can share the message of Jesus the life-giver.

Thursday: Ascension Day

Isaiah 52:7-15

Hebrews 7:11-28

Sometimes the lectionary is brilliant: Ascension Day comes after several days of thinking about the importance of the High Priest. That's exactly right. 40 days after the resurrection Jesus ascended into heaven to be our Great High Priest. Jesus, born from Judah's tribe, could not be a Levitical High Priest. The author of Hebrews points out that, before the Levities existed, the mysterious figure of Melchizedek pointed forward to a man who could be *both* King and High Priest. As High Priest, Jesus "is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them." Your salvation is guaranteed by the unending intercession of Jesus your High Priest. Exalted above the heavens, Jesus is the High Priest who meets our needs. Jesus is also our King, the suffering servant who has ascended to rule the world from the heavenly Zion (Isaiah 52). His reign is comfort for us and good news for the world.

For the next ten days, each prayer point will be based on "Thy Kingdom Come".

THY KINGDOM COME: "How beautiful ... are the feet of those who bring good news." Pray that we will gladly accept our mission to "Go into all the world and make disciples".

Friday 10th May

Numbers 20:1-13

Luke 7:11-17

Moses has been such a key figure since Exodus chapter 2. He is symbolic of Jesus in so many ways, but in Numbers 20 we remember that he is not the Messiah. Frustration rises in his heart and he strikes the rock, contrary to the LORD's instructions. Notice that the LORD identifies Moses' failure to trust as his main problem. Then we are told the location is Meribah, where Israel first received water from the rock (Exodus 17). Between then and Numbers 20 God's Law has been given in great detail, but for all the glory and wonder of God's Law it is unable to change the human heart (Rom. 8:3). How wonderful to turn to Luke 7 and see humanity as it should be. Jesus sees a doubly-bereaved woman and "his heart went out to her" (v13). The Old Testament is full of 'types' and 'shadows' of Christ but none of them are the reality. They are signs that point to the reality. Every page of the Old Testament should send us to Jesus.

THY KINGDOM COME: Call on God to send his Spirit to give us hearts like Jesus: full of compassion for the lost and broken. May God make us a church that weeps for the lost.

Saturday 11th May

Numbers 21:4-9

Luke 7:18-35

Jesus gives us a one-sentence understanding of our Numbers reading. "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." (John 3:14-15) Israel sinned; the snakes were God's judgment bringing death to the people. We have sinned, and eternal death is God's judgment. But look to the cross! There Jesus became sin. There Jesus bore the judgment we deserve. There Jesus died. This is God's love for you: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Look at him and live.

THY KINGDOM COME: Great revivals often come after the church has been humbled, as the Spirit leads Christians into serious confession and repentance. Ask God to show us our sin, so that our eyes might then be more open to see his fathomless grace.

Collect for 6th Sunday of Easter (use it every day):

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.