



7. Closing Prayer

God our Saviour walk towards us in our loneliness and yearning.

Take us up in your arms and lift us up. Enable us to receive your goodness and grace, to see your glory already around us, here and now and to believe that justice and peace can indeed go hand in hand.

May compassion for all who suffer well up within us, a kind of sacrament bubbling with the Samaritan's oil. May love always be stronger than death for us, a flame of love's promises from God's radiant heart.



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Fresh Dreams for Lent Fifth Sunday of Lent 2018



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1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

Lord, may we feel your comforting touch
May we hear the wisdom of your Word
May we know your healing within us
May we remember your gracious giving
transforming the seed
into shoot and blossom,
spreading its sweet perfume.
May we trust that our lives,
lived with you
can fill our land with
the gentle fragrance of your kingdom alive.

2. Gospel Text: John 12:20-33

Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” Philip went to tell Andrew, Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am my servant will also be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.

“Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time of judgement on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

3. Quiet Moment

People can read over the text for themselves and pick out words or short phrases that strike them and say them out loud.

When everyone has had a chance to say their word/phrase, they can then reflect silently for a moment or two and then briefly say why such a word/phrase struck them- in relation to themselves, or their community or the world.

4. Reflection Questions for John 12: 20-33

1. When have you experienced joy after sorrow/darkness?
2. As you look around notice the miracle of new growth.
3. Your favourite Easter symbol is...

5. Prayers

Mentioning people and situations we want to pray for.

6. Background Notes for John 12: 20-33.

Jerusalem is full of pilgrims arriving for the festival, among them many Greek-speaking Jews from all around the Roman empire. The text carries a sense of Jesus’ life on earth reaching its end. The interlude of the Greeks seeking to meet him is not developed. Jesus does not answer them but asks questions of his own. Doubt and dread assail him. He struggles to believe it has all been worth it.

But he says ‘No’ to turning back. ‘Yes’ to continuing on his way to death; letting the ‘seed’ die in the tomb. Trusting in God he will unseat the ‘prince of this world’. Jesus will glorify God on the cross and in turn will be glorified.

In the kingdom of God, the elements of God’s dream flourish. The community of followers will not remain alone but will have a new, powerful unity with Jesus and the Father. Our faith in the resurrection means that we believe that no love is ever lost across the face of the earth. Our challenge is to live and act with courage, letting life blossom where before there was wasteland, misery and desert. Evil does not triumph. The prince of this world does not conquer.