

Sunday 30th March 2025: Mothering Sunday

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or some other suitable time.

Theme for today is "There is no greater love"

Lent liturgy

Give us this day our daily bread to repair our soul.

We have broken bits and worn-out bits and missing bits; bits that make us much less whole...

Give us this day our daily bread to repair our soul.

Life challenges, damages, hurts and scars us, body, mind and spirit all...

Give us this day our daily bread to repair our soul.

Be our balm, the loving thread that gently tends our wounds, the thread and patch that makes us whole.

O Lord our God, on this Lenten journey, ***repair our broken fragile bits. Amen.***

Hymn StF 684 Here on the threshold of a new beginning

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: 'The first commandment is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength."

The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' 'I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.'

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Prayer:

Lord, you are steadfast in your love and infinite in your mercy; you welcome sinners and invite them to be your guests. We confess our sins, trusting in you to forgive us.

Silence

We have yielded to temptation and sinned: Lord, have mercy.

We have turned from our neighbours in their need: Christ, have mercy.

We have resisted your word in our hearts: Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and keep us in life eternal.

Amen.

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn StF 503 H&P 267 Love divine, all loves excelling

Bible readings: 2 Kings 5:1-14 John 19: 25-27

Reflection Brought to us by Avril Temple, one of our Local Preachers.

Standing near the cross were Mary, Jesus' mother and other close friends and family. When Jesus saw his mother standing beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, 'Dear woman here is your son'. And he said to this disciple, 'Here is your mother'. From then on, this disciple took her into his home.

So, we come to the fourth Sunday of Lent, also known as Mothering Sunday. At Sculthorpe and Fakenham, we always have a special service which includes the blessing and distribution of flowers and bookmarks to the congregation and to those who can't attend. Besides hymns and prayers, we have a prayer tree where the members of the congregation hang their prayers. We also give a presentation about mothers, girls and families in other parts of the world. This year we are thinking about Sunitra and Bonita in Ordisha, India, Kakoli in Bangladesh, Saima in Karachi and Sunita, her daughters and her grandmother, in Kalitar, Nepal. We also send a donation to 'All We Can.'

This is one of the above stories.

Sunitra and Bonita were driven from their homes because they showed signs of Leprosy. They now live deep in the jungle hidden away in a community of ten people. Both ladies are now disabled by Leprosy and their shared



friendship has grown out of a shared grief, loneliness and the daily struggle of life. They have been there for forty years now.

After long days of begging in the nearest town or village they return home exhausted to tiny ramshackle houses, hard floors, broken roofs and poisonous snakes. No matter how hard they try, they can't break this cycle of poverty. Many days they are without food. The whole community prays every day that things will change. The biggest prayer is for clean water, safe homes and toilets.

The Leprosy Mission is working to improve the conditions by building safe houses with help from the Indian government. We pray that things will soon be better for all these people.

There are several stories of mothering, nurturing and caring in the Bible. Moses in the bulrushes, Hannah and Samuel, Naomi and Ruth, care, courage and compassion in action. Moving forward hundreds of years to the crucifixion and care courage and compassion feature heavily in this story too. Amidst this terrible episode of torture and execution Jesus creates a new family, bringing Mary and John together to care for one another. Jesus shows the possibilities for a future beyond this terrible happening. The mothering qualities of care, courage and compassion that make a difference in peoples' lives take place every day in communities all over the world.

How is our mothering going? Caring for those in need, having courage to speak out against injustice, walking alongside the suffering and broken, with compassion.

We pause and say thank you for those who have mothered us down the years and pray that we may be filled with the gifts of care, courage and compassion as we seek to follow Jesus Christ faithfully, day by day.

Hymn StF 594 H&P 617 Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us

Prayers of Intercession:

Let us pray for the Church of God throughout the world.

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for those who have power and influence and for all who govern the nations,

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for the powerless, for all victims of famine and war, and for all who strive for justice and peace,

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for the afflicted and sorrowful and for all who need our prayers,

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us remember before God those who have passed from this life in faith and obedience,

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

Eternal God, through the self-offering of your Son you have filled our lives with your presence.

Help us in our sufferings and trials and strengthen us in our weakness;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

Hymn: StF 186 H&P 86 Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Closing blessing –

The God of all grace who has called us to eternal glory in Christ, make us perfect, confirming and strengthening us; and to him be the power for ever and ever.

Amen.