

**Ukraine Appeal** [clareanglicans.ie](http://clareanglicans.ie) or: [www.christianaid.ie](http://www.christianaid.ie)

**Turkey and Syria Earthquake relief - Bishop's appeal**

– see sheet at back of church for details or go to:

[www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/give](http://www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/give)

**Living the Questions Course** – sign-up sheet in church

**Vestry membership** - For those not yet on the general vestry list, please complete a form at the back of church if you would like to be part of the church's Easter Vestry.

**Meditation- St Columba's** – Every Thurs 7.30pm- church room.

**Lectio Divina** – please let me know if you would be interested in forming a group who would meet to read and reflect upon scripture together. See sign-up sheet.

**Book Club** - 1<sup>st</sup> (or 2<sup>nd</sup>) Tuesday of every month – please ask Sue or Carolyn (St C) or Clare (SP) for details.

**Prayer Workshop** - I am leading a prayer workshop at Ennis Cathedral Pastoral Centre Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 8.00pm. All are welcome.

**Recording for a Sunday** - It would be great if more people might like to record a reading or prayers for our online service – not only to reduce the workload for existing readers but also to let the viewers see new faces. We now have over 260 subscribers so the channel is growing. I can easily help you to get started – and it requires no expensive equipment – why not have a go?

**Confirmation** - Please let the Rector know if you are thinking of becoming confirmed in 2020 – I have three names so far.

**Select Vestry meetings:**

Kilnasoolagh – Weds 29<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm

Ennis & Spanish Point – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 7.30pm

**Easter Vestries:**

Kilnasoolagh – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm

Ennis & Spanish Point - Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April after 11.30am service

**Invitation**– I am being installed as a Canon at St Mary's Cathedral Limerick, 4.00pm Evensong 28<sup>th</sup> May, all are welcome  
*Kevin*

**Website:** [clareanglicans.ie](http://clareanglicans.ie)

**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans](http://www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans](http://www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans)

**Rector:** Email: [frkevinobrien@me.com](mailto:frkevinobrien@me.com)

**Tel:** 065 672 4721

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<http://nrsvbibles.org> The *Common Worship* psalter is ©

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## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent (Year A)

### Readings and Hymns

#### Collect

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: Strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

#### Suggested Hymns

*In conjunction with the online service you might like to view these hymns on YouTube - with internet links and lyrics so that you can song along:*

1) Awake my soul (51)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6TaygvxHrc>

2) Now thank we all our God (361)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLjJBFIXR0>

1) Thine be the Glory (288)

#### Exodus 2: 1-10

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

#### Psalm 127

Unless the Lord builds the house, \*  
those who build it labour in vain.  
Unless the Lord guards the city, \*  
the guard keeps watch in vain.  
It is in vain that you rise up early \*  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil; \*  
for he gives sleep to his beloved.  
Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord, \*  
the fruit of the womb a reward.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior \*  
are the sons of one's youth.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

#### **Luke 2.33-35**

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about Jesus. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

#### **Post Communion Prayer**

Lord our God, you feed us in this life with bread from heaven, the pledge and foreshadowing of future glory. Grant that the working of this sacrament within us may bear fruit in our daily lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

#### **Commentary**

#### **Exodus 12:1-10**

God has assailed the Egyptians with nine plagues: turning the water of the Nile to blood; infestations of frogs, gnats, and flies; terminal illness of livestock; boils; thunder, hail and fire; locusts; and darkness for three days: all this to convince the Pharaoh to "Let my people go, so that they may worship ... [God]" ( 9:1). The Pharaoh has refused to listen; he has refused to come to the knowledge that "I am the Lord" ( 7:17). God continues to act in history to the benefit of his chosen people. As is the case for the other plagues, the preparation for the last plague is described at length, but the plague itself occupies only a few verses. A lamb or goat is to be kept in safekeeping ("keep it", v. 6) until close to the full moon ("the fourteenth day"); then "the whole assembled congregation" will slaughter it: here all take on the role of priests. The priestly role extends further: the animal is to be "roasted" (v. 8, not boiled), and it is to be completely consumed (v. 10): a perfect ("without blemish", v. 5) and complete sacrifice.

#### **Psalms 127**

This psalm is made up of two wise sayings (vv. 1-2 and 3-5). The first says that human activity is futile without God's active involvement. ("House", v. 1, means Temple, royal palace, dynasty, as well as house.) V. 1b is an example: a guard on the city wall watches "in vain" unless God protects the city. Genesis 3:17-19 tells us that humankind was committed to a life of toil for "bread" (v. 2) for disobeying God; this verse contrasts this with God's gifts to those he loves. All kinds of houses have "sons" (v. 3); they are a gift from God; they protect and support their father in time of need: for example (v. 5b), when others try to make him back down in court ("the gate"). ("Arrows", v. 4, are a symbol of protection.)

#### **Colossians 3:12-17**

The author has already begun to describe the true Christian life. In what is probably an early baptismal instruction, he has called on his readers to "Set your minds on things that are above" (v. 2). When Christ comes again, they will be seen as being with him in power (v. 4) but those who follow evil ways

will suffer the wrath of God (v. 5-6). The author has told them: "you have stripped off the old self with its practices" (v. 9) and "have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator" (v. 10).

Now he tells them, chosen by God as they are, what virtues, ethical qualities, are expected of them: "compassion" (v. 12) is sympathy for the needs of others and "meekness" is gentleness and consideration towards others. Christ's forgiveness of them (and us) is a model for their conduct towards each other (v. 13). The primary quality for the Christian is "love" (v. 14).

In v. 15, the word translated "rule" literally means be umpire or referee: so may "the peace of Christ" be the reference point for your consciences, as it is for you all in the Church ("one body"). May the understanding, the knowledge, of the way Christ works be yours, and may sharing this in the community lead you to deeper understanding ("wisdom", v. 16); may you show your thankfulness to the Father through the Son in worship. In all your words and actions, speak and do as though Christ were doing them.

#### **Luke 2:22-40**

Jesus has been circumcised, marking him as a member of God's chosen people, Israel, through whom world salvation was to be achieved. After childbirth, it was 40 days before a mother could be purified before a priest in the Temple, so it is at least that long since Jesus' birth. She was expected to offer a lamb, along with a turtledove or a pigeon; if she were poor (as Mary is), two turtledoves or pigeons sufficed. Exodus required that every firstborn boy be consecrated to God. Jesus' presentation in the Temple is like Samuel's. Jesus and his family fulfil the requirements of Mosaic law.

Simeon looks forward to the coming of the Messiah to restore Israel to favour with God ("the consolation of Israel", v. 25). The Spirit has told him that he will see the Christ before he dies (v. 26). Simeon's words in vv. 29-32 are known as the Nunc Dimittis, from the first words in Latin. He begins by saying that God is setting him free, as a slave is granted liberty. He is now free to die (for the Spirit's revelation to him is now fulfilled), and Israel is free of bondage. God has saved Israel, as he promised to "all peoples"; his salvation is for Gentiles too. In v. 33, Joseph is Jesus' legal father. Simeon prophesies in vv. 34-35 through the Spirit (v. 25). Jesus is destined for the death and resurrection ("the falling and the rising", v. 34) of many; he will meet opposition, and will cause many to think deeply about him. Mary too will need to decide for or against Christ ("own soul", v. 35). Simeon and Anna together stand before God; to Luke, men and women are equal in God's eyes. Anna praises God, and tells many the meaning of Jesus, as Simeon has prophesied. Like Samuel, "the favour of God was upon him" (v. 40).

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