

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024

## Sixth Sunday of Easter



This is a big week! Today is Rogation Sunday and Thursday is Ascension Day!

The word 'rogation' comes from a Latin word, 'rogare', meaning 'to ask'.

Traditionally, on Rogation Sunday, people have asked for God's blessing on the land and the emerging crops. It was also a day to pray for the communities in which they lived.

A lovely medieval practice was 'beating the bounds', when people processed around the parish boundary, praying for different areas and community life. People still did this in rural areas until quite recently – and some still continue with the custom! Both aspects of Rogation Sunday are still very relevant in 2024.

At last, we are becoming more aware of the natural world and our dependence on it. As the effects of climate change become more apparent, we are seeing how that can affect farmers' work, as they produce and supply our food. The increasing threat to God's creation by climate change and global environmental injustice affects so many aspects of our lives and we need to be aware of this as we make our prayers at Rogationtide. As Christians, we cannot shrug our shoulders as if nothing is happening. We are responsible for planet earth, which God has placed in our hands. We ask God's help today to help us to change our ways.

Today's Gospel reading comes from John's Gospel, chapter 15, verses 9-17:

**As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.**

**'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I**

**chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another’.**

Jesus calls his disciples ‘friends’ and tells us that he has chosen us – he wants us on the team! He has shared with us all that God has made known to him. This privilege brings responsibilities! Christ asks that we love one another, which sounds easy but, in practice, is often very difficult! It also means we must act responsibly towards God’s creation, doing all we can to put right the damage humans have done to the Earth. We may not think we can make a lot of difference, but, just as the ocean is made of millions of droplets of water, each of us has a part to play.

On this Rogation Sunday, how about spending some time outside, giving thanks to God for this beautiful Earth and all that is in it, thinking about what we can do to play a part in helping to renew and restore the earth and finishing with this prayer:



A prayer for this week:

Creator God, whose will it is that the earth and the sea should bear fruit in due season, and that the good news should be proclaimed to all the world, bless those who work on land and sea, granting safety and a good harvest. Bless all those who work, campaign and strive for environmental justice and work to redress the effects of climate change. We ask this in Jesus’s name. Amen.

**Love One Another  
Word Maze**

Find your way from the start of the maze and connect the words from the answer phrase in their correct order.

Love one another. John 15:17b HCSB

The maze is a square grid with a complex path. A 'START' label is in an orange oval on the left side. Three words are placed in blue text within the maze: 'ONE' at the top, 'ANOTHER' in the middle, and 'LOVE' at the bottom. The path starts from the 'START' label and winds through the maze to connect the words in the correct order: START -> ONE -> ANOTHER -> LOVE.

zone

zone

zone

# The Feast of the Ascension (Ascension Day)

Forty days after Easter Day, the Church celebrates Jesus's Ascension into heaven.



Here is the Gospel reading for Ascension Day, which falls this Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> May.  
(Luke 24:44-53):

**Then Jesus said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'**

**Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.**

The story of the Ascension is the bridge between the Resurrection and Pentecost. After the miracle of Easter morning, Jesus appeared for 40 days to a variety of people and in a variety of places. However, as he had already told them, there would come a time when he would have to go away, so that he could return to them in a new way. This return would mean that he could be with everyone, everywhere and at anytime. Jesus ascended to be with God and then sent the Holy Spirit to fill and empower his followers. We shall celebrate that event at Pentecost!



S	T	N	A	V	R	E	S	T	E
N	N	T	S	A	L	R	A	E	B
A	R	D	N	A	M	M	O	C	S
V	A	E	Y	B	E	A	O	S	D
R	E	V	M	F	A	M	E	A	N
E	L	O	I	A	P	N	S	L	E
S	N	L	Y	L	I	Y	O	J	I
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A	M	T	U	O	V	F	H	I	F
R	E	B	E	A	D	E	C	E	L

REMAIN JOY COMPLETE FRIENDS  
 COMMAND LIFE SERVANTS BUSINESS  
 CHOOSE BEAR LAST NAME



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### Ascension: Paint by Number

Paint the following blocks of numbers using 1. Yellow 2. Orange 3. Blue 4. Tan 5. Purple 6. Green.

