

Monday-Saturday, 4th —9th April, 2022

5th Week of Lent - Year 2

MONDAY

Mass of the Day

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Have mercy on me, O God, for people assail me; they fight me all day long and oppress me.

READING: *Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62*

In Babylon there lived a man named Joakim. He had married Susanna daughter of Hilkiah, a woman of great beauty; and she was God-fearing, because her parents were worthy people and had instructed their daughter in the Law of Moses. Joakim was a very rich man, and had a garden attached to his house; the Jews would often visit him since he was held in greater respect than any other man. Two elderly men had been selected from the people that year to act as judges. Of such the Lord said, 'Wickedness has come to Babylon through the elders and judges posing as guides to the people.' These men were often at Joakim's house, and all who were engaged in litigation used to come to them. At midday, when everyone had gone, Susanna used to take a walk in her husband's garden. The two elders, who used to watch her every day as she came in to take her walk, gradually began to desire her. They threw reason aside, making no effort to turn their eyes to heaven, and forgetting its demands of virtue. So they waited for a favourable moment; and one day Susanna came as usual, accompanied only by two young maidservants. The day was hot and she wanted to bathe in the garden.

There was no one about except the two elders, spying on her from their hiding place. She said to the servants, 'Bring me some oil and balsam and shut the garden door while I bathe.'

Hardly were the servants gone than the two elders were there after her. 'Look,' they said 'the garden door is shut, no one can see us. We want to have you, so give in and let us! Refuse, and we will both give evidence that a young man was with you and that was why you sent your maids away.' Susanna sighed. 'I am trapped,' she said 'whatever I do. If I agree, that means my death; if I resist, I cannot get away from you. But I prefer to fall innocent into your power than to sin in the eyes of the Lord.' Then she

cried out as loud as she could. The two elders began shouting too, putting the blame on her, and one of them ran to open the garden door. The household, hearing the shouting in the garden, rushed out by the side entrance to see what was happening; once the elders had told their story the servants were thoroughly taken aback, since nothing of this sort had ever been said of Susanna.

Next day a meeting was held at the house of her husband Joakim. The two elders arrived, in their vindictiveness determined to have her put to death. They addressed the company: 'Summon Susanna

daughter of Hilkiah and wife of Joakim.' She was sent for, and came accompanied by her parents, her children and all her relations.

All her own people were weeping, and so were all the others who saw her. The two elders stood up, with all the people round them, and laid their hands on the woman's head. Tearfully she turned her eyes to heaven, her heart confident in God. The elders then spoke. 'While we were walking by ourselves in the garden, this woman arrived with two servants. She shut the garden door and then dismissed the servants. A young man who had been hiding went over to her and they lay down together. From the end of the garden where we were, we saw this crime taking place and hurried toward them. Though we saw them together we were unable to catch the man: he was too strong for us; he opened the door and took to his heels. We did, however, catch this woman and ask her who the young man was. She refused to tell us. That is our evidence.'

Since they were elders of the people, and judges, the assembly took their word: Susanna was condemned to death. She cried out loud as she could, 'Eternal God, you know all secrets and everything before it happens; you know that they have given false evidence against me. And now have I to die, innocent as I am of everything their malice has invented against me?'

The Lord heard her cry and, as she was being led away to die, he roused the holy spirit residing in a young boy named Daniel who began to shout, 'I am innocent of this woman's death!' At which all the people turned to him and asked, 'What do you mean by these words?' Standing in the middle of the crowd he replied, 'Are you so stupid, sons of Israel, as to condemn a daughter of Israel unheard and without troubling to find out the truth? Go back to the scene of the trial: these men have given false evidence against her.'

All the people hurried back, and the elders said to Daniel, 'Come and sit with us and tell us what you mean, since God has given you the gifts that elders have.' Daniel said 'Keep the men well apart from each other for I want to question them.' When the men had been separated, Daniel had one of them brought to him. You have grown old in wickedness,' he said, 'and now the sins of your earlier days have overtaken you, you with your unjust judgements, your condemnation of the innocent, your acquittal of guilty men, when the Lord has said, "you must not put the innocent and the just to death." Now then, since you saw her so clearly, tell me what tree you saw them lying under?' He replied, 'Under a mastic tree.' Daniel said, 'True enough! Your lie recoils on your own head: the angel of God has already received your sentence from him and will slash you in half.' He dismissed the man, ordered the other to be brought and said to him,

'Spawn of Canaan, not of Judah, beauty has seduced you, lust has led your heart astray! This is how you have been behaving with the daughters of Israel and they

were too frightened to resist; but here is a daughter of Judah who could not stomach your wickedness! Now then, tell me what tree you surprised them under?' He replied, 'Under a holm oak.' Daniel said, 'True enough! Your lie recoils on your own head: the angel of God is waiting, with a sword to drive home and split you, and destroy the pair of you.'

Then the whole assembly shouted, blessing God, the saviour of those who trust in him. And they turned on the two elders whom Daniel had convicted of false evidence out of their own mouths. As prescribed in the Law of Moses, they sentenced them to the same punishment as they had intended to inflict on their neighbour. They put them to death; the life of an innocent woman was spared that day.

PSALM: Though I walk in the valley of darkness I fear no evil, for you are with me.

ACCLAMATION:

**Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I do not wish the sinner to die, says the Lord, but to turn to me and live.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!**

GOSPEL: *John 8:1-11*

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and as all the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them.

The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in full view of everybody, they said to Jesus, 'Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning.

What have you to say?' They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, 'If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir,' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus 'go away, and don't sin any more.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Has no one condemned you, woman? No one, Lord. Neither shall I condemn you. From now on, sin no more.

TUESDAY

Mass of the Day

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: **Wait for the Lord; be strong; be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord!**

READING: *Numbers 21:4-9*

The Israelites left Mount Hor by the road to the Sea of Suph, to skirt the land of Edom. On the way the people lost patience. They spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this wilderness? For there is neither bread nor water here; we are sick of this unsatisfying food.'

At this God sent fiery serpents among the people; their bite brought death to many in Israel. The people came and said to Moses, 'We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you. Intercede for us

with the Lord to save us from these serpents.' Moses interceded for the people, and the Lord answered him, 'Make a fiery serpent and put it on a standard. If anyone is bitten and looks at it, he shall live.' So Moses fashioned a bronze serpent which he put on a standard, and if anyone was bitten by a serpent, he looked at the bronze serpent and lived.

PSALM: O Lord hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.

ACCLAMATION:

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower; all who come to him will live for ever.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!**

GOSPEL: *John 8:21-30*

Jesus said to the Pharisees:

'I am going away; you will look for me and you will die in your sin.

Where I am going, you cannot come.'

The Jews said to one another, 'Will he kill himself? Is that what he means by saying, "Where I am going, you cannot come"?' Jesus went on:

'You are from below;

I am from above.

You are of this world;

I am not of this world.

I have told you already: You will die in your sins.

Yes, if you do not believe that I am He,

you will die in your sins.'

So they said to him, 'Who are you?' Jesus answered:

'What I have told you from the outset.

About you I have much to say

and much to condemn;

but the one who sent me is truthful,

and what I have learnt from him

I declare to the world.'

They failed to understand that he was talking to them about the Father. So Jesus said:

'When you have lifted up the Son of Man,

then you will know that I am He

and that I do nothing of myself:

what the Father has taught me

is what I preach;

he who sent me is with me,

and has not left me to myself,

for I always do what pleases him.'

As he was saying this, many came to believe in him.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to myself, says the Lord.

WEDNESDAY

Mass of the Day

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: **My deliverer from angry nations, you set me above my assailants; you saved me from the violent man, O Lord.**

READING: *Daniel 3:14-20. 24-25, 28*

King Nebuchadnezzar said, 'Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, is it true that you do not serve my gods, and that you refuse to worship the golden statue I have erected? When you hear the sound of horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, or any other instrument, are you prepared to prostrate yourselves and worship the statue I have made? If you refuse to worship it, you must be thrown straight away into the burning fiery furnace; and where is the god who could save you from

my power?' Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to King Nebuchadnezzar, 'Your question hardly requires an answer: if our God, the one we serve, is able to save us from the burning fiery furnace and from your power, O king, he will save us; and even if he does not, then you must know, O king, that we will not serve your god or worship the statue you have erected.' These words infuriated King Nebuchadnezzar; his expression was very different now as he looked at Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He gave orders for the furnace to be made seven times hotter than usual, and commanded certain stalwarts from his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the burning fiery furnace.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar sprang to his feet in amazement. He said to his advisers, 'Did we not have these three men thrown bound into the fire?'

They replied, 'Certainly, O king. 'But,' he went on, 'I can see four men walking about freely in the heart of the fire without coming to any harm. And the fourth looks like a son of the gods.'

Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego: he has sent his angel to rescue his servants who, putting their trust in him, defied the order of the king, and preferred to forfeit their bodies rather than serve or worship any god but their own.'

PSALM: Glory and praise to you for ever!

ACCLAMATION:

**Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
Happy are they who have kept the word with a generous heart and yield a harvest through perseverance. Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

GOSPEL: John 8:31-42:

To the Jews who believed in him Jesus said:

'If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples, you will learn the truth and the truth will make you free.'

They answered, 'We are descended from Abraham and we have never been the slaves of anyone; what do you mean, "You will be made free"?' Jesus replied:

'I tell you most solemnly, everyone who commits sin is a slave.

Now the slave's place in the house is not assured, but the son's place is assured.

So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

I know that you are descended from Abraham; but in spite of that you want to kill me because nothing I say has penetrated into you.

What I, for my part, speak of is what I have seen with my Father; but you, you put into action the lessons learnt from your father.'

They repeated, 'Our father is Abraham.' Jesus said to them:

'If you were Abraham's children, you would do as Abraham did.

As it is, you want to kill me when I tell you the truth as I have learnt it from God; that is not what Abraham did.

What you are doing is what your father does.'

'We were not born of prostitution,' they went on 'we have one father: God.' Jesus answered:

'If God were your father, you would love me, since I have come here from God; yes, I have come from him;

not that I came because I chose, no, I was sent, and by him.'

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: God has brought us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of sins.

THURSDAY

Mass of the Day

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Christ is mediator of a New Covenant, so that by means of his death, those who are called may receive the promise of an eternal inheritance.

READING: Genesis 17:3-9.

Abram bowed to the ground and God said this to him, 'Here now is my covenant with you: you shall become the father of a multitude of nations. You shall no longer be called Abram; your name shall be Abraham, for I will make you father of a multitude of nations. I will make you most fruitful. I will make you into nations, and your issue shall be kings. I will establish my Covenant between myself and you, and your descendants after you, generation after generation, a Covenant in perpetuity, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. I will give to you and to your descendants after you the land you are living in, the whole land of Canaan, to owe in perpetuity, and I will be your God.'

God said to Abraham, 'You on your part shall maintain my Covenant, yourself and your descendants after you, generation after generation.'

PSALM: The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

ACCLAMATION:

**Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

GOSPEL: John 8:51-59

Jesus said to the Jews:

'I tell you most solemnly, whoever keeps my word will never see death.'

The Jews said, 'Now we know for certain that you are possessed. Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead, and yet you say, "Whoever keeps my word will never know the taste of death." Are you greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? The prophets are dead too.

Who are you claiming to be?' Jesus answered:

'If I were to seek my own glory that would be no glory at all;

my glory is conferred by the Father, by the one of whom you say, "He is our God" although you do not know him.

But I know him,

and if I were to say: I do not know him, I should be a liar, as you are liars yourselves.

But I do know him, and I faithfully keep his word.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to think that he would see my Day; he saw it and was glad.'

The Jews then said, 'You are not fifty yet, and you have seen Abraham!' Jesus replied:

'I tell you most solemnly, before Abraham ever was, I Am.'

At this they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself and left the Temple.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: God did not spare his own Son, but handed him over for us all; with him, he has given us all things.

FRIDAY

Mass of the Day

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in distress. Deliver me from the hands of my enemies and those who pursue me. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

READING: *Jeremiah 20:10-13.*

Jeremiah said:

'I hear so many disparaging me,
"Terror from every side!'

Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"

All those who used to be my friends watched for my downfall, "Perhaps he will be seduced into error.

Then we will master him and take our revenge!"

But the Lord is at my side, a mighty hero;

my opponents will stumble, mastered, confounded by their failure; everlasting, unforgettable disgrace will be theirs. But you, Lord of hosts, you who probe with justice, who scrutinise the loins and heart, let me see the vengeance you will take on them, for I have committed my cause to you.

Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has delivered the soul of the needy from the hands of evil men.'

PSALM: In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice.

ACCLAMATION:

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Your words, Lord, are spirit and life: you have the words of everlasting life. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL: *John 10:31-42*

The Jews fetched stones to stone him, so Jesus said to them, 'I have done many good works for you to see, works from my Father; for which of these are you stoning me?' The Jews answered him, 'We are not stoning you for doing a good work but for blasphemy: you are only a man and you claim to be God.' Jesus answered:

'Is it not written in your Law:

I said, you are gods?

So the Law used the word gods of those to whom the word of God was addressed, and scripture cannot be rejected.

Yet you say to someone the Father has consecrated and sent into the world,

"You are blaspheming,"

because he says, "I am the Son of God."

If I am not doing my Father's work, there is no need to believe me; but if I am doing it, then even if you refuse to believe in me, at least believe in the work I do; then you will know for sure that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.'

They wanted to arrest him then, but he eluded them.

He went back again to the far side of the Jordan to stay in the district where John had once been baptising.

Many people who came to him there said, 'John gave no signs, but all he said about this man was true'; and many of them believed in him

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the cross, so that dead to sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds we have been healed.

SATURDAY

Mass of the Day

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: O Lord, do not stay afar off; my strength, make haste to help me! For I am a worm and no man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

READING: *Ezekiel 37:21-28.*

The Lord says this: 'I am going to take the sons of Israel from the nations where they have gone. I shall gather them together from everywhere and bring them home to their own soil. I shall make them into one nation in my own land and on the mountains of Israel, and one king is to be king of them all; they will no longer form two nations, nor be two separate kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and their filthy practices and all their sins. I shall rescue them from all the betrayals they have been guilty of; I shall cleanse them; they shall be my people and I will be their God. My servant David will reign over them, one shepherd for all; they will follow my observances, respect my laws and practise them. They will live in the land that I gave my servant Jacob, the land in which your ancestors lived. They will live in it, they, their children, their children's children, for ever. David my servant is to be their prince for ever. I shall make a covenant of peace with them, an eternal covenant with them. I shall resettle them and increase them; I shall settle my sanctuary among them for ever. I shall make my home above them; I will be their God, they shall be my people. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord the sanctifier of Israel, when my sanctuary is with them for ever.

PSALM: The Lord will guard us, like a shepherd guarding his flock.

ACCLAMATION: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! Rid yourselves of all your sins and make a new heart and a new spirit. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

GOSPEL: *John 11:45-56*

'Many of the Jews who came to visit Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in him, but some of them went to tell the Pharisees what he had done. Then the chief priests and Pharisees called a meeting. 'Here is this man working all these signs' they said 'and what action are we taking? If we let him go on in this way everybody will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy the Holy Place and our nation.' One of them, Caiaphas, the high priest that year, said, 'You don't seem to have grasped the situation at all; you fail to see that it is better for one man to die for the people, than for the whole nation to be destroyed.' He did not speak in his own person, it was as high priest that he made this prophecy that Jesus was to die for the nation – and not for the nation only, but to gather together in unity the scattered children of God. From that day they were determined to kill him. So Jesus no longer went about openly among the Jews, but left the district for a town called Ephraim, in the country bordering on the desert, and stayed there with his disciples.

The Jewish Passover drew near, and many of the country people who had gone up to Jerusalem to purify themselves looked out for Jesus, saying to one another as they stood about in the Temple, 'What do you think? Will he come to the festival or not?'

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: **Christ was handed over, to gather into one the scattered children of God.**