

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKLEY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

7 April 2019

Bulletin for the Fifth Sunday in Lent

HYMNS: 75 62 164 754

INTROIT: When the LORD brought back the captives of Zion, we were like those who were dreaming. Then our mouths were filled with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy. Then people said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like watercourses in the Negev!

Those who sow in tears will harvest with shouts of joy.

He who continually goes along weeping, carrying his bag of seed, will certainly come back with shouts of joy, carrying his sheaves.

Psalm 126

COLLECT: Almighty God, by Your great goodness mercifully look upon Your people, that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Isaiah 43:16-21 Watch Me do a new thing.

Philippians 3:4b-14 God has called us to the heavenly prize.

Luke 20:9-20 The parable about the wicked tenant-farmers.

SERMON: Luke 23:32-43 Love divine, all love excelling

Two other men, who were criminals, were also led out to be executed with Him.

³³ When they came to the place that is called "The Skull," they crucified Him there with the criminals, one at His right and the other at His left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them! For they do not know what they are doing."

They divided His clothes among them by casting lots. ³⁵ The people stood there watching. The rulers were also sneering, "He saved others. Let Him save Himself if He is the Christ of God, the Chosen One!"

³⁶ The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him wine-vinegar. ³⁷ They said, "If you are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!"

³⁸ There was also a written notice above Him, "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there was blaspheming Him: "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"

⁴⁰ However, the other criminal rebuked him. He said, "Do you not even fear God? For you are under the same condemnation. ⁴¹ We are also being punished justly. For we are getting what we deserve for what we have done. However, this Man has done nothing wrong."

⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!"

⁴³ Jesus told him, "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise."

Through His death comes our salvation.

The agony of crucifixion was terrible. A person crucified usually died of asphyxiation. When a person was hanging from the cross, he would have trouble breathing, as the intercostal and pectoral muscles around the lungs halt normal breathing while the body hangs in the "down" position. In order to breathe, a person would have to push himself up with his legs. As he became weakened, it became more difficult to do this. Finally, a person would become so weak he could not push himself up anymore to breathe, and he would die of suffocation.

The death was slow and painful, as it was designed to be. This is why the soldiers did not dispatch the two criminals crucified next to Jesus with a spear thrust. Since they were still alive, the soldiers broke their legs so that they would not be able to push themselves up. That way they would still die slowly and painfully of suffocation.

Jesus suffered the agony of crucifixion. He could have stopped that at any time. It wasn't the nails in His hands and feet that kept Him on the cross. It was His great love for us that moved Him not to make use of the powers He had to get off the cross. However, the agony of crucifixion was not the worst thing Jesus suffered. His greatest agony was suffering the torments of hell. God took the sins of the whole world and placed them on His Son (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ became a curse for us that God may declare us not guilty (Gal. 3:13). From noon until 3 P.M., darkness covered the land (Matt. 27:45).

During that time Jesus suffered the torments of hell to pay for the sins of all people. Again, Christ could have insisted on His prerogatives and given that punishment to us. Instead, in love He chose to suffer our punishment for us. During His

suffering, Jesus cried out, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” (Matt. 27:46; cf. Psalm 22:1). This was not a cry of despair on the Saviour’s part. Rather, it was a cry of faith. Taken in the light of Psalm 22:1-5, Jesus was saying, “Father, You have never forsaken anyone who has trusted in You. Though You have forsaken Me, I trust that You will not leave Me forsaken but will deliver Me. For you are My God.” Can there be any greater demonstration of God’s love for undeserving sinners? As Paul once wrote, “*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us,*” (Rom. 5:8). When the trials of life cause you to question whether God loves you, remember Calvary. There God proved His love for you, in that *Christ paid for all your sins*.

When Jesus had completed His work of paying for the sins of the world, He said, “*It is finished,*” (John 19:30). The work of salvation was complete. He now turned His attention to conquering for us the final enemy, death. Jesus’ death was voluntary. He did not deserve to die. He had received the power to give life from His Father (John 5:21). Jesus had said, “*The reason why the Father loves Me is that I lay down My life, in order that I may take it back again. 18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it back again. This command I have received from My Father,*” (John 10:17-18). When Jesus had completed His work, He dismissed His soul into the hands of His Father (John 19:30). He died. Jesus did not deserve to pass through death. He did, however, “*in order that, through His death, He might destroy the one who has power over death, that is, the Devil, and in order that He might release all those who were subjected to slavery all their lives by fear of death,*” (Heb. 2:14-15). “*He Himself carried our sins in His body to the cross, so that we might die to sins and live to righteousness,*” (1 Peter 2:24).

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! May God bless our worship of Him by His serving of us!

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Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at www.aelc.org.au.

Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

COMING SERVICES

10 April WEDNESDAY	14 April Palm Sunday	18 April THURSDAY
7.30pm GRN Vespers	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBALR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC	7.30pm OAK HC
Wednesday, 10 April		
HYMNS: 55 part 1 52 v.1-4 52 v.5-8 48 v.3		
Sunday, 14 April		
READINGS: Deuteronomy 32:36-39; Philippians 2:5-11; John 12:12-19		
HYMNS: 86 51 733 (61 368) 87		
Thursday, 18 April		
READINGS: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 10:15-25; Luke 22:7-20		
HYMNS: 71 295 327 282 283 292		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 9 April, 7.30pm. Men’s Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: Don.

The next youth group will be held on Monday the 15th of April. It will be a barbeque at Cressbrook Dam from 11:30am. Please bring your own food for the barbeque.