

St Martin's Day

Prayers, Readings, Reflection and Song.

“Welcome to another short act of worship as we celebrate the life and works of our Patron, St Martin of Tours. For those who are able to follow it as written or listen in, I hope it offers some comfort, encouragement and a sense of being together despite the distance between us.” Rev Jonny



*Be still, and draw yourself closer to the God who rests beside you,
before you and within you.*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
All **Amen.**

The Lord be with you
All **And also with you**

‘How often have I longed to gather your children,
as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,’ says the Lord,
‘but you would not come to me.’
Let us as wayward children return to God
and confess our sins.

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:
Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:
Christ, have mercy.
All **Christ, have mercy.**

Spirit, you give us life and peace:
Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

May the Father forgive *you* by the death of his Son and
strengthen you to live in the power of the Spirit all *your* days.
All **Amen**

The Collect for the day

God all powerful,
who called Martin from the armies of this world
to be a faithful soldier of Christ:
give us grace to follow him
in his love and compassion for the needy,
and enable your Church to claim for all people
their inheritance as children of God;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Reading, Matthew 25: 31 - 40

Jesus said to his disciples:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels
with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the
nations will be assembled before him.

And he will separate them one from another as a shepherd
separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on
his right and the goats on his left.

Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are
blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you
from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you
gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and
you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you
visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we

see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?
When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked
and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit
you?'

And the king will say to them in reply, 'Very truly, I say to you,
whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did
for me.'"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ**

Reflection

I don't know – I will never know – how closely you have been
following the reflections I've been sending out in recent weeks.
Reflecting, writing and posting them out into the ether has kept me
focused and sane, so whether you have read them or not, they have
at least served one purpose!

Little did I realise, though, how the last two weeks' reflections would
lead us so nicely to this week's. I have been speaking about our love
for our neighbour. Both in respect to the Black Lives Matter
movement and to how we welcome the stranger, the migrant, the
tourist.

I spoke of how God made us, and he knows us, and he loves us – of
the deep and intrinsic worth of each of us. And I spoke of how, when
we welcome others, we welcome Christ – of how fear and suspicion
is the enemy of love.

And now we see the figure of St Martin – Martin of Tours – riding up
the road to meet us, come to show us what all of this means in
practice. The young Hungarian cavalry officer – his Roman armour
glinting in the moonlight – pulls on his reigns and stops in his tracks.

Outside the city gates – cast out of the wealthy city – is a man without clothes, without money, without dignity.

Martin sees him and responds. He slices his own cloak in two, and gives the poor man half. He gives the poor man clothes, but more than that. Martin gave him dignity, human contact, and love.

Martin didn't give him a lecture or encourage him to 'get-on-his-bike' to look for work. He responded in the moment with what he had, and he gave it away without asking. It didn't matter who this poor man was – for Martin, he was a child of God, and that was enough.

That night, as Martin slept, he saw the figure of Jesus wearing the cloak himself.

And that really says it all.

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me.... whatever you did for one of the least of my brothers, you did for me."

Martin shows us that the truth of Gospel is not hard to live out. It doesn't require a lot of thought or planning. It doesn't require a host of risk assessments or analysis of the costs involved. All it requires is that we are ready – in the moment – to see the person in need and give something of what we have to those who have nothing.

Of course that may be money, food or clothing. Those things matter, and they really make a difference. I think of Martin's Cloak and I think of the Mustard Seed blankets that some of you knit every year, to be sent to Romania, which warm the bodies and hearts of folk you'll never meet. Give generously where you can.

But as well as 'things', there is so much more that we can give – moment by moment – to those in need. Our time. Our energy. Our

listening ears. Our helping hands. We can give our patience, our prayer, our empathy and our love.

In so many ways we do this already. Over the last few months I have been astounded by our willingness to give of ourselves. You have clapped for carers. You have volunteered. There have been countless phone-calls and food-parcels and letters of loving support. We have laughed together and wept together and shared the trials of life together. We are stronger because of the love we have given to one another.

This is the way of St Martin, and this is the way of Christ.

God became human to walk amongst us; to share in our life, our laughter and our pain. When he saw the burden under which we struggled, he didn't give us a portion of his cloak, he gave us all that he was. He poured himself out into our lives, completely. He gave us his very self. He defeated the death we all feared.

And God transformed that tragedy into hope. God transformed tears into laughter and death into eternal life.

We live in this redeemed and ever redeeming world, and whenever we show acts of mercy and acts of love, the redemption becomes just a little more complete.

And that is why we sing in our chant today, 'Wherever charity and love abide, there God is abiding, too.'

Amen

Song

Ubi Caritas, et amor. Ubi Caritas, Deus ibi est

Ubi caritas

Jacques Berthier (1991)

Chords: Kieron Power (2016)

Where there is charity and love, God is to be found.

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of two staves of music. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes the following chords: F, C, Dm, Gm, and C. The lyrics are: "U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, Live in cha - ri - ty and stead - fast love." The second staff starts at measure 5 and includes the following chords: F, C, Dm, Gm, C₃, and F. The lyrics are: "u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est. Live in cha - ri - ty; God will dwell with you." The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Prayers of Intercession

Pray for one another – those in our church community

Pray for the Parish, the Island and the World

Pray for the sick, the isolated, the anxious and depressed

Pray for the dying, and those who mourn

Pray for yourselves, and for your own needs

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

The Intercessions may end as follows

Merciful Father

All Accept these prayers

for the sake of your son,

our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

The Peace

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.
The peace of the triune God be always with you

All **and also with you.**

Let us pray with confidence, as our Saviour taught us

All **Our Father**
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
For ever and ever. Amen.

The Blessing.

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love,
defend you on every side,
and guide you in truth and peace;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the
Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**