

Sunday 14 April 2024 ANZAC Day Weekend HC 2.1

### Hymn - Abide with me

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide:  
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide:  
when other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away,  
change and decay in all around I see:  
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour;  
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;  
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;  
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:  
heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

### The Grace

of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you.  
**And also with you.**

'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

**Lord have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit.**

### Sentence of the Day

When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Mark 13:7

### Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### Prayer of the Day

Risen Lord and King, Jesus Christ,  
you laid down your life so that we might live. We remember those who died serving in the armed forces of our nation. Preserve our nation in peace, and in times of war give your people strength and courage to defend the cause of justice even if it may cost us our lives. **Amen.**

### Daniel 7:9-14

<sup>9</sup> “As I looked, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. <sup>10</sup> A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. <sup>11</sup> “Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. <sup>12</sup> (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.) <sup>13</sup> “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. <sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### Psalms 22:25-31

<sup>25</sup> From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you I will fulfill my vows.

<sup>26</sup> **The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the LORD will praise him— may your hearts live forever!**

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him,

<sup>28</sup> **for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.**

<sup>29</sup> All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him— those who cannot keep themselves alive.

<sup>30</sup> **Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord.**

<sup>31</sup> **They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!**

### 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

<sup>5</sup> Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, <sup>2</sup> for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

<sup>4</sup> But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. <sup>5</sup> You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. <sup>6</sup> So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. <sup>9</sup> For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>10</sup> He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

### Mark 13:1-27

The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St Mark, Chapter 14 beginning at the first verse

<sup>13</sup> As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!” <sup>2</sup> “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.” <sup>3</sup> As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup> “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?” <sup>5</sup> Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>6</sup> Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many. <sup>7</sup> When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. <sup>8</sup> Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. <sup>9</sup> “You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. <sup>10</sup> And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. <sup>11</sup> Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. <sup>12</sup> “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. <sup>13</sup> Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>14</sup> “When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>15</sup> Let no one on the housetop go down or enter the house to take anything out. <sup>16</sup> Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. <sup>17</sup> How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! <sup>18</sup> Pray that this will not take place in winter, <sup>19</sup> because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. <sup>20</sup> “If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them. <sup>21</sup> At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. <sup>22</sup> For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. <sup>23</sup> So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time. <sup>24</sup> “But in those days, following that distress, “ ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; <sup>25</sup> the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ <sup>26</sup> “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup> And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

This is the gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

## Sermon - Lest we forget

### Question Time

### The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the world and the church

**Response:** Christ Jesus, intercede for us, and in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

### Scripture Sentence

Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any one, so that your Father who is in heaven may forgive your trespasses. Mark 11:25

### Prayer of Approach

**We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

### The Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

### Hymn - O valiant hearts

**O valiant hearts who to your glory came  
Through dust of conflict and through battle flame  
Tranquil you lie your knightly virtue proved  
Your memory hallowed in the land you loved**

**Proudly you gathered rank on rank to war  
As who had heard God's message from afar  
All you had hoped for all you had you gave  
To save mankind yourself you scorned to save**

**Splendid you passed the great surrender made  
Into the light that never more shall fade  
Deep your contentment in that blest abode**

**Who wait the last clear trumpet-call of God**

**Long years ago as earth lay dark and still  
Rose a loud cry upon a lonely hill  
While in the frailty of our human clay  
Christ our Redeemer passed the self-same way**

**Still stands His cross from that dread hour to this  
Like some bright star above the dark abyss  
Still through the veil the Victor's pitying eyes  
Look down to bless our lesser Calvaries**

**These were His servants in His steps they trod  
Following through death the martyred Son of God  
Victor He rose victorious too shall rise  
They who have drunk His cup of sacrifice**

**O risen Lord O shepherd of our dead  
Whose cross has bought them and whose staff has led  
In glorious hope their proud and sorrowing land  
Commits her children to Thy gracious hand**

### **Thanksgiving for Offering**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us. By his death on the cross, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin, and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful God, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, unite us in the body of your Son and bring us with all your people into the joy of your

eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **The Holy Communion**

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread: so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

**The gifts of God for the people of God**

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The Lord's Supper is open to all who love the Lord

Grape juice is available.

Please come to the Communion Rail if you are able, observing appropriate social distancing.

### **After Communion**

Gracious God, we thank you that in this sacrament you assure us of your goodness and love. Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and help us to grow in love and obedience that we may serve you in the world and finally be brought to that table where all your saints feast with you for ever.

**Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen**

### **Notices**

#### **Hymn - Recessional**

**Chorus**

**Lord God of Hosts Be with us yet**

**Lest we forget Lest we forget**

**God of our fathers Known of old**

**Lord of our far-flung battle line**

**Beneath whose awful hand we hold**

**Dominion over palm and pine *Chorus***

**The tumult and the shouting dies**

**The captains and the kings depart**

**Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice**

**An humble and a contrite heart *Chorus***

**Far-called our navies melt away**

**On dune and headland sinks the fire**

**Lo all our pomp of yesterday**

**Is one with Nineveh and Tyre *Chorus***

#### **Blessing**

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

#### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

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

## **Sermon - Lest we forget - Mark 12:41-14:11**

On Thursday we remembered ANZAC Day. Some people went to a Dawn Service, some people participated in, or watched an ANZAC Day march, some people played two-up and some people just quietly reflected. We marked the landings in Gallipoli of Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) soldiers in 1915, and commemorate all who served and died in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. We reflected on their courage, discipline and self-sacrifice.

Up until the 1940s, what we know as World War 1 was known as the Great War, the war to end all wars. Unfortunately, World War II put an end to that thinking. Even the great war could not prevent evil men perpetrating war again. Around 10 million soldiers dead of wounds or disease, as many as 13 million non-combatant civilians killed. 23 million military personnel injured.

It is foolishness to think that humans could stop war with a war, but people keep on trying, and conflicts are always with us.

In our gospel reading this morning, Jesus is more realistic about war. He knows that the only time war will cease will be the last days, when he returns to judge the world and sin is completely, finally destroyed. Up until then conflict will continue, and Jesus talks about two periods of conflict: the conflict leading to the destruction of the temple in AD70, and the birth pains leading up to the end times, when he will return and restore this world to the way God intended.

Scholars argue about which verses in our reading refer to which period, but I am of the view that verses 5 through 23 talk about the period leading up to and including the destruction of the Temple in AD70, and verses 24 through 35 are about the end times.

### **The Destruction of the Temple**

So let's quickly look at these conflicts. So firstly, let's look at verses 5 through 23, the destruction of the temple and events leading up to it. The destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, in 70AD under the Roman Emperor Titus was extremely traumatic for the Jewish people. For them, the temple symbolised God's presence. If God were to allow it to be destroyed, did this mean God had abandoned his people? Worse still, could it mean that God had been defeated by the gods of the Romans?

The disciples couldn't believe the magnificent temple in front of them could be destroyed, and ask Jesus When? Jesus answers in verse 5 following, saying to them: 7 When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to

come. 8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

There have certainly been wars and rumours of wars ever since Jesus said those words. From the Jewish wars that led to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD70, to the current major conflicts in Palestine, Ukraine, Burma, Northern Africa and Sudan. Historians say there has never been a period in recent history when there hasn't been at least one major international conflict. Jesus tells us not to be alarmed about wars, the end is still to come. This is true whether Jesus is talking about the end of the temple, or the end of days.

He said that leading up to AD70, many would claim they are Jesus, and would deceive many. Historically we know of many who claimed to be the Messiah, or Christ in the first century, and we still have them - people claiming to be Jesus because of mental illness or their own selfish reasons.

There were also wars and rumours of wars, just as there are today. Despite these, Jesus says do not be alarmed, the end is still to come. These wars, rumours of wars, earthquakes, famines and hate crimes against Christians are merely the beginning of birth pains.

Despite being the father of 4 children, and being present at each of their births, there are people here today who are much more qualified than I am to talk about birth pains, with much more direct experience. My wife has made it abundantly clear to me that a baby's birth involves a lot of physical pain. However, assuming nothing goes sadly wrong, we all know the baby will be born sooner or later. Jesus is saying that there will be a lot of pain, including the destruction of the temple before the last days, his followers should see them as prompts for us to be prepared for Jesus' return on the last days.

### **The Last Days**

This brings us to the end of days. Jesus says "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

This is a prophecy from Isaiah 13, where God goes on to say 11 I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. 13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the Lord Almighty, on the day of his burning anger.

Following these calamitous events in the skies, the sure sign of the final days is that 26 "At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth



to the ends of the heavens. This wasn't new to Jesus, it had been prophesied 700 years before by the prophet Daniel.

Jesus will return in the clouds and will gather all Christians to eternal life, as 1 Thessalonians 4 tells us: 16 the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Despite the signs, Jesus says: 32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.

The conflicts will continue until Jesus returns. Everyone will hate us because of Jesus, but everyone who stands firm to the end will be saved. Standing firm during the conflicts won't be easy, but if we do, we have the absolute confidence of eternal life in the perfect heaven that God has prepared for us.

Today, it is helpful for us to think of one of our forebears who proudly served his country in the great war.

Reginald Samuel Thorn grew up in Cavanaugh, South Australia, but grew up in Broken Hill, where he became a school teacher and principal. After hearing the news of Gallipoli, he joined the 10th Battalion of the 7th Brigade of the AIF on 31 August 1915. On the second day of the Battle of Pozieres, Reg was killed by a sniper. He gave everything for his family and country.

The day before the battle, he had written a letter to his mother, which is preserved in the Australian War memorial. It reads:

*My darling mother*

*We are on the eve of a very great battle, and no man of us knows whether or not he may be in this world this time tomorrow. This may therefore be my final farewell here, but I know that God will support you whatever befalls. We have no fear, and we should all be thankful to possess the assurance we have that our partings here are only temporary and that we shall at last meet in a better and a happier world. Should any of our own fall, do not grieve for us, but be thankful that our own rest has come, as will that for us all sooner or later, and when we meet again our present trials will seem quite insignificant compared with the future joy.*

*Remember, darling mother, that our own end should be fall will most likely be unconscious and hence painless, and although we have seen the awfulness of the worst part of the battlefields, we go without fear*

*Commending loved ones at home, who are called to the great sacrifice of loved ones to God's merciful care. Remember his sacrifice for us.*

*Ever your loving son and brother, Reginald Samuel Thorn*

Reg stayed firm until the end of his earthly life. He remained firm to his mother, his brother, his country, and most importantly, to his faith in Jesus Christ, and Jesus's sacrifice for us that we might have eternal life in a better and happier world, a world without the conflicts that have been part and parcel of this world ever since the serpent brought sin into our world, and a world whose joys will make the trials and conflicts of this world seem entirely insignificant.

Let us, like Reg, wait, watch, be on guard, and stand firm to the end and be saved to at last meet in a better and a happier world.