

In the week ahead

For this week, you might like to think about celebrating feasts and festivals and other high points in your life.

This Sunday is “Laetare Sunday” – meaning “Rejoice” – taking its name from the opening words of the Entrance Antiphon: ‘Rejoice, Jerusalem’. It is also Mothers’ Day. Whether you will celebrate Mothers’ Day or not, think about what you might do to celebrate this halfway point in Lent.

jot notes down to share next week about things such as

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- *Family and community celebrations that you particularly enjoy.*
- *What I did to celebrate this halfway point in Lent!*
- *How do I tune into the rhythm of the seasons and enjoy how the world changes over the course of a year.*

Closing Prayer – from Psalm 33

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.
Praise befits the upright.
Praise the Lord with the lyre;
make melody to him
with the harp of ten strings.
Sing to him a new song;
play skilfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

For the word of the Lord is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full
of the steadfast love of the Lord.

Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and shield.
Our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.
Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

Lent 2019 Year C

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

God’s Gifts of Love and Mercy:
Cause to Celebrate



God's Gift of Love and Mercy: Cause to Celebrate

Opening Responses

Reader We gather in the name of the Father

**All Who brought his People out of slavery –
who fed them in the wilderness –
and brought them safe
to the land he had promised them.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Son

**All Who celebrated the Passover of his People
and became himself the Passover Lamb.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Holy Spirit

**All Who guided God's People in the wilderness
and who guides God's People today.**

Reader We gather...

**All (making the Sign of the Cross) in the name
of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen**

Setting the Scene

Last week, we had the account of Moses being appointed as the one to bring the Hebrew people out of Egypt. They wandered in the desert for 40 years – which seems a long time to be wandering a comparatively small area. During that time, children were born who had no memory of the time in Egypt but the boys and men had not been circumcised which would prevent them from taking part in the Passover since the People had left Egypt. This was duly done and, after a time of healing, the People prepared for the Feast of the Passover in sight of the Promised Land. As a sign of their arrival there, the manna that had sustained them for years stopped appearing and they were able to turn their minds to cultivating the land God had prepared for them .

To Ponder...

- What must it have been like for the families to travel through the wilderness for 40 years?
- And what must it have felt like to arrive – and suddenly find your miraculous source of food drying up and the fruits of your own hands becoming your source of food?

Reading—Joshua 5: 9-12

The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.' And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were encamped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched (or roasted) grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Sharing Reflections

Feasts and festival play an important part in all religions. Feasts of the ancient times owed much to the rhythms of the seasons and, even today, our religious feasts have similar links – Christmas is at around the time of the winter solstice, and Easter is the first Sunday after the first Full Moon occurring on or after the spring equinox – which is why it is a changeable feast.

- Which feasts in our Church's year speak most to us?
- Should the date of Easter be fixed – or is there something to be said for its being tied to the full moon and spring equinox?
- How do we celebrate feasts and festivals today?