

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

21 March 2021
The 5th Sunday in Lent

HYMNS: 71 62 173 771 840 178

INTROIT:

How will a young man keep his behaviour pure? By keeping watch according to Your Word.

With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me go astray from Your Commandments!

In my heart I have treasured Your Word, that I may not sin against You.

Blessed are You, O LORD; teach me Your Prescriptions.

With my lips I have recounted all the Decisions of Your mouth.

I have been rejoicing in the way of Your Testimonies as much as in all wealth.

Let me give attention to Your Directions, and let me look at Your Ways.

I shall find myself delighted at Your Statutes; I shall not forget Your Word.

Psalm 119:9-16

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: Jeremiah 31:31-34 God promises a new covenant.

Hebrews 5:1-10 God's Son made perfect through suffering.

Mark 10:32-45 Jesus foretells His death a third time.

SERMON: Hebrews 5:1-10 JESUS IS OUR PERFECT HIGH PRIEST

The Lord's Supper has always been seen as a sign of unity between those who commune together at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:17). When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper in a church body that has a confession of faith, they thereby declare that they believe that they are one in faith with those who commune with them. Since people cannot honestly hold two differing confessions at the same time, they cannot honestly commune with those whose confession is in conflict with their own. If any do this nevertheless, they deny their own confession, and so deny Christ Himself (2 Cor. 6:14-18). **We ask visitors who are communicant members in a church not in fellowship with the AELC, or are not familiar with the *AELC Statement of Faith*, to refrain from communing today. If you have questions, please speak with the pastor after service.**

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 46333604 or 0407583922.

Email him at paziebell@gmail.com or to the church office at ddaalc@gmail.com.

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.

Christ is our Great High Priest

The high priests of the Old Testament had two major assignments: They offered sacrifices for the people and they interceded with God for the people as they offered those sacrifices. The high priest was set apart from the people and anointed for this special work. He was to be physically flawless; any physical defect would exclude him from so sacred an office and work. His vestments were of the finest linen, so that he would not sweat in them when he offered his sacrifices. He was in many respects removed from the common life of his countrymen to symbolise that in his person and work he was separate as the special and holy intermediary between God and His people. He wore a breast-plate with the names of the tribes of Israel inscribed on it in precious stones, so that he would always know and remember that his function was to intercede with God for the people (Exodus 28, 29; Leviticus 8, 9). The outward purity and holiness of the Old Testament high priests was to serve as a shadow and a picture of the one Great High Priest to come: Jesus Christ. He was the fulfilment of the purity and holiness that the Old Testament high priests could only picture. Thus, Christ is unique. He is the Great High Priest because He comes into the presence of His Father not just with an appearance of holiness like the high priests in the Old Testament but with real, actual, perfect holiness. There is no stain of sin in Him. There is nothing that He needs to repent of and nothing for which He needs forgiveness.

Of all the sacrifices that the high priest offered, the most important was that offered on the great Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). On that day the high priest would enter God's throne room on earth: the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle and, after the time of Solomon, in the temple. He entered it twice on that day and on no other. Each time he brought blood with him, the blood of a bull for his own sins and the blood of a goat for the sins of the people. The blood was sprinkled over the top of the ark of the covenant, called the mercy seat. The sprinkling of the blood covered up the stone tablets of the Law, which were inside the ark. With the Law covered up, so too then were the sins against it likewise covered by that blood. The high priest then took a second goat, called the scapegoat, and confessed the sins of the people over the goat. The goat, bearing the sins confessed over him, was then driven out of the camp and into the wilderness to die.

Christ, the Great High Priest, fulfilled all of those pictures. He offered a sacrifice, but His was not the sacrifice of bulls and goats or sheep. His was the sacrifice of Himself as the perfect Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29, 36). He

endured the cross and the shame, suffering, and death. He, the almighty Son of God, at whose command the legions of angels stand at the ready (Matthew 26:53-54), refused to lift a finger of His own or a feather of any angel's wing to prevent or even lessen His torment. His is a perfect sacrifice on so many different counts. It is perfect because the One suffering is perfect; it is not for Himself that He endures suffering but for us, for all mankind. It is perfect because He endures it willingly and freely just as Isaiah prophesied about Him in Isaiah 53. It is the perfect sacrifice at the time of His own choosing. It is perfect in that it cannot be matched by any other sacrifice and because it need not be matched by any other sacrifice. His is the all-sufficient sacrifice, active as He wills it and passive as He permits and endures it, for the sins of the world. It is perfect because it covers the punishment due to all mankind and the debt owed to God for the sin of the whole world. From eternity to eternity the perfect sacrifice of the Great High Priest avails before the throne of God as the one, the only, the all-sufficient sacrifice for sin.

With the blood of His sacrifice He enters into the Holy of Holies in heaven as the Great High Priest for all mankind. He presents Himself as the perfect Priest with the perfect sacrifice. He has once and for all poured out His own blood most holy to cover all the unholiness of sinful, fallen humankind. To this day and into eternity He continues as our Great High Priest, successfully interceding for us by virtue of His perfect sacrifice for us. St. John beautifully describes that work of intercession so inseparably linked to Christ's sacrifice for us. He tells us, "*If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the propitiation for our sins and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world*" (1 John 2:1-2).

What a perfect description of Christ's high priestly work! To this day, in this very hour, when we pray for forgiveness, there is our Great High Priest, the Holy One, acting on our behalf, interceding for us. In an eternal procession before the Most Holy Place in heaven He carries the blood of His own sacrifice that has once and for all won our pardon. His sacrifice, His blood, has washed away all our sins. Think of that grand and glorious, that saving procession of Christ behind the veil in the Most Holy Place in heaven – it's going on even as you pray. It continues at every cry of the penitent: "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"

Again, we cannot help but note that it is biblical understatement to call Him who serves us: Great! While there is no other word that will do, that one word just seems too small for Him as our Great High Priest in His high priestly office.

COMING SERVICES

Mid-Week Lenten Services	Sunday, 28 March PALM SUNDAY	MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICES
Wednesday, 24 March, 7.00pm Marburg.	8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA HC 9.00am GRN LR	Wednesday, 31 March, 7.00pm, Marburg HC
Thursday, 25 March, 7.30pm Greenwood.	10.30am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	Thursday, 1 April, 7.30pm, Tmba HC
WEDNESDAY/THURSDAY, 24/25 March		
HYMNS: 53 68 783 48 v.3		
Sunday, 28 March		
READINGS: Zechariah 9:9-12; Philippians 2:5-11; John 12:12-19		
HYMNS: 10 87 11 (286 290) 86		
MAUNDY THURSDAY		
READINGS: Exodus 24:3-11; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; Mark 14:12-26		
HYMNS: 73 295 840 51 83 63		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please take home with you today a copy of the CoC minutes and the latest Newsletter.

Monday, 5 April, 10.00am. Parish Picnic at Aubigny. Everyone is invited. Could each family please provide something for a shared lunch? Children, if you haven't already, please take a colouring-in picture home with you today and enter it in the colouring-in competition at the Parish Picnic. You can bring it along on the day.