

A Service of Welcome

For

The Right Reverend Mary Gregory Bishop of Reading



Sunday 2nd March 2025 3.00pm

Reading Minster of St Mary The Virgin

'The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this' I Thessalonians 5.24

Introduction

Welcome to this service which marks the beginning of Bishop Mary's episcopal ministry in the Diocese of Oxford and the Reading Area.

The verse on the front of this order of service, from Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians, sustained Mary throughout the discernment process for her new role. It is embroidered on the inside of her cope.

At the beginning of the service, the organist plays Rhosymedre by Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), her Dad, John's, favourite organ piece.

The choir then leads us in singing 'Take, O take me, as I am' by John Bell of the Iona Community. This was sung at the beginning of the service of Mary's ordination as priest at St Lawrence Church in Hatfield, South Yorkshire, on 27th June 2006. Please join in with the choir as you are able.

The Venerable Stephen Pullin Archdeacon of Berkshire

The Bishop of Oxford's Outreach Fund Reg Charity No.247954 The Outreach Fund is dedicated to supporting the mission of the Church nationally and internationally. Through the fund, the Bishop of Oxford is able to respond to a wide range of requests for help, in areas such as humanitarian need, Christian mission, education and training.

Donations to the Bishop's Outreach Fund can be made,

- using the card donations machine at the back of the church,
- or alternatively, online via this webpage,

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The Rt Revd Mary Gregory



Mary grew up in rural Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, before studying English at Birmingham University. After graduation, following a call to work amongst people on the edges of society, she worked in the Prison Service for ten years latterly as a Prison Governor. She was a member of an enquiry into incidents at the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland, which was foundational in developing her interest in reconciliation.

Mary studied theology at Cranmer Hall in Durham. Her MA in Theological Research included an exploration of the Gospel and the arts, whilst her

dissertation focused on the cultural appropriation of the holocaust at Auschwitz in post-war Poland.

She served her curacy and first incumbency in the Diocese of Sheffield, where she was also Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Dean of Women's Ministry. Mary then became Team Rector for the Flagstaff Family of Churches in Leicestershire, and Rural Mission Enabler for the Diocese of Leicester.

Most recently, Mary has served as Canon for Arts and Reconciliation at Coventry Cathedral, where she has developed an understanding of reconciliation as being born of rich storytelling and courageous listening, and relished opportunities for growing relationships with leaders of other faiths.

Mary is a serial-adopter of retired greyhounds, and a self-taught quilter. She loves walking holidays and has completed the Cleveland Way and Wainwright's Coast-to-Coast. She has a particular passion for the role of beauty and the imagination in drawing us deeper into our encounters with God.

Bishop Mary was consecrated in Canterbury Cathedral on 27th February 2025.

Bishops are called to serve and care for the flock of Christ. Mindful of the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep, they are to love and pray for those committed to their charge, knowing their people and being known by them. As principal ministers of word and sacrament, stewards of the mysteries of God, they are to preside at the Lord's table and to lead the offering of prayer and praise. They are to feed God's pilgrim people, and so build up the Body of Christ. They are to baptize and confirm, nurturing God's people in the life of the Spirit and leading them in the way of holiness. They are to discern and foster the gifts of the Spirit in all who follow Christ, commissioning them to minister in his name. They are to preside over the ordination of deacons and priests, and join together in the ordination of bishops.

As chief pastors, it is their duty to share with their fellow presbyters the oversight of the Church, speaking in the name of God and expounding the gospel of salvation. With the Shepherd's love, they are to be merciful, but with firmness; to minister discipline, but with compassion. They are to have a special care for the poor, the outcast and those who are in need. They are to seek out those who are lost and lead them home with rejoicing, declaring the absolution and forgiveness of sins to those who turn to Christ.

Following the example of the prophets and the teaching of the apostles, they are to proclaim the gospel boldly, confront injustice and work for righteousness and peace in all the world

From Common Worship: The Ordination and Consecration of a Bishop

The Crosier

The crosier presented to the eleventh Bishop of Reading today

was the gift of the people of the diocese of Oxford to their first Bishop Suffragan, James Leslie Randall consecrated in 1889. The money was raised by subscription and in order to make this as possible inclusive as no subscription was to be more than Subscriptions were rapidly £I. collected and on Wednesday the 19th May 1890 the Bishop of Oxford and a large number of clergy and laity assembled in the Council Chamber (now the Waterhouse Room) in Reading Town Hall to present the crosier to the Bishop of Reading.

The crosier was made by Carl Krall of Barkentin and Krall of Regent Street, London; a company renowned for their ecclesiastical metalwork and jewellery. It is of



silver gilt adorned with precious stones, including amethysts, turquoises, carbuncles, sapphires and aquamarines. The crook is adorned with crockets and contains a silver group representing the charge to St Peter, "feed my lambs", while below in six niches are the figures of six saints in silver: St Paul, St James, St Birinus, St Nicolas, St Aldhelm, and St Hugh of Lincoln.

The organist, Ian Hillier, plays Rhosymedre by Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) during which civic leaders will process.

Processional order

Verger
Deputy Lieutenants of Berkshire
Vice Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire
High Sheriff of Berkshire
Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire

Welcome and Notices – The Revd Sonya J Wratten, Vicar, Reading Minster

The choir leads us in singing

Take, O take me as I am

John L. Bell





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Take, O take me as I am.
Summon out what I shall be.
Set your seal upon my heart,
and live in me.

Take, O take me as I am. Yours and yours alone to be. Set your seal upon my heart, and live in me.

Words and tune: John L Bell (b. 1949)

The congregation then stands to sing the hymn as the procession enters the Minster

Processional order

The Minster Cross and Candles

The Choir of Reading Minster Ecumenical Representatives & Representatives of Other Faiths

Verger Lay Ministers Visiting Clergy The Berkshire Clergy The Area Deans and Lay Chairs of Berkshire Archdeacons and Associate Archdeacons Honorary Bishops The Minster Clergy Berkshire Area Team Regius Professor of Divinity, Christ Church Cathedral The Bishop of Buckingham The Bishop of Dorchester The Bishop of Reading The Minster Churchwardens The Bishop of Oxford The Bishop's Chaplain

Processional Hymn

God is Love, let heav'n adore him;
God is Love, let earth rejoice;
Let creation sing before him
And exalt him with one voice.
God who laid the earth's foundation,
God who spread the heav'ns above,
God who breathes through all creation:
God is Love, eternal Love.

God is Love; and love enfolds us,
All the world in one embrace:
With unfailing grasp God hold us,
Ev'ry child of ev'ry place.
And when human hearts are breaking
Under sorrow's iron rod,
Then we find that self-same aching
Deep within the heart of God.

God is Love; and though with blindness
Sin afflicts all human life,
God's eternal loving kindness
Guides us through our earthly strife.
Sin and death and hell shall never
O'er us final triumph gain;
God is Love, so Love for ever
O'er the universe must reign.

Words: Timothy Rees (1874-1939)
Tune: Abbots Leigh

The Welcome

The congregation remains standing as the bishop greets the people

Bishop Steven Grace, mercy and peace

from God our Father and the Lord lesus Christ

be with you,

All and also with you.

Bishop Steven Welcome to this Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin.

We have gathered here to welcome Bishop Mary as the new Bishop of Reading. We have come to ask God's blessing on her ministry. We have come to celebrate the discipleship and ministry of the whole people of God as we each seek to use the gifts God has given us for the building of his Kingdom. We have come to pray for Bishop Mary and for each one of us as we seek the grace to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, each in our own vocation and calling.

All sit

Confession

Bishop Steven The sun of righteousness has dawned

with healing in his wings.

Let us come to the light of Christ,

confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

In a dark and disfigured world

we have not held out the light of life:

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Bishop Steven In a hungry and despairing world we have failed to share our bread.

Christ, have mercy.

All Christ, have mercy.

Bishop Steven In a cold and loveless world

we have kept the love of God to ourselves.

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Bishop Steven May the God who loved the world so much

that he sent his Son to be our Saviour

forgive you your sins

and make you holy to serve him in the world,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Symbols of Ministry

Representatives of the community gather around Bishop Mary with symbols of ministry

Clarie Lewis, Vice Chair of Churches together in Reading and Berkshire and Head of Operations at Christian Community Action, presents Bishop Mary with the Bible.

Be among us as teacher and guardian of the faith, proclaiming the good news of Jesus afresh to us and to every generation.

2 Timothy 4.2

All Together, with God's help, we will find, in God's word, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

Revd Rebecca Amoroso, Hospital Chaplain, West London NHS Trust, presents Bishop Mary with the jug and bowl.

Be among us as one who receives the ministry of Christ, and who, in imitation of him, kneels to serve.

Luke 22.27; John 13.4,9

All Together, with God's help, we will be tender and humble in service.

Andy Dickens, Director of FAITH Christian Group, presents Bishop Mary the bread.

Be among us as one who feeds the hungry; with food for the body and with food for the soul; with bread made by human hands and with Jesus, the bread that has come down from heaven.

James 2.15; John 6.41

All Together, with God's help, we will share our sisters and brothers as with Jesus himself.

Nithan Gnanaprakasam, post graduate student at Reading University, presents Bishop Mary with the candle.

Be among us as one who proclaims the light that shines in the darkness, the light the darkness cannot overcome, and who points people to follow Jesus, who is the Light of the World.

John 1.5; 8.12

All Together, with God's help, we will speak of the hope that is in us.

Asya Aydin, The Dialogue Society, presents Bishop Mary with the flask of oil.

Be among us as one who brings healing and reconciliation where there is brokenness and distance.

2 Corinthians 5.18-19

ΑII Together, with God's help, we will be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another as God, in Christ, has forgiven us.

Nichole Grace, local singer-songwriter, presents Bishop Mary with the poetry book.

> Be among us as one who kindles the imagination, invites us to wonder, and points us to the 'more' of God.

> > Ephesians 3.18

All

Together, with God's help, we will be open to exploration and to be surprised by joy and wonder.

Graham Barker, Vice Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire, presents Bishop Mary with the Map.

> Be among us as one rooted in Berkshire, formed by the people and places of this area, to hold us before God, and God before us.

> > John 1.14

ΑII

Together, with God's help, we will love where we have been planted.

The Declaration of Assent

Bishop Steven The Church of England is part of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation. Led by the Holy Spirit, it has borne witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies. the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. In the declaration you are about to make, will you affirm your loyalty to this inheritance of faith as your inspiration

and guidance under God in bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making him known to those in your care?

I, Mary Emma Gregory, do so affirm and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness: and in public prayer and administration of the sacraments I will use only the forms of service which are authorised or allowed by Canon.

The Oath of Allegiance to the Sovereign

The Bishop of Reading, facing the people, makes the Declaration of Assent

Bishop Mary I, Mary Emma Gregory, do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty, King Charles III, his heirs and successors, according to law: So help me God.

The Oath of Canonical Obedience

The Bishop of Reading turns towards the Bishop of Oxford for the Oath of Canonical Obedience

Bishop Mary I, Mary Emma Gregory, do swear by Almighty God that I will pay true and canonical obedience to the Bishop of Oxford and his successors in all things lawful and honest: So help me God.

Bishop Steven Mary, with love and fidelity in the office to which you have been called, seek only the glory of God and the wellbeing of the body of Christ.

All Amen.

The Bishop of Oxford gives the Bishop of Reading the Reading Crozier

Bishop Steven Receive this pastoral staff as a sign of the ministry of oversight you share with me. Be among the people of Berkshire as a shepherd of Christ's flock, teaching, nurturing, encouraging, advocating for those who are poor and marginalised, confronting injustice and working for righteousness and peace.

My brothers and sisters, will you pray for your new Bishop as she undertakes this charge?

All We will.

Bishop Steven Will you uphold and encourage her in her ministry now and in the years to come?

All We will.

Bishop Mary kneels. Bishop Steven blesses Bishop Mary and anoints her with oil

Bishop Steven The God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Presentation

All stand as Bishop Mary is presented to the congregation by the Archdeacon of Berkshire

Archdeacon I present to you Mary, our Area Bishop.

Receive her in love and obey her in truth, that together we may give ourselves to the work of God in the world, to the praise and glory of his holy name.

All Amen.

All greet Bishop Mary with a round of applause and then sit for words of welcome from Alexander Barfield, High Sheriff of Berkshire and other representatives of the community

The Peace

All stand

Bishop Steven Christ is our peace. He has reconciled us to God in one body by the Cross. We meet in his name and share his peace. The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you.

Hymn

And all can safely live

A place where saints and children tell

How hearts learn to forgive

Built of hopes and dreams and visions

Rock of faith and vault of grace

Here the love of Christ shall end divisions

All are welcome, all are welcome

All are welcome in this place

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true, where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace; here as one we claim the faith of Jesus.

All are welcome, all are welcome

All are welcome in this place

Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat:
 a banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet.
 Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space; as we share in Christ the feast that frees us.
 All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.

Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face; let us bring an end to fear and danger.

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.

All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.
Words and tune: Marty Haugen (b.1950)

All sit

Old Testament Reading

Read by Andrew Try, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isaiah 35.1-10

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading

Read by Mabel Tang and Martin Chan

路加福音 18

Revised Chinese Union Version (Traditional Script) Shen Edition

寡婦和法官的比喻

18 耶穌對門徒講了一個比喻,為了要他們常常禱告,不可灰心。 **2 他**說:

「某城有一個官,不懼怕 神,也不尊重人。 ³ 那城裏有個寡婦,常到他那裏,說:『我有一個冤家,求你給我伸冤。』 ⁴ 他很久不受理,後來心裏說:『我雖不懼怕 神,也不尊重人, 5 只因這寡婦煩擾我,我就給她伸冤吧,免得她常來糾纏我。』」 6 主說:「你們聽這不義的官所說的話。 7 神的選民畫夜呼籲他,他豈會延遲不給他們伸冤嗎? 8 我告訴你們,他很快就要給他們伸冤。然而,人子來的時候,能在世上找到這樣的信德嗎?」

法利賽人和稅吏的禱告

⁹耶穌向那些自以為義而藐視別人的人講了這比喻: ¹⁰「有兩個人上聖殿去 禱告,一個是法利賽人,一個是稅吏。 ¹¹法利賽人獨自站着,自言自語地 禱告說:『 神啊,我感謝你,我不像別人勒索、不義、姦淫,也不像這 個稅吏。 ¹²我每週禁食兩次,凡我所得的都獻上十分之一。』 ¹³那稅吏遠 遠地站着,連舉目望天也不敢,只捶着胸,說:『 神啊,開恩可憐我這 個罪人!』 ¹⁴我告訴你們,這人回家去比那人倒算為義了。因為凡自高的 .必降為卑:自甘卑微的,必升為高。」

Read by Jessica Maddocks from Citizens UK

Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'

Luke 18.9-14

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Preached by the Rt Revd Mary Gregory, Bishop of Reading

Anthem

Be thou my vision — Bob Chilcott (b. 1955) The Choir of Reading Minster

The Apostles' Creed

All stand

ΑII

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Hymn

Great God, your love has called us here, as we, by love, for love were made.
Your living likeness still we bear, though marred, dishonoured, disobeyed.
We come, with all our heart and mind your call to hear, your love to find.

We come with self-inflicted pains of broken trust and chosen wrong, half-free, half-bound by inner chains, by social forces swept along, by powers and systems close confined, yet seeking hope for humankind.

Great God, in Christ you call our name and then receive us as your own, not through some merit, right or claim, but by your gracious love alone.

We strain to glimpse your mercy seat and find you kneeling at our feet.

Then take the towel, and break the bread, and humble us, and call us friends.

Suffer and serve till all are fed, and show how grandly love intends to work till all creation sings, to fill all worlds, to crown all things.

Great God, in Christ you set us free your life to live, your joy to share.
Give us your Spirit's liberty to turn from guilt and dull despair and offer all that faith can do while love is making all things new.

Words: Brian Wren (b.1936)

Tune: Surrey

All sit

Prayers

The prayers are led by All Saints Dedworth Youth

Please pray in whatever language is closest to your heart.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All

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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

All stand

ΑII

I am no longer my own but yours.

Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessèd God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Methodist Covenant Prayer

Blessing

Bishop Mary

History says, Don't hope on this side of the grave. But then, once in a lifetime the longed for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme.

So hope for a great sea-change on the far side of revenge.
Believe that a further shore is reachable from here.
Believe in miracles and cures and healing wells.

From 'The Cure at Troy', by Seamus Heaney (1939-2013)

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 5.13

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Recessional Hymn

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord! Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice; tender to me the promise of his word; in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy name, the Lord, the mighty one.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word! Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord to children's children and for evermore!

Words: Timothy Dudley Smith (1926-2024 Tune: Woodlands (Greatorex)

Recessional Order

Verger
Deputy Lieutenants of Berkshire
Vice Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire
High Sheriff of Berkshire
Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire

The Minster Cross and Candles

The Choir of Reading Minster Ecumenical Representatives & Representatives of Other Faiths

Lay Ministers
Visiting Clergy
The Berkshire Clergy
The Area Deans and Lay Chairs of Berkshire
Archdeacons and Associate Archdeacons
Honorary Bishops
The Minster Clergy
Berkshire Area Team
Regius Professor of Divinity, Christ Church Cathedral
The Bishop of Buckingham
The Bishop of Dorchester
The Bishop of Reading
The Minster Churchwardens
The Bishop of Oxford
The Bishop's Chaplain

The organ voluntary is Fantasia in G by Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1918).

Please stay for light refreshments.

Some texts copyright Common Worship.

Biblical texts copyright New Revised Standard Version.

Photography

This is a public occasion. Please be aware that photography and filming will take place during the service. No other photography is permitted. For any concerns relating to photography today please email communications@oxford.anglican.org

