

**DEANERY OF ST EDMUND CAMPION
ENGLISH MARTYRS—
VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE PASTORAL AREA**

www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

13th – 20th November 2022



Remembrance Sunday 2022

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979
aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Fr Andrew is usually available to speak to after Mass.

Arrangements for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals or other meetings are most conveniently made by e-mail.

Ma Lluïsa Jarne: office@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk or at one of the St Mary's Sunday masses or on Mondays, 6pm-8pm, on 07983045824.

GIVING TO THE PARISH

BY REGULAR STANDING ORDER OR GIFT

BANK DETAILS: PRCDTR East Hendred, St Mary

Sort Code: 309304 Account Number: 00877183

To arrange Gift Aid, contact : hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Please let us know (if you are a UK Taxpayer) if you are happy for us to claim Gift Aid. At the start of the tax year we need anybody in Gift Aid to let us know if they are no longer taxpayers. In that case we should not make a claim.

Donations to the parish: www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

WEEK 33 YEAR 2

13th – 20th November 2022

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthendred
 St Mary's is usually open each day from 9am until late afternoon.

SUNDAY 33C
13th November

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

9.15am Children's Church
(begins in St Mary's Parish Rooms)

9.30am Requiem Mass

11am War Memorial Act of Remembrance

11.15am Mass at St Patrick's

6pm Holy Mass *Pro populo*

WEEK 33 (Year 2)

Monday 14th

Of Week 33 *[Green]*
 9.15am Holy Mass *Holy Souls (Annie Furlong)*

Tuesday 15th

St Albert the Great, Religious, Bishop, *[White]*
Doctor of the Church
 9.15am Holy Mass *FM Agnes Gardner 1945*

Wednesday 16th

ST EDMUND OF ABINGDON *[White]*
 7pm *Mass at Our Lady & St Edmund's,*
Abingdon

Thursday 17th

No Mass

Friday 18th

No Mass
 3pm *Adoration (St Mary's)*

Saturday 19th

Our Lady St Mary on Saturday *[white]*
No Mass

SUNDAY 34C
20th November

CHRIST THE KING

9.15am Children's Church
(begins in St Mary's Parish Rooms)

9.30am Parish Mass

11.15am Mass at St Patrick's

6pm Holy Mass

Confessions: after Mass (weekdays) or by appointment

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



NOVEMBER IS THE MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS

THE HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER

We pray for children who are suffering, especially those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war; may they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection.

NATIONAL & DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTIONS

Sunday 13 th	<i>(National:)</i> The Dead of the Wars; World Day of the Poor <i>(Diocesan:)</i> Blessed Hugh Faringdon, Faringdon
Monday 14 th	Bishop Philip <i>(born 14th November 1955)</i>
Tuesday 15 th	Chaplains in Higher Education in the Diocese
Wednesday 16 th	God's Blessing on the Diocese Parish of St Edmund, Hornbeam Chapel of St Margaret of Scotland, Tichborne
Thursday 17 th	Bishop Emeritus Crispian <i>(born 17th November 1936)</i>
Friday 18 th	The Parish, Communities & Schools in the Bailiwick of Guernsey Pastoral Area
Saturday 19 th	Diocesan Team for Charities & Outreach

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Martha, Diana France, Helen Lewis, John Castle, Daniel Cuevas, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Brenda Paddon, Karen Greig, Mary McNichol, Des McNichol

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Recently Departed: Fr Robin Sanders PP;

Week 13th– 19th November: Elizabeth Rivers, Mary Eyston, Adelaide

Battley, Canon Thomas Luck PP, Edith Lily O'Driscoll, Gerard Felle, Rose Anne Rooke, Gertrude Corby, Marjorie Mockler.

Fr Robin Sanders R.I.P (1949 – 2022)

Robin Sanders was born on 27th June 1949 in South London. He received an MA from Oxford and an MA from University of Bristol. After his studies, he served as an Anglican Priest from 1975 until being received into full communion with the Catholic Church in 1983.

Having done supplementary seminary studies at Allen Hall, he was ordained for the Diocese of Portsmouth by Bishop Crispian Hollis on 2nd December 1989 at St Laurence, Petersfield.

During his ministry within the Diocese, he served the parishes of East Hendred and Chandlers Ford. In addition, he served within the Diocesan Tribunal as Tribunal Administer and Assistant Judicial Vicar. He also assisted with Tribunal work for the Archdiocese of Southwark.

After his time in parish ministry, he served actively with the St Barnabas Society as secretary and director.

After his retirement in 2018, Fr Robin continued to live in Oxfordshire.

We are grateful to God for his service within the Diocese and the St Barnabas Society. He died on 1st November. Please kindly pray for his family, especially his sister, Elizabeth, friends and all who will miss him.

His funeral will be a cremation attended in private by his family. However, the Bishop will offer Mass for him at 3pm on Saturday 3rd December 2022, at Holy Rood Church, Oxford.

EAST Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

SECOND COLLECTION

A second collection for **MARY'S MEALS** will be taken on 20th November.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Have a word with Veronica or Libby if you would like to help. Children's Church is at 9.15am on Sundays in St Mary's Parish Rooms, except school holidays.

HENDRED HOUSE CHAPEL

Hendred House Chapel is closed for building works. This week there will be no Friday Mass and 3pm Adoration will take place in St Mary's.

STEWARDING AT 9.30AM

We have a vacant slot in the rota every five or six weeks. Could you, or your family, take this on? If so, contact Ma Louise on office@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 6th November 2022, 194 people viewed, 73 machines looking only at St Mary's. 38 of these were in the UK, 25 in the USA, and 10 elsewhere (including one in Ukraine). 114 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

COLDS AND FLU?

Stay home and watch the livestream! Details on www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

HOMES FOR PEOPLE DISPLACED BY WAR IN UKRAINE

Are you able to help the Catholic Charity *Caritas*? <https://sjog-homesforukraine.uk/>

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH

Information from the Bishop and Portsmouth Diocese. To keep up to date with the news of the Diocese and the Bishop: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/>

JOSEPH KERSHAW

Joseph Kershaw (Didcot Sixth Form student and former St Amand's pupil) would like to really thank parishioners for their generous support of the Feb 2023 mission trip to a Catholic orphanage in Uganda that he is involved in. Around £400 was raised, and the group has now completed their sponsored walk - going roughly 14km barefoot in Ugandan flag colours around Guildford. They may well plan more fundraising events in future, so stay tuned! If you would like to follow their progress, make a donation, or find out more about the charity they are supporting (Mercy for Life) just head to their gofundme page at

https://www.gofundme.com/f/pjwjvh-uganda-mission-trip?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_c_f+share-flow-1da



YOUNG ADULTS

DAVE AND GEMMA

I have asked Dave and Gemma, a couple at St Mary's who got married on 12th November to head up and liaise our work with young adults. If you are interested in any of the things below – or other activities – have a word with them. They can be reached on davegem2022@gmail.com

FLAME

Flame, the largest youth gathering of Catholics, is taking place at the OVO Arena, Wembley on Saturday 4th March 2023, with the theme 'Rise Up!' All young people, whether from the parish, at school (Year 9 or older), or at university are welcome. Loud music, bright lights, moments of stillness..... Any questions? Contact youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or phone 07780 221686.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2023

Those aged 16 or above by July 2023 are invited to join with like-minded young people from across the diocese to journey on pilgrimage to Lisbon for World Youth Day. This is a life-changing experience for all those who accept the invitation and this pilgrimage, led by Bishop Philip, is set to be the best one yet! But hurry, spaces are limited! Plans are in the early stages, but we will provide more information and details as soon as possible. For further information, see the posters in church, or please email wyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

PILGRIMAGE

PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK

Escorted Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Ireland, 15th March 2023. £699.00 per person sharing. Price includes flight, all transfers, 4 nights' in Knock House Hotel with full board. All entertainment and excursions included. Day trips to Westport, Ballintubber Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Fr. Peyton Centre & National Museum. Special St Patrick's Day Celebrations. Single supplement £150.00. Contact Patricia on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com.



Thank you so much for your generosity! Last weekend was a great success for the ***Closer to Christ*** Campaign in our parish. I'm delighted to tell you that based on the cards filled out by parishioners at Mass, our total raised currently stands at over **£91,575!**

To allow us to draw a line under the campaign we need to make sure that all pledges have been recorded properly. If you completed a small card at Mass recently, you will have received a pledge form for completion in the post or via email this week. I ask that you return the form at your earliest convenience to either the parish office, to me after Mass or directly through the post. While you may not wish to start your pledge immediately I do ask that you return your form, indicating a start date and method of payment that is convenient to you. Our hope is that parishioners will consider what they can as every pledge counts and all gifts will bring us closer to our shared goal.

I know there are some families out there who are still considering their pledge and I would be delighted to receive your support. While we have already surpassed our goal of £70,000, 50% of anything raised above it will come back to us and so we have much to benefit from.

We hope to receive the majority of pledges within the next two weeks so that we can see exactly how much has been raised. I will give you a further update in a few weeks' time.

Thank you for your support and please pray for the continued success of the ***Closer to Christ*** Campaign in our parish.

Matt Bloomer

OUR VISION

BRINGING PEOPLE CLOSER TO JESUS CHRIST THROUGH HIS CHURCH

To go out on mission to everyone.

"Go, make disciples of all nations. " (Matthew 28:19)

That we enable many more to hear the Gospel and to come to know, serve and love Jesus Christ in the saving communion of His Catholic Church, so that, persevering in faith, hope and charity, they may one day reach the happiness of Heaven.

To convert Catholics.

"He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, lives in me, and I live in him." (John 6:55-56)

That we assist all Catholics, especially those who are not yet practising, to reach a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, to be more intentional disciples and, discerning their charisms, to become more actively engaged in the Church's mission.

To be totally dependent on the Holy Spirit.

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you." (Acts 1:8)

That shifting from maintenance to mission, we trust more completely in God through prayer, imploring the Holy Spirit to inspire our clergy and our laity with constant joy and creativity to develop and realise new, innovative ministries and ways of Christian living.

To become outward-looking servants.

"In so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

That all our parish and our school communities become ever more outward-facing service-centres, brighter beacons of mission, dialogue and service to everyone around, especially to the poor, the homeless, those in need.

*Rt. Rev. Philip Egan BA, STL, PhD
Bishop of Portsmouth*

Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit

IN HIS Pastoral Letter on 16th October 2022, Bishop Philip presented us with the challenge to 'to establish or pledge to develop six holy habits':

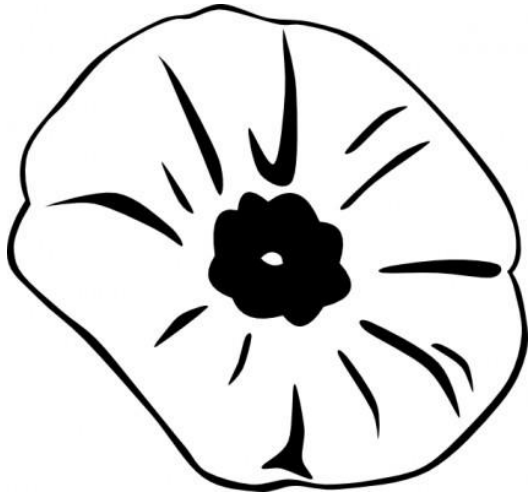
- to keep Sunday special, a family day, by attending Mass.
- to spend five minutes a day in prayer using the Scriptures
- to do penance on Fridays, and to serve the poor and needy
- every fortnight to make a Holy Half Hour before the Blessed Sacrament
- to go to Confession once a month
- join a small group for formation, prayer, and fellowship

AS WE prepare for this Year of Prayer, which will begin on the First Sunday of Advent (27th November), we look at these 'holy habits' in turn. So.....

(4) Every fortnight to make a Holy Half Hour

An important part of our Catholic Faith is to acknowledge and worship the Lord in our midst, hidden under sacramental forms. For many, a very helpful and moving way of doing this is by participating in a Holy Hour. We have a Holy Hour every Friday afternoon at 3pm and it is lay led. Occasionally we have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at other times too and we shall be increasing these opportunities in response to the Bishop's call. However we should realise that a Holy Hour or a Holy Half Hour does not depend on Exposition or indeed any organised event. St Mary's is open throughout the day and some do make use of this to say prayers in front of the Blessed Sacrament which is perpetually reserved in the Tabernacle. What is the difference between Exposition and a closed Tabernacle? Strictly, not much. After all, on Maundy Thursday the Tabernacle is closed for the Watch of the Passion and the Lord is not any less there if the doors are closed. In short, take the opportunities that are there and, whether you are present for Adoration at a set time or simply popping in to pray, try to take up the holy habit of a Holy Half Hour once a fortnight.

East Hendred Catholic Parish



**Thirty-Third Sunday
in Ordinary Time (C)
Remembrance Sunday
13th November 2022
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Readings from the Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

9.30am **Entrance Antiphon** *Absterget Deus*
God will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or
mourning, crying or pain, for former things have passed away. *Rev 21:4*

11.15am and 6pm **Entrance Antiphon** *Dicit Dominus*
The Lord said: I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction. You will
call upon me, and I will answer you, and I will lead back your captives
from every place. *Jer 29:11, 12, 14*

9.30am **Collect**
O God, who willed that your Only-Begotten Son, having conquered
death should pass over into the realm of heaven, grant, we pray, to your
departed servants that, with the mortality of this life overcome, they may
gaze eternally on you, their Creator and Redeemer. Through our Lord
Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

11.15am and 6pm **Collect**
Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being
devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with
constancy the author of all that is good. Through our Lord Jesus Christ,

your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

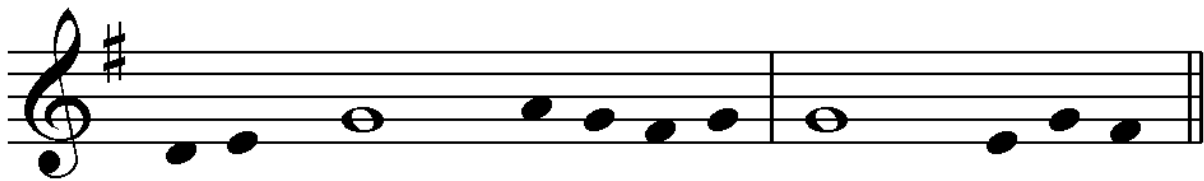
First Reading

Malachi 4:1-2 (RSV)

For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings.

Psalm 98:5-9 R/9

Tone III.3



R/ The Lord comes to judge the world | () with fair-ness.

*Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp
with the harp and the sound of song.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
raise a shout before the King, the Lord. R/*

*Let the sea and all with-in it, thunder;
the world, and those who dwell in it.
Let the rivers clap their hands ~
and the hills ring out their joy
at the presence of the Lord. R/*

*() For the Lord comes,
he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with justice*

Second Reading

2 Thessalonians 3:7-12 (RSV)

You yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, we did not eat any one's bread without paying, but with toil and labour we worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you. It was not because we have not that right, but to give you in our conduct an example to imitate. For even when we were with

you, we gave you this command: If any one will not work, let him not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work in quietness and to earn their own living.

Gospel Acclamation



Stay a - wake, praying at all times

For the strength to stand with confidence before *the Son* of Man.

Gospel

Luke 21:5-19 (RSV)

As some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, Jesus said, ‘As for these things which you see, the days will come when there shall not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.’ And they asked him, ‘Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign when this is about to take place?’ And he said, ‘Take heed that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name, saying, “I am he!” and, “The time is at hand!” Do not go after them. And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified; for this must first take place, but the end will not be at once.’ Then he said to them, ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. This will be a time for you to bear testimony. Settle it therefore in your minds, not to meditate beforehand how to answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they will put to death; you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives.

9.30am **Prayer over the Offerings**

Look with favour, we pray, O Lord, on the sacrificial offerings we present to you for the souls of your servants and, just as you bestowed on them the dignity of the Christian faith, grant them also its reward. Through Christ our Lord.

11.15am and 6pm **Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant, O Lord, we pray, that what we offer in the sight of your majesty may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to you and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness. Through Christ our Lord.

9.30am **Preface III *De Defunctis*** (*Christus, salus et vita*)

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord. For he is the salvation of the world, the life of the human race, the resurrection of the dead. Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty and rejoices in your presence for ever. May our voices, we pray, join with theirs in one chorus of exultant praises, as we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

11.15am and 6pm **Preface** (*I De mysterio paschali et de populo Dei*)

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord. For through his Paschal Mystery, he accomplished the marvellous deed, by which he has freed us from the yoke of sin and death, summoning us to the glory of being now called a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for your own possession, to proclaim everywhere your mighty works, for you have called us out of darkness into your own wonderful light. And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

9.30am **Communion Antiphon**

God sent his Only Begotten Son into the world, so that we might have life through him. *1 John 4:9*

11.15am and 6pm **Communion Antiphon** *Mibi autem adhaerere Deo Ps 73:28*

To be near God is my happiness, to place my hope in God the Lord.

9.30am **Prayer after Communion**

Through these sacrificial gifts, which we have received, O Lord, bestow on your departed servants your grant mercy, and, to those you have endowed with the grace of Baptism, grant also the fullness of eternal joy. Through Christ our Lord.

11.15am and 6pm **Prayer after Communion**

We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbly imploring you, O Lord, that what your Son commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in charity. Through Christ our Lord.

Salve Regina

Liturgical Hymns 597

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy! Hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

Scripture Reading (Week 33 Year 2)

Monday	Revelation 1:1-4, 2:1-5	Luke 18:35-43
Tuesday	Revelation 3:1-6, 14-22	Luke 19:1-10
Wednesday	Revelation 4:1-11	Luke 19:11-28
Thursday	Revelation 5:1-10	Luke 19:41-44
Friday	Revelation 10:8-11	Luke 19:45-48
Saturday	Revelation 11:4-12	Luke 20:27-40
CHRIST THE KING C	2 Samuel 5:1-3	
	Colossians 1:12-20	Luke 23:35-43

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

14th – 19th November 2022



St Peter's Basilica

Collect for Week 33

GRANT us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Monday of Week 33 (ii)

Reading

Rev 1:1-4; 2:1-5

Introduction and Salutation and the Message to Ephesus

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, **2** who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. **3** Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near.

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne.....

2 'To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

2 ^I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear evil men but have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not, and found them to be false; **3** I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. **4** But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. **5** Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Reflection

THE APOCALYPSE – or 'The Revelation to St John' – was granted to a prophet called John, who was neither St John the Son of Zebedee nor the author of the Gospel and Epistles of St John. He is therefore often referred to as 'St John the Divine'. The book, the last in the New Testament, seems to date from the 90s. The Emperor Domitian died in AD96 and he notoriously persecuted Christians. It has been suggested that the Number of the Beast, 666, which figures in the Book (13:18), expressed in Roman Numerals as DCLXVI, stood for Domitian, an absolute

dictator and a notorious persecutor of Christians. Expressed in Roman numerals, 666 is DCLXVI— *Domitius Caesar Legatos Xti Violenter Interfecit*—which translates as ‘The Emperor Domitian violently killed the ambassadors of Christ.’ Today’s reading gives us the introduction and the first of seven messages to the various churches in the western part of Asia Minor. Though the whole book appears to us surreal and strange, it is very much what one expects from visionary apocalyptic literature, common at the time. There are also traces of this literature in the Gospels (Mt 24:1-35; Mk 13:1-31; Lk 21:1-33). We appear to be looking ahead to some future End-Time but the writing is often occasioned by, and reflective of, what was seen as the turmoil of the present. The apocalyptic sensitivity of the Early Church was heightened by the devastation of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple in AD 70. The major misunderstanding of the book is when interpreters look to the future for the meaning of what is prophesied. Rather we should learn what was happening at the time and how it is to be understood, and then how it might assist us interpret our own times.

Writing to each of the seven churches, the prophet is addressing them with the words of Christ, variously described. Each message continues with a characterisation of the church, the good things and the bad things, as appropriate. What follows is admonition and encouragement to do better. The short messages each end with a promise to those who prevail in the struggle.

Tuesday of Week 33

(St Albert the Great)

Reading

Rev 3:1-6, 14-22

The Message to Sardis and the Message to Laodicea

3 ‘And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

“I know your works; you have the name of being alive, and you are dead. ²Awake, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my

God. ³ Remember then what you received and heard; keep that, and repent. If you will not awake, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you. ⁴ Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. ⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'.....

¹⁴ 'And to the angel of the church in La-odice'a write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

¹⁵ ^I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸ Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may be rich, and white garments to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. ²¹ He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Reflection

TODAY we get to hear the messages to two more of the seven churches. Yesterday it was the message to the Church in Ephesus. Today it is messages five and seven, to Sardis and Laodicea. We have passed over messages two, three, and four, to Smyrna, Pergamon, and Thyatira, and we have missed out message six, to Philadelphia. In each message there are local and topical references. For example, the reference in the message to Sardis about the Lord coming like a thief at an unexpected hour not only has biblical resonances (Mt 24:43; 1 Thess 5:2) but also refers to the difficulties of the city, twice captured by surprise. Similarly the Laodiceans, whose lukewarmness means that they will be spewed out, calls to mind the very different temperatures in the hot springs at nearby

Hierapolis and the cold drinking water of Colossae. Many of the details of the seven messages are now lost to us but what is certainly of abiding importance is the need to watch eagerly for the coming of the Kingdom and to be aflame with hope and zeal.

ST EDMUND OF ABINGDON, Bishop

Joint-Principal Patron of the Diocese

Wednesday 16th November

St Edmund (c1175-1240) was born in Abingdon and studied in Oxford and Paris. He became treasurer at Salisbury and then in 1233 Archbishop of Canterbury. With the help of St Richard of Chichester and others he was a great reformer of ecclesiastical discipline and the rights of the Church. He died at Soisy in France, *en route* to Rome, and was buried at Pontigny. Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge were founded in his name.

Collect

O GOD, by whose grace the Bishop Saint Edmund of Abingdon was vigilant over integrity in public office and discipline in religious life: grant, we pray, through his intercession, that same spirit of constancy to your Church, that she may be fearless in promoting justice. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Reading

Rev 4:1-11

The Heavenly Worship

4 After this I looked, and behold, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up hither, and I will show you what must take place after this.' **2** At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne! **3** And he who sat there appeared like jasper and carnelian, and round the throne was a rainbow that looked like an emerald. **4** Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clad in white garments, with golden crowns upon their heads. **5** From the throne issue flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder, and before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God; **6** and before the throne there is as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And round the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: **7** the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. **8** And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all round and within, and day and night they never cease to sing,

**'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!'**

9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

**¹¹'Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your they existed and were created.'**

Reflection

THE DESCRIPTION of the heavenly worship in Revelation 4 fits well with our commemoration today of the Basilicas of St Peter and St Paul in Rome. This scripture passage is often thought to be a looking forward imaginatively to what things will be like when we are finally gathered into the presence of God. It has also been suggested that it reflects the experience of worship in the Early Church. Whichever of these – either, neither, or both – we glimpse the heavenly court in session, with imagery drawn from the Book of Ezekiel and the Prophet Isaiah. Instead of mythical figures, precious gems are used to describe the Lord God sitting upon his throne. Lightning and the four living creatures echo the vision of the cherubim in Ezek 1:4-13 and 10:18-22. The ‘Holy, holy, holy’ reminds us not only of the Sanctus at Mass but also of Isaiah’s vision (Is 6:3). The additional words, ‘who was and is and is to come!’, declare the eternal glory of God, resounding throughout creation, and transcending the trials and tribulations of the present. The seven churches to which St John the Divine has written need to withstand the transitoriness of their embattled circumstances and look beyond to eternity. An interesting feature of the passage is the number twenty-four, two groups of twelve. This number of elders does not happen outside the Book of Revelation and we should presume, perhaps, that what the prophet has in mind are twelve representatives of the old Israel, the Old Covenant, the heads of tribes, and twelve of the new Israel, the New Covenant, the apostles.

Thursday of Week 33

17th November

(St Hugh of Lincoln, Religious, Bishop)

ST HUGH (c1140-1200) was born at Avalon in Burgundy and was first an Augustinian Canon and then a member of the Carthusians. After ten years at La Grande Chartreuse, he came to Witham in Somerset to take charge of the new Charterhouse there. In 1186 he reluctantly became Bishop of Lincoln. He died at his residence in Lincoln’s Inn, London in 1200. His

symbol is a swan because of his affinity to the swan of Stowe which guarded him as he slept.

Collect

O GOD, who gave the Bishop Saint Hugh of Lincoln the grace of relying on you alone and endowed him with a wise and cheerful boldness to commend to earthly rulers the merits of a holy life: grant us, we pray, that, with him as our advocate, we may have good cause for the hope that is in us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Reading

Rev 5:1-10

The Scroll and the Lamb

5 And I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back sealed with seven seals; ² and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' ³ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, ⁴ and I wept much that no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, 'Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.'

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth; ⁷ and he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; ⁹ and they sang a new song, saying,

**'Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals,
for you were slain and by your blood ransomed men for God**

**from every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
¹⁰ and have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on earth.'**

Reflection

YESTERDAY we had a vision of the Heavenly Worship. Today we have a complementary vision of the Lamb. The prophet is told to see the Lion of Judah (see Gen 49:9-10) and the Root of David (see Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:2) who has conquered and has dominion over the nations, and instead sees the Lamb. The image of the Lamb is possibly derived from the morning and evening temple sacrifices (Ex 29:38-42; Num 28:3-8) or from the Passover Lamb (Ex 12:1-27; Lev 23:5-6) or from the Suffering Servant (Is 53:7). These striking images tumble over one another as do the sevens as they accumulate: seven seals, seven horns, seven eyes, seven spirits of God sent out into the world. In the vision of the Heavenly Worship, God is hymned as the Creator: the scroll is his, it is in his right hand. We met this scroll first in Ezek 2:8ff. The writing is on both sides of the scroll: nothing can be added to God's Providential plan. Like wills in the Roman world, the scroll for security's sake has seven seals on the scroll. In the vision of the Lamb, God the Son is hymned as the Redeemer. He alone is worthy to take the scroll and, when he does so, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders – that is, the heavenly court – fall down in worship, with harps in their hand and golden bowls of incense. Their worship is our worship because the incense is the prayer of the saints – that is, the prayer of faithful Christians. The apocalyptic language takes a while to unpack and is ultimately impossible fully to comprehend but points to the otherness of God, his mystery and his majesty.

Friday of Week 33

20th November

Reading

Rev 10:8-11

The Open Scroll

⁸Then the voice which I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, 'Go, take the scroll which is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.'⁹ So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll; and he said to me, 'Take it and eat; it will be bitter to your stomach, but sweet as honey in your mouth.'¹⁰ And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter.¹¹ And I was told, 'You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.'

Reflection

JOHN the Divine is no longer in heaven but on earth. He is now being commissioned to transmit a bitter-sweet message. Drawing on imagery from the prophet Ezekiel (3:1-3) the mighty angel in this passage bids John eat the little scroll. This 'mighty angel' appears earlier in the Bible (Dan 4:13-14) and later in the Book of Revelation (10:1; 18:21): he is portrayed as vast, astride sea and land. The scroll too is new. It is a little scroll this time, and an open scroll, so that the message is plain. The Gospel is bitter-sweet because it inaugurates a time of testing and trial as well as a time of beatitude and salvation. The Gospel message is to be proclaimed neither amidst, nor against, 'peoples and nations and tongues and kings' but with a view to them severally. We can see, for example, who the kings are meant to be when, later in the book, we hear of 'seven kings' (17:10) and 'ten kings' (17:12). The 'seven' are Roman Emperors – though we cannot be quite sure which of the fourteen Roman Emperors are being indicated – and the 'ten kings' are in the future.

Saturday of Week 33

(The Dedication of the Basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles)

LAST week (9th November) we celebrated the dedication of the Archbasilica of St John Lateran. Today we remember two other basilicas, that of St Peter, on the Vatican Hill, built above the tomb of the first Pope, and that of St Paul 'outside the Walls', built above the tomb of St Paul.

Collect

DEFEND your Church, O Lord, by the protection of the holy Apostles, that, as she received from them the beginnings of her knowledge of things divine, so through them she may receive, even to the end of the world, an increase in heavenly grace. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.



Basilica of St Paul's Without Walls

The Four Last Things

ADVENT is the time of year when we focus on ‘**The Four Last Things**’ – **Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell**. In a series of talks at his Wednesday general audiences, (July and August, 1999) St John Paul II offered brief commentaries on the options that will face us after death, heaven, hell and purgatory.

Heaven, he said (21st July), ‘is not an abstraction nor a physical place amid the clouds, but a living and personal relationship with the Holy Trinity. When this world has passed away, those who accepted God in their lives and were sincerely open to His love, at least at the moment of death, will enjoy that fullness of communion with God, which is the goal of human existence’

A week later, he told his audience that damnation, the ‘tragic situation’ of eternal separation from God, is not God's initiative, but a self-imposed punishment of those who refuse His love and mercy.

He cautioned against a too literal interpretation of biblical imagery about **Hell**. The ‘inextinguishable fire’ and ‘burning oven’ of which Scripture speaks ‘indicate the complete frustration and vacuity of a life without God,’ he pointed out. Whether or not any human beings are in hell ‘is not something we can know,’ the Pope said, but damnation ‘remains a real possibility.’

In his talk on **Purgatory** on 4th August, Pope John Paul said that ‘before we enter into God's kingdom, every trace of sin within us must be eliminated, every imperfection in our soul must be corrected. This is exactly what takes place in purgatory.’ He called purgatory ‘the process of purification for those who die in the love of God but are not completely imbued with that love.’

Christ intercedes for us with an offer of mercy, the Pope said, but that offer ‘does not exclude the duty to present ourselves pure and whole before God.’

(from the ‘Catholic Matters’ website)