

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

After Epiphany

24th-30th January 2021



The Call of the Disciples

Reflection – Christian Unity Octave

Each of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas', or 'I belong to Christ.' Has Christ been divided?

1 Corinthians 1:12-13a

ST PAUL is addressing **the church of God in Corinth**. But what is the church of God in Corinth? Paul answers the question for us. It is a local church. It is, to quote St Paul, earlier in the first chapter of 1 Corinthians, **the holy people of Jesus Christ, who are called to take their place among the saints everywhere**. And how do we know who are 'the saints everywhere'? They are, says St Paul, those **who pray to our Lord Jesus Christ**. And why must we be concerned with all these other people, throughout the world, 'who pray to our Lord Jesus Christ'? Because, says St Paul, **he is their Lord no less than ours**. We reflect that it is this letter, the first letter to the Church in Corinth, in which St Paul gives us his teaching about the Body of Christ, the Church. I still have on my bookshelves John Robinson's monograph *The Body*. SCM published it in 1952 and I read it as a student in 1970.

Here is a bit of what Robinson has to say:

One could say without exaggeration that the concept of the body forms the keystone of Paul's theology. In its closely interconnected meanings, the word soma knits together all his great themes. It is from the body of sin and death that we are delivered; it is through the body of Christ on the Cross that we are saved; it is into his body the Church that we are incorporated; it is by his body in the Eucharist that this Community is sustained; it is in our body that its new life has to be manifested; it is to a resurrection of this body to the likeness of his glorious body that we are destined.

The Body, SCM 1952 p9

The work of Christian unity is fellowship and co-operation with all the baptised. But, for us, there is the additional ecumenical task of making it possible for our separated brothers and sisters to find unity with the rock from which we are hewn, the Church Catholic. How else than through the united witness of the universal Church can we obey the call to be **the light of the nations?** How else can we work and pray for the coming of God's kingdom so that his **salvation may reach to the end of the earth?**

24th -31st January 2021

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthendre

Sunday 24th January	THIRD SUNDAY <i>Per Annum</i> (Year B) 9.30am Mass <i>Pro populo</i> Jonah 3:1-5, 10 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20
Monday 25th January	Conversion of St Paul <i>Christian Unity Octave</i> 9.15am Mass Acts 22:3-16 Mark 16:15-18
Tuesday 26th January	SS Timothy & Titus, Bishops <i>David Lazarus & family</i> 9.15am Mass <i>(Annie Furlong)</i> Hebrews 10:1-10 Mark 3:31-35
Wednesday 27th January	9.15am Mass <i>RIP Catherine Carey</i> Hebrews 10:11-18 Mark 4:1-20
Thursday 28th January	St Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor 10am School Mass <i>FM Ada Daubenay 1953</i> Hebrews 10:19-25 Mark 4:21-25
Friday 29th January	9.15am Mass <i>FM Elizabeth Eyston 1952</i> Hebrews 10:32-39 Mark 4:26-34
Saturday 30th January	<i>Our Lady on Saturday</i> <i>No Mass</i> Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-9 Mark 4:35-41
Sunday 31st January	FOURTH SUNDAY <i>Per Annum</i> (Year B) 9.30am Mass <i>Pro populo</i> Deuteronomy 18:15-20 1 Corinthians 7:32-35 Mark 1:21-28

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

ST MARY'S ON LIVE-STREAM

LAST SUNDAY 276 people looked in from 114 addresses, with 109 staying around long enough to take part in the Mass. Homes where there is more than one person viewing help explain the largest figure.

VERSO L'ALTO - REACH THE HEIGHTS!

An Hour of Prayer and Praise

Bishop Philip invites you to join him and the Cathedral clergy online every Thursday 7.30 to 8.30 pm during lockdown to pray for safety, for the sick and for key workers, for the Diocese and for a speedy end to the pandemic.

<https://www.portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk/live-mass.php>

CHURCH CLOSED

The churches in the parish are currently closed: for safety's sake, before accessing please check with Fr Andrew. In place of the scheduled Parish Pastoral Council Meeting on Wednesday 10th February, the Standing Committee will be convened, 8pm on Zoom that night, to monitor progress. Whilst St Mary's is closed, there are plans to repair the floor. Whilst St Patrick's is closed, we hope to re-hang the *baldacchino* securely.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Please open the file below for resources for this week.



CLG Term 3 Sunday
24th January 2021.doc

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

JOB VACANCY

Post of Administrative Secretary, working for Fr Phillip Harris, Parish Priest at Didcot and Wallingford, located at the Parish Office in the Presbytery at Didcot. 16 hours a week, mornings Tuesday – Friday. **Salary:** £12 per hour gross. **Commencement Date:** Immediate. Further details from pp

Apply with application form:

[https://www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org/parish-](https://www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org/parish-administrator-vacancy)

[administrator-vacancy](https://www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org/parish-administrator-vacancy) or e-mail didcot@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

HOLY FATHER'S JANUARY PRAYER INTENTION

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Roy Kemp, Kristina, Baby Martha, John Castle, Petal Connell, Daniel Cuevas, Rose Millet, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Sr Catherine, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Angus Clark, Karen Greig, Kitty Teasdale, Mary McNichol, Andrew Gunn, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol, Christine Robinson, Rose

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Catherine Carey, Eamon Joseph Mockler, Francis Castle-Jack, Albert George Howard, Elisabeth Eyston, Agnes Mary Eyston, Patricia Turner Bridger, Frances Rivers, Helen Jessie Patterson.

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD

Pope Francis has issued a 'Motu Proprio' (i.e. a document at his own instigation) instituting this Sunday, the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, as the Sunday of the Word of God. He proposed the idea at the conclusion of the Year of Mercy: a Sunday given over entirely to the word of God, so as to appreciate the inexhaustible riches contained in that constant dialogue between the Lord and his people. The document provides a summary of the Church's teaching on Scripture and the place of Scripture within the Liturgy. It suggests a number of ways of marking the day. The document can be found at **[Motu Proprio, Aperuit illis](#)** (pdf)

GIVING: THE CATHEDRAL

This weekend is the annual second collection in support of our Cathedral in Portsmouth. This collection is the only support our Cathedral receives from the wider Diocesan family. Due to the lockdown, a 'Give as you Live' page has also been created to enable you to donate online at:

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/cathedral-annual-appeal>

Please use this route if you can, rather than the 'second collection' envelope. Understandably, we all are aware that these are difficult times for us all, but please give generously to support your cathedral, gift aiding wherever possible.

GIVING: CHARITY

To help with supplying the Didcot Foodbank, contact Veronica Paget: veronicapaget@hotmail.com or leave suitable food outside her front door.

Jackymattam@btinternet.com helps with the poor locally. Does anyone have a washing machine (or could buy one)? Also, the same family, are in need of warm clothes for their daughter for age 3.5 to 4 years. She particularly needs waterproof clothes. The parents are doing their best to work around Covid restrictions and child care requirements. Answers to Jacky.

GIVING: THE PARISH BY REGULAR STANDING ORDER OR GIFT

BANK DETAILS: PRC DTR East Hendred, St Mary

Sort Code: 309304 Account Number: 00877183

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

East Hendred Catholic Parish



Third Sunday *Per Annum* (B)

**24th January
2021**

**Antiphons,
Prayers and
Readings**

The Call of the Disciples

Today is 'the Sunday of the Word of God'

As the Second Vatican Council teaches, 'the Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she has venerated the Lord's body, in that she never ceases, above all in the sacred liturgy, to partake of the bread of life and to offer it to the faithful from the one table of the word of God and the body of Christ' (*Dei Verbum*, 21).

Entrance Antiphon

Cantate Domino

O sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth. In his presence are majesty and splendour, strength and honour in his holy place.
Ps 96:1, 6

Collect

Almighty ever-living God, direct our actions according to your good pleasure, that in the name of your beloved Son we may abound in good works. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever

First Reading

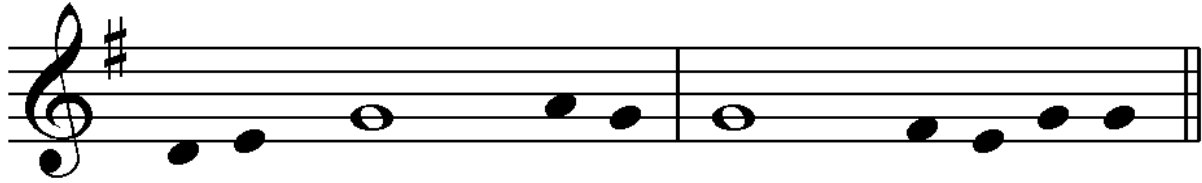
Jonah 3:1-5, 10 (RSV)

The word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ² 'Arise, go to Nin'evah, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nin'evah, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nin'evah was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. ⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he cried, 'Yet forty days, and Nin'evah shall be overthrown!' ⁵ And the people of Nin'evah believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them....¹⁰ When God saw what

they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which he had said he would do to them; and he did not do it.

Psalm 25:4-9 R/ 4

Tone VIII.3



R/ O Lord, **make me know your ways.** | ()

O Lord, make me know *your* ways.
 () Teach me your paths.
 Guide me in your truth, and *teach* me;
 for you are the God of *my* sal-va-tion. **R/**

Do not remember the sins of *my* youth.
 nor *my* trans-gres-sions
 In your merciful love remem-ber me.
 because of your *good*-ness, O Lord. **R/**

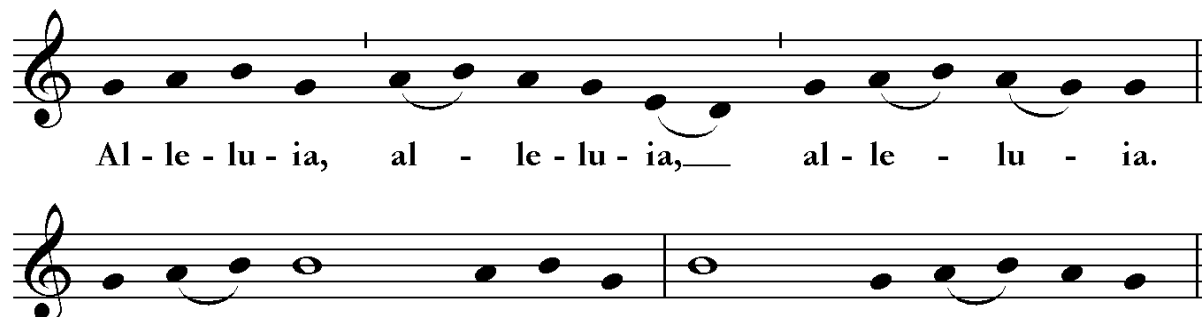
Good and upright is *the* Lord;
 he shows the *way* to sin-ners.
 He guides the humble in right *judg*-ment;
 to the humble he *tea*-ches his way. **R/**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 (RSV)

Brethren, the appointed time has grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, ³⁰ and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, ³¹ and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the form of this world is passing away.

Alleluia



The king-dom of God is *close* at hand: be - lieve the good news.

Gospel

Mark 1:14-20 (RSV)

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.' ¹⁶ And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men.' ¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zeb'edee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zeb'edee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him.

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept our offerings, O Lord, we pray, and in sanctifying them grant that they may profit us for salvation. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(III De salvatio hominis per hominem)

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. For we know it belongs to your boundless glory, that you came to the aid of mortal beings with your divinity and even fashioned for us a remedy out of mortality itself, that the cause of our downfall might become the means of our salvation, through Christ our Lord. 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 praise, as we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

after St Alphonsus Liguori (18th cent.)

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Even if I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

+ +

O come to my heart, Lord Jesus. There is room in my heart for you.

Communion Antiphon

I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

Ego sum lux mundi

Jn 8:12

Prayer after Communion

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, receiving the grace by which you bring us to new life, we may always glory in your gift. Through Christ our Lord.

Scripture Reading (Week 3 Year 1)

| | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------|
| Monday | Hebrews 9:15, 24-28 | Mark 3:22-30 |
| Tuesday | Hebrews 10:1-10 | Mark 3:31-35 |
| Wednesday | Hebrews 10:11-18 | Mark 4:1-20 |
| Thursday | Hebrews 10:19-25 | Mark 4:21-25 |
| Friday | Hebrews 10:32-39 | Mark 4:26-34 |
| Saturday | Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-9 | Mark 4:35-41 |
| Sunday 4B | Deuteronomy 18:15-20
1 Corinthians 7:32-35 | Mark 1:21-28 |

Sunday of the Word of God

The Word of God is in no way less than the Body of Christ; nor should it be received less worthily.

I ask you, brothers or sisters, tell me: which to you seems the greater, the word of God, or the Body of Christ? If you wish to say what is true you will have to answer that the word of God is not less than the Body of Christ.

Therefore just as when the Body of Christ is administered to us, what care do we not use so that nothing of it falls from our hands to the ground, so should we with equal care see that the word of God which is being imparted to us shall not be lost to our soul, while we speak or think of something else.

For he who listens carelessly to the word of God is not less guilty than he who through his own inattention suffers the Body of Christ to fall to the ground.

St Caesarius of Arles (469-541) *Sermo 300*

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

25th January – 2nd February 2021

Week 3 (Year 1)



Conversion of St Paul

Monday 25th January

Acts 22:3-16

St Paul tells of his conversion

³ I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cili'cia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gama'li-el, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as you all are this day. ⁴ I persecuted

this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, ⁵ as the high priest and the whole council of elders bear me witness. From them I received letters to the brethren, and I journeyed to Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

⁶ 'As I made my journey and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone about me. ⁷ And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' ⁸ And I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting.' ⁹ Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Rise, and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do.' ¹¹ And when I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus.

¹² 'And one Anani'as, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, ¹³ came to me, and standing by me said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And in that very hour I received my sight and saw him. ¹⁴ And he said, 'The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Just One and to hear a voice from his mouth; ¹⁵ for you will be a witness for him to all men of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.'

Reflection

MOST Saints' Days mark the death of saints and their passing into glory. The notable exceptions are St John the Baptist and Our Lady, the beginning of whose lives are also celebrated. Two of the apostles – Peter and Paul – have not only their day of death commemorated but also a notable stage in their life. In the case of St Peter, it is the Chair of St Peter (22nd February) and in the case of St Paul, it is the feast of his conversion, celebrated today. In an older version of the Roman Calendar, the feast of the Chair of St Peter was celebrated on 18th January, kept by some non-Catholics as 'the Confession of St Peter', celebrating the famous incident at Caesarea Philippi where Simon Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. The two feasts, 18th January and 25th January, inspired the Episcopalian friar, Fr Paul Watson, to invent the Octave (later 'Week') of Prayer for Christian Unity in 1908. The point was that the St Peter event is

of particular significance for Catholics whilst the preaching of St Paul and the phenomenon of adult conversion to Christ is of particular significance for Protestants. Both emphases are important. For Catholics, what is crucial is belonging to the Household of Faith, the Ark of Salvation, a membership which begins at Baptism, often at a very early age. For Protestants, what is crucial is coming to a living Faith in Christ, something which often happens in adulthood. So, where Catholics emphasise the founding of the Church at Caesarea Philippi, the role of St Peter, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Protestants emphasise the turning point in life where, just as Saul the Pharisee became Paul the Apostle, so someone lacking a living Faith has a life-changing encounter with Christ.

Tuesday 26th January

SS Timothy & Titus, Bishops

Hebrews 10:1-10

Christ's Sacrifice once for all

10 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices which are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who draw near. **2** Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? If the worshippers had once been cleansed, they would no longer have any consciousness of sin. **3** But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. **4** For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.

5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

**'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;**

⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

**⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do thy will, O God,'
as it is written of me in the roll of the book.'**

8 When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings' (these are offered according to the law), **9** then he added, 'Behold, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. **10** And by

that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Reflection

TODAY'S reading from Hebrews (10:1-10) is the first part of a summary of the argument so far. The second and concluding part of the summary will come in tomorrow's reading (Hebrews 10:11-18). Today we are looking again at the ineffectiveness of the sacrificial system. It involves endless repetition – year on year – of the sacrifice of the blood of bulls and goats, which patently does not work as a sin offering. If it did, the worshippers would no longer be aware of sin and would not need to return to the place of sacrifice year after year. And so we learn that the coming of Christ into the world puts an end to all that, precisely in a way which is foretold in Scripture. Well, not quite precisely as we find it: the quotation from Ps 40, like similar quotations, is from the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament. It is not that the earlier system was wrong. It was honoured by God but then abolished by the later system. We are familiar with this notion of earlier and later versions: St Thomas Aquinas, in the hymn *Tantum ergo*, sung at Benediction, at the Transfer of the Holy Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, and at Corpus Christi, reminds us that 'Types and shadows have their ending, for the newer rite is here'. There is the old and there is the new. An Old Covenant and a New Covenant, each undergirded by sacrifice.

Wednesday 27th January

Hebrews 10:11-18

The Priestly Order of Melchizedek

Every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. ¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

**¹⁶ 'This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, says the Lord:
I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds,'**

¹⁷ then he adds,

'I will remember their sins and their misdeeds no more.'

¹⁸ Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Reflection

YESTERDAY'S passage, Hebrews 10:1-10, is the first half of a longer section, of which today's passage, Hebrews 10:11-18, is the second half. Having contrasted the ineffectiveness of the sacrifices of the Temple with the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice, and contrasting the many priests of the Old Covenant with the One High Priest of the New Covenant, we conclude that Christ's sacrifice is once and for all, and brings about an entirely new situation. For now God remembers and sins no more: the forgiveness brought about by Christ means that there is no longer any offering for sin. We notice that this High Priest sits at the right hand of God, itself a single event, which contrasts with the priests of the temple, who, over and over again, have to stand to make the offerings for sin. The sacrifice of Christ perfects 'for all time those who are sanctified' and to this new state of affairs, this New Covenant, the Holy Spirit is the witness. The words here, slightly altered to make the writer's point, are from Jeremiah 31:33-34. We get 'hearts and minds' rather than 'minds and hearts' because it is with the whole heart that we are invited in the Book of Deuteronomy to serve the Lord.

Thursday 28th January

St Agnes, Virgin, Martyr

Hebrews 10:19-25

A Call to Persevere

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; ²⁴ and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not

neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Reflection

BY NOW we have studied the main thrust of the Epistle to the Hebrews: the sacrifice of Christ the eternal High Priest, once offered, has replaced the annual sin-offerings, the blood of bulls and goats, offered by the Temple priesthood. The priesthood of Christ is without beginning and end, not in the lineage of Aaron but after the timeless example of Melchizedek, a one-off, mythical figure. It is time now for us to look at embracing the truth and draw near to the sanctuary, to which we have privileged access through the Blood of Christ. We are not only concerned with entering the sanctuary (vv. 24-25) but finding fellowship one with another within the earthly sanctuary. Entering the sanctuary is something we can do with confidence, since we approach with 'a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water' (v.22). So: faith, forgiveness, baptism. But, as an answer to the often-expressed belief that 'you don't have to go to Church to be a Christian', we notice the constant use of 'we' and 'us', rather than the singular forms, the admonition 'to stir up one another to love and good works' and the specific instruction 'not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some'. Christian believers meet together for 'encouraging one another...all the more as [we] see the Day drawing near.' As we look for the coming of the Kingdom, we support one another in work and prayer.

Friday 29th January

St Vincent, Deacon, Martyr

Hebrews 10:32-39

Remember the hard struggle with sufferings

Recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on the prisoners, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. ³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised.

³⁷ 'For yet a little while,
and the coming one shall come and shall not tarry;
³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith,
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him.'

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls.

Reflection

HAD WE carried on where we left off yesterday – instead of missing out verses 26-31 – we should have encountered a warning of judgment, aimed specifically at those who intentionally sin. We are talking here about evil acts, not peccadilloes. Sinning 'unintentionally' or 'unwittingly' seems to be covered by various texts from the Jewish Law (Lev 4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:15; Num 15:27-29; 35:11; Deut 19:4; Josh 20:3, 9). The matter in these cases is serious and when the sin is committed deliberately there is, says the Letter to the Hebrews, no further forgiveness available for those who have already received the forgiveness of baptism. It is in the light of this stern warning that today's extract offers us encouragement. It could be summed up as: you have come so far along the road, don't throw it all away now!

Saturday 30th January

Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

Abraham looked forward to the city whose builder and maker is God

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the men of old received divine approval. ³ By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.....

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go. ⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ¹¹ By faith Sarah herself received power to

conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, 'Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.'¹⁹ He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead; hence he did receive him back, and this was a symbol.

Reflection

CHAPTER 11 of the Letter to the Hebrews gives us a great list of heroes of the Faith: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. Today's extract from the chapter deals principally with Abraham and Sarah. The burden of the message is that 'faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen'. We are not reflecting on the good deeds that these leading figures managed to perform but on the tenacity of their faith. Faith, as we learn from Abraham's preparedness to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice – a sacrifice which was not required of him – is belief and trust in the promises of God, promises of which these figures could catch a glimpse but promises which would not be realised within their own lifetimes.

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST MARK,

Chapter by Chapter

Mark 1 *Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition*

The Proclamation of John the Baptist

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
who shall prepare thy way;

3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight—'

4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. **6** Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. **7** And he preached, saying, 'After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. **8** I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Baptism of Jesus

9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. **10** And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; **11** and a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'

The Temptation of Jesus

12 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. **13** And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him.

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, **15** and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.'

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

16 And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. **17** And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men.' **18** And immediately they left their nets and followed him. **19** And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zeb'edee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. **20** And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zeb'edee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him.

The Man with an Unclean Spirit

21 And they went into Caper'na-um; and immediately on the sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. **22** And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. **23** And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; **24** and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' **25** But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' **26** And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. **27** And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, 'What is this? A new teaching! With authority he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' **28** And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many at Simon's House

²⁹ And immediately he left the synagogue, and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever, and immediately they told him of her. ³¹ And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her; and she served them.

³² That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together about the door. ³⁴ And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

A Preaching Tour in Galilee

³⁵ And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went out to a lonely place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him followed him, ³⁷ and they found him and said to him, 'Every one is searching for you.' ³⁸ And he said to them, 'Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also; for that is why I came out.' ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

⁴⁰ And a leper came to him beseeching him, and kneeling said to him, 'If you will, you can make me clean.' ⁴¹ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I will; be clean.' ⁴² And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ And he sternly charged him, and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, 'See that you say nothing to any one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to the people.' ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.