

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

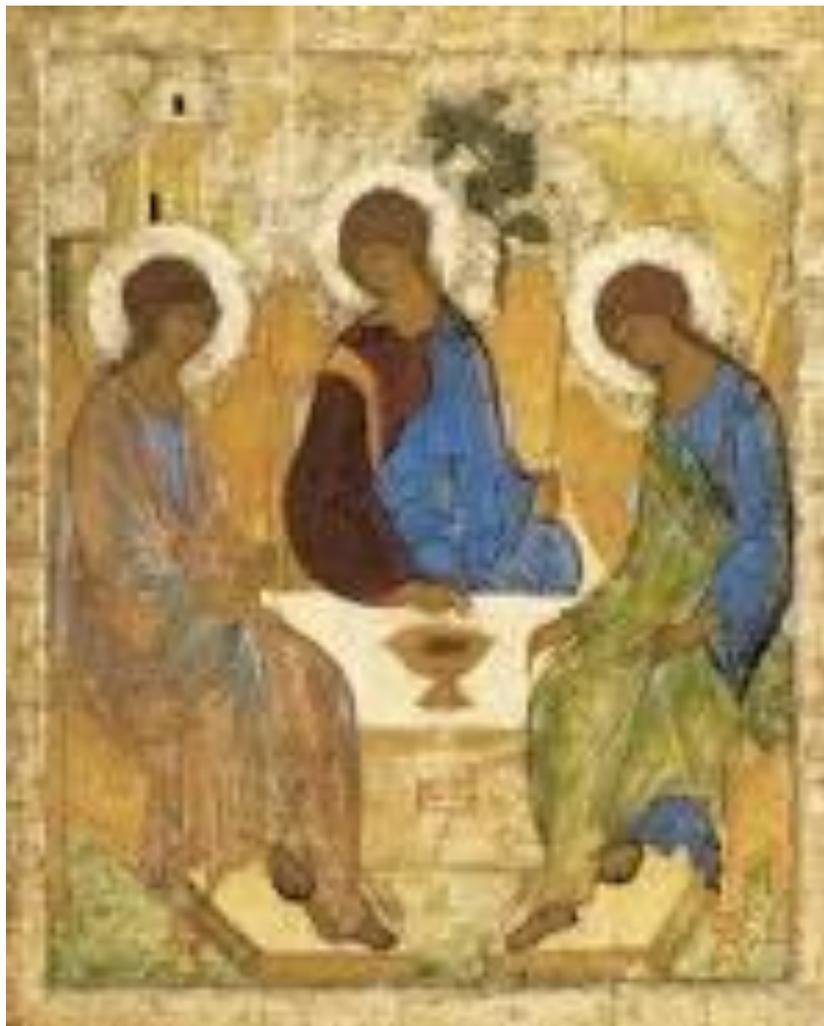
www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

Week 16C *Per Annum*

17th-24th July 2022



Andrei Rublev Icon of the Trinity

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S JULY PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for the elderly, who represent the roots and memory of a people; may their experience and wisdom help young people to look towards the future with hope and responsibility.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTION

Sunday 17th Sisters of St Marie Madeleine Postel in the Diocese
Monday 18th Parish of Corpus Christi, Bournemouth
Tuesday 19th Catholic Women's League
Wednesday 20th Welcomers in our churches
Thursday 21st Benefactors of the Diocese
Friday 22nd Community of St Edmund, Southampton
Saturday 23rd Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Baby Martha, Sid Wallace, Diana France, John Castle, Petal Connell, Daniel Cuevas, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Karen Greig, Mary McNichol, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 17th - 23rd July: James O'Connor, Minnie Rafferty, Mildred Charlton, Fr Patrick Bushell, Elizabeth Jane Lineham, James Heron, Violet Castle, Charles Turberville Eyston

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

DEBORAH MORTON

Debbie has been the secretary at St Amand's for many years and has been a reliable support for governors, heads, teachers, teaching assistants, parents, and pupils. She has been awarded the Bishop's Medal for long and distinguished service which Fr Andrew will present at the End-of-Term Mass in St Mary's.

COFFEE IN ST MARY'S PARISH ROOMS

Coffee &c after the 9.30am Mass will start today, Sunday 17th July. Thanks in advance to the coffee team who are anxious to recruit one or two more. Speak to Francia Kilgarraff if you are able to help.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Babies, waddlers, toddlers and Key Stage One children are welcome at Children's Church, 9.15am on Sundays in St Mary's Parish Rooms.

OXFORD CATENIANS

Oxford Catenians and their families are holding their annual President's Mass at 11 am on Saturday 23rd July 2022. The current President George Steele is a member of our congregation. He is extending a welcome to anyone who wishes to attend this Mass and to understand more about the Catenian Association"

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 10th July 2022, 180 people viewed, 57 machines looking only at St Mary's. 33 of these were in the UK, 24 from eight other countries. 104 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

FR ANDREW ON THE DIOCESAN FUNDING CAMPAIGN

The Funding Director has a travelling schedule so making the appointments efficiently is very important. If you have received an invitation to a meeting, please make a point of responding. There are meetings on 19th July, 26th July, and 27th July. Thank you for your help.

ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

On Sunday 14th August we shall celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady, the Feast of Dedication and Title of St Mary's. Mass at 11am, followed by a Parish Barbecue in the Garden at The Wheatsheaf, East Hendred.

East Hendred Catholic Parish



Sunday 16 (C)

17th July 2022

Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings

Entrance Antiphon

Ecce Deus adiuvat me

See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O God, for it is good.

Ps 53:6,8

Collect

Show favour, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commandments. 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

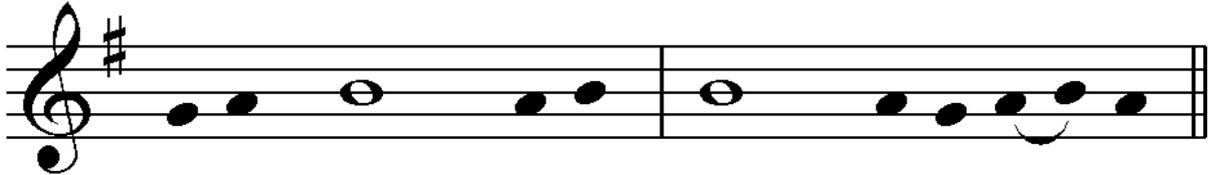
Genesis 18:1-10(RSV)

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men stood in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, and said, 'My lord, if I have found favour in your sight, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, while I fetch a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on -- since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes.' And Abraham

ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds, and milk, and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, ‘Where is Sarah your wife?’ And he said, ‘She is in the tent.’ The Lord said, ‘I will surely return to you in the spring, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.’

Psalm 15:2-5 *R/cf 2*

Tone I.1



R/ () *The just will live |*
in the pre-sence of the Lord.

Lord, who may abide in your tent,
and dwell on your ho-ly moun-tain?
Whoever walks without fault; ~
*who does what *is* just,*
*and speaks the *truth* from his heart. *R/**

*Whoever does not slander with *his* tongue,*
*who does no wrong *to* a neigh-bour,*
who casts no slur on a friend, ~
*who looks with scorn on the *wic-ke*d,*
*but honours those *who* fear the Lord. *R/**

*Who keeps an oath, whatever *the* cost,*
*who lends no *mo-ney* at in-terest,*
*and accepts no bribes against the *in-no-cent*.*
*Such a one shall *ne-ver* be sha-ken. *R/**

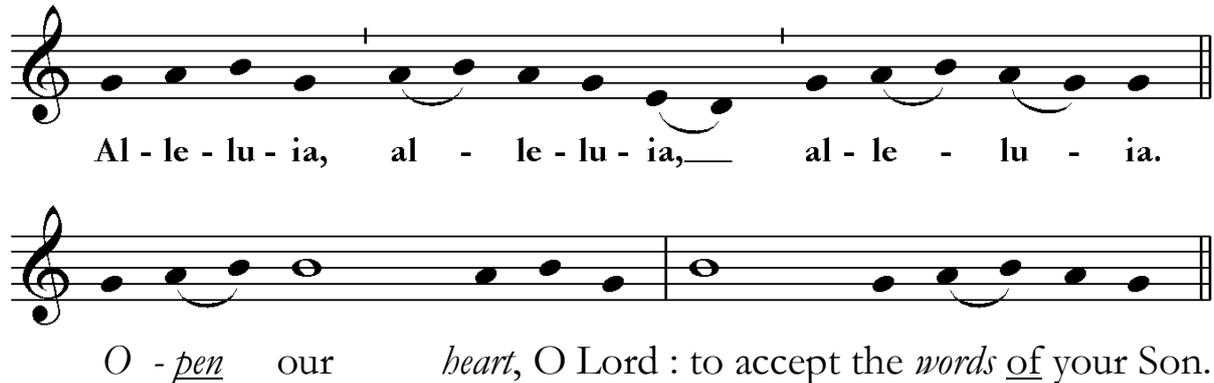
Second Reading

Colossians 1:24-28(RSV)

Brethren: I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made

manifest to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ.

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

O - pen our heart, O Lord : to accept the words of your Son.

Gospel

Luke 10:38-42 (RSV)

At that time: Jesus entered a village; and a woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.'

Prayer over the Offerings

O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice brought to completion varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful servants and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honour of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface VIII

De Ecclesia adunata ex unitate Trinitatis

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, when your children were scattered afar by sin, through the

Blood of your Son and the power of the Spirit, you gathered them to yourself, that a people, formed as one by the unity of the Trinity, made the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, might, to the praise of your manifold wisdom, be manifest as the Church. And so, in company with the choirs of Angels, we praise you, and with joy we proclaim: Holy, holy, holy *etc.*

Communion Antiphon

Memoriam fecit

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him. *Ps 110:4-5*

Prayer after Communion

Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life. 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 16 [II] *Per Annum*)

Monday	Micah 6:1-4, 6-8	Matthew 12:38-42
Tuesday	Micah 7:14-15, 18-20	Matthew 12:46-50
Wednesday	Jeremiah 1:1, 4-10	Matthew 13:1-9
Thursday	Jeremiah 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13	Matthew 13:10-17
Friday	Jeremiah 3:14-17	Matthew 13:18-23
Saturday	Jeremiah 7:1-11	Matthew 13:24-30

SUNDAY 17 C

Genesis 18:20-32

Colossians 2:12-14

Luke 11:1-13

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July is the Month of the Precious Blood

Litany of the Precious Blood

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,
God the Son, Redeemer of the world
God, the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, One God,

have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.

Blood of Christ, only-begotten Son of the eternal Father, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, Incarnate Word or God, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, of the New and Eternal Testament, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, falling upon the earth in Agony, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, shed profusely in the Scourging, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, flowing forth in the Crowning with Thorns, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, price of our salvation, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, without which there is no forgiveness, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, Eucharistic drink and refreshment of souls, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, stream of mercy, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, victor over demons, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, courage of Martyrs, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, strength of Confessors, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, bringing forth Virgins, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, help of those in peril, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, relief of the burdened, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, solace in sorrow, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, hope of the penitent, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, consolation of the dying, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, peace and tenderness of hearts, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, pledge of eternal life, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, freeing souls from purgatory, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, most worthy of all glory and honour, **save us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us, O Lord.

V/ You have redeemed us, O Lord, by your Blood.
R/ And made us a kingdom for our God.

Almighty and eternal God, you have appointed your only-begotten Son Redeemer of the world and willed to be satisfied by his blood. Grant, we beseech you, that we may worthily worship this the price of our salvation and through its power be so safeguarded from the evils of the present life that we may rejoice in its fruits for ever in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

This Litany in honour of Jesus in His Most Precious Blood was drawn up by the Sacred Congregation of Rites and promulgated by Pope John XXIII on February 24, 1960. The devotion to Jesus in His most Precious Blood was first popularized by Saint Gaspar del Bufalo (1786-1837) who founded the Missioners of the Most Precious Blood. A partial Indulgence is granted to the faithful who recite this litany.

July is the Month of the Precious Blood

Constant Prayer of St Catherine of Siena

Precious Blood, ocean of divine mercy: flow upon us!
Precious Blood, most pure offering: procure us every grace!
Precious Blood, hope and refuge of sinners: atone for us!
Precious Blood, delight of holy souls: draw us! Amen

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

18th – 23rd July 2022

Collect for Week 16

SHOW favour, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commandments. 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 16 *[Year Two]*

18th July 2022

Reading

Micah 6:1-4, 6-8 (RSV)

God Challenges Israel: What God requires

Hear what the LORD says: Arise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ² Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel.

³ 'O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! ⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.....

⁶ 'With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' ⁸ He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?'

Reflection

THE EIGHTH century prophets form a quartet. Isaiah was at work in the Southern Kingdom, Judah, Hosea and Amos were at work in the Northern Kingdom, Israel. The fourth prophet we now meet, active in both South and North, is Micah of Moresheth. The place name is important because there were many called Micah. He appears from the book to have been active for many years but in reality he was probably operating in the last quarter of the eighth century, leading up to the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in 701BC. Micah's message is not new to us. The prophet is operating in the same milieu, and with the same concerns, as the other prophets in the quartet. Despite the political volatility, there were reforms and economic steps forward which allowed wealthy landowners to prosper at the expense of small peasant farmers. Having proclaimed a glorious future for Israel in chapters 4 and 5, we today meet Micah outlining the problems this ungrateful people has. We may recognize from the *Improperia* of the Good Friday Liturgy the reproaches Micah makes: 'O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me!' He reminds them that God led them out from slavery in Egypt into the Promised Land and asks them how they respond. Micah points them beyond formal religious duties, the cultic sacrifices of year-old calves, thousands of rams, and rivers of oil. In perhaps the most famous verse in the book, and amongst the verses of the Bible that ring out most clearly, we find these words, which apply as much to us as to the Israelites nearly three millennia ago: 'what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?'

Tuesday in Week 16 [Year 2]

19th July

Reading

Micah 7:14-15, 18-20 (RSV)

God's Compassion and Steadfast Love

Shepherd your people with your staff,
the flock of your inheritance,
who dwell alone in a forest
in the midst of a garden land;

let them feed in Bashan and Gilead
as in the days of old.

15 As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt
I will show them marvellous things.

16 The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might;
they shall lay their hands on their mouths;
their ears shall be deaf;

17 they shall lick the dust like a serpent,
like the crawling things of the earth;
they shall come trembling out of their strongholds,
they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God,
and they shall fear because of you.

18 Who is a god like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance?
He does not retain his anger for ever
because he delights in steadfast love.

19 He will again have compassion upon us,
he will tread our iniquities under foot.
You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.

20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and steadfast love to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our fathers
from the days of old.

Reflection

THE POETRY and tenderness of Micah of Moresheth shine through. Yesterday it was 'What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?' Today it is 'You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.' Micah prays to God that he will 'shepherd his people'. There are over one hundred mentions of shepherds in the Bible, mostly in the Old Testament. The twenty or so mentions in the New Testament are mostly a reference to Jesus the Good Shepherd but, interestingly, there are nearly thirty Old Testament mentions of shepherding which identify God as the Shepherd of Israel. 'Shepherd', of course, comes from an agricultural economy, and, as a metaphor, gives us 'pastoral care'. Micah in today's passage is asking

very particular things from the heavenly Pastor. He wants God to let his people graze in the finest pastures. We are linked back to an earlier reference, in Micah 2, where Micah reassures the people that God will gather the remnant and lead them out of exile – this is after the fall of the Northern Kingdom. Micah’s coupling of ‘faithfulness to Jacob’ with ‘steadfast love to Abraham’ tells us that he is thinking about the whole people of the Hebrews, Israel, presently conquered by Assyria, and Judah under grave military threat from the same enemy. We know – though Micah doesn’t – that Judah will survive the Assyrian threat but will eventually fall to the Babylonians. Oracles of judgment are usually about present dangers. Oracles of salvation point beyond the immediate future to the long term.

Wednesday in Week 16 [*Year 2*]

20th July

Reading

Jeremiah 1:1, 4-10 (RSV)

Jeremiah’s Call and Commission

The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilki’ah, of the priests who were in An’athoth in the land of Benjamin, ...

⁴ Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵ ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.’

⁶ Then I said, ‘Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.’ ⁷ But the LORD said to me,

‘Do not say, “I am only a youth”;
for to all to whom I send you you shall go,
and whatever I command you you shall speak.

⁸ Be not afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
says the LORD.’

⁹ Then the LORD put forth his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me,

‘Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰ See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.’

Reflection

THE BOOK of the prophet Jeremiah is second only in length to the Book of Isaiah and its importance is made clear when we notice that, of all the prophets, we know most about Jeremiah. His name means ‘the LORD will restore’ – which we need to bear in mind when we hear the story of destruction and exile that the prophet foretells and tells. In popular use ‘a Jeremiah’ is a pessimist and ‘a jeremiad’ is a long, mournful complaint. He was born in the reign of King Josiah of Judah (640-609 BC) and was a priest and prophet in the dark days before the Babylonian invasion, the destruction of Jerusalem in 597BC, and the exile of the Jewish people. A tradition tells us that it was Jeremiah who removed the Ark of the Covenant from the Jewish Temple and hid it in a cave on Mount Nebo (2 Mac 2:4-8) before the Temple was destroyed. In today’s reading we hear how God called and formed Jeremiah, from the earliest days in his mother’s womb, for his urgent work, warning the people of the disaster to come and giving them help and encouragement as they faced it.

Thursday in Week 16 [Year 2]

21st July

Reading

Jeremiah 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13 (RSV)

God Pleads with Israel to Repent

2 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² ‘Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the LORD,

I remember the devotion of your youth,
your love as a bride,

how you followed me in the wilderness,
 in a land not sown.
³ Israel was holy to the LORD,
 the first fruits of his harvest.
 All who ate of it became guilty;
 evil came upon them,
 says the LORD.'....
⁷ 'And I brought you into a plentiful land
 to enjoy its fruits and its good things.
 But when you came in you defiled my land,
 and made my heritage an abomination.
⁸ The priests did not say, "Where is the LORD?"
 Those who handle the law did not know me;
 the rulers transgressed against me;
 the prophets prophesied by Ba'al,
 and went after things that do not profit....
¹² Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
 be shocked, be utterly desolate,'
 says the LORD,
¹³ 'for my people have committed two evils:
 they have forsaken me,
 the fountain of living waters,
 and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
 broken cisterns,
 that can hold no water.'

Reflection

AFTER Jeremiah's prophetic call in chapter 1, the subject of yesterday's reading, we move in the second chapter to a summary of his prophetic message. Essentially the LORD is seen as the Bridegroom and Israel, centred on Jerusalem, as the Unfaithful Bride. By now 'Israel' is not a reference to the Northern Kingdom which fell to the Assyrians but the whole people. Israel encompasses both the North and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Both North and South are seen as being unfaithful to the LORD throughout history. The link between pagan idolatry and cultic prostitution (cf Is 57:7-8) means that the reference to an adulterous Bride may not be entirely metaphorical. The breaking of the covenant is not just the breaking of rules but the betrayal of the relationship which God has with his chosen people.

St Mary Magdalen

Friday 22nd July

St Mary Magdalen, originally from Magdala in Galilee, was one of the Lord's devoted female disciples. She remained constant and, according to St Mark's Gospel and St John's Gospel, was the first witness of the Resurrection. She was despatched by the Risen Lord as a messenger to the apostles and has been accordingly known, particularly by the Dominicans, as *apostola apostolorum* (apostle of the apostles). In the Middle Ages she was often conflated with the woman from whom Christ drove out seven demons and with the woman taken in adultery. She became designated as 'penitent' and, despite her role in the Gospel, given only the rank of a memorial. She has recently been recognised more appropriately and now, like most of the Twelve, is given the rank of a feast.

Collect

O GOD, whose Only-Begotten Son entrusted Mary Magdalen before all others with announcing the great joy of the Resurrection: grant, we pray, that through her intercession and example we may proclaim the living Christ and come to see him reigning in your glory, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Reading

John 20:1-18 (RSV)

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalen

Now on the first day of the week Mary Mag'dalen came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ² So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³ Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. ⁴ They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; ⁵ and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, ⁷ and the napkin, which

had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes.

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' ¹⁴ Saying this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rab-bo'ni!' (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' ¹⁸ Mary Mag'dalen went and said to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Reflection

IN JOHN Chapter 20 there are four Resurrection stories, two at the tomb and two in the Upper Room. Three are on the same day, one a week later. The first two concern St Mary Magdalen, the second two the Twelve. In today's Gospel we have the first two stories. We begin with Mary Magdalen coming to the tomb on that first Easter Sunday morning – in John she seems to be alone, whereas in the synoptic Gospels, explicitly in Matthew and Mark, and implicitly in Luke, she is accompanied by Mary the mother of James and Salome. With or without 'the other Mary', Mary Magdalen has come to the tomb, and Mark and Luke tell us that the purpose of the visit is to anoint the body. Mary Magdalen is perplexed that the stone of the tomb has been rolled back and the body removed and she runs to find Peter and John the Beloved Disciple. We move to the second of the two stories and we now find Mary, herself looking inside the tomb and weeping. The angels in the tomb ask her why she is weeping

and, when she explains her loss, she turns to find Jesus – not that she recognises him.

As with Doubting Thomas in the fourth of the Resurrection stories, there is a personal encounter with the Risen Lord. There is an interesting contrast between these two encounters. Famously Jesus says to Mary 'Do not hold me' – *Noli me tangere* – but to Thomas 'Put your finger here and see my hands; and put out your hand and place it in my side' (20:27). Personal encounters with the Lord minister to our deepest needs. Mary Magdalen's deepest need – as with many a bereaved person – is to learn about not being able to touch. Thomas's deepest need, by contrast, is to investigate things for himself and so convince himself.

This emphasis on personal encounter, we discover, is a particular emphasis in the Resurrection appearances in St John's Gospel. The Risen Lord has a personal encounter with Mary Magdalen on Easter morning, with the Eleven, minus Thomas, in the evening of that day. Similarly there is a personal encounter with Thomas the following Sunday evening. Later there is one with the disciples at the Lakeside, as they returned to their trade as fishermen, and with Simon Peter after their breakfast of bread and fish. What is outstanding about the encounter with Mary Magdalen is that it was the first encounter, and the tenderest. Mary Magdalen recognises her Lord, as we too should, when he calls her by name. When he calls our name, we too should respond 'Rab-bo'ni!' (which means Teacher).

St Bridget, Religious, Patron of Europe

Saturday 23rd July

St Bridget (Birgitta Birgersdotter) was born in Sweden in 1303 and died in Rome in 1373. She was a happily married woman, and her eight children with her husband Ulf included St Catherine of Sweden. Her husband died when Bridget was about 40 and she went on to found a religious community, the Bridgettines. She received mystical revelations, corresponded with monarchs, promoted peace, and the return of the Papacy from Avignon to Rome. She also went on pilgrimage, not only to Rome but also to Jerusalem. In 1999 she was declared by Pope St John

Paul II one of six patrons of Europe, it being noteworthy that she was from Northern Europe and also a wife and mother.

Reading

John 15:1-8 (RSV)

I AM the True Vine

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I AM the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

⁵ I AM the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.'

Reflection

IN THESE daily 'Food for the Journey' reflections, we have encountered a fair amount of agricultural imagery – the sowing of seed, sorting out wheat and weeds, the shepherding of sheep. The vineyard is another favourite metaphor, especially in the Old Testament, and here, in one of the sayings from his Farewell Discourse, Jesus presents himself as the Vine and his Father as the Vinedresser. It is a powerful image and leads us, often enough, to think about the trunk of the Vine, Jesus, and the branches, ourselves. The branches either bear fruit or - this bit makes us uneasy – get pruned away. Another way of thinking about these sayings – not just the Vine but the rest of the Farewell Discourse too – is that they focus on our relationship with Christ and, enabled by the Holy Spirit, the Counsellor, with one another. The key word is 'abide'. We 'abide' in Christ as he 'abides' in the Father. And we 'abide' with one another in the fellowship.