

**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 18B *Per Annum*

1st – 8th August 2021



I AM the Bread of Life

WEEK 18 YEAR 1

1st – 8th August 2021

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthendred
book for Sunday 9.30am Mass: hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
St Mary's is usually open each day from 9am until late afternoon.

SUNDAY 18B *Per Annum* [Green]
1st August **9.30am** **Parish Mass** *Pro populo*
 12.30pm **Holy Baptism** *Nancy Anne Duhig*
 6pm **Holy Mass** *Private Intention*

Monday 2nd August *Feria* [Green]
 9.15am Holy Mass *FM Andrew Shanahan 1999*

Tuesday 3rd August *Feria* [Green]
 9.15am Holy Mass *FM Helen Goodfriend 1999*

Wednesday 4th August St John Vianney, Priest [White]
 9.15am Holy Mass
 Fr David O'Sullivan and St John Vianney, Wantage

Thursday 5th August *Dedication of the Basilica of St Mary Major* [White]
 9.15am Holy Mass *Family Intentions*
 (Julie Lazarus)

Friday 6th August **TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD** [White]
 9.15am Holy Mass
 2pm Nuptial Mass
 Paul Johnstone and Katherine Dalton

Saturday 7th August *Our Lady St Mary on Saturday* [White]
 No Mass

SUNDAY 19B *Per Annum* [Green]
8th August **9.30am** **Parish Mass** *Pro populo*
 12 noon **Holy Baptism** *George Kirby*
 6pm **Holy Mass** *Private Intention*

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Reflection *The Holy Eucharist II: Justin Martyr*

St Justin Martyr (born Judaea, c100, died in Rome c165), a Greek Apologist-Philosopher, writes about the Eucharist:

.... after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptized [illuminated] person, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation.

Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss. There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands.

And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen. This word Amen answers in the Hebrew language to *ge'noito* [so be it]. (*First Apology*, Chapter 65)

....And this food is called among us *Eucharistia* [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined.

For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from

which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. – (*First Apology*, 66)

And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion.

Nearly two thousand years later, this account of the Eucharist in the Early Church remains very recognisable. There is a 'president' (bishop or priest), and a place where the 'brethren' are assembled (the congregation). Admission is by Baptism. There are 'Prayers' (of the Faithful), a 'Kiss (sign) of Peace', a mixing of wine and water (representing the divinity and humanity of Christ), and a Thanksgiving (the Eucharistic Prayer), to which the congregation 'express their assent by saying Amen'. The bread and wine are referred to as the Eucharist and become 'blood and flesh by transmutation'. These elements are given only to the baptised and to believers. The deacons distribute Holy Communion and take the Sacrament out to those who are unable to be present.

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

MASS TIMES

Please Note: There will be no Mass in St Mary's in the period **Monday to Friday, 9th-13th August**. Apologies for the disruption.

On **Sunday 15th August**, St Mary's Feast of Title and Anniversary of Consecration in 1865, morning Mass will be sung at 11am instead of 9.30am. After Mass, weather permitting, there will be a celebratory glass in the churchyard. There will be a 6pm Mass as usual.

BRASSO BANNED?

The Altar Candles and *Menorot* (a.k.a. Benediction Candelabra) have been restored, repolished, and lacquered. Brasso apparently removes the lacquer so its use is discontinued on the items in question.

BOOKING FOR MASS

Please book for 9.30am Sunday Mass before 12 noon on Fridays hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk On Saturday contact Fr Andrew on aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

There is now no need to book for the 6pm Mass. Nonetheless we are required to carefully note who comes, in case of infection alerts, and so we ask you to sign in on Sunday night and sit as allocated by the steward.

CHURCH SERVICES LIVESTREAM

On Sunday 25th, there were 233 hits from 64 unique viewers, with 103 remaining on-line long enough to take part in Mass. 53 machines were in the UK, 11 in the rest of the world. (I assume 'unique viewers' are those whose who looked at us rather than surfing through different churches....)

CHARITY: DIDCOT

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

CHARITY: WANTAGE

Jackymattam@btinternet.com helps with the poor locally. Contact her about what practical help she needs. She is looking for a recline and rise chair for a very elderly and sick man.

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

We have about 15 regular contributors a month for whom we are not able to claim Gift Aid, at least at present. 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

YOUNG CATHOLICS

The **Fanning the Flame Camp for Young Catholics, age 12 - 18**, will take place Monday 16th - Fri 20th August. If you are interested, details at www.fanningtheflame.co.uk Cost £130. It is usually held at the Dominican Priory in the New Forest but this year it will be at the Kintbury Retreat Centre, near Newbury. If you would like to support teenagers whose families struggle to pay for this camp, then please consider making a donation to sr.veronicabrennan@gmail.com

WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

Are you in the habit of looking up and using our website? This Bulletin appears each week on the website www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk Some look at our East Hendred Catholic Parish page on Facebook.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY DURING THE SUMMER

There are no special Children's Prayers at 9am at St Mary's on Sunday during the summer, but we offer access to a website of the SDC Children's Liturgy Resource. All you need to do is click on this link: <http://www.sdc.me.uk/sundayliturgy/>

Also we publish below the full CAFOD programme for the summer.



[Our Work](#)

[Donate](#)

[Get involved](#)



Children's Liturgy resources: Summer 2021

The summer holidays have arrived, and after a challenging few months, I hope you're all getting the opportunity to have a break and enjoy some long sunny days.

Perhaps you're looking for things to do with your family or church? If so, we are excited to be offering some brand-new [prayer activities](#) for families to explore over the summer break.

There are six different themes and we hope the ideas will help. These resources are taking the place of some of our regular children's liturgy illustrations during August, and we would love to get your feedback on how you find using them.

Included below are the children's liturgy resources you need to take you into September. Obviously, many groups will be gathering in different ways over the summer so please do use them in the way that best suits your circumstances.

We'll also be continuing to stream our [virtual children's liturgy](#) live every Sunday morning over the holiday period.

[Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (1 August)

Jesus tells us that he is the “bread of life.” He makes us strong and able to help others.

[Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (8 August)

Jesus talks more about how he is the bread of life, but the crowd finds it hard to believe because they know his parents, Joseph and Mary. Sometimes we miss seeing God in unexpected people and places.

[Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#) (15 August)

We celebrate how Mary was taken to heaven at the end of her life and reflect on the special song of praise that she sang to God.

[Download the accompanying activity sheet.](#)

[Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (22 August)

Lots of people found it too hard to believe that Jesus was really the Son of God, and so they gave up, went away and didn’t listen to him anymore. What do we do when things are difficult?

[Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (29 August)

Jesus tells us that it is not enough to say that we believe in God. We must show that we love God through our actions and by being the best people that we can be.

[Download accompanying illustration](#)

[Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (5 September)

Jesus helps a man who is deaf to hear and to speak more clearly. We think about how we can listen and speak out.

[Download accompanying illustration](#)

[Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (12 September)

We hear that it is not always easy to follow Jesus. Sometimes it requires courage.

[Download accompanying illustration](#)

Wishing you all a fun and faith-filled Summer,



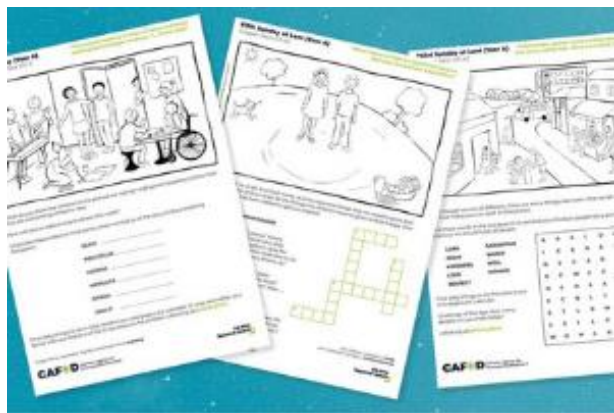
God of love,
open our ears to hear your word
and open our hearts that we may always speak up for what is right.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Family prayer resources

Share these creative prayer ideas and fun activities with your children throughout the school holidays.

[Find out more](#)



Children's liturgy group

Join our Facebook group to keep in touch and share family-friendly ideas and activities with our community.

[Join us](#)



Family activities

Explore our families page for more activities and prayers.

[Explore](#)



**

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S AUGUST PRAYER INTENTION

Let us pray for the Church, that She may receive from the Holy Spirit the grace and strength to reform herself in the light of the Gospel.

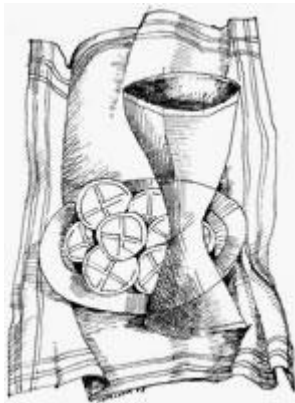
THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Joyce MacKenzie, Baby Martha, Sid Wallace, Dame Catherine, Diana France, John Castle, Petal Connell, Daniel Cuevas, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Karen Greig, Kitty Teasdale, Mary McNichol, Andrew Gunn, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol, Christine Robinson, Rose

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 1st - 7th August: Fr Anthony French-Mullen, Albert Eric Mol, Helen Midwinter, Doris Baker, Henry Castle, Jess Tuckax, Monica Wheeler.

East Hendred Catholic Parish



The Food of the Eucharist

**Eighteenth Sunday in
Ordinary Time (B)
1st August 2021
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Deus in adiutorium

O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me! You are my rescuer, my help; O Lord, do not delay.

Cf Ps 70:2, 6

Collect

Draw near to your servants, O Lord, and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness, that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide, you may restore what you have created and keep safe what you have restored. 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

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15 (RSV)

² The whole congregation of the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, ³ and said to them, 'Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.' ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or not....' ¹¹ And the LORD said to Moses, ¹² 'I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'" ¹³ In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning dew lay round about the camp. ¹⁴ And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as hoarfrost on the ground. ¹⁵ When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, 'It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.

Psalm 78:3-4, 23-25, 54 R/24

R/ The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

The things we have heard and understood,
the things our fathers have told us,
these we will not hide from their children
but will tell them to the next generation:
the glories of the Lord and his might. **R/**

He commanded the clouds above
and opened the gates of heav'n.
He rained down manna to eat,
and gave them bread from heav'n. **R/**

Man ate the bread of angels.
He sent them abundance of food;
So he brought them to his holy land,
to the mountain his right hand had won. **R/**

Second Reading

Ephesians 4:17, 20-24 (RSV)

¹⁷ Now this I affirm and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds;...²⁰ You did not so learn Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus. ²² Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, **alleluia!**

Man does not live by bread alone:

but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. **Alleluia.**

Gospel

John 6:24-35 (RSV)

²⁴ When the people saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Caper'na-um, seeking Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' ²⁶ Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷ Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal.' ²⁸ Then they said to him, 'What must we do, to be doing the works of God?' ²⁹ Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.' ³⁰ So they said to him, 'Then what sign do you do, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform?' ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³² Jesus then said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives

you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world.' ³⁴ They said to him, 'Lord, give us this bread always.' ³⁵ Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.

Prayer over the Offerings

Graciously sanctify these gifts, O Lord, we pray, and, accepting the oblation of this spiritual sacrifice, make of us an eternal offering to you. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(II De mysterio salutis)

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 out of compassion for the waywardness that is ours, he humbled himself and was born of the Virgin; by the passion of the Cross he freed us from unending death, and by rising from the dead he gave us life eternal. 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.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

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

Panem de cælo dedidisti

You have given us, O Lord, bread from heaven, endowed with all delights and sweetness in every taste.

Wis 16:20

Prayer after Communion

Accompany with constant protection, O Lord, those you renew with these heavenly gifts and, in your never failing care for them, make them worthy of eternal redemption. Through Christ our Lord.

Salve Regina

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 18 [i])

Monday	Numbers 11:4-15	Matthew 14:13-21
Tuesday	Numbers 12:1-13	Matthew 14:22-36
Wednesday	Numbers 13:1-2, 25 -14:1, 26-35	Matthew 15:21-28
Thursday	Numbers 20:1-13	Matthew 16:13-23
Transfiguration	Daniel 7:9-10	Mark 9:2-10
Saturday	Deuteronomy 6:4-13	Matthew 17:14-20
Sunday 19B	1 Kings 19:4-8 Ephesians 4:30 – 5:2	John 6:35, 41-51

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For the weekday readings and reflections, see also

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

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

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

2nd – 6th August 2021

Monday in Week 18 *Per Annum [Year 1]*

2nd August

Reading

Numbers 11:4-15 (RSV)

Moses finds leadership difficult

⁴ Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving; and the people of Israel also wept again, and said, 'O that we had meat to eat! ⁵ We remember the fish we ate in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; ⁶ but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.'

⁷ Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium. ⁸ The people went about and gathered it, and ground it in mills or beat it in mortars, and boiled it in pots, and made cakes of it; and the taste of it was like the taste of cakes baked with oil. ⁹ When the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell with it.

¹⁰ Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, every man at the door of his tent; and the anger of the LORD blazed hotly, and Moses was displeased. ¹¹ Moses said to the LORD, 'Why have you dealt ill with your servant? And why have I not found favour in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people upon me? ¹² Did I conceive all this people? Did I bring them forth, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries the sucking child,' to the land which you swore to give their fathers? ¹³ Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me and say, "Give us meat, that we may eat." ¹⁴ I am not able to carry all this people alone, the burden is too heavy for me. ¹⁵ If you will deal thus with me, kill me at once, if I find favour in your sight, that I may not see my wretchedness.'

Reflection

WITH a fleeting visit to the Book of Leviticus at the end of last week, we find ourselves for four days this week in the Book of Numbers. We pick up the thread in Chapter 11, where the first generation of Israelites has died out and the second generation have been born and raised in the desert. The first ten chapters of Numbers tell us that here is a prosperous and populous nation: a census gives us 603,550 (Num 1:46), in chapters 2-4 we see a typical ancient war camp, with the Tabernacle in the middle and three tribes on each of the four sides. Post-Sinai, Israel is in a new relationship with God: more distant, with more need for mediation, and cultic worship of a propitiatory kind. The Levites are a barrier, a defence against God's holiness. Chapters 5 and 6 are about dealing with moral offences and uncleanness. The non-priestly eleven tribes nonetheless allow for Nazarites, individuals who consecrated to holiness. In chapters 7-10 are devoted to breaking camp as the second generation of Israelites prepares to set out for the Promised Land, taking with them Tabernacle. They leave Sinai, as they left Egypt, with the celebration of the Passover (Num 9) and the departure is as determined by God with the lifting of the cloud from the Tabernacle and the blowing of the silver trumpets. The people march on. Where today's reading begins, we hear early disillusion with this second journey. The desert is a place where food is scarce and the Israelites grumble and fantasise about the food that they used to eat in Egypt a generation earlier: fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, garlic . Moses finds their restiveness difficult to deal with and worrying. Taking the census figures as a guide, and given that the tribes amounted to, perhaps, four times the population of Oxford, three times the population of Swindon, or twice the population of Reading in our time, there was plenty for Moses to worry about.

Tuesday in Week 18 *[Year 1]*

3rd August

Reading

Numbers 12:1-13 (RSV)

The LORD is angry with Aaron and Miriam

12 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman; ² and they said, 'Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not

spoken through us also?’ And the LORD heard it. ³ Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all men that were on the face of the earth. ⁴ And suddenly the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, ‘Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting.’ And the three of them came out. ⁵ And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the door of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forward. ⁶ And he said, ‘Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with my servant Moses; he is entrusted with all my house. ⁸ With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?’

⁹ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed; ¹⁰ and when the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron turned towards Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. ¹¹ And Aaron said to Moses, ‘Oh, my lord, do not punish us because we have done foolishly and have sinned. ¹² Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother’s womb.’ ¹³ And Moses cried to the LORD, ‘Heal her, O God, I beseech you.’

Reflection

THE ‘MURMURING’ which characterised the journey a generation earlier, as they went to Sinai, breaks out again amongst the second generation of the Children of Israel as they journey on from Sinai to the Promised Land. In fact there are other similarities too. Manna is the food for both journeys and makes the people long for meat. In each journey there is a ‘water from the rock’ incident and at both stages Moses finds the people impossible to manage alone. In this second journey, God provides a flock of quails and a middle-management of seventy or seventy-two spirit-inspired prophets. All is not entirely well: omitted from our series of readings is the outbreak of food poisoning amongst the grumblers, who are afflicted by the ill-effects of the quail. Lack of refrigeration one suspects. Today we hear of the LORD’s anger with Aaron and Miriam, to which is attributed Miriam’s contracting of leprosy. Aaron and Miriam, Moses’ older sister, are clearly jealous of Moses and his Cushite wife. They are jealous of Moses’ special status as the sole spokesman for the people and presumably not too pleased by the ethnicity of his new wife. It has been suggested that ‘Cushite’ might here mean ‘Midianite’. It has even been suggested that ‘Cushite’ might indicate an Ethiopian, in which case

Miriam's skin going very white with leprosy might be an ironic comment on Moses choosing to marry a black woman.

Wednesday in Week 18 [Year 1]

St John Vianney

4th August

Reading *Numbers 13:1-2, 25 – 14:1, 26-29, 34-35 (RSV)*

The People refuse the Land of Milk and Honey

13 The LORD said to Moses, ²'Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I give to the people of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers shall you send a man, every one a leader among them.' ...

²⁵ At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. ²⁶ And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ And they told him, 'We came to the land to which you sent us; it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. ²⁸ Yet the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. ²⁹ The Amal'ekites dwell in the land of the Negeb; the Hittites, the Jeb'usites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan.'

³⁰ But Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once, and occupy it; for we are well able to overcome it.'³¹ Then the men who had gone up with him said, 'We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.'³² So they brought to the people of Israel an evil report of the land which they had spied out, saying, 'The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. ³³ And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim); and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.'

14 Then all the congregation raised a loud cry; and the people wept that night..... ²⁶ And the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron, ²⁷'How long shall

this wicked congregation murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel, which they murmur against me. ²⁸ Say to them, "As I live, says the LORD, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you: ²⁹ your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness; and of all your number, numbered from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against me...³⁴ According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years, and you shall know my displeasure." ³⁵ I, the LORD, have spoken; surely this will I do to all this wicked congregation that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die.'

Reflection

TODAY we move swiftly through a couple of chapters as an advance party is sent ahead from Kadesh to go North into Canaan and spy out the land. This is the crisis point in the Book of Numbers because only two of the representative tribesmen – Joshua and Caleb – are in favour of going ahead with the conquest. Ten of the tribesmen report back, after the forty day sortie, that, though the land is very fertile – 'flowing with milk and honey' is the phrase – and they have lush fruit to show for it, the military prospects are too formidable. The defences are strong and there are giants – real or imagined – in the land. They felt like the size of grasshoppers compared with the Nephilim. Their advice is for the Israelites to head back towards Egypt. The LORD is furious: they are rejecting the destiny of the Chosen People and their reward is to remain in the desert – in the wilderness – for forty years, one year for each day spent on the military sortie. In short, the present generation too will die before Israel reaches the Promised Land. All of this happens not without much pleading from Moses, interceding as he did on Sinai after the Golden Calf episode and reminding God of the mercy he then showed to his rebellious people. Though the LORD pardons the people once more, he will not allow those presently alive to enter into the Promised Land. God reminds Moses that the people have rebelled against him ten times. There are six occasions in Exodus – at the outset (Ex 5), at the Red Sea (Ex 14), at the waters of Marah (Ex 15), before the provision of manna (Ex 16), at the waters of Masah (Ex 17), the Golden Calf (Ex 32). In the Book of Numbers there are two rebellions in Numbers 11, Miriam and Aaron rebelling in Numbers 12, and the mutiny in today's reading, when the spies returned from Canaan. We have reached a major juncture in the story of Israel. The Israelites had murmured against Moses and

Aaron saying, 'Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!' (Num 14:2, a verse omitted from today's set passage) and God takes them at their word. Those who will inherit the land will be the next generation. As if none of this had happened – and, in fact, coming after the extract we have heard – the people take it upon themselves after all to mount an attack on the hill country ahead. The Amalekites and the Canaanites rebuff them. Yet again, disobedience to the commands of the LORD proves to be disastrous and, logically enough, we are faced with a new body of laws (Num 15), making the requirements for sacrificial offerings more exacting.

Thursday in Week 18 *[Year 1]*

5th August

Reading

Numbers 20:1-13 (RSV)

The Waters of Meribah

20 And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

² Now there was no water for the congregation; and they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. ³ And the people contended with Moses, and said, 'Would that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! ⁴ Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? ⁵ And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; and there is no water to drink.' ⁶ Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tent of meeting, and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, ⁷ and the LORD said to Moses, ⁸ 'Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water; so you shall bring water out of the rock for them; so you shall give drink to the congregation and their cattle.' ⁹ And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, 'Hear now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?' ¹¹ And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock

with his rod twice; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their cattle. ¹² And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you did not believe in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.' ¹³ These are the waters of Mer'ibah, where the people of Israel contended with the LORD, and he showed himself holy among them.

Reflection

MORE 'murmurings', this time again about the shortage of water. Moses strikes the rock – much as he did earlier (Ex 17) but this time twice. There are two sites called Meribah : one was near Rephidim in the Desert of Sin and was also called Massah). The other site was located in Kadesh Barnea and was referred to as Meribah Kadesh. See Num 27:14, Deut 32:51, Ezek 47:19. We learn that Moses and Aaron 'did not believe in' the LORD – presumably they doubted that they would be able to find water – and they are told that they, like the present generation of the Children of Israel, will not be able to go into the Promised Land. Presumably the record, as edited, is coming up with a reason – and not immediately obviously a strong reason – why it was that both Moses and Aaron died before the Israelites entered the Promised Land.

Transfiguration of the Lord

Friday 6th August

Reading

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14 (RSV)

Judgment before the Ancient One

⁹ As I looked,
thrones were placed
and one that was Ancient of Days took his seat;
his raiment was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
its wheels were burning fire.

¹⁰ A stream of fire issued
and came forth from before him;
a thousand thousands served him,

and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;
the court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened....

¹³ I saw in the night visions,

and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.

¹⁴ And to him was given dominion
and glory and kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.

Reflection

LOOKING at the schedule of Jewish Feasts in Leviticus 23 last week we may have noticed the last Harvest festival of the Jewish year, the thanksgiving for the autumn ingathering of grapes and olives. This feast, known as **Tabernacles** (*Sukkoth*), or 'Booths', is described in Leviticus 23:39-43, and commemorates the nomadic period in Israelite history, when, having no permanent abode, the people lived in tents. Spending a week outdoors like this in autumn, as strict Jews still do, inevitably has its challenges, especially in a climate like ours. Of relevance to us, as we look at the early books of the Bible, is that it was during the autumn Feast of Tabernacles that the Transfiguration of the Lord – which we observe today - took place. The story is in all three synoptic Gospels (Mt 17:1-9; Mk 9:2-10; Lk 9:28b-36). It gives us a glimpse of the splendour of the Resurrection: all three Evangelists comment on the whiteness of the Lord's garments and St Matthew tells us that Jesus' 'face shone like the sun'. This event, witnessed by Peter, James, and John, is parallel to the story in Exodus 24, where Moses ascends Mount Sinai with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu. There the focus is on the glory of God, a glory which did not overwhelm them:

they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ And

he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank. (Ex 24:10-11)

Moses and his companions were accompanied up the mountain by the seventy (or seventy-two) prophets. Jesus, by contrast, took Peter, James, and John and his other followers remained at the foot of the mountain. We hear from the story of Moses on the mountain that 'they beheld God, and ate and drank' – that is, they lived to tell the tale and were not destroyed by the awesome splendour of God. Devotionally, we are reminded that, in the Eucharist, we too behold God as we eat and drink. Though we are unharmed by the veiled encounter in Holy Communion – provided we are prepared – we profitably reflect on the passage from the Book of Daniel, set for today, in which we see the splendour of the courts of heaven where -

**one that was Ancient of Days took his seat;
his raiment was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
its wheels were burning fire.**

We observe and -

**behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.**

XX