

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

7th – 14th November 2021



BAMENDA SUNDAY
7th November 2021

What can YOU do to help?
Visit: www.bamendaandportsmouth.com

WEEK 32 YEAR 1

7th – 14th November 2021

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

SUNDAY 32B [Green]
7th November **9.30am** **Parish Mass** *Pro populo*
and Blessing of the Graves
6pm **Holy Mass** *Private Intention*

WEEK 32 (Year 1) *Of Week 32* [green]
Monday 8th November 9.15am Holy Mass
Kristina's Intentions (Julie Lazarus)

Tuesday 9th November **Dedication of the Lateran Basilica** [white]
9.15am Holy Mass
FM Cecilia Anne Dearlove 1942
[white]

Wednesday 10th November St Leo the Great, Pope, Doctor of the Church
9.15am Holy Mass *FM Charles Eyston 1863*

Thursday 11th November St Martin of Tours, Religious, Bishop [white]
9.15am Holy Mass *FM Agnes Gardner 1945*

Friday 12th November St Josaphat, Bishop, Martyr [red]
9.15am Holy Mass
Dante Chacín (Ramona Frearson)

Saturday 13th November *Our Lady St Mary on Saturday* [white]
No Mass

SUNDAY 33B **Remembrance Sunday** [Black]
14th November **9.30am** **Requiem Mass**
War Memorial Mass
10.30am Churchyard Service (WP) and
Procession to the War Memorial
11am Remembrance at the Memorial
[Green]
6pm **Holy Mass** *Pro populo*

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Reflection

Catechism of the Catholic Church paras. 1030-1032

III. The Final Purification, or Purgatory

1030 All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.

1031 The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned.⁶⁰⁴ The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire:⁶⁰⁵

As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence we understand that certain offences can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come.⁶⁰⁶

1032 This teaching is also based on the practice of prayer for the dead, already mentioned in Sacred Scripture: "Therefore Judas Maccabeus] made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin."⁶⁰⁷ From the beginning the Church has honoured the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God.⁶⁰⁸ The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead:

Let us help and commemorate them. If Job's sons were purified by their father's sacrifice, why would we doubt that our offerings for the dead bring them some consolation? Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Council of Florence (1439): DS 1304; Council of Trent (1563): DS 1820; (1547): 1580; see also Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus* (1336): DS 1000.

⁶⁰⁵ Cf. 1 Cor 3:15; 1 Pet 1:7.

⁶⁰⁶ St. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* 4, 39: PL 77, 396; cf. Mt 12:31.

⁶⁰⁷ 2 Macc 12:46.

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. Council of Lyons II (1274): DS 856.

⁶⁰⁹ St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in 1 Cor.* 41, 5: PG 61, 361; cf. Job 1:5.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S NOVEMBER PRAYER INTENTION

We pray that people who suffer from depression or burn-out will find support and a light that opens them up to life.

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

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, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 7th -13th November: Elizabeth Mary Hunt, Charles Castle, Teresa Barry, Ann Maud Eyston, Elizabeth Rivers.

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Gospel: Mark 12:38-44

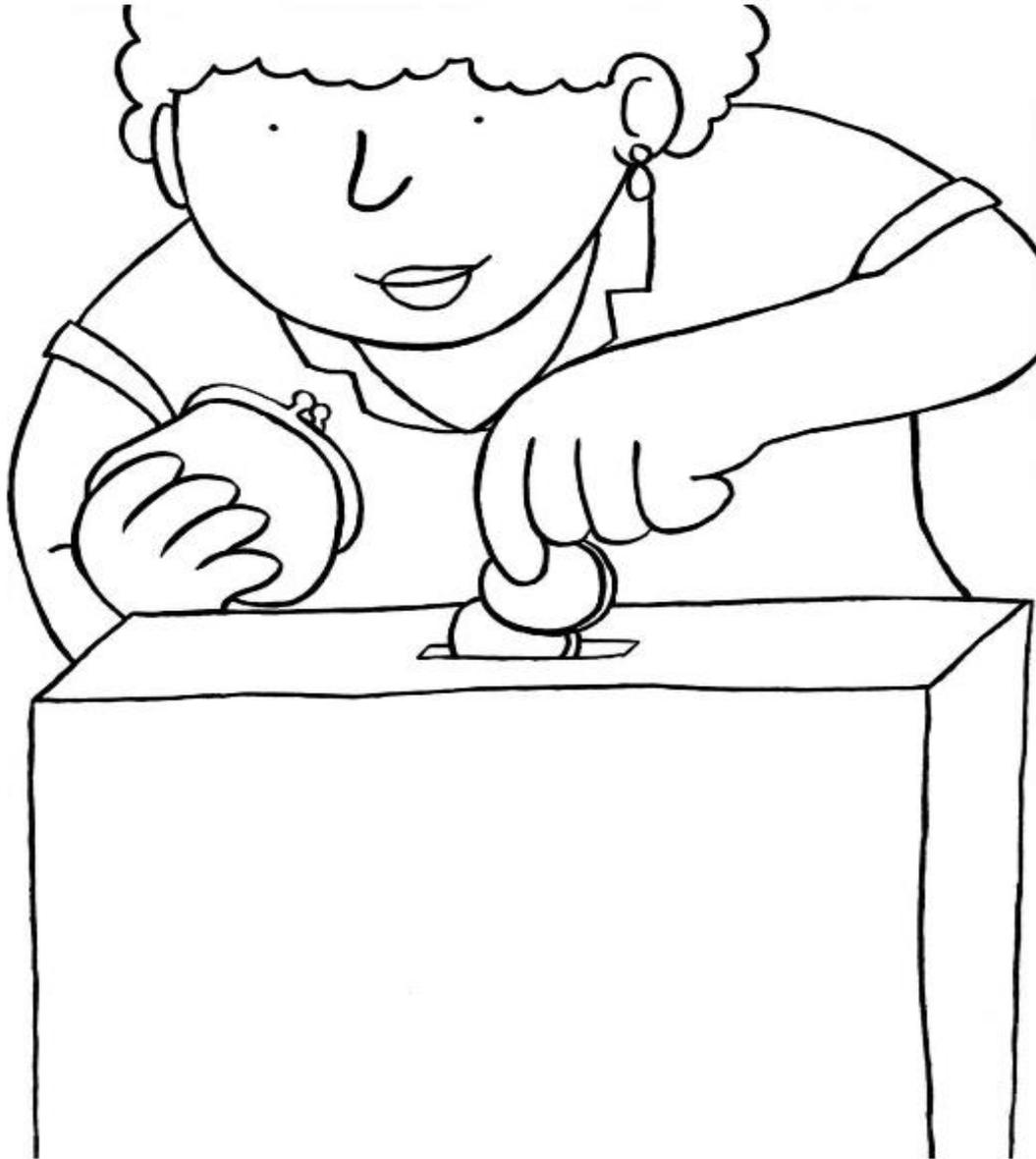


Illustration: Emma Metcalfe, Charity no 1160884 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398

Find more family activities at cafod.org.uk/families

CAFOD Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

**no one
beyond reach**

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

On Sunday (7th November) George and Toby Morrissey, sons of Susie and David Morrissey, receive their First Holy Communion. We congratulate them and pray for them and thank Mary Harrison for preparing them.

BISHOP PHILIP

The Bishop of Portsmouth wrote to thank us all for 'the recent visitation'. He declared himself 'impressed with the high standard of the liturgy and also the quality of the parish newsletter'. He was complimentary about me (apparently you had given him good reports!) and asked me to raise the issue of parish boundaries at the Pastoral Area clergy meeting. Finally he said 'pass on my gratitude to the servers, musicians, the members of the Parish Council and the people of the parish for all the good they do.' I'll pin the letter up in the porch.

MEDITABOR UT COLUMBA (I shall moan like a dove [Isaiah 38])

These words seemed particularly apt in the morning office for All Souls' Day: a dozen doves have taken up residence on St Mary's roof, presumably mistaking the bell tower for a dovecote. One has taken a particular fancy to perching in the church porch and administering its favours overnight. Please tread carefully and keep the main door closed!

ST PATRICK'S

We had a lovely All Saints' Mass at St Patrick's and it now seems sensible to proceed with restoring the regular Sunday 11.15am Mass there. This is planned with effect from 28th November, the First Sunday in Advent.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Though Children's Liturgy is suspended, we have now restored the Children's Corner, with resources, and there are resources at the main door too. Please make use of all this whilst children are with you in church. For those at home, there is SDC Children's Liturgy Resource. Click link and select the date: <http://www.sdc.me.uk/sundayliturgy/>
See also:

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time (7th November)

A poor widow does something very special. We reflect on how we can share from what we have, no matter how little that is.

[Download the accompanying illustration](#) (see also page 5 above)

FAREWELL GUY FAWKES: WELCOME ALL SAINTS' 'FESTIVAL OF LIGHT'!

On 4th November, St Amand's celebrated a Festival of Light with children dressed as saints, and with bangers, bonfires, and burgers. Well done all of you! It's all on the St Amand's Facebook page.

SYCAMORE

We have just started a **SYCAMORE** course for adults interested in finding out more about the Faith or preparing for baptism and/or confirmation. If you are interested, please contact aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk a.s.a.p. **SYCAMORE** usually happens on Tuesday at 8pm but is paused for half-term this resumes this Tuesday (9th November).

BOOKING FOR MASS

There is no booking at St Mary's for the present. We still are required to note who comes, in case of infection alerts, and so we ask you to sign in and sit as allocated by the stewards so as to fit everyone in safely.

CHURCH SERVICES LIVESTREAM

On Sunday 31st October there was no livestream at 9.30am because of a power cut. Nevertheless, there being an evening Mass, there were 280 hits from 76 unique viewers, with 135 on-line long enough to take part in Mass. 56 machines were in the UK and 20 in the rest of the world.

SYNOD 2021-2023

During October, the Holy Father launched a three-year consultation process with the whole Church. There are three stages. Between now and the end of April 2022, parishes are asked to produce a report to send to the diocese. These will be conflated nationally and, from September 2022 to March 2023, there will be continent-wide reflections throughout the world. Finally in October 2023, the Synod of Bishops will meet in Rome to produce a report for the Pope. Synods of Bishops are not new, nor are deliberations of Bishops' Conferences. What is new is that every parish is asking people and groups to reflect on 'What changes need to be made – in myself, in our parish, in the Diocese, to make the Church's mission today more vibrant and effective?' We shall co-ordinate our parish response via individuals and accredited groups through the Parish Pastoral Council and the St Patrick's Pastoral Committee. Comments and suggestions to Fr Andrew or to John Carpenter.

E-MAILS, WEBSITE, AND FACEBOOK

Last minute changes are sometimes unavoidable and these are communicated by e-mail to the Bulletin list (as with the cancellation of masses on 4th and 5th November). Anyone may join the Bulletin list - contact hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk - and particular care should be taken of the handful who have no access to e-mail. One or two unavoidably turned up on 4th and 5th and we ask you to pass on our apologies to any you know and thus be a good neighbour to them.

See our website www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

See also our East Hendred Catholic Parish page on Facebook.

GIVING

CHARITY: BAMENDA

There is a Second Collection on Sunday 7th November for the Archdiocese of Bamenda (see archbishop's Letter below). Please use the yellow envelopes for cash gifts and please use Gift Aid where possible. Mark the envelope 'Bamenda'.

CHARITY: AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED

Aid to the Church in Need is appealing for funds to help the suffering Church in Syria. The situation is desperate, and they are asking for donations. Contact 0345 646 0110 or www.acnuk.org/sy21donate

CHARITY: DIDCOT

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

GIVING TO THE PARISH

BY REGULAR STANDING ORDER OR GIFT

BANK DETAILS: PRCDTR East Hendred, St Mary

Sort Code: 309304 Account Number: 00877183

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

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

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

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

Parish Priest:

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Parish Office:

hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

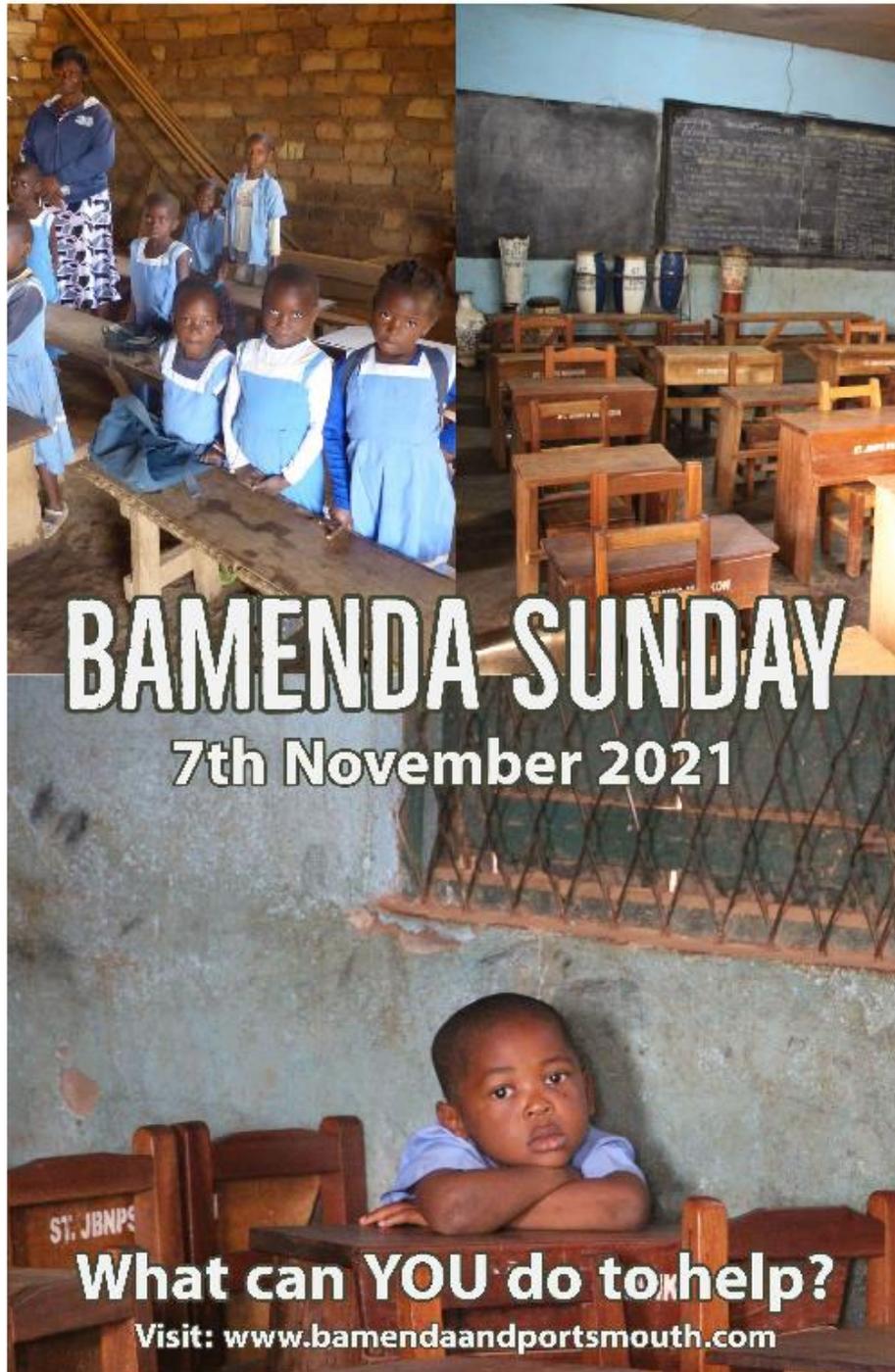
GREETINGS FROM BAMENDA

Sunday 7th November is Bamenda Sunday. The Bishop of Portsmouth commends the Archdiocese of Bamenda and its Archbishop to our prayers. There will be a second collection.

The Archbishop of Bamenda writes:

O**N BEHALF** of all the members of Christ's faithful here in the Archdiocese of Bamenda, I send fraternal greetings to our Sister Church in the Diocese of Portsmouth. As the third metropolitan Archbishop of Bamenda, by the grace of God and the choice of the Apostolic See, I thank God for this link and the fruits it has borne for both churches in the over forty years. As we look forward to the celebration of the golden jubilee of this link, it is my vision that our link goes more to the evangelisation of our peoples through the exchange of human and spiritual resources.

When I heard how each year the diocese of Portsmouth dedicates a Sunday, not only to pray, but also to raise funds for the development and growth of the faith in the Archdiocese of Bamenda, I was so touched and moved by the gesture. Apart from this, during the socio-political crisis that we have been going through since 2016, I have got reports how the whole church in Portsmouth have been journeying with us spiritually, supporting us financially, and clergy and people petitioning to Her Majesty's Government through its parliamentary representatives to look for a lasting solution to our problem. Moved by these charitable acts, I have decided also to institute a Portsmouth Sunday to be celebrated here in the whole Archdiocese of Bamenda on the very day Bamenda Sunday is celebrated in Portsmouth. Our people here in Bamenda also need to pray and think of ways of supporting you too in your own challenges. We may not be able to reach your standards; but in our own way, we will be able to show a sign of solidarity with you in your own challenges. Covid-19 has revealed the poverty of humanity, no matter where we find ourselves on planet earth. The people of Bamenda need to learn to journey with you, not only in sending priests as you have them now in Portsmouth, but in other areas of evangelisation which our young Church can also help to inspire in Portsmouth. Hence, Portsmouth Sunday will be an opportunity



for us to pray and reflect on other ways in which Bamenda can also be of more assistance to you our sister diocese.

Sharing our pastoral life is of paramount importance, and I am looking at a situation where our Catholic Women, Catholic Men, Youths and other

groups will share their experiences of faith with their corresponding groups in the Diocese of Portsmouth, as brothers and sisters without making any material demands.

As you well know, the Socio-Political crisis in the Anglophone area is now in its fifth year and we are very far from reaching a solution.

One of the greatest challenges facing us now is the revival of our schools and reinstating them to their glory before the socio-political situation we found ourselves in since 2016. Although parish life has continued unhindered in the whole of the archdiocese of Bamenda, with even more parishes and Eucharistic Centres created, our schools have suffered a lot because the main tool used by those craving for federation or the independence of the Southern Cameroons was the boycott of schools. While we did our utmost best to keep schools going, we succeeded more in Bamenda, the regional capital since there was some security. Because most of the fighting between government forces and the 'Amba Boys' concentrated more in rural areas, there was mass exodus into Bamenda and other secured towns and villages in French Speaking Cameroon. Not only did schools stop totally, most of the buildings and infrastructures have dilapidated. In Bamenda town, make-shift structures were created in some of our primary schools and even secondary schools to accommodate students fleeing from St. Bede's College, Ashing-Kom, John Paul II Comprehensive College, Wum, St. Joseph's Comprehensive College, Mbengwi and St. Benedict XVI's Comprehensive College, Widikum. As for primary education, they have been almost inexistent out of the Bamenda town area since 2016.

The good news now is that schools are gradually resuming in almost all parts of the archdiocese and many families are returning to their homes and areas of resident prior to the beginning of the crisis. There is, therefore, the need to rehabilitate the schools' buildings and infrastructures that have been abandoned in the last 5 years and employment of more teachers, considering that with the closures of schools and lack of money to pay teachers, some have looked for greener pastures elsewhere. Unlike in the UK, teachers are paid solely from the meagre school fees children have to pay for their tuition. Also, the new schools opened in Bamenda town, as they expand at terrific speed need

more structures equipment in order to accommodate the high enrolment and some of the students would not want to go back to their respective towns and villages. An example can be seen in the St Joseph's Comprehensive Secondary School opened last year in a section of the primary school here at the Cathedral premises run by Fr. Bonaventure, who served at St. John Bosco's Parish in Woodley, Reading. Last year, the first year of its existence, there were just over 300 students. This year, its enrolment has gone over 600. There is dire need, therefore, of constructing good classrooms.

Considering that as more IDPs return with increased security, I think that donations for the Bamenda Sunday would help a lot in reviving Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of the young. Justice has not been done to these children in the past 5 years. As a church, believing and knowing that education is a fundamental human right, we need to put our hands on deck and see how fast and far we can make right the errors of these past years.

I have forwarded to your Bishop and to the Chairperson of the Portsmouth/Bamenda Committee, copies of the five year Strategic Plan of the Archdiocese of Bamenda, for both pastoral, spiritual and material growth. It is my sincere hope that you will journey with us through this plan, especially by your prayers.

Once more, thanks a lot and I commend all of you into the hands of St. Joseph, the Patron of the Archdiocese of Bamenda and to the Immaculate Conception, the Co-Patroness of the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

+Andrew NKEA,

Archbishop of Bamenda.

East Hendred Catholic Parish



The Widow's Mite: Two Copper Coins

SUNDAY 32B
7th November
2021
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings

Entrance Antiphon

Let my prayer come into your presence. Incline your ear to my cry for help, O Lord.

Intret oratio mea

Ps 88:3

Collect

Almighty and merciful God, graciously keep us from all adversity, so that, unhindered in mind and body alike, we may pursue in freedom of heart the things that are yours. 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

1 Kings 17:10-16 (RSV)

Elijah the prophet arose and went to Zar'ephath; and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, 'Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.' ¹¹And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, 'Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' ¹²And she said, 'As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a cruse; and now, I am gathering a couple of sticks, that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' ¹³And Eli'jah said to her, 'Fear not; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For thus says the LORD the God of Israel, 'The jar of meal shall not be spent, and the cruse of oil shall not fail, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.'" ¹⁵And she went and did as Eli'jah said; and she, and he, and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶The jar of meal was not spent, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD which he spoke by Eli'jah.

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R/ My soul, give praise to the Lord. | ()

*It is the Lord who preserves fidelity for e-ver,
who does justice to those who are op-pressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hun-gry,
the Lord who sets pri-soners free. R/*

*It is the Lord who opens the eyes of the blind (),
the Lord who raises up those who are bowed down.
It is the Lord who loves the just (),
the Lord who pro-TECTS the stran-ger R/*

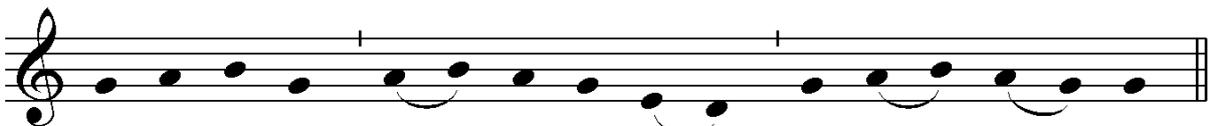
*The Lord upholds the orphan and the wi-dow,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for e-ver,
the God of Zion from age to age. R/*

Second Reading

Hebrews 9:24-28 (RSV)

Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the Holy Place yearly with blood not his own; ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment, ²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Alleluia



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

*E-ven if you have to die, says the Lord:
Keep faithful and I will give you the crown of life.*

R/ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Mark 12:38-44 (RSV)

In his teaching Jesus said, 'Beware of the scribes, who like to go about in long robes, and to have salutations in the market places ³⁹ and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at feasts, ⁴⁰ who devour widows' houses and for a pretence make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.' ⁴¹ And he sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² And a poor widow came, and put in two copper coins, which make a penny.

HYMNS FOR 7 NOVEMBER

OFFERTORY

Urbs Sion aurea

JERUSALEM the golden,
with milk and honey blest,
beneath thy contemplation
sink heart and voice oppressed:
I know not, O, I know not,
what social joys are there;
what radiancy of glory,
what light beyond compare!

They stand, those halls of Zion,
conjubilant with song,
and bright with many an angel,
and all the martyr throng:
the Prince is ever in them,
the daylight is serene;
the pastures of the blessed
are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
and there, from care released,
the song of them that triumph,
the shout of them that feast;
and they who with their Leader
have conquered in the fight,
for ever and for ever
are clad in robes of white.

O, sweet and blessed country,
shall I ever see thy face?
O, sweet and blessed country,
shall I ever win thy grace?
Exult, O dust and ashes!
The Lord shall be thy part;
his only, his for ever,
Thou shalt be, and thou art!

POST COMMUNION

FOR ALL the saints, who from their
labours rest,
who thee by faith before the world
confessed,
thy Name, O Jesu, be forever
blessed. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress
and their Might;
thou, Lord, their Captain in the well
-fought fight;
thou, in the darkness drear, their
one true Light. Alleluia &c.

O may thy soldiers, faithful, true and
bold,
fight as the saints who nobly fought
of old,
and win with them the victor's
crown of gold. Alleluia &c.

O blest communion, fellowship
divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory
shine;
yet all are one in thee, for all are
thine. Alleluia &c.

And when the strife is fierce, the
warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph
song,
and hearts are brave, again, and
arms are strong Alleluia &c.

The golden evening brightens in the
west;
soon, soon to faithful warriors
comes their rest;
sweet is the calm of paradise the
blest. Alleluia &c.

But lo! there breaks a yet more
glorious day;
the saints triumphant rise in bright
array;
the King of glory passes on His way.
Alleluia &c.

From earth's wide bounds, from
ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl streams in the
countless host,
singing to Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost: Alleluia &c

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

8th – 12th November 2021

Monday of Week 32 [Year 1]

8th November

Reading

Wisdom 1:1-7 (RSV)

Exhortation to Uprightness

1 Love righteousness, you rulers of the earth,
think of the Lord with uprightness,
and seek him with sincerity of heart;
2 because he is found by those who do not put him to the test,
and manifests himself to those who do not distrust him.
3 For perverse thoughts separate men from God,
and when his power is tested, it convicts the foolish;
4 because wisdom will not enter a deceitful soul,
nor dwell in a body enslaved to sin.
5 For a holy and disciplined spirit will flee from deceit,
and will rise and depart from foolish thoughts,
and will be ashamed at the approach of unrighteousness.
6 For wisdom is a kindly spirit
and will not free a blasphemer from the guilt of his words;
because God is witness of his inmost feelings,
and a true observer of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue.
7 Because the Spirit of the Lord has filled the world,
and that which holds all things together knows what is said

Reflection

BACK to the Old Testament this week and the Wisdom of Solomon. Almost all scholars agree with St Augustine of Hippo that this book was written first in Greek and was amongst the last book to be written. Though written centuries after the reign of King Solomon - sometime between the third century BC and the first century AD - we do know that,

by the time of Solomon, 'Wisdom' was a major theme. So 'in honour of Solomon' would be more accurate than 'of Solomon'. 'Wisdom' is defined as 'the fear of the Lord', a phrase used 163 times in the English Bible, all but seven in the Old Testament. So we find in the Book of Job (28:28): 'the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.' Tenth century BC Israel is seen, in retrospect, as a leader of nations, a people not concerned just to keep the Torah – the laws deriving from Moses – but to instruct the nations in right living. Hence the move from ceremonial and ritual law-giving to the natural law, the way the world works, properly understood in conformity with the mind of the Creator. So, we find in the concluding verse of today's reading 'the Spirit of the Lord has filled the world, and that which holds all things together knows what is said' (1:7). Rightly understood, 'Wisdom', described as 'a kindly spirit' (1:6), is the Holy Spirit, and we shall encounter that understanding more fully later in the week.

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

Tuesday 9th November

Reading

Wisdom 2:23 - 3:9 (RSV)

The Destiny of the Righteous

God created man for incorruption,
and made him in the image of his own eternity,
²⁴ but through the devil's envy death entered the world,
and those who belong to his party experience it.

3 But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
and no torment will ever touch them.

² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,
and their departure was thought to be an affliction,

³ and their going from us to be their destruction;
but they are at peace.

⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished,
their hope is full of immortality.

⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good,
because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;

⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them,
and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.

⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth,
and will run like sparks through the stubble.

⁸ They will govern nations and rule over peoples,
and the Lord will reign over them for ever.

⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth,
and the faithful will abide with him in love,
because grace and mercy are upon his elect,
and he watches over his holy ones.

Reflection

WE SAW yesterday that the Book of Wisdom was written not in Hebrew more or less in the tenth century BC, the time of Solomon, but eight hundred years later, in Greek. We know this not least because Wisdom quotes other parts of the Old Testament – Is 3:10, Is 44:20, Job 9:12, 19 – using the Septuagint (Greek) version. The Septuagint, we know, comes from about 200 BC. Wisdom 3 examines whether God will care for the righteous man. Though the righteous seem dead, and their death often seems to be untimely and unjust, they are at peace, and are accepted as a worthy sacrifice by God. They will rule in glory in the world to come and those who trust in God should find comfort in his care for his faithful ones. This passage occurs up to a dozen times a year and not only celebrates the eternal truths which the very building of the church stands for – well worth remembering on the feast of the Dedication of St John Lateran, the Pope’s own cathedral church – but also offers the consolation of a perspective on our own mortality and the mortality of those whom we love, a November theme.

Wednesday in Week 32 [Year 1]

10th November

St Leo the Great, Pope, Doctor of the Church

Reading

Wisdom 6:1-11 (RSV)

Rulers should seek Wisdom

6 Listen therefore, O kings, and understand;
learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.

² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes,

and boast of many nations.

³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord,
and your sovereignty from the Most High,
who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

⁴ Because as servants of his kingdom you did not rule rightly,
nor keep the law,
nor walk according to the purpose of God,

⁵ he will come upon you terribly and swiftly,
because severe judgment falls on those in high places.

⁶ For the lowliest man may be pardoned in mercy,
but mighty men will be mightily tested.

⁷ For the Lord of all will not stand in awe of any one,
nor show deference to greatness;
because he himself made both small and great,
and he takes thought for all alike.

⁸ But a strict inquiry is in store for the mighty.

⁹ To you then, O monarchs, my words are directed,
that you may learn wisdom and not transgress.

¹⁰ For they will be made holy who observe holy things in holiness,
and those who have been taught them will find a defence.

¹¹ Therefore set your desire on my words;
long for them, and you will be instructed.

Reflection

WHILST the Wisdom of Solomon was almost certainly composed centuries after his death, the advice given in the book is put into the mouth of the Wise King. Here he speaks as a leader amongst kings, sternly warning rulers everywhere that they are accountable to God and must walk in accordance with his purpose and law. The words of Jesus spring to mind (Lk 12:48):

**Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required;
and of him to whom men commit much they will demand the more.**

In the Book of Wisdom, righteousness, immortality, and kingly rule are all ultimately related. It is God's world and those who wield power do so as surrogates of God. From that comes the weighty responsibility of acting justly. 'They will be made holy who observe holy things in holiness' (6:10) so, once more, the guiding principle of wisdom is the fear of the Lord and the avoidance of evil.

Thursday in Week 32 [Year 1]

11th November

St Martin of Tours, Religious, Bishop

Reading

Wisdom 7:22 - 8:1 (RSV)

The Nature of Wisdom

Wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.
For in her there is a spirit that is intelligent, holy,
unique, manifold, subtle,
mobile, clear, unpolluted,
distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen,
irresistible, ²³ beneficent, humane,
steadfast, sure, free from anxiety,
all-powerful, overseeing all,
and penetrating through all spirits
that are intelligent and pure and most subtle.

²⁴ For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things.

²⁵ For she is a breath of the power of God,
and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty;
therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.

²⁶ For she is a reflection of eternal light,
a spotless mirror of the working of God,
and an image of his goodness.

²⁷ Though she is but one, she can do all things,
and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
in every generation she passes into holy souls
and makes them friends of God, and prophets;

²⁸ for God loves nothing so much as the man who lives with wisdom.

²⁹ For she is more beautiful than the sun,
and excels every constellation of the stars.

Compared with the light she is found to be superior,

³⁰ for it is succeeded by the night,
but against wisdom evil does not prevail.

8 She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other,
and she orders all things well.

Reflection

SOLOMON is portrayed describing the perfection of Wisdom. What we are encountering, then, is the Holy Spirit, described (vv 22-23) as:

**intelligent, holy,
unique, manifold, subtle,
mobile, clear, unpolluted,
distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen,
irresistible, beneficent, humane,
steadfast, sure, free from anxiety,
all-powerful, overseeing all,
and penetrating through all spirits
that are intelligent and pure and most subtle.**

She, that is, the Holy Spirit is (v25):

**a breath of the power of God,
and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty.**

In a later chapter (9:17) – not amongst this week's selection of extracts from Wisdom - we discover that Wisdom (*Sophia*) and Holy Spirit (*hagios pneuma*) are parallel descriptions of the same reality.

There is considerable theological heavy-lifting going on in the Book of Wisdom, viewed from later on in the tradition. For example,

**For she is a reflection of eternal light,
a spotless mirror of the working of God,
and an image of his goodness**

is presented to us later in the tradition in the phrase of the Nicene Creed, where Jesus Christ is described as *lumen de lumine*, 'Light from Light'. And the natural theology – a sort of philosophy of nature – has been described as 'the principle of analogical reasoning fully and explicitly articulated' (ed. Bergsma, J and Pitre, B, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible: The Old Testament*, San Francisco 2018, p.682), anticipating the 'Fifth Way' argument of St Thomas Aquinas for the existence of God, the order and beauty of the created world pointing to the work of the Creator.

Friday in Week 32 [Year 1]

12th November

Reading

Wisdom 13:1-9 (RSV)

The Foolishness of Nature Worship

13 For all men who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature; and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know him who exists, nor did they recognize the craftsman while paying heed to his works; **2** but they supposed that either fire or wind or swift air, or the circle of the stars, or turbulent water, or the luminaries of heaven were the gods that rule the world. **3** If through delight in the beauty of these things men assumed them to be gods, let them know how much better than these is their Lord, for the author of beauty created them. **4** And if men were amazed at their power and working, let them perceive from them how much more powerful is he who formed them. **5** For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator. **6** Yet these men are little to be blamed, for perhaps they go astray while seeking God and desiring to find him. **7** For as they live among his works they keep searching, and they trust in what they see, because the things that are seen are beautiful. **8** Yet again, not even they are to be excused; **9** for if they had the power to know so much that they could investigate the world, how did they fail to find sooner the Lord of these things?

Reflection

HUMANKIND has been led astray into idolatry by the beauty of created things. This mistaking of the creature for the Creator is at the root of not only intellectual misunderstanding but also moral failure. It is the prevailing sin of Israel, as outlined in the historical books, but it is also a more general human failure. The Wisdom of Solomon is addressed not just to Israel but to the peoples of the world.

Saturday in Week 32 [Year 1]

13th November

Reading

Wisdom 18:14-16; 19:6-9 (RSV)

God guides and protects his People

¹⁴ For while gentle silence enveloped all things,
and night in its swift course was now half gone,
¹⁵ your all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne,
into the midst of the land that was doomed,
a stern warrior ¹⁶ carrying the sharp sword of your authentic command,
and stood and filled all things with death,
and touched heaven while standing on the earth.....

⁹⁶ For the whole creation in its nature was fashioned anew,
complying with your commands,
that your children^[a] might be kept unharmed.

⁷ The cloud was seen overshadowing the camp,
and dry land emerging where water had stood before,
an unhindered way out of the Red Sea,
and a grassy plain out of the raging waves,

⁸ where those protected by your hand passed through as one nation,
after gazing on marvellous wonders.

⁹ For they ranged like horses,
and leaped like lambs,
praising you, O Lord, who delivered them.

Reflection

THE LAST extract from the Book of Wisdom this week is well worth including, even though there is usually no Saturday Reflection. The passage sees God's Word, leaping down from the royal throne, as a warrior to judge the doomed land of Egypt. The Exodus story is viewed from this perspective as a re-run of Creation with God's people gaining their freedom. They enter the waves of the Red Sea and, as at the Creation, discover that God has created dry land from the mighty waters. It is the story of Redemption, told figuratively.

