

**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

Pentecost

23rd-30th May 2021



Reflection *Pentecost*

PENTECOST presents us with a whole set of images, compelling ideas. The Holy Spirit, the Wind and Breath of God, filling the Upper Room.... The flames of fire descending on the heads of the apostles.... The gifts of languages, enabling people from all over the known world, to understand the words of the Gospel.... The apostles, emerging from their timid hideout behind locked doors, emboldened to preach and teach and heal, to confound and console and comfort.... It is the birthday of the Church, the day on which its divine energy is unleashed in the wider community. There is more traditional imagery around today. The white flowers of Whit Sun – White Sunday, the day for Confirmations. The Jewish feast of *Shavuot* – fifty days after the Passover (so, what we call Pentecost). On *Shavuot* the Giving of the Torah is commemorated and the Ten Commandments are solemnly read. The Jewish Pentecost at the time of Jesus was also a celebration of water, in a land in which neither irrigation nor adequate drinking water could be taken for granted. The great water pots of Pentecost were a reminder that water – symbolising the Holy Spirit – is a divine gift. When it is full to overflowing, so is God's Spirit in our hearts and lives.

The feast tells the story very simply and effectively. What we need to do is to allow the images and compelling ideas to refresh and irrigate our own lives and the life of the Church locally. The Holy Spirit, the Breath of God, the gift of communication, the courage the energy, the white flowers of Spring, the delight in the Law of God, the fonts and water pots overflowing, the joy of the Gospel. It is all here for us to be and become, in the words of Sherry Weddell, 'Intentional Disciples', not people who happen to believe in God, in the balance of probabilities, or who think of Christianity as just decent behaviour. We need to constantly relearn to pray and celebrate, to radiate joy and hope, to live for others and to the glory of God.

Please God, the last fifteen months have been a time of hibernation, when our gifts have been stored rather than discarded, our lives rested rather than stymied, our love conserved rather than allowed to grow cold. May we emerge from this cold climate into the Springtime of God's love and bring fresh life and energy to our Christian living, through the grace and power of God's Holy Spirit. 'Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.'

Fr Andrew

THE WEEK OF PENTECOST

23rd– 30th May 2021

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthendred
please book for Sunday masses: hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Church is open from 9am until late afternoon

PENTECOST			<i>[Red]</i>
23rd May	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am	Holy Mass	
	6pm	Holy Mass	<i>FM Mary Jane Eyston 1917</i>
Monday 24th May	The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church <i>[White]</i>		
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>RIP Ann Connolly</i>
Tuesday 25th May	St Bede the Venerable, Religious <i>[White]</i>		
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>RIP Peter Pyplacz</i>
Wednesday 26th May	St Philip Neri, Priest, Founder <i>[White]</i>		
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>FM Ida Mary Stafford-Northcote 1954</i>
Thursday 27th May	Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest <i>[White]</i>		
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>FM Albert Austin Dearlove 1942</i>
Friday 28th May	Blessed Margaret Pole, Martyr <i>[Red]</i>		
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>Holy Souls</i>
Saturday 29th May	St Paul VI, Pope <i>[White]</i>		
	No Mass		
TRINITY SUNDAY			<i>[White]</i>
30th May	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	6pm	Holy Mass	

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk is monitored by the Parish Administrator and her Assistant.

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

CHURCH SERVICES LIVESTREAM

On Sunday 16th May, there were 277 hits from 78 machines, with 117 remaining on-line long enough to take part in Mass. 63 viewers were from the UK, 8 from Ireland, and 7 from the rest of the world.

BOOKING FOR MASS AT ST MARY'S

Please book for 9.30am, and 6pm Sunday Masses before 12 noon on Fridays hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk On Saturday contact Fr Andrew on aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk Space limited. Book early. Masks and social distancing required.

CHILDREN'S PAGES

- (1) Have you tuned into '**Morning Prayer for Children**', 9am on Sundays? It's ten minutes on Church Services TV.
- (2) **Special stuff for Sunday** 23rd May, Pentecost, follows on the next couple of pages.

ROSARY

The Pope is asking us to join worldwide in the saying of the Rosary each day in May. He will lead the Rosary each day at 6pm (Rome Time), 5pm here. We shall say a daily decade after Mass. The intention is for the ending of the plague and for those who are suffering or caring for the sick. There is a note on the Rosary immediately following the Children's Pages below.

PENTECOST [B]

Sunday 23rd May 2021

The Holy Spirit Comes

John 17: 11-19

Looking up to heaven Jesus said, "Father, now I must return to you and leave these friends behind. I have shared your word with them and watched their faith in you grow when many others chose to doubt. I have watched over them and kept them safe from danger and those who wish them harm. Now I am sending them out into the world, and I ask you to watch over them always and keep them in your care."

Reflection

Sometimes our friends move away to a different part of the country or even different parts of the world. Some people have relatives they may only physically see once or twice in their lifetime.

Saying goodbye to loved one who you know you are not going to see for a long time is sad and there is lots you might want to say to them, but you don't know where to start!

How do you think the apostles felt when they knew Jesus was finally returning to his father? They had grown to love him very much, so much that they were prepared to go out and be witnesses for Christ.

They probably felt sad and a little afraid about what lay ahead of them.

The Holy Spirit gave the apostles the strength and courage they needed for their mission. They knew they were not being left alone but would always be watched over.

Closing Prayer

Lord, I do not feel afraid because you are always with me.

With you beside me there is nothing to fear.

I know that you will protect me from harm and keep me safe.

Amen



Speak, Lord



Acts 2:1-11
Psalm 103
Galatians 5:16-25
John 15:26-27; 16:13-15

SUNDAY LITURGY FOR CHILDREN

Year B — Pentecost Sunday



Join the dots with straight lines:

TODAY IS ...

PENTECOST SUNDAY

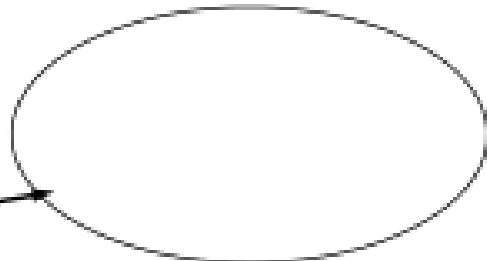
WHO CAME TO THE APOSTLES ON THIS DAY?

THE H _____ S _____

What did the Apostles hear?

W _____

Draw it here



What did the Apostles see?

FLAMES OF

F _____

Draw it here



My prayer to the HOLY SPIRIT



The Rosary

The Rosary has five sets of ten beads each preceded by a separate bead. The Our Father is said on the separate bead, a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads, and a Glory be... whilst holding the chain before proceeding to the next separate bead. It is customary to begin, on the short chain, with the Creed (holding the crucifix), an Our Father, three Hail Marys and a Glory be... At the end of the chaplet (set of five mysteries), hold the medal and say the Hail Holy Queen....

The Five Joyful Mysteries (Monday and Saturday)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | The Annunciation | <i>Luke 1:26-38</i> |
| 2 | The Visitation | <i>Luke 1:39-46</i> |
| 3 | The Nativity | <i>Luke 2:1-7</i> |
| 4 | The Presentation | <i>Luke 2:22-32</i> |
| 5 | The Finding in the Temple | <i>Luke 2:42-52</i> |

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday and Friday)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | The Agony in the Garden | <i>Mark 14:32-38</i> |
| 2 | The Scourging at the Pillar | <i>John 18:33 – 19:1</i> |
| 3 | The Crowning with Thorns | <i>Mark 15:16-20</i> |
| 4 | The Carrying of the Cross | <i>Matthew 27:31-34</i> |
| 5 | The Crucifixion | <i>Luke 23:33-48</i> |

The Five Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | The Baptism in the Jordan | <i>Matthew 3:13-17</i> |
| 2 | The Wedding at Cana | <i>John 2:1-12</i> |
| 3 | The Proclamation of the Kingdom | <i>Luke 4:14-21</i> |
| 4 | The Transfiguration | <i>Mark 9:2-8</i> |
| 5 | The Institution of the Eucharist | <i>1 Corinthians 11:23-26</i> |

The Five Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday and Sunday)

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | The Resurrection | <i>Luke 24:1-6</i> |
| 2 | The Ascension | <i>Luke 24:50-53</i> |
| 3 | The Gift of the Holy Spirit | <i>Acts 2:1-4</i> |
| 4 | The Assumption of Our Lady | <i>1 Corinthians 15:20-26</i> |
| 5 | The Coronation of Our Lady and the Glory of the Saints | <i>Revelation 12:1-6</i> |

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 lift 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.

CHARITY

Didcot

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

Wantage

Jackymattam@btinternet.com helps with the poor locally. Contact her about what practical help she needs. It is usually children's clothes, push chairs &c.

Annie@thehilltribe.com is collecting scarves (for headcovering), socks for men, women, and children, and suitcases to take all this to Afghanistan.

TEA TALKS

Oxford Playhouse – our local contact is Jo Noble – is organising Tea Talks, bringing people together in difficult times with a cup of tea and a weekly chat. This began in May and continues through June and is open to everyone over 60. (It's in partnership with Age UK). There will be a further project in the Autumn.

To take part in this free initiative, please contact Beth Sedgwick on 01865 305346 or e-mail community@oxfordplayhouse.com

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

A donation to the parish may be made on
www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

HOLY FATHER'S MAY PRAYER INTENTION

Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.

FIRST COMMUNION GROUPS

Pray for children who have just begun First Communion Preparation through St Amand's School: Felicity, Keeleigh, Elijah, Anna, Eamonn, Luca, Mia, Isobel, Julia, Stephen, Thomas. Pray also for George and Toby from Hendreds Primary School, undertaking preparation with Mary Harrison.

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

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

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 23rd-29th May: Nora McDonagh, Diana Tuson.

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CARMELITE CONFERENCES

Scripture and Spirituality Conferences are run from Carmelite Friary on Boar's Hill (which has been local to us and will be again once we get beyond the Zoom-only stage).

Key dates at present are 10th-11th July for a Conference on St John of the Cross and 7pm on 11th July for an event called 'Teresa's Four Waters in Word, Image, and Song'.

For further details, contact: ruth.preston@carmelite.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish



Pentecost (B)

23rd May 2021

**Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Spiritus Domini (Wis 1:7; Ps 68:2)

The Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole world and that which contains all things understands what is said, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. *Ps* Let God arise; let his foes be scattered: let those who hate him flee from his presence.

Collect

O God, who by the mystery of today's great feast sanctify your whole Church in every people and nation, pour out, we pray, the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth and, with the divine grace that was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed, fill now once more the hearts of believers. 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

Acts 2:1-11(RSV)

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Par'thians and Medes and E'lamites and residents of Mesopota'mia, Judea and Cappado'cia, Pontus and Asia, Phryg'ia and Pamphyl'ia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyre'ne, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.'

Psalm 104 1, 24, 29-31, 34 **R/** cf 30

**R/ Send forth your Spirit, O Lord,
and renew the face of the earth.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
O Lord my God, how great you are.
How many are your works O Lord!
The earth is full of your creatures. **R/**

You hide your face, they are dismayed;
You take away their breath they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, and they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth. **R/**

May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!
May my thoughts be pleasing to him.
I will rejoice in the Lord. **R/**

Second Reading

Galatians 5:16-25 (RSV)

I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Sequence (*Veni, sancte Spiritus*)

Come, thou holy Paraclete,
And from thy celestial seat
Send thy light and brilliancy:
Father of the poor, draw near;
Giver of all gifts, be here;
Come, the soul's true radiancy:

2. Come, of comforters the best,
Of the soul the sweetest guest,
Come in toil refreshingly:
Thou in labour rest most sweet,
Thou art shadow from the heat,
Comfort in adversity.

3. O thou Light, most pure and blest,
Shine within the inmost breast
Of thy faithful company.
Where thou art not, man hath nought;
Every holy deed and thought
Comes from thy Divinity.

4. What is soiled, make thou pure;
What is wounded, work its cure;
What is parchèd, fructify;
What is rigid, gently bend;
What is frozen, warmly tend;
Strengthen what goes erringly.

5. Fill thy faithful, who confide
In thy power to guard and guide,
With thy sevenfold Mystery.
Here thy grace and virtue send:
Grant salvation to the end,
And in heaven felicity. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful :
and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Gospel

John 15:26-27; 16:12-15 (RSV)

Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Counsellor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me; ²⁷ and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning.... **16** ¹² "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Prayer over the Offerings

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that, as promised by your Son, the Holy Spirit may reveal to us more abundantly the hidden mystery of this sacrifice and graciously lead us into all truth. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(De mysterio Pentecostes)

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, bringing your Paschal Mystery to completion, you bestowed the Holy Spirit today on those you made your adopted children by uniting them to your Only begotten Son. This same Spirit, as the Church came to birth, opened to all peoples the knowledge of God and brought together the many languages of the earth in profession of the one faith. Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise, and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they 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

Repleti sunt omnes

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke of the marvels of God, alleluia.

Prayer after Communion

O God, who bestow heavenly gifts upon your Church, safeguard, we pray, the grace you have given, that the gift of the Holy Spirit poured out upon her may retain all its force and that this spiritual food may gain her abundance of eternal redemption. Through Christ our Lord.

V/ Go in Peace, Alleluia, Alleluia.

R/ **Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Scripture Reading (Week 8[I])

Monday	Sirach 17:20-28	Mark 10:17-27
Tuesday	Sirach 35:1-15	Mark 10:28-31
Wednesday	Sirach 36:1, 4-5, 10-17	Mark 10:32-45

Our Lord Jesus Christ, High Priest

	Hebrews 2:10-18	John 17:1-2,9,14-26
Friday	Sirach 44:1, 9-13	Mark 11:11-26
Saturday	Sirach 51:17-27	Mark 11:27-33

TRINITY B

Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40

Romans 8:12-17

Matthew 28:16-20

Ant.
6.
R E-gí-na cæli * læ-tá-re, alle-lú-ia: Qui a
quem me-ru-ísti portá-re, alle-lú-ia: Re-surréx-it,
si-cut dix-it, alle-lú-ia: Ora pro no-bis De-um,
alle-lú-ia.

Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven, alleluia.
he whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia.
as he promised hath arisen, alleluia.
pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia.

V/ Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia:
R/ for the Lord has risen indeed, alleluia.

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

24th – 28th May 2021

Monday in the Pentecost Octave [Week 8 Year 1]

24th May 2021

Reading

Sirach 17:20-28 (RSV)

A Call to Repentance

Their iniquities are not hidden from him,
and all their sins are before the Lord.

²² A man's almsgiving is like a signet with the Lord,
and he will keep a person's kindness like the apple of his eye.

²³ Afterward he will arise and requite them,
and he will bring their recompense on their heads.

²⁴ Yet to those who repent he grants a return,
and he encourages those whose endurance is failing.

²⁵ Turn to the Lord and forsake your sins;
pray in his presence and lessen your offences.

²⁶ Return to the Most High and turn away from iniquity,
and hate abominations intensely.

²⁷ Who will sing praises to the Most High in Hades,
as do those who are alive and give thanks?

²⁸ From the dead, as from one who does not exist, thanksgiving has
ceased;
he who is alive and well sings the Lord's praises.

Reflection

WE HAVE a chance this week to have another look at Sirach, also known as 'Ecclesiasticus'. The Latin word 'Ecclesiasticus' means 'churchy' and the book got this nickname because, amongst the Old Testament literature, it was particularly beloved by Christians. The proper title of the Book is 'The Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach' – 'Jesus' here being the Greek version of 'Joshua'. The book has several titles, and 'Ecclesiasticus' being easily

confused with 'Ecclesiastes' (a different book), the most usual reference nowadays is simply to 'Sirach'. Though modern Jews and Protestants regard Sirach as part of the apocrypha, rather than the Hebrew Scriptures, there is evidence of an original Hebrew text as well as the Greek text in which it has come down to us. Greek Jewish texts originated in the Greek-speaking world of the Jewish diaspora and, as well as the full translation of the Old Testament into Greek – known as the Septuagint – there are a number of writings which exist only in Greek and which may never have existed in Hebrew. Broadly speaking, these constitute what non-Catholics refer to as 'the Apocrypha'.

Today's passage follows a rather long poem about Creation, which sets Man in a covenant bond with God, and then discusses how divine creation, justice, and mercy are related. Humans are set in relationship with God by being given understanding and knowledge of good and evil. It is divine revelation which shows humankind this: 'Their eyes saw his glorious majesty, and their ears heard the glory of his voice' (Sirach 17:13). This leads to the call to Repentance we hear in the reading.

Tuesday in the Pentecost Octave [*Week 8 Year 1*]

25th May

Reading

Sirach 35:1-15 (RSV)

The Law and Sacrifices: Divine Justice

- 35** He who keeps the law makes many offerings;
he who heeds the commandments sacrifices a peace offering.
- 2** He who returns a kindness offers fine flour,
and he who gives alms sacrifices a thank offering.
- 3** To keep from wickedness is pleasing to the Lord,
and to forsake unrighteousness is atonement.
- 4** Do not appear before the Lord empty-handed,
5 for all these things are to be done because of the commandment.
- 6** The offering of a righteous man anoints the altar,
and its pleasing odour rises before the Most High.
- 7** The sacrifice of a righteous man is acceptable,
and the memory of it will not be forgotten.
- 8** Glorify the Lord generously,
and do not stint the first fruits of your hands.
- 9** With every gift show a cheerful face,

- and dedicate your tithe with gladness.
- ¹⁰ Give to the Most High as he has given,
and as generously as your hand has found.
- ¹¹ For the Lord is the one who repays,
and he will repay you sevenfold.
- ¹² Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it;
and do not trust to an unrighteous sacrifice;
for the Lord is the judge,
and with him is no partiality.
- ¹³ He will not show partiality in the case of a poor man;
and he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged.
- ¹⁴ He will not ignore the supplication of the fatherless,
nor the widow when she pours out her story.
- ¹⁵ Do not the tears of the widow run down her cheek
as she cries out against him who has caused them to fall?

Reflection

SIRACH focuses much of his attention on 'the older man' – among those whom we nowadays might nickname 'the great and the good' but who in Jewish society were referred to as 'the wise'. Being 'wise', in the Wisdom Tradition, is demonstrated by fearing the Lord and avoiding evil. Sirach has plenty of practical advice – not disbursing one's estate too early in life, treating servants well, interpreting dreams – but nothing is more important than the Hebrew tradition of mercy towards the poor and needy. This concern for the marginal and unfortunate reverberates throughout the Jewish Law. Caring for orphans and widows, the strangers and the dispossessed, was the social care system of its time and became the foundation of our modern understanding of the unique value of the individual. In the week following Pentecost, when we also remember the feast of *Shavuot*, commemorating the giving of the Jewish Law on Mount Sinai, it is good to reflect on the spacious and humane wisdom of the Jewish tradition, which we are privileged to inherit.

Wednesday in the Pentecost Octave [Week 8 Year 1]

26th May

Reading

Sirach 36:1, 4-5, 10-17 (RSV)

A Prayer for God's People

36 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, the God of all, and look upon us,

.....⁴ As in us you hast been sanctified before them,

so in them be you magnified before us;

⁵ and let them know you, as we have known

that there is not God but you, O Lord.....

¹⁰ Crush the heads of the rulers of the enemy,

who say, 'There is no one but ourselves.'

¹¹ Gather all the tribes of Jacob,

and give them their inheritance, as at the beginning.

¹² Have mercy, O Lord, upon the people called by your name,

upon Israel, whom you have likened to a first-born son.

¹³ Have pity on the city of your sanctuary,

Jerusalem, the place of your rest.

¹⁴ Fill Zion with the celebration of your wondrous deeds,

and your temple with your glory.

¹⁵ Bear witness to those whom you created in the beginning,

and fulfil the prophecies spoken in your name.

¹⁶ Reward those who wait for you,

and let your prophets be found trustworthy.

¹⁷ Hearken, O Lord, to the prayer of your servants,

according to the blessing of Aaron for your people,

and all who are on the earth will know

that you are the Lord, the God of the ages.

Reflection

MORE advice from Sirach for the older man, the pillar of society, leads to the prayer which is today's First Reading. It calls for judgment on Israel's enemies – these verses have been omitted – and invokes a blessing on Zion and the temple and priesthood of Jerusalem. This is the one book in the Old Testament where we have clear indication of author and date. The prologue to Ecclesiasticus tells us that it is the work of Jesus ben Sira who was translating his grandfather's book of Hebrew wisdom 'in the thirty-eighth year of Euergetes', The date of this translation, the thirty-eighth year of king Ptolemy VII Euergetes of Egypt, would have been 132BC,

and we might therefore settle on 200BC as a date for the Hebrew original. This would make sense of the references to the high priest Simon II the Just, who is mentioned in fragments of Sirach 50, who flourished at that time. Not only do we get evidence of authorship and date in the book, but we also learn that translating Hebrew into Greek is no easy task – and Sirach apologises for his errors – and that the translation is for ‘those living abroad who wished to gain learning, being prepared in character to live according to the law’.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest

27th May

Reading

Hebrews 2:10-18 (RSV)

It was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹² saying,

‘I will proclaim your name to my brethren,
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.’

¹³ And again,

‘I will put my trust in him.’

And again,

‘Here am I, and the children God has given me.’

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. ¹⁶ For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Reflection

THE FEAST of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest is a recent addition to the Calendar, rather on the lines of Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart, so providing further opportunity to meditate on the mysteries of the Passion. Corpus Christi was set for the first 'spare Thursday' after Maundy Thursday and the Sacred Heart was set for the first 'spare Friday' after Good Friday. 'Spare' here means broadly outside Eastertide. All of this is really for Calendar 'nerds' because the first 'spare Thursday' was judged to be after Trinity Sunday but with the revised Calendar of 1970 is nowadays thought to be the Thursday after Pentecost – today. Matters are further complicated by the tendency to move Corpus Christi, as we do in England and Wales, to the Sunday afterwards. Inserting the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest, as an extra meditation on the Paschal mysteries helps our devotional life. In particular, with the reading, we ponder that the 'merciful and faithful high priest ...was.. made like his brethren in every respect'. He makes 'expiation for the sins of the people...' and 'because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.' That is the Good News of Christ in his Divinity sharing our humanity.

Friday in the Pentecost Octave *[Week 8 Year 1]*

28th May

Reading

Sirach 44:1-13 (RSV)

Let us Now Praise Famous Men

Let us now praise famous men,
and our fathers in their generations.
² The Lord apportioned to them great glory,
his majesty from the beginning.
³ There were those who ruled in their kingdoms,
and were men renowned for their power,
giving counsel by their understanding,
and proclaiming prophecies;
⁴ leaders of the people in their deliberations
and in understanding of learning for the people,
wise in their words of instruction;

- ⁵ those who composed musical tunes,
and set forth verses in writing;
- ⁶ rich men furnished with resources,
living peaceably in their habitations—
- ⁷ all these were honoured in their generations,
and were the glory of their times.
- ⁸ There are some of them who have left a name,
so that men declare their praise.
- ⁹ And there are some who have no memorial,
who have perished as though they had not lived;
they have become as though they had not been born,
and so have their children after them.
- ¹⁰ But these were men of mercy,
whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten;
- ¹¹ their prosperity will remain with their descendants,
and their inheritance to their children's children.
- ¹² Their descendants stand by the covenants;
their children also, for their sake.
- ¹³ Their posterity will continue for ever,
and their glory will not be blotted out.

Reflection

WEDNESDAY'S passage was abbreviated by the compilers of the Mass Lectionary, who omitted the verses of the prayer which were calling down vengeance on Israel's enemies. Today's passage is also abbreviated in the Mass Lectionary but presumably only to make it more compact. It is worth reading in full – and we have set it out accordingly in full – because it is a beautiful piece of poetry. At schools and colleges up and down the land, wherever resort is still made to Holy Scripture on great occasions, Ecclesiastic 44 is read. One remembers phrases like 'those who composed musical tunes, and set forth verses in writing' and the melancholy evoked by 'there are some who have no memorial, who have perished as though they had not lived', a significant reminder on many a Founder's Day celebration. Sirach is interested in the rich diversity of human achievement but prizes nothing more than the posterity and glory of 'men of mercy, whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten'.

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