

**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

The Most Holy Trinity

12th – 19th June 2022



WEEK 11 YEAR 1

12th -19th June 2022

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

Church is open from 9am until late afternoon

TRINITY SUNDAY			<i>[WHITE]</i>
12th June	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am	Mass (St Patrick's)	
	6pm	Holy Mass	
Monday 13th June			<i>[White]</i>
		St Anthony of Padua, Religious, Doctor of the Church	
	9.15am	Holy Mass	
Tuesday 14th June	<i>Of Week 11</i>		<i>[Green]</i>
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>FM Millie Charlton 1999</i>
Wednesday 15th June	<i>Of Week 11</i>		<i>[Green]</i>
	<i>No Mass</i>		
Thursday 16th June		<i>St Richard of Chichester, Bishop</i>	<i>[White]</i>
		<i>No Mass</i>	
Friday 17th June	<i>Of Week 11</i>		<i>[Green]</i>
	8.30am	Holy Mass (<i>Hendred House</i>)	<i>Holy Souls</i>
Saturday 18th June		<i>Our Lady St Mary on Saturday</i>	<i>[White]</i>
		<i>No Mass</i>	
CORPUS CHRISTI			<i>[White]</i>
19th June	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am	Mass (St Patrick's)	
	12.30pm	Holy Baptism (Emily Holligan)	
	5pm	Vespers with Exposition & Benediction	
	6pm	Holy Mass	

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church
Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

***Closer to Christ* Campaign Announcement Letter**

East Hendred Catholic Parish

Dear Parishioners of East Hendred,

I am sure you will agree when I say this last year has continued to be challenging. Yet although many aspects of our lives have been impacted, our Catholic faith has remained the one constant. I am encouraged by those returning to Mass, the large numbers who have joined livestream liturgies, parishioners supporting neighbours, friends and loved ones. I also wish to thank wholeheartedly those clergy who have worked so tirelessly to sustain and support the communities under their care. It is this steadfast commitment that has progressed the Church across the Diocese of Portsmouth since the late 19th century.

As a faith community, we have been through some challenging times in the past yet by God's grace, we have always shown resilience, compassion and generosity. Fifteen years ago, the *Living Our Faith* campaign had a tremendous and wide-reaching effect, and I am grateful for all it enabled. I am confident now with the intercession of the parish of East Hendred and our patron, St Edmund of Abingdon, that we have the strength to continue our great mission of 'Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church'.

Further to much prayer, consideration and consultation with clergy and laity, we have embarked on a new fundraising initiative entitled the ***Closer to Christ*** Campaign. This will build upon the mission of our church, enabling us to continue our journey to become ever more outward facing and evangelistic, while meeting the immediate financial priorities of parishes, who are the backbone of our Church.

Central to the success of our mission, is the continued support of our clergy at all stages of ministry, those individuals who give their lives to serve our parish communities. ***Closer to Christ*** will fund our seminarians and priests in active ministry and rejuvenate our parishes, ensuring they have the necessary resources to provide a place for prayer, worship and community interaction, meeting a broad range of faith needs and giving them a platform to thrive. We must also care for our priests in their retirement, recognising the important work they have achieved in delivering our mission and the contribution they continue to make in so many ways following a life of service and dedication to local parish life.

The ***Closer to Christ*** Campaign is a 'call to action' which invites parishioners to become more fully and sacrificially involved in the life of the Church – to collectively build God's Kingdom and live the Gospel, especially in providing for others. Simultaneously, the ***Closer to Christ*** Campaign reflects a commitment to enhanced communications and stewardship of donors' generosity. Over the next two years, every parish will participate in this endeavour. We began the Campaign last year, with ten parishes taking part so far and I am delighted that East Hendred will be part of the next group of parishes leading the way.

In the coming months, Father Andrew will be sharing with you in more detail the objectives of this initiative – through individual conversations, telephone/video calls and announcements at Mass. I appreciate your willingness to learn more, ask questions, consider the role you could play and importantly pray for our success.

Towards the end of his Letter to the Philippians, St. Paul says: "There is no need to worry, but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving" (Phil 4: 6). I look forward to us all accomplishing together the Lord's work, moving from maintenance to mission.

In Corde Iesu

+Philip

Bishop of Portsmouth

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S JUNE PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for Christian families around the world; may they embody and experience unconditional love and advance in holiness in their daily lives.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTION

Monday 13 th	The Poor
Tuesday 14 th	'Faith and Light' for the spirituality of the disabled
Wednesday 15 th	Community of Sacred Heart, Lambourn, and Parish of St Thomas More, Twyford
Thursday 16 th	Diocesan Team for Formation for Mission
Friday 17 th	Parish of St Boniface, Shirley, Southampton
Saturday 18 th	Parishes, Communities & Schools in the North East Hampshire Pastoral Area

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

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

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 12th - 18th June: Edwin Bernard Castle, Barbara Reeley, Mary Isherwood, Evelin Tomlin, Noreen Little, Cuthbert Wheeler, Lawrence Castle

Reflection *The Holy Trinity*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. *2 Corinthians 13:13*

THE FEAST of the Most Holy Trinity came into being gradually. From about the eighth century the Gelasian Sacramentary gave us a preface, set for the octave day of Pentecost, and giving us a succinct summary of doctrine. We learn of the glory of the Father being revealed as the glory also of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, three Persons equal in majesty, yet undivided in splendour, one Lord, one God always to be adored. In 800 Alcuin composed a Mass of the Holy Trinity. Though resisted by a couple of popes, the Trinity Mass gained a hold in Cluny and Citeaux. In 1334 Pope John XXII instituted it as a feast of the universal Church on the octave day of Pentecost – and so it has remained, despite the abolition of the Pentecost octave in 1970. Apart from 'The Grace', used as a greeting on special days, there is the commission to make disciples of all nations:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age.*Mt 28:19-20*

This concludes St Matthew's Gospel and, similarly, the feast of the Holy Trinity is at the end of the cycle. The story of Creation and Redemption is complete. We have celebrated God as Father and Son and the coming of the Holy Spirit. We sum up with the mystery of God the Holy Trinity.

The New Testament teaching about the Trinity otherwise is principally St Paul's frequent mentions of Christ and the Holy Spirit and the teaching of Jesus on Father, Son and Holy Spirit in John's Gospel, especially in the Farewell Discourses:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. *John 16:13*

The Risen Lord promises to be with his people and in his world to the end of time - I am with you always, to the close of the age – and so, every time we leave Church, filled with the new life that the Blessed Sacrament gives, we are challenged to live our lives, individually and communally, through grace, enfolded within and alive to the mystery of the communion of the persons of the Trinity, dedicating ourselves to the service of the Great Commission. All we do should be to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three Persons equal in majesty, yet undivided in splendour, one Lord, one God always to be adored.

Fr Andrew

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

WE ARE restarting Children's Church on 19th June. This is being co-ordinated by Libby Holderness and she will be interested to hear from those who are happy to help. (To contact her, please email office@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk and we shall pass it on). We need two volunteers per session but there are usually enough for this to be easily manageable. One volunteer needs to be a DBS-checked leader, confident to supervise the activities. The other needs to be a willing helper, probably the parent of an under-four-year old with more of a 'play and share' role. There is plenty of scope, however, for older adults to help.

Children's Church meets in St Mary's Parish Rooms, starting at 9.15am on Sunday, which enables parents to drop off and join the 9.30am Mass. At the beginning of the Offertory, the children will be escorted back to St Mary's to re-join their parents. Children under-four need to have a parent with them during the session.

Those who attend Children's Church and join Mass half-way through are fulfilling their Mass obligation.

The diocese suggests that Keystage 2 children, and particularly those who have made their First Communion, should attend Mass with their parents, so Children's Church is really for toddlers and Keystage 1 children.

Children's Church meets only during school term-times. During the holidays, especially or religious festivals, it is important for children to experience the whole of the Mass with their parents.

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

COFFEE IN ST MARY'S PARISH ROOMS

Work is well-advanced on St Mary's Parish Rooms and we hope that in June we shall reopen. It is hoped to start coffee after 9.30am Mass in the newly refurbished rooms in June (date to be confirmed) We very much hope men and women will volunteer to join the coffee rota so that we can once again enjoy this friendly get together after Mass. For further information please contact Francia Kilgarriff on 07899675784.

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 5th June 2022, 202 people viewed, 71 machines looking only at St Mary's. 44 of these were in the UK, 20 in the USA, seven from other countries. 118 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

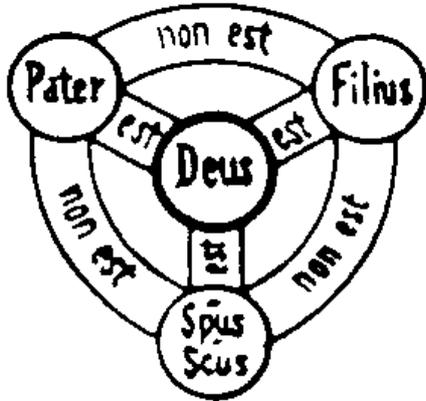
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL – CHANGE OF DATE

The next meeting will now be on Thursday 23rd June at 8pm. We shall meet (we hope) in St Mary's Parish Rooms. As the Council is reconstituted, in the first instance, those who took part in the Standing Committee during the pandemic are invited to this meeting.

FR ANDREW ON THE FUNDING CAMPAIGN

Please read the Bishop's Letter carefully: all parishes must take their turn and it is our turn now. I have selected a number of people to speak to in the very first stage. I don't know what your financial commitment to the parish is and I shall not know what additional commitment, if any, you decide to make for this diocesan-cum-parish scheme. I wish I could speak to everyone so, inevitably, the list for the very first stage is a bit arbitrary. Thankyou for your help and support.

East Hendred Catholic Parish



**The Most Holy
Trinity (C)
Antiphons,
Prayers and
Readings**

The Feast of the Most Holy Trinity concludes the ancient octave of Pentecost.

Entrance Antiphon

Benedictus sit

Blessed be God the Father, and the Only Begotten Son of God, and also the Holy Spirit: for he has shown us his merciful love.

Collect

God our Father, who by sending into the world the Word of Truth and the Spirit of Sanctification made known to the human race your wondrous mystery; grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith, we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory, and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty. Through our Lord Jesus Christ you Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

First Reading

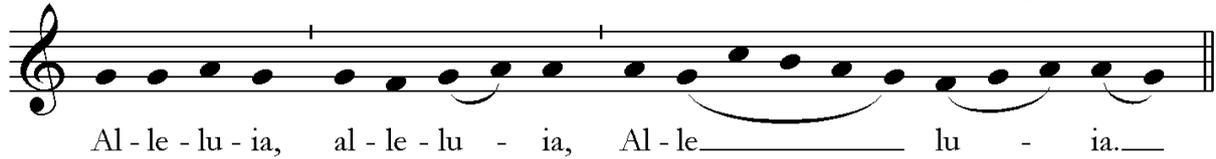
Proverbs 8:22-31(RSV)

The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth; before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit,

so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men.

Psalm

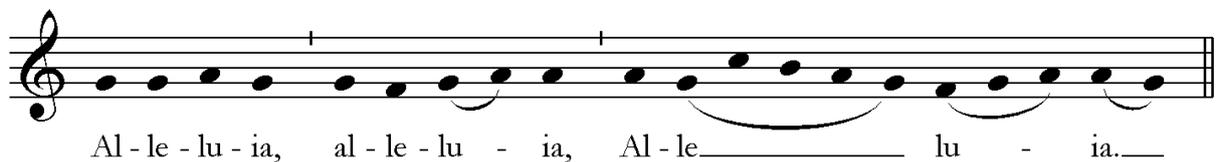
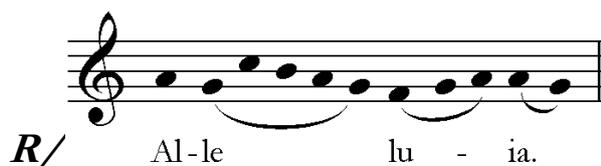
Ps 103:1:24, 29-31, 34 ([Revised] Grail)



When I see the heavens, the work of your *fin* - gers,
the moon and the stars which *you* ar - ranged, **R/ Alleluia.**
what is man that you should keep him *in* mind,
the son of man that you *care* for him? **R/ Alleluia.**

Yet you have made him little lower than the *an* - gels;
with glory and honour *you* crowned him, **R/ Alleluia.**
gave him power over the works of *your* hands:
you put all things un - *der* his feet. **R/ Alleluia.**

All of them, sheep and *o* - xen,
yes, even the cattle *of* the fields, **R/ Alleluia.**
birds of the air, and fish of *the* sea
that make their way through *the* wa - ters. **R/ Alleluia.**



Second Reading

Romans 5:1-5 (RSV)

Brethren: since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and

character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

Gospel Acclamation

O filii et filiae



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

R/ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
the God who is, who was, and who is to come.

R/ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

John 14:15-16, 23-26(RSV)

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 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. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 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

Sanctify by the invocation of your name, we pray, O Lord our God, this oblation of your service, and by it make of us an eternal offering to you. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

De mysterio Sanctissimae Trinitatis

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. For with your Only Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit you are one God, one Lord; not in the unity of a single person, but in a Trinity of substance. For what you have revealed to us of your glory we believe equally of your Son and of the Holy Spirit, so that, in the confessing of the true and eternal Godhead you might be adored in what is proper to each Person, their unity in substance, and their equality in majesty. For this is praised by Angels and Archangels, Cherubim, too, and Seraphim,

who never cease to cry out each day, as with one voice they acclaim:
Holy, holy, holy *etc.*

Communion Antiphon

Since you are children of God, God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of his Son, the Spirit who cries out: Abba, Father. *Gal 4:6*

Prayer after Communion

May receiving this Sacrament, O Lord our God, bring us health of body and soul, as we confess you eternal holy Trinity and undivided Unity. 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 11, Year II *Per Annum*)

Monday	1 Kings 21:1-16	Matthew 5:38-42
Tuesday	1 Kings 21:17-29	Matthew 5:43-48
Wednesday	2 Kings 2:1,6-14	Matthew 6:1-6,16-18
Thursday	Ecclesiasticus 48:1-14	Matthew 6:7-15
Friday	2 Kings 11:1-4,9-18, 20	Matthew 6:19-23
Saturday	2 Chronicles 24:17-25	Matthew 6:24-34

CORPUS CHRISTI (C)

Gen 14:18-20

1 Cor 11:23-26

Luke 9:11-17

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The Litany of the Sacred Heart

June is traditionally the Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is the month in which we celebrate the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (on the first available Friday after Eastertide). Many find the Litany of the Sacred Heart helpful in their devotions.

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

**Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy**

God our Father in heaven
God the Son, Redeemer of the world
God the Holy Spirit
Holy Trinity, one God

**have mercy on us
have mercy on us
have mercy on us
have mercy on us**

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father
Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit
 in the womb of the Virgin Mother
Heart of Jesus, one with the eternal Word
Heart of Jesus, infinite in majesty
Heart of Jesus, holy temple of God
Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High
Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven

**have mercy on us
have mercy on us**

Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for us
Heart of Jesus, source of justice and love
Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love
Heart of Jesus, well-spring of all virtue
Heart of Jesus, worthy of all praise
Heart of Jesus, king and centre of all hearts
Heart of Jesus, treasure-house of wisdom and knowledge

**have mercy on us
have mercy on us**

Heart of Jesus, in whom there dwells the fullness of God

have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father is well pleased

have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, from whose fullness we have all received

have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, desire of the eternal hills

have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, patient and full of mercy

have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, generous to all who turn to you **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, overwhelmed with insults **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, broken for our sins **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, obedient even to death **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, pierced by a lance **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, victim of our sins **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, salvation of all who trust in you **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, hope of all who die in you **have mercy on us**
Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints **have mercy on us**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world **have mercy on us**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world **have mercy on us**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world **have mercy on us**

V/ Jesus, gentle and humble of heart.

R/ **Touch our hearts and make them like your own.**

Let us pray.

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that we, who glory in the Heart of your beloved Son
and recall the wonders of his love for us,
may be made worthy to receive
an overflowing measure of grace
from that fount of heavenly gifts.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

13th – 18th June 2022

Collect for Week 11 *Per Annum*

O God, strength of those who hope in you: graciously hear our pleas, and, since without you mortal frailty can do nothing, grant us always the help of your grace, that in following your commands we may please you by our resolve and our deeds. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Monday of Week 11

St Anthony of Padua

13th June

Reading

Matthew 5:38-42 (RSV)

Concerning Retaliation

Jesus said to his disciples: ³⁸ `You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." ³⁹ But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; ⁴⁰ and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; ⁴¹ and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. ⁴² Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you.'

Reflection

This *pericope* – extract from the Scriptures – contains a couple of the most-quoted of Jesus' sayings. I say 'a couple' because it would be hard to say whether 'an eye for an eye...' or 'going the second mile' is the more frequently heard. Sometimes these sayings are used to indicate the moral superiority of Christ's teaching as compared with the Jewish Law but this is a mistake. Jesus is concerned to fulfil rather than abolish the Law and his teaching, however superior, is part of a general rabbinical discussion, diving into the rich depths of the Torah. Nothing is quite what it seems, so - to take the idea of retaliation for example, 'an eye for an eye' - the *lex talionis*, as it is known - is about proportionality, reacting appropriately rather than over-reacting. We shall hear again about the *lex talionis* tomorrow. Yet Jesus goes further than the demands of even-handed justice and requires even brutality and force to be met with loving kindness.

Tuesday of Week 11

14th June

Reading

1 Kings 21:17-29 (RSV)

Naboth's Vineyard

21 Now Naboth the Jezre'elite had a vineyard in Jezre'el, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samar'ia. ²And after this Ahab said to Naboth, 'Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money.'³ But Naboth said to Ahab, 'The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.'⁴ And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezre'elite had said to him; for he had said, 'I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.' And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food.

⁵ But Jez'ebel his wife came to him, and said to him, 'Why is your spirit so vexed that you eat no food?' ⁶And he said to her, 'Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezre'elite, and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it';

and he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" ⁷ And Jez'ebel his wife said to him, 'Do you now govern Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezre'elite.'

⁸ So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who dwelt with Naboth in his city. ⁹ And she wrote in the letters, 'Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people; ¹⁰ and set two^[a] base fellows opposite him, and let them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death.' ¹¹ And the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jez'ebel had sent word to them. As it was written in the letters which she had sent to them, ¹² they proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. ¹³ And the two base fellows came in and sat opposite him; and the base fellows brought a charge against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, 'Naboth cursed God and the king.' So they took him outside the city, and stoned him to death with stones. ¹⁴ Then they sent to Jez'ebel, saying, 'Naboth has been stoned; he is dead.'

¹⁵ As soon as Jez'ebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jez'ebel said to Ahab, 'Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezre'elite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.' ¹⁶ And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezre'elite, to take possession of it.

Reflection

ON MONDAY and Tuesday of this week, we have two more readings from the First Book of the Kings and learn through them (as we normally do from this source) about the wickedness of Israel's kings. To be precise, we learn about the wickedness not only of King Ahab but also of his scheming Queen, Jezebel. The historian is building a case-file against the Kings, to explain why they, and Israel, come to a sticky end. There are short-term disasters and long-term disasters. The short-term disaster, as we shall see tomorrow, is temporarily averted when Ahab repents but the dogs will eat Jezebel in the Field of Jezreel. Ahab's family

too will be dishonoured: dogs will eat those who die in the city and those who die in the open country will be food for the birds. The long-term disaster is just over a century away: the destruction of Israel in 724BC. The historian is assembling the evidence slowly: Ahab is spared, but disaster lies ahead. There is a pattern to this: earlier, the Lord spared David and the punishment – the division of the kingdom – did not happen until after the reign of Solomon, a reign which itself justified the fate which awaited the united Kingdom. In fact there are similarities between David and Ahab: David steals Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, by having Uriah killed in battle; Ahab has Naboth stoned, having assembled false witnesses to testify that Naboth blasphemed.

This way of explaining history is not one we nowadays tend to subscribe to. There are causes for the collapse of regimes – Hitler, Stalin, Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi – but we tend not to attribute these outcomes to Divine intervention. That isn't to say, of course, that there isn't an ongoing battle between Good and Evil, in which these various outcomes are episodes. We mustn't oversimplify, however. Ten years ago, in his book *Moral Combat*, the historian, Michael Burleigh, showed that the Second World War was much messier than a battle between Good and Evil.

As we heard yesterday, in the Jewish Law was enshrined the *Lex Talionis*, the requirement that retaliation should not exceed the offence committed (Lev. 24:19–21). This early regulation remains the basis of the idea of proportional response. In today's Gospel, Jesus takes us beyond that to a new moral ideal. Turn the other cheek. If someone wants your tunic, give him your cloak as well. If you are ordered to go one mile, go the extra mile with him. We cannot ourselves affect the affairs of nations – we would have been powerless against the malice of Ahab and, despite the voting booth, are mostly powerless to affect current affairs nowadays on a national or international scale. But we can begin with the Sermon on the Mount, and breaking the spiral of retribution and going the extra mile is a very good place to begin.

Wednesday of Week 11

15th June

Reading

2 Kings 2:1, 6-14 (RSV)

Elijah ascends to Heaven and Elisha succeeds Elijah

Now when the LORD was about to take Eli'jah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Eli'jah and Eli'sha were on their way from Gilgal ...

⁶ Then Eli'jah said to him, 'Tarry here, I pray you; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.' But he said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' ⁷ Fifty men of the sons of the prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸ Then Eli'jah took his mantle, and rolled it up, and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground.

⁹ When they had crossed, Eli'jah said to Eli'sha, 'Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.' And Eli'sha said, 'I pray you, let me inherit a double share of your spirit.' ¹⁰ And he said, 'You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.' ¹¹ And as they still went on and talked, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Eli'jah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹² And Eli'sha saw it and he cried, 'My father, my father! the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!' And he saw him no more.

Then he took hold of his own clothes and rent them in two pieces. ¹³ And he took up the mantle of Eli'jah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴ Then he took the mantle of Eli'jah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, 'Where is the LORD, the God of Eli'jah?' And when he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other; and Eli'sha went over.

Reflection

WE NOW have chance to look at the story of Elijah's departure – not by natural death but by ascension into heaven - and the mantle falling on his successor, Elisha. Elisha requests a double portion of Elijah's spirit and

Elijah is not sure whether this will be granted. Elijah's final prophecy is that, if Elisha witnesses his departure, his request for a double portion will be granted. And we have the story of the whirlwind with its chariot of fire and horses of fire. Before that we have seen Elijah and Elisha cross the Jordan on dry ground – much as the people of Israel, fleeing from the armies of Pharaoh, crossed the Red Sea on dry ground (Ex 14:16). The parting of the river was brought about by Elijah's mantle, rolled up, and, when he returned from witnessing Elijah's ascension, Elisha uses the same mantle, rolled up, to make a path back across the Jordan. This crossing of the Jordan, though it is reminiscent of the crossing of the Red Sea, is also another transition. The 50 prophets accompanying Elijah have crossed from North to South, from Bethel, the holy place of Jacob's dream in the distant past (Gen 28:19) to Jericho, in the South (Josh 2:1), near the place where the Israelites crossed the Jordan (Josh 3:13-17) *en route* to Gilgal and the Promised Land.

The story is as heavy on symbolism as it is imaginative on historical detail and it helps us to reflect on transitions and journeying closer to the Lord. Transitions include handing on the tradition and the responsibility to those who come after: tradition, after all, means handing on. And journeying closer to the Lord is not only our striving after perfection, which we were reflecting on yesterday, but our preparation for meeting our Maker, a journey rather less spectacular, one would hope, than Elijah's whirlwind and chariot and horses of fire.

Thursday of Week 11

16th June

St Richard of Chichester

St Richard of Chichester (1197-1253) was born at Droitwich and educated at Oxford, Paris, and Bologna. He was Chancellor of Oxford University and legal adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He was appointed Bishop of Chichester in 1244 and died in Dover whilst preaching the crusade. He had a reputation for simplicity and generosity to the poor.



St Richard of Chichester

Collect

LORD God, who bestowed on the Bishop, Saint Richard of Chichester, a love of learning, a zeal for souls and a devotion to the poor: in your kindness grant to us, we pray, the assistance of his intercession that we may be led to deeper knowledge and love of your Only-Begotten Son so that we may follow him more closely. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Reading

Matthew 5:43-48 (RSV)

Love for Enemies

Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴³ 'You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

Reflection

MANY will remember the musical *Godspell*, by Stephen Schwartz. It was a re-telling of the Gospel story, originally composed in 1970, but commonly performed in years following. Most memorable of all the songs in the show was 'Day by day...three things we pray'. That lyric was based on a prayer attributed to St Richard of Chichester, whose feast it is this week. I say 'attributed'. There's an element of approximation here. But, whether we opt for the *Godspell* version, or the prayer itself, the words

are well worth remembering. Here is the fuller, St Richard of Chichester, version:

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ
for all the benefits you have given us,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for us.
O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,
may we know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
day by day.**

Know him more clearly. Love him more dearly. Follow him more nearly. A good summary of what it is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Today's Gospel, from the Sermon on the Mount, is not only about the difficult task of loving one's enemies but, the challenge to perfection. 'You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' The path to perfection could easily be described as knowing more clearly, loving more dearly, and following more nearly. It isn't the route that's difficult, it's making progress along the route. The phrase 'be perfect' is striking because perfection is an abstract idea not really in the Hebrew tradition. The closest is the command to be holy: 'Say to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "You shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy"' (Lev 19:2). Where St Matthew says 'be perfect', St Luke, in his version of the saying, has 'Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful' (Lk 6:36). So, we can take our pick: the route to perfection is the road to holiness and discovering mercy and showing mercy are signposts along the way.

Friday of Week 11

17th June

Reading

Matthew 6:7-15 (RSV)

How to pray

Jesus said to his disciples: And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
¹⁰ Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
 On earth as it is in heaven.
¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread;
¹² And forgive us our debts,
 As we also have forgiven our debtors;
¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
 But deliver us from evil.

¹⁴ For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Reflection

YESTERDAY and today, the Gospel readings are from the Sermon on the Mount and concern the three religious duties of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. Today we look more closely at prayer. Praying is at the heart of our relationship with God and it is no surprise that disciples, of whatever Faith, ask their spiritual leaders to teach them how to do it. So it was that Jesus' disciples asked him how to pray. In his answer, he warns against using many words, heaping up empty phrases. He reassures them – and us – that the heavenly Father knows our needs before we ask. And he gives them – and us – the model prayer, the Our Father. So the answer to the question is 'Be still and know that I am God' (as Psalm 46 puts it) and, in the stillness, say the Our Father. No more is needed. No less is needed. Jews were in the habit of praying three times a day the Eighteen Benedictions (known as the '*Amidah*', because they were said standing). Since we find all the phrases of the Our Father in those Benedictions, the Our Father is probably a simpler version, much as Jesus also summed up the Commandments in a simpler version, the twin commandments to love God and our neighbour as ourselves. One of our earliest sources for Christian Prayer is the *Didache* which is probably from

the same time as St Matthew's Gospel. About praying the Lord's Prayer, the *Didache* tells us 'Three times in the day you are so to pray' (8:3).

When we look at the Our Father, we discover that – like the Ten Commandments – it starts with acknowledging God in his holiness. It then moves on to aligning the will of the one who prays with the sovereign will of God. It then makes requests. Central to these requests, (so much so that it is further explained in verse 14-15) is the covenant of forgiveness. God's forgiveness of other (the vertical part of the Cross, if you like) is conditional upon us learning to forgive one another (the horizontal part).

Many struggle with establishing a good routine of prayer. We could do worse than making prayer three times a day part of our rule of life, perhaps saying the Lord's Prayer three times: once in the morning, once at midday, and once in the evening. This automatically happens if we incorporate the Rosary into our devotional life and, of course, attending Mass always includes saying of the Lord's Prayer.