

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

30th May – 5th June 2021



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

WEEK 9 YEAR 1

30th May – 5th June 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

TRINITY SUNDAY			<i>[White]</i>
30th May	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	6pm	Holy Mass	
Monday 31st May	The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary <i>[White]</i>		
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>David & Julie Lazarus (Annie Furlong)</i>
Tuesday 1st June	St Justin, Martyr		<i>[Red]</i>
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>Deceased Relatives and Friends (Julie Lazarus)</i>
Wednesday 2nd June	Of Week 9		<i>[Green]</i>
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>RIP Eithne Naughton (Annie Furlong)</i>
Thursday 3rd June	St Charles Lwanga & Companions		<i>[Red]</i>
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>FM Marguerite Raab 1943</i>
Friday 4th June	Of Week 9		<i>[Green]</i>
	9.15am	Holy Mass	<i>Holy Souls</i>
Saturday 5th June	St Boniface, Religious, Bishop, Martyr		<i>[Red]</i>
	No Mass		
CORPUS CHRISTI			<i>[White]</i>
6th June	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.

Would you
like to join us
as a partner in mission?



IN PRAYER

- ❖ asking God daily for reconciliation and harmony for the whole world
- ❖ bringing to God the needs of people from around the world.

IN ACTION

- ❖ in thinking globally and acting locally
- ❖ sharing your blessings and talents along with us for all in need
- ❖ choosing a simpler life-style in your relationship with people and with all of God's creation

IN TOTAL CONSECRATION

- ❖ working to give your whole life to evangelisation for the Kingdom of God.

Come and see!
Meet us personally!



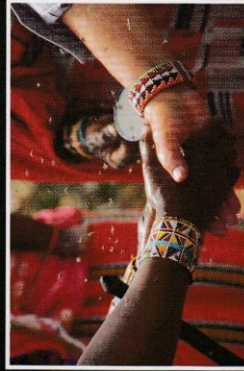
www.comboniane.org

Comboni Missionary Sisters work in Four Continents

United States	Spain	Central Africa Republic
Brazil	Italy	Congo
Equator	United Kingdom	Egypt
Mexico	Kenya	Eritrea
Peru	Uganda	Ethiopia
Costa Rica	Zambia	Mozambique
Colombia	Togo	South Africa
Guatemala	Chad	Sri Lanka
France	Sudan	Jordan
Portugal		Israel
		United Arab Emirates

Comboni

MISSIONARY SISTERS



called by God.
to evangelise...
to build bridges
between people, cultures and
religions...
to set the downtrodden
free.

How to contact us

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151 Ballieston Road, Shettleston
GLASGOW G32 0TG
0141 771 1773

Comboni Missionary Sisters
2 Chiswick Lane
LONDON W4 2JF
020 8994 0449

Who we are...

The Comboni Missionary Sisters are women called by God and consecrated to Him for the mission of evangelization.

The vision of Daniel Comboni lives in us today wherever we are:

- ❖ In Africa where we have our missionary roots;
- ❖ In Europe, America and Asia where we reach out in answer to the signs of the times.

Our traits are:

- ❖ Passion for mission – giving priority to Africa among the most neglected groups.
- ❖ Making “the power of prayer our strength”.
- ❖ We choose to live a simple life-style.
- ❖ We are a religious community made up with members from different cultures. We come from 33 nationalities and work in 30 different countries in four continents.
- ❖ As a community we aim at making common cause with the people wherever we are in our mission.



Our Spirituality

Our spirituality is based on the heritage left to us by the Founder Saint Daniel Comboni:

- ❖ Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus from whom we learn His compassionate and universal love for Humanity.
- ❖ Love of the Cross making our own the sufferings of the people in solidarity with their own situation.

Our Mission

- ❖ We announce the Good News of the universal love of God in Jesus Christ to the people who do not yet know Him, particularly to the most poor and oppressed.
- ❖ We promote the growth of the values of the Kingdom of God already present in Creation and in history.
- ❖ We are women of dialogue and reconciliation: we work as bridges between peoples, cultures, religions, between those who exclude and the excluded.
- ❖ We are committed to missionary awareness in the local churches to communicate the passion for the proclamation of the Gospel, being engaged in the work of Justice & Peace and care of Creation.



Our founder...

St. Daniel Comboni was born in Limone, Italy in 1831. He was ordained a priest in 1854 and went to Africa for the first time in 1857.

- In Africa he worked to:
- ❖ save Africa with Africans.
 - ❖ involve all peoples in collaborating with his vision.
 - ❖ establish missionary institutes of sisters, brothers and priests.

Comboni spent all his energies for Africa and fought against the slavery of his time. In 1877 he was consecrated the first Bishop of Central Africa. He died on 10th October 1881 in Khartoum, Sudan and was canonised on 5th October 2003.



East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

COMBONI MISSIONARY SISTERS

Today we have Sr Aurora Salgado, of the Comboni Missionary Sisters CIO, speaking to us about their work over four continents, bridging cultures and proclaiming the Gospel (see the couple of pages above). There is a second collection today for the Sisters. Please avail yourselves of second collection envelopes, as required. If you put your gift aid number on the 'Comboni' envelope, the charity will benefit. Our thanks to Ramona Frearson for giving hospitality on our behalf to Sr Aurora. As usual, it is possible to bring your contribution next week: mark the envelope 'Comboni'.

CHURCH SERVICES LIVESTREAM

On Sunday 23rd May, there were 327 hits from 113 machines, with 124 remaining on-line long enough to take part in Mass. 91 viewers were from the UK, 8 from Ireland, and 14 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** 30th May, Trinity, follows on the next couple of pages.

YOUNG CATHOLICS

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

TRINITY SUNDAY [B]

Sunday 30th May 2021

God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Matthew 28: 16-20

Jesus appeared to his disciples on a hillside where they had arranged to meet. When they saw him, they fell to their knees and he said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me, and I am sending you out into the world to make disciples of all peoples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey all the commandment I have given to you. Remember that I will always be with you, to the very end of time."

Reflection

Trinity means something made up of three, and today we give thanks for the three persons of God. Who are the three persons who makeup the Holy Trinity and what do we know about them? God the Father created the world and everything in it. He loves us dearly and sent his only son, Jesus, to rescue us from sin.

God the Son is Jesus made human. We know many stories which remind us of his kindness and love for us all. His love was so great he died for us and rose from the dead to save us from sin.

God the Holy Spirit takes many forms: wind, fire or a dove. He is invisible but very powerful. The Spirit fills us with God's life and warms our hearts with the fire of God's love and courage. So, there are three persons but only one God. The Trinity is a mystery which we cannot really understand, but because we know that God can do anything, we believe in this mystery. It is part of our faith.

Closing Prayer

Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end.

Amen



Deut. 4:32-34, 39-40
Psalm 32
Romans 8:14-17
Matthew 28:18-20

Speak, Lord



SUNDAY LITURGY FOR CHILDREN

Year B — Holy Trinity



THE HOLY TRINITY



J _____ agreed

Colour in the letters with a star (*) to reveal the 3 person of the Holy Trinity

to meet the apostles on a



m _____. He said to them,

"Go, make disciples of all  n _____

and baptise them in the name of the

F _____ and of the S _____ and of the

H _____ S _____.

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 JUNE PRAYER INTENTION

Let us pray for young people who are preparing for marriage with the support of a Christian community: may they grow in love, with generosity, faithfulness and patience.

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, Karen Greig, Kitty Teasdale, Mary McNichol, Andrew Gunn, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol, Christine Robinson, Rose

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Recent: Angus Clark

Week 30th May-5th June: Charles John Mulford, Elizabeth Wilkinson, Edward Murphy, Thomas More Eyston, Margaret Rose Raab, David Rogers, Eva O'Connor, Edward Purcell.

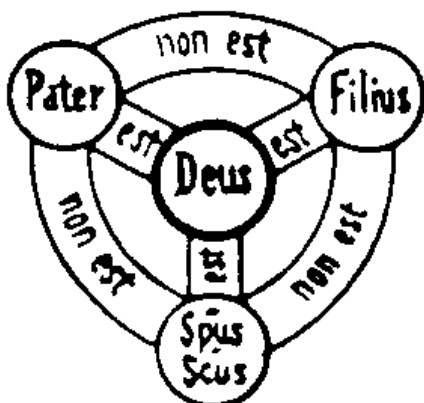
CARMELITE CONFERENCES

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



The Most Holy Trinity (B)

30th May 2021

**Antiphons,
Prayers and
Readings**

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 your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

First Reading

Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40 (RSV)

Moses said to the people: 'For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether such a great thing as this has ever happened or was ever heard of. ³³ Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and still live? ³⁴ Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? ³⁹ Know therefore this day, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. ⁴⁰ Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command you this day, that it may go well with you, and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God gives you for ever.'

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Psalm 150

R/ Alleluia!

Praise God in his holy place,
praise him in his mighty firmament,
Praise him for his powerful deeds,
praise him for his boundless grandeur, **R/Alleluia!**

O praise him with sound of trumpet;
praise him with lute and harp,
Praise him with timbrel and dance;
praise him with strings and pipes, **R/Alleluia!**

O praise him with resounding cymbals;
praise him with clashing of cymbals, alleluia,
Let everything that breathes
praise the Lord, alleluia, **R/ Alleluia!**

Second Reading

Romans 8:14-17 (RSV)

All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' ¹⁶ it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

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. Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 28:16-20 (RSV)

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age.'

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 Sanctissimæ 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 &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 *Gal 4:6*

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

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.

Scripture Reading (Week 9 of Ordinary Time, Year 1)

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

	Zephaniah 3:14-18	Luke 1:39-56
Tuesday	Tobit 1:3; 2:1-14*	Mark 12:1-17*
Wednesday	Tobit 3:1-11, 16-17	Mark 12:18-27
Thursday	Tobit 6:10-11; 7:1, 9-14; 8:4-9	Mark 12:28-34
Friday	Tobit 11:5-17	Mark 12:35-37
Saturday	Tobit 12:1, 5-15, 20a	Mark 12:38-44
CORPUS CHRISTI	Exodus 24:3-8	
	Hebrews 9:11-15	Mark 14:12-16, 22-26

* *adjusted to include readings for both Monday and Tuesday*

SALVE REGINA

SALVE Re-gí-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ, Vi-ta, dul-cé-do, et spes
 nostra, salve. Ad te clamá-mus, éx-su-les, fí-li-i He-væ. Ad te
 suspi-rá-mus, gemén-tes et flen-tes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo,
 Advo-cá-ta nostra, illos tu-os mi-se-ri-cór-des ó-cu-los ad nos con-vér-te.
 Et Je-sum, be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu-i, no-bis post hoc exsíl-li-um
 osténde. O cle-mens: O pi-a: O dulcis Virgo Ma-rí-a.

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 toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! **Amen.**

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

24th – 28th May 2021

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Monday 31st May 2021

Reading

Luke 1:39-56 (RSV)

Mary visits Elizabeth

³⁹ In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechari'ah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.' ⁴⁶ And Mary said,

Mary's Magnificat

'My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
⁴⁸ for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ And his mercy is on those who fear him
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm,
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
⁵² he has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.'

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.

Reflection

Mary's Song of Praise

THE *MAGNIFICAT*, as this Gospel passage from St Luke is called, is a hymn from the mouth of Mary when she visited her cousin Elizabeth. At the time, Elizabeth was six months' pregnant with the son of her old age, John later called 'the Baptist'. Mary's canticle is based on the Song of Hannah, the mother of the Old Testament prophet, Samuel, (1 Sam 2:1-10), but greatly enriched by other biblical allusions, such as the use of phrases from the Psalms. It was customary for Hellenistic historians to use speeches to summarise conversations and events and St Luke shows himself to be such an historian. The importance of the *Magnificat* is that it is a prospectus for the coming Kingdom of God, in which values are turned upside down. This prospectus, together with Our Lady's statement, 'All generations shall call me blessed', is why the canticle forms the climax each day of the Evening Office of Vespers. Mary's words are those of the faithful daughter of Israel. In that sense, she speaks not just for herself but for the whole People of God. God is described in the canticle as 'Lord', 'Saviour', and 'Holy'. Each of these titles has been applied (Luke 1:34, 1:43) or will be applied (2:11) to Jesus. The Child about to be born to Mary is indeed Almighty God.

Tuesday in Week 9 [Year 1]

St Justin, Martyr

1st June

Reading

Tobit 1:3; 2:1-14 (RSV)

Tobit feared God more than he feared the king

1I, Tobit, walked in the ways of truth and righteousness all the days of my life, and I performed many acts of charity to my brethren and countrymen who went with me into the land of the Assyrians, to Nin'evah....

2 When I arrived home and my wife Anna and my son Tobi'as were restored to me, at the feast of Pentecost, which is the sacred festival of the seven weeks, a good dinner was prepared for me and I sat down to eat. **2** Upon seeing the abundance of food I said to my son, 'Go and bring whatever poor man of our brethren you may find who is mindful of the Lord, and I will wait for you.' **3** But he came back and said, 'Father, one of our people has been strangled and thrown into the market place.' **4** So before I tasted anything I sprang up and removed the body to a place of shelter until sunset. **5** And when I returned I washed myself and ate my food in sorrow. **6** Then I remembered the prophecy of Amos, how he said,

'Your feasts shall be turned into mourning,
and all your festivities into lamentation.'

And I wept.

7 When the sun had set I went and dug a grave and buried the body. **8** And my neighbours laughed at me and said, 'He is no longer afraid that he will be put to death for doing this; he once ran away, and here he is burying the dead again!'

9 On the same night I returned from burying him, and because I was defiled I slept by the wall of the courtyard, and my face was uncovered. **10** I did not know that there were sparrows on the wall and their fresh droppings fell into my open eyes and white films formed on my eyes. I went to physicians, but they did not help me. Ahi'kar, however, took care of me until he went to Elyma'is.

Tobit's Wife Earns Their Livelihood

¹¹ Then my wife Anna earned money at women's work. ¹² She used to send the product to the owners. Once when they paid her wages, they also gave her a kid; ¹³ and when she returned to me it began to bleat. So I said to her, 'Where did you get the kid? It is not stolen, is it? Return it to the owners; for it is not right to eat what is stolen.' ¹⁴ And she said, 'It was given to me as a gift in addition to my wages.' But I did not believe her, and told her to return it to the owners; and I blushed for her. Then she replied to me, 'Where are your charities and your righteous deeds? You seem to know everything!'

Reflection

THE BOOK of Tobit is a fictional work, a novella, which is why, perhaps, even though its original language was probably Aramaic, it was not accepted into the Hebrew Canon. It was written early in the second century BC and comes from very much the same background as Sirach, which we were looking at last week. There are two Greek translations of the work, of which there are both Aramaic and Hebrew fragments, and the Book of Tobit probably originated in the Jewish Diaspora. Pervading the book is prayer – in the form of spirituality and texts of prayers. The reader knows – but Tobit and Tobias do not know – that Raphael is an angel. As well as prayer and fasting, almsgiving is commended as being better than wealth and is the way to 'a full life' (Tobit 12:8-9). As Tobit's wife, Anna, says challengingly at the end of today's reading 'Where are your charities and your righteous deeds?' This is the humane Jewish culture of godliness, shown as caring for those less fortunate.

Wednesday in Week 9 [*Year 1*]

Reading

Tobit 3:1-11, 16-17 (RSV)

Tobit's Prayer

³ Then in my grief I wept, and I prayed in anguish, saying, ² 'Righteous are you, O Lord; all your deeds and all your ways are mercy and truth, and you render true and righteous judgment for ever. ³ Remember me and look favourably upon me; do not punish me for my sins and for my unwitting offences and those which my fathers committed before you. ⁴ For they disobeyed your commandments, and you gave us over to plunder, captivity, and death; you made us a byword of reproach in all the nations

among which we have been dispersed. ⁵ And now your many judgments are true in exacting penalty from me for my sins and those of my fathers, because we did not keep your commandments. For we did not walk in truth before you. ⁶ And now deal with me according to your pleasure; command my spirit to be taken up, that I may depart and become dust. For it is better for me to die than to live, because I have heard false reproaches, and great is the sorrow within me. Command that I now be released from my distress to go to the eternal abode; do not turn your face away from me.'

Sarah Falsely Accused

⁷ On the same day, at Ecbat'ana in Media, it also happened that Sarah, the daughter of Rag'uel, was reproached by her father's maids, ⁸ because she had been given to seven husbands, and the evil demon Asmode'us had slain each of them before he had been with her as his wife. So the maids said to her, 'Do you not know that you strangle your husbands? You already have had seven and have had no benefit from any of them. ⁹ Why do you beat us? If they are dead, go with them! May we never see a son or daughter of yours!'

Sarah's Prayer for Death

¹⁰ When she heard these things she was deeply grieved, even to the thought of hanging herself. But she said, 'I am the only child of my father; if I do this, it will be a disgrace to him, and I shall bring his old age down in sorrow to the grave.' ¹¹ So she prayed by her window and said, 'Blessed are you, O Lord my God, and blessed is your holy and honoured name for ever. May all your works praise you for ever...

¹⁶ The prayer of both was heard in the presence of the glory of the great God. ¹⁷ And Raph'ael was sent to heal the two of them: to scale away the white films of Tobit's eyes; to give Sarah the daughter of Rag'uel in marriage to Tobit's son as the son of Tobit, and to bind Asmode'us the evil demon, because Tobit's son was entitled to possess her. At that very moment Tobit returned and entered his house and Sarah the daughter of Rag'uel came down from her upper room.

Reflection

IN CHAPTER 2, Tobit and his family were preparing to celebrate the Jewish feast of Weeks, the 49 days before the fiftieth day, which we call Pentecost, the feast we are also celebrating this week. We heard the story yesterday about how Tobit becomes defiled by handling a dead body and loses his

sight. In today's reading from Chapter 3, we hear Tobit's prayer of desperation, and the story of the hapless widow Sarah, a new character in the story, falsely accused by her maid of murdering several husbands, all of whom seem to have perished on their wedding night. (It may seem strange to us that Sarah was much-married: here we meet the practice of endogamous marriage – marrying within the clan). The angel Raphael is sent by God to heal not only Tobit's sight but also to bring resolution to the plight of Sarah. We are here encountering not only the difficulties of everyday life – illness, depression, bereavement, false accusation – but the supernatural struggle between good and evil. The archangel Raphael, the healer, deals with Asmode'us the evil demon.

Thursday in Week 9 [*Year 1*]

St Charles Lwanga & Companions, Martyr

1st June

Reading

Tobit 6:10-11; 7:1, 9-14; 8:4-9 (RSV)

The Lord brought you so that Sarah might be assigned to you as your Wife

¹⁰ [Raphael and Tobit entered Media and had nearly reached Ecbatana when Raphael] said to the young man, 'Brother, today we shall stay with Rag'uel. He is your relative, and he has an only daughter named Sarah. I will suggest that she be given to you in marriage, ¹¹ because you are entitled to her and to her inheritance, for you are her only eligible kinsman. ¹² The girl is also beautiful and sensible. Now listen to my plan. I will speak to her father, and as soon as we return from Rages we will celebrate the marriage. For I know that Rag'uel, according to the law of Moses, cannot give her to another man without incurring the penalty of death, because you rather than any other man are entitled to the inheritance.'...

Arrival at Home of Raguel

7 When they reached Ecbat'ana and arrived at the house of Rag'uel, Sarah met them and greeted them. They returned her greeting, and she brought them into the house....

⁹ So he communicated the proposal to Rag'uel. And Rag'uel said to Tobi'as, 'Eat, drink, and be merry; ¹⁰ for it is your right to take my child. But let me explain the true situation to you. ¹¹ I have given my daughter to seven

husbands, and when each came to her he died in the night. But for the present be merry.' And Tobi'as said, 'I will eat nothing here until you make a binding agreement with me.' ¹² So Rag'uel said, 'Take her right now, in accordance with the law. You are her relative, and she is yours. The merciful God will guide you both for the best.' ¹³ Then he called his daughter Sarah, and taking her by the hand he gave her to Tobi'as to be his wife, saying, 'Here she is; take her according to the law of Moses, and take her with you to your father.' And he blessed them. ¹⁴ Next he called his wife Edna, and took a scroll and wrote out the contract; and they set their seals to it.

8 ... ⁴ When the door was shut and the two were alone, Tobi'as got up from the bed and said, 'Sister, get up, and let us pray that the Lord may have mercy upon us.' ⁵ And Tobi'as began to pray,

'Blessed are you, O God of our fathers,
and blessed be your holy and glorious name for ever.
Let the heavens and all your creatures bless you.
⁶ You made Adam and gave him Eve his wife
as a helper and support.
From them the race of mankind has sprung.
You said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone;
let us make a helper for him like himself.'

⁷ And now, O Lord, I am not taking this sister of mine because of lust, but with sincerity. Grant that I may find mercy and may grow old together with her.' ⁸ And she said with him, 'Amen.' ⁹ Then they both went to sleep for the night.

Reflection

SOMETIMES in the Lectionary we find ourselves stringing together extracts, as it were speed-reading through books. There is much to be said for getting out the Bible and reading the chapters in full, filling in the missing bits. But today's reading skips through chapters 6, 7, and 8 of the Book of Tobit, drawing together verses to distil a particular story. It is the story of the marriage of Tobias with Sarah, the daughter of Tobit's relative Raguel, and widow of seven husbands. We are reminded of the story in the Gospels when the Sadducees questioned Jesus about the wife of seven brothers, asking whom she would be married to in the after-life (Mk 12:20 and parallels). Tobias is a good and holy man who, before his wedding night, asks his wife to join him in prayer, blessing God for creating Adam and Eve as companions and for the increase of humankind. It is a morality

tale: seven of Sarah's husbands died on their wedding night, each the victim of the evil demon Asmode'us, and then we have Tobias who entrusts himself, Sarah, and their relationship to the Providence of God.

Friday in Week 9

4th June

Reading

Tobit 11:5-17 (RSV)

Tobit's Sight Restored

⁵ Now Anna sat looking intently down the road for her son. ⁶ And she caught sight of him coming, and said to his father, 'Behold, your son is coming, and so is the man who went with him!'

⁷ Raph'ael said, 'I know, Tobi'as, that your father will open his eyes. ⁸ You therefore must anoint his eyes with the gall; and when they smart he will rub them, and will cause the white films to fall away, and he will see you.'

⁹ Then Anna ran to meet them, and embraced her son, and said to him, 'I have seen you, my child; now I am ready to die.' And they both wept. ¹⁰ Tobit started toward the door, and stumbled. But his son ran to him ¹¹ and took hold of his father, and he sprinkled the gall upon his father's eyes, saying, 'Be of good cheer, father.' ¹² And when his eyes began to smart he rubbed them, ¹³ and the white films scaled off from the corners of his eyes. ¹⁴ Then he saw his son and embraced him, and he wept and said, 'Blessed are you, O God, and blessed is your name for ever, and blessed are all your holy angels. ¹⁵ For you have afflicted me, but you have had mercy upon me; here I see my son Tobi'as!' And his son went in rejoicing, and he reported to his father the great things that had happened to him in Media.

¹⁶ Then Tobit went out to meet his daughter-in-law at the gate of Nin'eveh, rejoicing and praising God. Those who saw him as he went were amazed because he could see. ¹⁷ And Tobit gave thanks before them that God had been merciful to him. When Tobit came near to Sarah his daughter-in-law, he blessed her, saying, 'Welcome, daughter! Blessed is God who has brought you to us, and blessed are your father and your mother.' So there was rejoicing among all his brethren in Nin'eveh.

Reflection

IN TOBIT 11, Anna reappears. Instead of referring to Tobias as 'my son', she now says to Tobit 'Behold, your son'. She is confident that Tobit's blindness will be healed, and Raphael and Tobias set about restoring Tobit's sight. It is Tobias who performs the healing action for his father but it is at the instruction of Raphael. No one yet knows, of course, that Raphael is the archangel of God and that Raphael means 'God heals'. It is in Chapter 12, when they try to repay Raphael (whom they know as Azariah, a kinsman of Tobit), that they discover will who he is. The repayment required is not money but the duty of praise and thanksgiving, which in the Hebrew tradition is a corporate activity. The archangel has been sent by God not only to come to their aid but also to present their prayers and charitable deeds to God, having put the family to the test. The immediate benefit of Tobit regaining his sight is that he can see his daughter-in-law, Sarah, for the first time. With Sarah free of her demon, Tobit healed of his blindness, and Tobias and Sarah joined together in matrimony, the stage is set for much feasting.

XX

June is the Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Meditation by St Thérèse of Lisieux

I need a heart burning with tenderness,
Who will be my support for ever,
Who loves everything in me, even my weakness...
And who never leaves me day or night.
I could find no creature
Who could always love me day or night.
I could find no creature
Who could always love me and never die.
I must have a God who takes on my nature
And becomes my brother and is able to suffer!
You heard me, only Friend whom I love.
To ravish my heart, you became man.
You shed your blood, what a supreme mystery!
O heart of Jesus, treasure of tenderness,
You yourself are my happiness, my only hope.
You who knew how to charm my tender youth,
Stay near me till the last night...
Ah! I know well, all our righteousness
Is worthless in your sight.
To give value to my sacrifices,
I want to cast them into your Divine Heart.
You did not find your angels without blemish.
In the midst of lightning you gave your law!
I hide myself in your Sacred Heart, Jesus.
I do not fear, my virtue is you!