

DEANERY OF ST EDMUND CAMPION

ENGLISH MARTYRS—

VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE PASTORAL AREA

www.portsmouthdiocese3.org.uk

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

Week 17C *Per Annum*

24th – 31st July 2022



WEEK 17 YEAR 2

24th – 31st July 2022

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthendred
St Mary's is usually open each day from 9am until late afternoon.

SUNDAY 17C Per Annum [GREEN]

24th July **9.30am** **Parish Mass**
 11.15am **Holy Mass** (St Patrick's)
 6pm **Holy Mass** *Grandparents*

Monday 25th July **St James, Apostle** [Red]
 9.15am **Holy Mass** *FM Edward Woods 1937*

Tuesday 26th July SS Joachim & Anne, Parents of Our Lady [White]
 9.15am Holy Mass
 In Thanksgiving (Annie Furlong)

Wednesday 27th July *Of Week 17* [Green]
 9.15am Holy Mass *FM Fanny Gorton 1937*

Thursday 28th July *Of Week 17* [Green]
 9.15am Holy Mass *FM Charles Gorton 1937*

Friday 29th July SS Mary, Mary, & Lazarus [White]
 8.30am Holy Mass (Hendred House) *Holy Souls*

Saturday 30th July *Our Lady St Mary on Saturday* [White]
 No Mass

SUNDAY 18C Per Annum [Green]

31st July **9.30am** **Parish Mass**
 11.15am **Holy Mass** (St Patrick's)
 6pm **Holy Mass**

CONTACT DETAILS

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office@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk is monitored by the Parish Secretary.

Reflection

Last Sunday, 17th July 2022, Sunday 16C, there was a baptism and simple talk at the 9.30am Mass. The following homily was preached at the 6pm Mass and is printed here for general availability

It was God's purpose to reveal [the message which was a mystery hidden for generations and centuries] to [his saints] and to show all the rich glory of this mystery to pagans. The mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory: this is the Christ we proclaim... *Colossians 1:27-28*

WHAT is the Word of God in the Sunday readings telling us? All three readings are about eating together. Abraham's three mysterious visitors, captured famously in Rublev's icon, are given the finest veal, cream and milk, and loaves made from three bushels of flour. He greets them as *Adonai*, lords, sirs. Jewish tradition is that this plural address - *Adonai*, lords - is the way to address the One God. As Abraham entertains this three-person Lord, he learns that his wife, Sarah, will be fruitful in her old age. In the Gospel reading, Mary and Martha are similarly entertaining the Lord for a meal. They learn that the path of contemplation is better even than the path of service. Without contemplation, the presence of the Lord is not discerned. Without service, the festive meal - the point of true encounter - never happens. In between these two meals, there is a third.

It was God's purpose to reveal the message... to [his saints] and to show all the rich glory of this mystery to pagans.

How do we know that this too is a meal? Simply that the mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory. As Catholic

Christians we are in no doubt that it is when we celebrate the Eucharist that the mystery is revealed to the saints. We are in no doubt that the mystery is Christ among us, our hope of glory and we are in no doubt that our task is to welcome all and sundry, from the highways and hedges, from what the Jerusalem Bible calls 'the crossroads in the town' to sit down at the great feast.

Entertaining the Lord in our midst. Contemplation. Service. Proclamation. What challenges us in the Church is the question whether these things are done in such a way as to point to the God who honours them. Too often we lose our *sense* of awe, we lose our sense of contemplation, or where all is inward-looking, self-preoccupied, without service of others, or proclamation. We are not called upon to find new and ingenious ways of doing some of these things. We are called upon simply to do all of them, as faithfully and well as we can. In the words of Proverbs 29, it is where there is no vision that the people perish.

We live in a culture that is changing very fast, in a church which shrinks and grows in bewildering ways. Amidst this we can pause and confidently restate our text.

It was God's purpose to reveal [the message which was a mystery hidden for generations and centuries] to [his saints] and to show all the rich glory of this mystery to pagans. The mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory: this is the Christ we proclaim... *Colossians 1:27-28*

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S JULY PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for the elderly, who represent the roots and memory of a people; may their experience and wisdom help young people to look towards the future with hope and responsibility.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTIONS

Sunday 24 th	Community of St John Vianney, Wantage
Monday 25 th	Parish of St James, Reading
Tuesday 26 th	Parish of St Anne, Brockenhurst
Wednesday 27 th	Parish of St Joseph, Grayshott
Thursday 28 th	Parish of Our Lady of the Assumption & St Edward the Confessor, Lyndhurst
Friday 29 th	Community of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, St Sampson, Guernsey
Saturday 30 th	Diocesan Council of Priests

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 24th - 30th July: Theresa Ayles, Susan Little, Hilda Rita Hyde, Kenneth Albert Keble, Geroge Basil Eyston, James Matthew Lineham.

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY

(from the Marriage and Family team)

Last year Pope Francis decided to institute a Church-wide celebration of a World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. He declared it will be held on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the liturgical memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. This year the Second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly falls on **Sunday 24th July**, with the theme; *"In old age they will still bear fruit"* (Psalm 92:15).

Grandparents and the Elderly can be a great witness into living out their vocation and what God's call is for them, but also advise our younger people discerning theirs. It's also important to think of and pray in thanksgiving to those who have inspired us in our lives, who may not be us anymore. For more information and resources please go to the national website: <https://www.ukvocation.org/grandparentsday>

COFFEE IN ST MARY'S PARISH ROOMS

Coffee &c after the 9.30am Mass. Thanks to the coffee team who are anxious to recruit one or two more. Speak to Francica Kilgarriff if you are able to help.



Did you know that CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, helps some of the poorest and most marginalised people across the world? We can reach so many people because we are a member of *Caritas Internationalis*, the Catholic Church network with a presence in 165 countries. Our local experts work with people over the long-term, helping them to have the right skills, tools and opportunities to live with dignity and support their families. For example, in South Sudan we are helping families learn how to farm better as the climate gets hotter, so that they can cope better in the future when things get even more difficult. Thank you for your support. Why not consider volunteering for CAFOD? We are looking for school volunteers to deliver assemblies and workshops please contact Jo on portsmouth@cafod.org.uk for more information.

FR ANDREW ON 'CLOSER TO CHRIST' CAMPAIGN

Why 'Closer to Christ'? Because it is part of the Bishop's project to 're-set' the diocese, increasing its spiritual energy and revitalising its resources. Our own 're-boot' in Hendred, as I have called it, is part of that process. We have now begun work on the campaign in the parish. The difficulties of the last few years – 2008, the Pandemic, the Cost of Living squeeze – have caused havoc in the diocese and much loose plate giving remains very low – a pound or two here and there. Here in Hendred we have been blessed by considerable stability, though even now we are not yet back 'in the black'. If we reach or exceed our target in this campaign, at least a third of the funds are for the parish, funds we badly need to repay our debts and come out of 'the red'. The remaining two-thirds will support the training of seminarians (i.e. future priests), housing and financial support for retired priests (i.e. past parish priests), and other parishes and clergy, a much better scenario than seeing churches closed and buildings sold off. The good news is that early results show great optimism and good returns. We are having some preliminary meetings with as many as I can manage to see (regardless of personal means which remain unknown to me). Further meetings are planned for 26th July, 27th July, and 2nd August. After that there will be a general launch to the parish. Thank you very much for your help.

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 17th July 2022, 179 people viewed, 56 machines looking only at St Mary's. 30 of these were in the UK, 21 from eight other countries. 114 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

On Sunday 14th August we shall celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady, the Feast of Dedication and Title of St Mary's. Mass at 11am, followed by a Parish Barbecue in the Garden at The Wheatsheaf, East Hendred. The barbecue is £15 per adult, £20 for families. Free for accompanied children.

CLERGY MANOEUVRES

We shall be saying farewell to Fr Phillip Harris at the end of August as he moves from Didcot and Wallingford to be Parish Priest of Hook. In his place we shall welcome Fr Dominic Adeiza who comes to us from Basingstoke.

CARMELITES ON BOARS HILL

I wonder if we take for granted the precious resource on our doorstep! The Carmelite Friars on Boars Hill <https://www.carmelite.uk.net/> run courses and retreats both on site and on line. Worth keeping an eye on!

CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Though Children's Church is now closed for the summer holidays we are planning and thinking about the autumn. Have a word with Veronica or Libby if you would like to help.

PARENTS AND TODDLERS' GROUP

It would be great to enable and welcome a Parents' and Toddlers' Group and we now have a first-rate, air-conditioned environment for such a group. The advantage of such groups is that they more or less run themselves. If anyone is interested in such a venture, have a word with Fr Andrew.

YOUNG CATHOLIC ADULT NETWORK

9th –11th September 2022, Durham University. A conference to think about the Catholic calling to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Benedictines, Dominicans, SVP, CAFOD, Aid to the Church in Need, and Catholic Voices. For further information <https://youngcatholicadultnetwork.uk/>

FLAME

Flame, the largest youth gathering of Catholics, is taking place at the OVO Arena, Wembley on Saturday 4th March 2023, with the theme 'Rise Up!' All young people, whether from the parish, at school (Year 9 or older), or at university are welcome. Loud music, bright lights, moments of stillness..... Any questions? Contact youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or phone 07780 221686.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2023

Those aged 16 or above by July 2023 are invited to join with like-minded young people from across the diocese to journey on pilgrimage to Lisbon for World Youth Day. This is a life-changing experience for all those who accept the invitation and this pilgrimage, led by Bishop Philip, is set to be the best one yet! But hurry, spaces are limited! Plans are in the early stages, but we will provide more information and details as soon as possible. For further information, see the posters in church, or please email wyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish



Sunday 17 (C)

24th July 2022

**Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Deus in loco sancto suo

God is in his holy place, God unites those who dwell in his house; he himself gives might and strength to his people.

Cf Ps 68:6-7, 36

Collect

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure. 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

Genesis 18:20-32(RSV)

The Lord said, 'Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry which has come to me; and if not, I will know.' So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham still stood before the Lord. Then Abraham drew near, and said, 'Will you indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' And the Lord said, 'If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.' Abraham answered, 'Behold, I have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of

the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?' And he said, 'I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.' Again he spoke to him, and said, 'Suppose forty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of forty I will not do it.' Then he said, 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak. Suppose thirty are found there.' He answered, 'I will not do it, if I find thirty there.' He said, 'Behold, I have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it. Then he said, 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.'

Psalm 138:1-3, 6-8 *R/cf 3*

Tone II.1

R/ On the day I called | you answered me, O Lord.

I thank you, Lord, with all *my* heart,
 you have heard the words *of* my mouth.
 In the presence of the angels I *praise* you.
 I bow down toward your ho-*ly* tem-ple. *R/*

I give thanks to your name ~
 for your merciful love and your faith-*ful*-ness.
 You have exalted your name *o*-ver all.
 On the day I called, you an-*s*wered me;
 you increased the strength *of* my soul. *R/*

The Lord is high, yet he looks on the *low*-ly,
 And the haughty he knows *from* a-far.
 You give me life though I walk amid af-*flic*-tion;
 You stretch out your hand against the anger *of* my foes. *R/*

You stretch out your hand against the anger of *my* foes.
 With your right hand you save me; ~
 the Lord will accomplish *this* for me.
 O Lord, your merciful love is e-*ter*-nal;
 discard not the work *of* your hands. *R/*

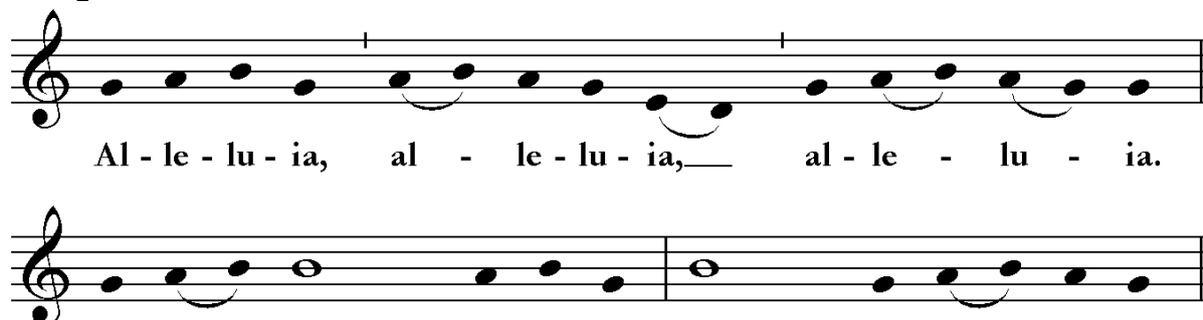
Second Reading

Colossians 2:12-14(RSV)

Brethren: you were buried with Christ in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made

alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, having cancelled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Gospel Acclamation



The Word was made flesh and lived a - mong us :
to all who did accept him he gave power to become *chil-dren* of God.

Gospel

Luke 11:1-13 (RSV)

At that time: Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' And he said to them, 'When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation.' ' And he said to them, 'Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything'? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the offerings which we bring from the abundance of your gifts, that through the powerful working of your grace these most sacred mysteries may sanctify our present way of life and lead us to eternal gladness. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface I

De mysterio paschali et de populo Dei

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord. For through his Paschal Mystery, he accomplished the marvellous deed, by which he has freed us from the yoke of sin and death, summoning us to the glory of being now called a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for your own possession, to proclaim everywhere your mighty works, for you have called us out of darkness into your own wonderful light. And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

Communion Antiphon

Benedic, anima mea

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits. *Ps 103:1*

Prayer after Communion

We have consumed, O Lord, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation. Through Christ our Lord.

Salve Regina

Liturgical Hymns 597

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 17 [II] *Per Annum*)

Monday	Jeremiah 13:1-11	Matthew 13:31-35
Tuesday	Jeremiah 14:17-22	Matthew 13:36-43
Wednesday	Jeremiah 15:10, 16-21	Matthew 13:44-46
Thursday	Jeremiah 18: 1-6	Matthew 13:47-53
Friday	Jeremiah 26:1-9	Matthew 13:54-58
Saturday	Jeremiah 26:11-16, 24	Matthew 14:1-12

SUNDAY 18 C **Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23**

Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

Luke 12:13-21

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July is the Month of the Precious Blood

Litany of the Precious Blood

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

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

Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

**Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.**

God the Father of 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.**

Blood of Christ, only-begotten Son of the eternal Father, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, Incarnate Word or God, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, of the New and Eternal Testament, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, falling upon the earth in Agony, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, shed profusely in the Scourging, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, flowing forth in the Crowning with Thorns, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, price of our salvation, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, without which there is no forgiveness, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, Eucharistic drink and refreshment of souls, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, stream of mercy, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, victor over demons, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, courage of Martyrs, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, strength of Confessors, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, bringing forth Virgins, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, help of those in peril, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, relief of the burdened, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, solace in sorrow, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, hope of the penitent, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, consolation of the dying, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, peace and tenderness of hearts, **save us.**

Blood of Christ, pledge of eternal life, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, freeing souls from purgatory, **save us.**
Blood of Christ, most worthy of all glory and honour, **save us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us, O Lord.

V/ You have redeemed us, O Lord, by your Blood.
R/ And made us a kingdom for our God.

Almighty and eternal God, you have appointed your only-begotten Son Redeemer of the world and willed to be satisfied by his blood. Grant, we beseech you, that we may worthily worship this the price of our salvation and through its power be so safeguarded from the evils of the present life that we may rejoice in its fruits for ever in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

This Litany in honour of Jesus in His Most Precious Blood was drawn up by the Sacred Congregation of Rites and promulgated by Pope John XXIII on February 24, 1960. The devotion to Jesus in His most Precious Blood was first popularized by Saint Gaspar del Bufalo (1786-1837) who founded the Missioners of the Most Precious Blood. A partial Indulgence is granted to the faithful who recite this litany.

July is the Month of the Precious Blood

Constant Prayer of St Catherine of Siena

Precious Blood, ocean of divine mercy: flow upon us!
Precious Blood, most pure offering: procure us every grace!
Precious Blood, hope and refuge of sinners: atone for us!
Precious Blood, delight of holy souls: draw us! Amen

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

25th – 29th July 2022

St James, Apostle

Monday 25th July 2022

St James the Great was the son of Zebedee and was called along with his brother St John. Along with St Peter and St John he was in the 'inner circle', witnessing the Transfiguration (Mt 17) and the Agony in the Garden (Mt 26). He was condemned by King Herod Agrippa and beheaded in AD 44. He was the first of the twelve to be martyred. A legend associates him with a preaching mission to Galicia (Spain), hence the *camino* and shrine of Santiago de Compostela.

Collect for St James

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, who consecrated the first fruits of your Apostles by the blood of St James: grant, we pray, that your Church may be strengthened by his confession of faith and constantly sustained by his protection. 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.

Reading

Matthew 20:20-28 (RSV)

The Request of the Mother of James and John

²⁰Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee came up to Jesus, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. ²¹And he

said to her, 'What do you want?' She said to him, 'Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.' ²² But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' ²³ He said to them, 'You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.' ²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. ²⁶ It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; ²⁸ even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'

Reflection

THE REQUEST of the Mother of James and John in Matthew 20 corresponds to a similar passage in St Mark (Mk 10:35ff) but in St Mark it is the disciples themselves, rather than their mother, who make the outrageous request. It is outrageous not just because it is jockeying for position – which is the very thing which runs counter to the teaching of Jesus – but because it completely misunderstands how things will be in the Kingdom of Heaven. In both accounts – Matthew and Mark – Jesus confronts James and John with what faces them – the cup of suffering. So we not only discover how the way ahead is likely to work out, consonant with the vocation of Israel to be God's suffering servant, but we also find emphasised the underlying Kingdom values 'whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave' (Mt 20:26-27).

Collect for Week 17

O GOD, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure. 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.

Tuesday in Week 17 [Year 2]

26th July

Reading

Jeremiah 14:17-22 (RSV)

The Great Drought: the People plead for Mercy

The LORD said to Jeremiah:

You shall say to them this word:

'Let my eyes run down with tears night and day,
and let them not cease,

for the virgin daughter of my people is smitten with a great
wound, with a very grievous blow.

¹⁸ If I go out into the field,
behold, those slain by the sword!

And if I enter the city,
behold, the diseases of famine!

For both prophet and priest ply their trade through the land,
and have no knowledge.'

¹⁹ 'Have you utterly rejected Judah?
Does your soul loathe Zion?

Why have you smitten us
so that there is no healing for us?

We looked for peace, but no good came;
for a time of healing, but behold, terror.

²⁰ We acknowledge our wickedness, O LORD,

and the iniquity of our fathers,
for we have sinned against you.
²¹ Do not spurn us, for your name's sake;
do not dishonour your glorious throne;
remember and do not break your covenant with us.
²² Are there any among the false gods of the nations that can
bring rain? Or can the heavens give showers?
Are you not he, O LORD our God?
We set our hope on you, for you do all these things.

Reflection

IN JEREMIAH, chapter 14, today's First Reading, we hear of the great drought which the people are suffering. The laments of the people are shared by the Lord's own laments and the laments of Jeremiah the prophet. Why is it that, when the people turn to the Lord in need, he is unable or unwilling to help them? Nothing, it seems, can avert the disaster which threatens to overwhelm them and which, as it happens, does overwhelm them. The analysis here is that it is the people's apostasy, their lack of faithfulness, which is the root cause. This disaster is a very particular example of what remains a problem for us in every age and culture. The question is 'who does God let bad things happen to good people?' We are no longer inclined to say that when bad things happen – drought, earthquake, famine, fire, flood, plague – God is punishing us. Sometimes the results of natural disasters reflect human sinfulness – inadequate construction, poor distribution, inadequate healthcare – and blaming God is simply escaping human social responsibility. The world we live in is God's creation and it is with his help that men and women of goodwill can create caring responses to the consequences of the way things happen in nature. Jesus himself addressed this problem in Luke 13:4 'Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Silo'am fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who dwelt in Jerusalem?'

Wednesday in Week 17 [Year 2]

27th July

Reading

Jeremiah 15:10, 16-24 (RSV)

Jeremiah complains again and is reassured

¹⁰ Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me... ¹⁶ Your words were found, and I ate them,

and your words became to me a joy

and the delight of my heart;

for I am called by your name,

O LORD, God of hosts...

¹⁷ I did not sit in the company of merry-makers,
nor did I rejoice;

I sat alone, because your hand was upon me,
for you had filled me with indignation.

¹⁸ Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?

Will you be to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail?

¹⁹ Therefore thus says the LORD:

'If you return, I will restore you,
and you shall stand before me.

If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,
you shall be as my mouth.

They shall turn to you,
but you shall not turn to them.

²⁰ And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;

they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,

for I am with you
to save you and deliver you,
says the LORD.

²¹ I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.'

Reflection

PART of Jeremiah's endearing humanity is his sense of unworthiness. The prophetic task laid upon him is too much for him, he thinks. He is daunted and afraid and, in the true Hebrew tradition, complains to God in forthright fashion. There are obvious similarities to the life and teaching of Jesus, though only in the wilderness of temptation and Gethsemane do we see signs that Jesus may be overwhelmed by his task. Speaking his mind to God, God replies to him with an oracle of encouragement. We may feel that we are beset on every side and in danger of collapsing under the strain of whatever burden we are trying to shoulder but we are never tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13).

Thursday in Week 17 [Year 2]

28th July

Reading

Jeremiah 18:1-6

The Potter and the Clay

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² 'Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' ³ So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴ And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.

⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁶ 'O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? says the LORD. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.'

Reflection

ONE OF the many songs produced in recent decades and much used in Catholic worship is 'Abba, Abba, Father, you are the potter, we are the clay, the work of your hands'. It is an appealing image: Jeremiah is invited to watch a potter at work. The worship song is a little sentimental: God moulds us and we are his handiwork. The biblical reference, though, is to God breaking us and remoulding us, much as a potter, with a badly-cast pot, starts again. The house of Israel is to be

reworked 'into another vessel as it seemed good to the potter to do.' As is so often the case, the image works both for the Church and for the individual. God's people are re-moulded and fashioned, as time goes on, and so is each one of us in our lives.

Friday in Week 17 [Year 2]

29th July

SS Martha, Mary, & Lazarus

St Martha was the sister of Mary and Lazarus. Her house at Bethany was a place where the Lord often stayed. There is a tradition that Martha was driven out of Palestine and ended up in Provence (France).

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, whose Son was pleased to be welcomed to Saint Martha's house as a guest: grant, we pray, that through her intercession, serving Christ faithfully in our brothers and sisters, we may merit to be received by you in the halls of heaven. 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.

Reading

John 11:19-27

'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God'

Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary sat in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² And even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.' ²³ Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' ²⁴ Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' ²⁵ Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life;^[a] he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and whoever lives and

believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' ²⁷ She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.'

Reflection

WE TURN today to the stories about St Martha, sister of Mary and Lazarus. The household were clearly friends of Jesus and he was a frequent visitor. There are two stories. One is the one we have just had as the Gospel reading. The second is an alternative reading from St Luke's Gospel. In the story in Luke, the two sisters, Martha and Mary, behave very differently. Mary sits at the Lord's feet to learn from him whilst Martha busies herself in the kitchen. In more innocent days, Martha was portrayed as a 'housewife', a model for women looking after their homes. That kind of conventional domestic portrait is now, rather unfairly, seen sometimes, as anti-feminist though, in the Gospel narrative, it is giving legitimacy and respect to the role many women have played and continue to play. Martha's mistake is to tell the Lord that he should be asking Mary to help her with the cooking and serving. The Lord gently chides Martha for worrying and fretting over many things and tells her that Mary has chosen the better part and should be left to her contemplation. In short, both the active and the contemplative lives are endorsed by Jesus, though contemplation is the higher calling.

The other story about Martha and Mary is the one in today's Gospel reading. We now see another side to Martha. She is recognisably the same woman: as in the story in St Luke, she speaks sharply to Jesus. If he had got there on time, Lazarus would never have died. This leads to another exchange: Martha is able to profess her faith in the Messiah, one of the high points in the Gospels. Jesus tells her that he is the resurrection and the life and that those who believe in him will never die. It's a pity, sometimes, that we can't hear two Gospel readings. In this case, there is plenty to reflect on in each.