

East Hendred Catholic Parish

After Epiphany

16th – 23rd January 2022

Week 2



The Marriage at Cana

After Epiphany

16th-23rd January 2022

WEEK 2 [YEAR 2]

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

St Mary's is usually open each day from 9am until late afternoon.

Sunday 16th January	SECOND SUNDAY <i>Per Annum</i> (Year C) <i>Day of Prayer for Peace</i>	[GREEN]
	9.30am Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am Mass at St Patrick's	
	12.30pm Holy Baptism	<i>Francesca Kate Evans</i>
	6pm Holy Mass	<i>Peace in the World</i>
	<i>(Readings: Ordinary Time Year 2: Week 1)</i>	
Monday 17th January	St Anthony of Egypt, Abbot	[White]
	9.15am Holy Mass	<i>Naughton Family (Annie Furlong)</i>
	<i>18th-25th January: Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity</i>	
Tuesday 18th January	<i>Of Christian Unity</i>	[Purple]
	9.15am Holy Mass	<i>Local Christian bodies</i>
Wednesday 19th January	<i>St Wulstan, Religious, Bishop</i>	[White]
	9.15am Holy Mass	<i>FM Col. S.V Daughlish 1925</i>
Thursday 20th January	<i>Of Week 2</i>	[Green]
	9.15am Holy Mass	
	<i>RIP Janina Krokowska [1st Anniversary](Julie Lazarus)</i>	
Friday 21st January	St Agnes, Virgin, Martyr	[Red]
	9.15am Holy Mass	<i>RIP Sheila Shepherd (Leo Shepherd)</i>
Saturday 22nd January	<i>Our Lady St Mary on Saturday</i>	[White]
	<i>No Mass</i>	
Sunday 23rd January	THIRD SUNDAY <i>Per Annum</i> (Year C)	[GREEN]
	9.30am Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am Mass at St Patrick's	
	6pm Holy Mass	<i>Christian Unity</i>

CONTACT DETAILS

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Reflection Born of the Virgin Mary (7)

An Extract from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Concluding a series of seven reflections on the Blessed Virgin Mary in extracts from the Catholic Catechism, this is the summary given in the Catechism.

IN BRIEF

508 From among the descendants of Eve, God chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of his Son. 'Full of grace', Mary is 'the most excellent fruit of redemption' (SC 103): from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life.

509 Mary is truly 'Mother of God' since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

510 Mary 'remained a virgin in conceiving her Son, a virgin in giving birth to him, a virgin in carrying him, a virgin in nursing him at her breast, always a virgin' (St. Augustine, Serm. 186, 1: PL 38, 999): with her whole being she is 'the handmaid of the Lord' (Lk 1:38).

511 The Virgin Mary 'co-operated through free faith and obedience in human salvation' (LG 56). She uttered her yes 'in the name of all human nature' (St. Thomas Aquinas, S Th III, 30, 1). By her obedience she became the new Eve, mother of the living.

Message from the Bishops

The Conference of Catholic Bishops of England and Wales has made a statement stressing the current regulations as laid down by the government. The Bishops ask that masks be worn even for singing, except by soloists &c. The statement also includes the following:*

Clarification on the Sunday Obligation

The Bishops' Statement *Honouring Sunday* reflected the pastoral situation of public worship in the light of the pandemic situation at this time. The Bishops have asked for all Catholics to reflect on their personal circumstances with respect to their attendance at public worship. Questions have been raised regarding the status of the Sunday Obligation. The *Code of Canon Law* states that 'Sunday... is the primordial holy day of obligation' (Can. 1246§1) and 'the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass.' (Can. 1247)

At the beginning of the pandemic, from Friday 20th March 2020, the Bishops of England and Wales recognised that the participation of the faithful in the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration was prevented due to grave cause because of the inception of the covid-19 pandemic and stated that the Sunday obligation could not be fulfilled due to the inherent danger of the faithful gathering in churches for the Eucharistic celebration. On Monday 23rd March 2020, HM Government mandated the closure of places of worship along with other locations.

The Bishops, now having reflected on the current situation in England and Wales, recognise that the causes and effects of the pandemic are still present to such a degree that the absolute duty for all to freely attend the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration cannot yet be fulfilled.

As such, they have asked that all Catholics now reflect on the centrality of the Eucharist to their own life of faith and take into consideration their personal circumstances and the reasons as to whether they can now attend the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration or otherwise. Should a person feel that grave cause honestly persists in their personal circumstances, there is no sin associated with their non-attendance at Mass, and they are encouraged to devote themselves to prayer at home. This may be achieved either through personal prayer or by participating with a live-streamed celebration of Mass from a Church.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S JANUARY PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

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

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 16th-22nd January: Catherine Masey, Louis McCoy, Roger Tomlin, Winifred Day, Thomas McDonagh, Fr Sean Murphy, Brian Mulford, Edmond Joseph Mockler, Tamsie Mary Tonnor, Veronica Lineham, Edwin Harper, John Fisher.

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 9th January 2022, 225 people viewed, 78 machines looking only at St Mary's. 60 of these were in the UK and 18 elsewhere. 122 stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

SYCAMORE

The **SYCAMORE** course for adults interested in finding out more about the Faith or preparing for baptism and/or confirmation is now well underway. Please contact aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk if you are interested, a.s.a.p. **SYCAMORE** meets on Tuesday at 8pm on Zoom. The next meeting is on Zoom this Tuesday, 11th January, and begins the second semester of the course.

SYNOD 2021-2023

Last October, the Holy Father launched a three-year consultation process with the whole Church. There are three stages. Between now and the end of April 2022, parishes are to produce a report to send to the diocese. These will be conflated nationally and, from September 2022 to March 2023, there will be reflections throughout the world. Finally in October 2023, the Synod of Bishops will meet in Rome to produce a report for the Pope. Every parish is asking people and groups to reflect on 'What changes need to be made – in myself, in our parish, in the Diocese, to make the Church's mission today more vibrant and effective?' We shall co-ordinate our parish response via individuals and accredited groups through the Parish Pastoral Council and the St Patrick's Pastoral Committee. Meanwhile, comments and suggestions, personal and group submissions, to Fr Andrew or to John Carpenter.

E-MAILS, WEBSITE, AND FACEBOOK

Last minute changes are sometimes unavoidable and these are communicated by e-mail to the Bulletin list. Anyone may join the Bulletin list - contact hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
See our website www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk
See also our East Hendred Catholic Parish page on Facebook.

GIVING

CHARITY: DIDCOT

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

TO GIVE TO OUR 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

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL

Next weekend we take the annual second collection in support of your Cathedral in Portsmouth

Appeal envelopes are available at all Masses for those who do not have gift aided planned giving envelopes for second collections. This collection is the only support our Cathedral receives from the wider Diocesan family.

In response to some of the precautions taken in the previous lockdowns, a 'Give as you Live' page was also created at:

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/cathedral-annual-appeal-1>

Understandably, we all are aware that these are difficult times for us all, but please give generously to support your cathedral, gift aiding your donation wherever possible.

The Divine Office

The People of God share in different ways in the daily recitation of the Divine Office. The Office of Readings (sometimes called 'Vigils' or 'Matins') used to be a night time provision. Nowadays it takes place early in the morning but may be scheduled for any convenient time of day. To this, religious add the minor hours of Terce (approx. 9am), Sext (approx. 12 noon), None (approx. 3pm), and Compline (late evening). Those not in religious communities are able to replace Terce, Sext, and None with a short Midday Office. The major hours are Lauds (Morning Prayer) and Vespers (Evening Prayer), each climaxing with a Gospel Canticle, the Song of Zechariah (*'Benedictus'*) in the morning and the Song of Our Lady (*'Magnificat'*) in the evening. It is these major hours, which the Second Vatican Council called 'the hinges' (*'cardines'*) of the Divine Office and it is these major hours which the whole People of God are to share.

It is not an easy time to buy Office Books, which are all being revised. Stocks are low if not non-existent. Many people now make use of an app and read the Office on an iPad or iPhone. Google <https://universalis.com> for material and help with dealing it. There are some basic decisions: the version on the internet is free but uses its own translation to avoid problems of copyright; the version as an iPhone or android app costs about £10 (one-off single payment) and that allows one to use the proper texts. There are also options: to use Revised Standard Version (as we do in East Hendred); to listen to the Office read and sung &c.

Universalis as it describes itself

Martin Kochanski who runs the site writes:

'[Universalis] is the biggest present there can be, because it changes lives, and it lasts for ever. A Universalis registration code costs £19.99... It gives the recipient all the Mass readings for every day, forever, and all the Hours of the Liturgy of the Hours for every day, forever. There are also benefits such as the daily 'About Today' pages, with their stories of the saints and their illustrations. The registration code works on whatever devices your friend has – Android and iPhone/iPad/iPod Touch and Mac and Windows – and also for making personal e-books. It is very simple indeed to give a Universalis registration code as a present. [Our blog post gives all the details.](#)'

East Hendred Catholic Parish



Second Sunday
Per Annum (C)
16th January 2022
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings

Entrance Antiphon

All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to your name, O Most High!

Omnis terra adoret te

Ps 66:4

Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. 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

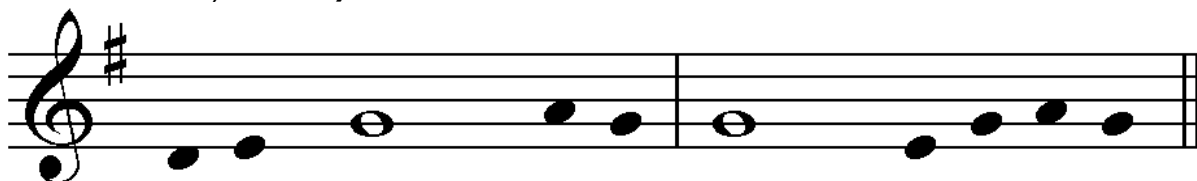
First Reading

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My delight is in her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

Isaiah 62:1-5(RSV)

Psalm 96:1-3, 7-10 R/cf 3

Tone VIII.2



R/ Pro-claim the wonders of the Lord | among all the peo-ples.

O *sing* a new song to the Lord, ~
sing to the Lord, all *the* earth.
O sing to the *Lord*, bless his name. **R/**

Proclaim his salvation day by day, ~
tell among the nations his *glo-ry*
and his wonders among *all* the peo-ples. **R/**

Give the Lord, you families of peoples, ~
give the Lord glory and *pow'r* ();
give the Lord the *glo-ry* of his name. **R/**

Worship the Lord in holy *splen-dour*.
O tremble before *him*, all the earth.
Say to the nations: 'The Lord is *king* ().'
He will judge the peo-*ple* in fair-ness. **R/**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 12:4-11(RSV)

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Alleluia



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

Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life:
You have the message of e-ter-nal life.

R/ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

John 2:1-11 (RSV)

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast.' So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Every man serves the good wine first; and when

men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.' This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Prayer over the Offerings

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we may participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(II De mysterio salutis)

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 out of compassion for the waywardness that is ours, he humbled himself and was born of the Virgin; by the passion of the Cross he freed us from unending death, and by rising from the dead he gave us life eternal. 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.

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

Parasti in conspectu

You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.

Cf Ps 23:5

Prayer after Communion

Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, and in your kindness make those you have nourished by this one heavenly Bread one in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord.

Scripture Reading

Monday	1 Samuel 15:16-23
Tuesday	1 Samuel 16:1-13
Wednesday	1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51
Thursday	1 Samuel 18:6-9; 119:1-7
Friday	1 Samuel 24:3-21
Saturday	2 Samuel 1:4,11-12,17,19,23-27

Week 2 Year 2

Mark 2:18-22
Mark 2:23-28
Mark 3:1-6
Mark 3:7-12
Mark 3:13-19
Mark 3:20-21

THIRD SUNDAY *Per Annum* (C)

Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10

1 Corinthians 12:12-30

Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

Offertory

O WORSHIP the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
With gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
Kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.

2 Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
High on his heart he will bear it for thee,
Comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
Guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

3. Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
Of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
These are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

4. These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
He will accept for the name that is dear;
Mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
Trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

5. O worship &c (*verse 1 again*)

Post Communion

SOUL of my Saviour sanctify my breast,
Body of Christ, be thou my saving guest;
Blood of my Saviour bathe me in thy tide;
Wash me, ye waters gushing from His Side.

2. Strength and protection may his Passion be,
O blessed Jesus, hear and answer me;
Deep in thy Wounds, Lord, hide and shelter me;
So shall I never, never part from thee.

3. Guard and defend me from the foe malign;
In death's drear moments make me only thine;
Call me and bid me come to thee on high,
Where I may praise thee with thy Saints for aye.

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

17th – 22nd January 2022

Second Week *Per Annum*

Weekday Lectionary Year 2

Monday in Week 2 [*Year 2*]

17th January

Reading

1 Samuel 15:16-23 (RSV)

Saul's Kingship Unravels

Samuel said to Saul, 'Stop! I will tell you what the LORD said to me this night.' And he said to him, 'Say on.'

¹⁷ And Samuel said, 'Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel. ¹⁸ And the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, utterly destroy the sinners, the Amal'ekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' ¹⁹ Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop on the spoil, and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?' ²⁰ And Saul said to Samuel, 'I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, I have brought Agag the king of Am'alek, and I have utterly destroyed the Amal'ekites. ²¹ But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.' ²² And Samuel said,

'Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to hearken than the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
he has also rejected you from being king.'

Reflection

THE FIRST of the Kings, Saul, is not a success. Though he had a fine physique (1 Sam 9), and was valiant in battle with the Ammonites (1 Sam 11), he overplays his hand. He takes on himself the role of priest, offering sacrifice unlawfully, thus losing his right to pass on kingly rule to his son, Jonathan (1 Sam 13). He utters a rash curse that rebounds on the Israelites and more directly affects his son (1 Sam 14). That brings us to today's reading (1 Sam 15). Here Saul deceitfully disobeys Samuel's prophetic voice with regard to the campaign against the Philistines (1 Sam 15) taking the spoils of war for himself and then pretending that it was the people who had done that. The final words of Samuel's prophecy in the reading are stark and clear:

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
he has also rejected you from being king.'

All is ready for the crown to be taken by David.

Tuesday in Week 2 [Year 2]

18th January

Reading

1 Samuel 16:1-13 (RSV)

David anointed as King

16 The LORD said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' ² And Samuel said, 'How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me.' And the LORD said, 'Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' ³ And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me him whom I name to you.' ⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, 'Do you come peaceably?' ⁵ And he said, 'Peaceably;

I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.' And he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eli'ab and thought, 'Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him.' ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.' ⁸Then Jesse called Abin'adab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, 'Neither has the LORD chosen this one.' ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, 'Neither has the LORD chosen this one.' ¹⁰And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, 'The LORD has not chosen these.' ¹¹And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here?' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he comes here.' ¹²And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the LORD said, 'Arise, anoint him; for this is he.' ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

Reflection

THE STORY of the choosing of David is beautiful. The prophet Samuel now looks to the tribe of Jesse for Saul had been of the tribe of Benjamin. He visits Bethlehem, where Jesse presents seven sons all of whom, at the Lord's instruction, are rejected by Samuel. It is the least likely, the youngest, the boy David, brought in finally from the fields who proves to be the one chosen by the Lord, the one whom Samuel must anoint. When David is anointed he is empowered by the Spirit of the Lord. It is worth noting that the anointed king is 'a messiah of the Lord'. This Hebrew word 'messiah' will have increasing resonance and, of course, its equivalent in Greek is 'Christ'. The long reign of the second king is about to begin, a new start for the Israelites. For a while David remains heir apparent, one whom Saul has increasing justification in viewing as a rival and a threat.

Wednesday in Week 2 [Year 2]

19th January

Reading

1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51 (RSV)

David and Goliath

³² And David said to Saul, 'Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.' ³³ And Saul said to David, 'You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth.'...

³⁷ And David said, 'The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.' And Saul said to David, 'Go, and the LORD be with you!'...

⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in his shepherd's bag or wallet; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

⁴¹ And the Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. ⁴² And when the Philistine looked, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, ruddy and comely in appearance. ⁴³ And the Philistine said to David, 'Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine said to David, 'Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field.' ⁴⁵ Then David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin; but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down, and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷ and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's and he will give you into our hand.'

⁴⁸ When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone, and slung it, and

struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.

⁵⁰ So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine, and killed him; there was no sword in the hand of David. ⁵¹ Then David ran and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath, and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

Reflection

DAVID has become King Saul's armour-bearer and proves himself in the campaign against the Philistines. The Philistine hero is a giant, Goliath - ten feet tall according to the Hebrew text, but a rather more feasible six foot nine in the Greek. David takes him on: the giant is fully-armed but the shepherd boy has only a sling and a stone. The story has become one of those very few well-known bible stories which spill out well beyond the church community. Such is the appeal of the giant-slayer idea. It is a pivotal moment in David's life. Suddenly he gains wide acclaim.

Thursday in Week 2 [Year 2]

20th January

Reading

1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7 (RSV)

Jonathan Intercedes for David

⁶ As they were coming home, when David returned from slaying the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with timbrels, with songs of joy, and with instruments^[a] of music. ⁷ And the women sang to one another as they made merry,

'Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his ten thousands.'

⁸ And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him; he said, 'They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; and what more can he have but the kingdom?' ⁹ And Saul eyed David from that day on.....

19 And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. ²And Jonathan told David, 'Saul my father seeks to kill you; therefore take heed to yourself in the morning, stay in a secret place and hide yourself; ³and I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you; and if I learn anything I will tell you.' ⁴And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, 'Let not the king sin against his servant David; because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have been of good service to you; ⁵for he took his life in his hand and he slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great victory for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced; why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?' ⁶And Saul hearkened to the voice of Jonathan; Saul swore, 'As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death.' ⁷And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed him all these things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

Reflection

THE VICTORY over Goliath proves to be a cause of difficulty for David. The Philistines having fled, it is Saul's military triumphs which are on parade but it is David who enthuses the crowds. People draw comparisons between the valour of Saul – who is said to have killed thousands – and David who has said to have killed ten thousands. We can take these figures as highly imaginative but the point is clear: there is now a rival for the crown and Saul immediately seeks to have David killed. There is, however, an intense friendship between David and Saul's son, Jonathan, and Jonathan speaks urgently to his father, warning him not to commit the great sin of murder. Saul is persuaded and, for the time being, David is able to return to the court of the king.

Friday in Week 2 [Year 2]

21st January

Reading

1 Samuel 24:3-21 (RSV)

Saul is at the Mercy of David

³ And [Saul] came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave; and [he] went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in

the innermost parts of the cave. ⁴ And the men of David said to him, 'Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'" Then David arose and stealthily cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. ⁵ And afterward David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. ⁶ He said to his men, 'The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put forth my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's anointed.' ⁷ So David persuaded his men with these words, and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave, and went upon his way.

⁸ Afterward David also arose, and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, 'My lord the king!' And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth, and did obeisance. ⁹ And David said to Saul, 'Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Behold, David seeks your hurt'? ¹⁰ Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave; and some bade me kill you, but I^[a] spared you. I said, 'I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is the LORD's anointed.' ¹¹ See, my father, see the skirt of your robe in my hand; for by the fact that I cut off the skirt of your robe, and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it. ¹² May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me upon you; but my hand shall not be against you. ¹³ As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness'; but my hand shall not be against you. ¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! ¹⁵ May the LORD therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you, and see to it, and plead my cause, and deliver me from your hand.'

¹⁶ When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, 'Is this your voice, my son David?' And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. ¹⁷ He said to David, 'You are more righteous than I; for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. ¹⁸ And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. ¹⁹ For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. ²⁰ And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. ²¹ Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house.'

Reflection

THERE is an American translation of this passage which tells us that Saul went into the cave 'to go to the bathroom'. This absurd anachronistic avoidance of anything in bad taste does alert us to the sheer banality of it all. After a temporary reconciliation, Saul and David again become estranged and David has to take flight, gathering a bunch of outlaws to support him. Today's reading is one of the many occasions when David might have killed Saul but, clearly – being the good guy – he respects the anointed king. There is now a further reconciliation and Saul asks David to preserve his name and his dynasty. This, however, is simply a lull in hostilities. Saul's waning power and David's gradual growth is portrayed in terms of *hesed* – covenant fidelity, involving love and mercy. So we see Saul, consumed by jealousy, portrayed as a treacherous man, unable to maintain his obligations to others. David, by contrast, shows loyalty, love, and mercy: even when he has the upper hand, he does not harm the Lord's anointed.

Saturday in Week 2 [Year 2]

22nd January

Reading

2 Samuel 1:4,11-12,17,19,23-27 (RSV)

How are the Mighty Fallen!

⁴ And David said to [the man from Saul's camp], 'How did it go? Tell me.' And he answered, 'The people have fled from the battle, and many of the people also have fallen and are dead; and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead.'.....

¹¹ Then David took hold of his clothes, and rent them; and so did all the men who were with him; ¹² and they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.....

¹⁷ And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son,...

¹⁹ 'Your glory, O Israel, is slain upon 'Your high places!
How are the mighty fallen!....

²³ 'Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely!
In life and in death they were not divided;
they were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.

²⁴ 'You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
who clothed you daintily in scarlet,
who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.

²⁵ 'How are the mighty fallen
in the midst of the battle!

'Jonathan lies slain upon Your high places.

²⁶ I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan;
very pleasant have you been to me;
your love to me was wonderful,
passing the love of women.

²⁷ 'How are the mighty fallen,
and the weapons of war perished!

Reflection

JUST like the symbolic warriors, 'David and Goliath', the phrase 'How are the mighty fallen!' has entered our language. There is a battle against the Philistines and, Saul and David being rivals, there was some expectation that David and his outlaws would join battle alongside the Philistines to defeat Saul. The Philistine kings understandably are not comfortable having David as an ally and he is sent away and does battle against the Amalekites. Saul panics and consults a medium – the witch of Endor – who conjures up the spirit of the deceased Samuel. Consulting a medium is breaking the law of Moses (Lev 19:31; 20:27) and the advice Saul receives from the medium is not encouraging. Saul and his three oldest sons – Jonathan included – will be defeated and die. We have the one recorded incident of suicide in the Bible when Saul 'falls on his own sword' (another phrase to have entered our language). David, meanwhile, proves his covenant-faithfulness by executing the Amalekite man who boasted – inaccurately – that he had slain Saul. After the death of Saul we have a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. The house of Saul grew weaker and the house of David grew stronger (2 Sam 3).