

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

Week 15B *Per Annum*

11th-18th July 2021



Reflection

Chosen to be Holy

THIS Sunday is the first of seven on which we shall be drawing the Second Reading from the Letter to the Ephesians. We don't often focus on the Second Reading which, in the Green season, is the odd one out. In other words, it isn't chosen to fit Old Testament Reading and Gospel, which usually match. Instead, it's a reminder of how we imagine the Early Church, when they met to hear the readings, say the prayers, and break the bread, listening also to the latest letter from one of the Apostles. Ephesians is right at the heart of what we now think of as the theology of St Paul and yet most scholars have concluded that it is not actually a letter of St Paul but the work of a disciple of St Paul, so written, perhaps in the 90s rather than in the 60s. Certainly there are bits in Ephesians which are drawn from Colossians and other Pauline letters.

The first chapter, as set for Sunday 15B, 11th July, reads like a typical Jewish prayer of thanksgiving, blessing God for his benefits. The particular benefit is us being chosen by God to be holy. Christ and those who follow Christ are given the role of bringing everything in heaven and on earth under the lordship of Christ. It is an extension of – or rather enlargement on – the calling, first outlined in the Book of Genesis, to be stewards of Creation and co-workers with God. The Body of Christ, the Church, of which Christ is the Head, has this task and purpose. It is a mystical Body, called into being before the Creation of the world and existing into infinity.

Though members of the Church – that is, members by Baptism – are both male and female, the Epistle uses the language of sonship. We inherit our share in the Body – and the Church itself is seen as female – in much the same way as the son and heir inherits. This balancing of language – men and women are all 'sons' belonging to a male and female Church who is 'mother' – has become a little harder for us, but they are only metaphors. What is glorious and noteworthy are not the details of gender in the illustration but the quality of the calling. We have redemption, forgiveness of sins, and the riches of grace, all poured out upon us not because of anything we deserve but because of God's free gift of love to those who place their faith and trust in the risen and exalted Christ.

Fr Andrew

WEEK 15 YEAR 1

11th – 18th July 2021

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

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

SUNDAY 15B Per Annum SEA SUNDAY			[Green]
11th July	9.30am	Parish Mass	Pro populo
	6pm	Holy Mass	Benedictine Communities

Monday 12th July	<i>Feria</i>		[Green]
	9.15am	Votive Mass of the Mercy of God <i>In Thanksgiving (David Lazarus)</i>	
Tuesday 13th July	<i>Feria</i>		[White]
	9.15am	Votive Mass of the Holy Angels <i>Deceased Relatives and Friends (Julie Lazarus)</i>	
Wednesday 14th July	<i>Feria</i>		[White]
	9.15am	Votive Mass of St Joseph <i>FM Edward Robert Joseph Eyston 1943</i>	
Thursday 15th July	St Swithun, Bishop		[White]
	<u>10am</u>	School Leavers' Mass <i>(At School: Parents by Invitation)</i>	
Friday 16th July	<i>Our Lady of Mount Carmel</i>		[White]
	9.15am	Holy Mass <i>Private Intention (Anne Johns)</i>	
Saturday 17th July	St Bonaventure, Religious, Bishop		[White]
	No Mass		

SUNDAY 16B Per Annum			[Green]
18th July	9.30am	Parish Mass	Pro populo
	6pm	Holy Mass	

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979
aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

THURSDAY 15TH JULY: SCHOOL LEAVERS' MASS

Please note that Mass on Thursday 15th July will be at school and, in present circumstances, by invitation only.

BOOKING FOR MASS

Please book for 9.30am Sunday Masses before 12 noon on Fridays hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk On Saturday contact Fr Andrew on aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

There is now no need to book for the 6pm Mass. As with the weekday morning masses, demand does not outstrip supply. Nonetheless we are required to carefully note who comes, in case of infection alerts, and so we ask you to sign in on Sunday night and sit as allocated by the steward.

CHURCH SERVICES LIVESTREAM

On Sunday 4th July, there were 326 hits from 95 machines, with 146 remaining on-line long enough to take part in Mass. 73 machines were in the UK, 6 in Ireland, 6 in Poland, 10 in the rest of the world.

CHURCH CLEANING

We need either to restart a Cleaning Rota or to once again employ cleaners, as we did at the height of the pandemic. Contractual cleaners are very expensive but it may be that a couple of people might like to be paid for a couple of hours a week work. Whether you are interested in being a cleaning volunteer, once a month on a rota, or taking on a small paid weekly task, contact Maria in person or on hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

FINANCE

CHARITY: DIDCOT

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

CHARITY: WANTAGE

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

THIS WEEK SHE NEEDS CLEAN DOUBLE BEDDING, AND CLEAN PILLOWS.

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 : hended@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

A donation to the parish may be made on

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

GIVING AND GIFT AID

We have about 15 regular contributors a month for whom we are not able to claim Gift Aid, at least at present. Please let us know (if you are a UK Taxpayer) if you are happy for us to claim Gift Aid.

At the start of the tax year we need anybody in Gift Aid to let us know if they are no longer taxpayers. In that case we should not make a claim.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S JULY PRAYER INTENTION

We pray that, in social, economic and political situations of conflict, we may be courageous and passionate architects of dialogue and friendship.

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

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 11th - 17th July: Mary Dearlove, Malcolm Farrow, George Hudson, Albert Burgess, John Beary, William (Billy) Carroll, Edward Joseph Eyston, Richard Stibbs, Molly French Mullen, Polly Dunnock, James O'Connor, Minnie Rafferty, Mildred Charlton, Fr Patrick Bushell.

GOOD COUNSEL NETWORK

The 11th Annual GK Chesterton Walking Pilgrimage will take place on Saturday 24th July 2021. You can sponsor Stuart McCullough as he raises funds for Good Counsel on this 27 mile walk here:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/gkcwalk21

You can email prayer intentions to be prayed for along the way to;

catholicgkcsociety@yahoo.co.uk

You can join us for Mass or part of the walk on the day or even just join us by saying the GK Chesterton Prayer on the day wherever you are. Find details and the prayer in a number of languages here

www.catholicgkchestertonsociety.co.uk

CHILDREN'S LITURGY DURING THE SUMMER

There will no longer be special Children's Prayers at 9am on Sunday and, in place of the weekly pages we have been publishing, we are offering access to a website of the SDC Children's Liturgy Resource. All you need to do is click on this link: <http://www.sdc.me.uk/sundayliturgy/>

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 www.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. If you would like to support teenagers whose families struggle to pay for this camp, then please consider making a donation to sr.veronicabrennan@gmail.com

WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

Are you in the habit of looking up and using our website? This Bulletin appears each week on the website www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

Many people look for occasional updates on our East Hendred Catholic Parish page on Facebook.



East Hendred Catholic Parish



Jesus teaches the Twelve

**Fifteenth
Sunday in
Ordinary Time (B)**
11th July 2021
**Antiphons,
Prayers and
Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Ego autem

As for me, in justice I shall behold your face; I shall be filled with the vision of your glory.

Cf. Ps 16:15

Collect

O God, who show the light of your truth to those who go astray so that they may return to the right path, give all who for the faith they profess are accounted Christians the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ and to strive after all that does it honour. Through our Lord, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

First Reading

Amos 7:12-15 (RSV)

Amazi'ah the prophet of Bethel said to Amos, 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³ but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.' ¹⁴ Then Amos answered Amazi'ah, 'I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, ¹⁵ and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

Psalm 85 9-14 *R/ 8*

***R/* Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and grant us your salvation.**

I will hear what the Lord God speaks;
he speaks of peace for his people and his faithful,
and those who turn their hearts to him.
His salvation is near for those who fear him,
and his glory will dwell in our land. ***R/***

Merciful love and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have kissed.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth,
and justice look down from heav'n. ***R/***

Also the Lord will bestow his bounty,
and our earth shall yield its increase.
Justice will march before him,
and guide his steps on the way. ***R/***

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:3-14 (RSV)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. ⁵ He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ which he lavished upon us. ⁹ For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In him, according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, **alleluia.** Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life: You have the message of eternal life. **Alleluia.**

Gospel

Mark 6:7-13 (RSV)

Jesus called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; ⁹ but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. ¹⁰ And he said to them, 'Where you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. ¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they refuse to hear you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet for a testimony against them.' ¹² So they went out and preached that men should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.

Prayer over the Offerings

Look upon the offerings of the Church, O Lord, as she makes her prayer to you, and grant that, when consumed by those who believe, they may bring ever greater holiness. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

De salute per obœdiantiam Christi

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 you so loved the world that in your mercy you sent us the Redeemer, to live like us in all things but sin, so that you might love in us what you loved in your Son, by whose obedience we have been restored to those gifts of yours that, by sinning, we had lost in disobedience. And so, Lord, with all the Angels and Saints, we, too, give you thanks, as in exultation 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

Qui manducat

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him,
says the Lord.

Jn 6:57

Prayer after Communion

Having consumed these gifts, we pray, O Lord, that, by our participation in this mystery, its saving effects upon us may grow. Through Christ our Lord.

Salve Regina

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy! Hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

Scripture Reading (Week 15 [I] *Per Annum*)

Monday	Exodus 1:8-14, 22	Matthew 10:34 - 11:1
Tuesday	Exodus 2:1-15	Matthew 11:20-24
Wednesday	Exodus 3:1-6, 9-12	Matthew 11:25-27
Thursday	Exodus 3:13-20	Matthew 11:28-30
Friday	Exodus 11:10 - 12:14	Matthew 12:1-8
Saturday	Exodus 12:37-42	Matthew 12:14-21
Sunday 16 B	Jeremiah 23:1-6	
	Ephesians 2:13-18	Mark 6:30-34

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

12th – 16th July 2021

Monday in Week 15 *Per Annum [Year 1]*

12th July

Reading

Exodus 1:[1-7], 8-14, [15-21], 22 (RSV)

The Israelites Are Oppressed

[**1** These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: **2** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, **3** Is'sachar, Zeb'ulun, and Benjamin, **4** Dan and Naph'tali, Gad and Asher. **5** All the offspring of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt. **6** Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation. **7** But the descendants of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong; so that the land was filled with them.]

8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. **9** And he said to his people, 'Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. **10** Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war befall us, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.' **11** Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens; and they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raam'ses. **12** But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. **13** So they made the people of Israel serve with rigor, **14** and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field; in all their work they made them serve with rigor.

[**15** Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiph'rah and the other Pu'ah, **16** 'When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, she shall live.' **17** But the midwives

feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt called the midwives, and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and let the male children live?' ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and are delivered before the midwife comes to them.' ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and grew very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God he gave them families.] ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.'

Reflection

WE HAVE finished with the Book of Genesis for the time being and thus completed our abbreviated history of the patriarchs. We now move on to the Book of Exodus and the story of Moses. The Mass Lectionary shortens the first chapter of Exodus but reading from verse 1 and including Pharaoh's attempted cull of all the Israelites' male children is helpful. Now is probably as good a time as any to take stock of our biblical journey.

The first five books of the Bible – the Pentateuch – form the Jewish *Torah* or Law and were traditionally ascribed to Moses himself. It is now thought that the Pentateuch was edited round about 537 BC, the return to Jerusalem of the Jews who were exiled to Babylon sixty years earlier. This editing usually assumes four different strands of writing: the Jahwistic ('J'), Elohist ('E'), Deuteronomistic ('D'), and Priestly ('P'). 'E' is thought to have sprung from the ten Northern tribes of Samaria in the ninth to eighth century and is characterised by referring to God in the plural as 'Elohim'. 'D' is thought to come from the seventh century, the time of King Josiah's reforms. 'J' is so-called because it refers to God as 'JHWH'. 'P' material is largely the body of priestly and liturgical detail, found particularly in Leviticus. Quite how all this came together, and what material existed previously in written form, as contrasted with oral history, continues to be debated and probably always will be.

Tuesday in Week 15 [Year 1]

13th July

Reading

Exodus 2:1-15 (RSV)

Birth and Youth of Moses and his Escape to Midian

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and took to wife a daughter of Levi. **2** The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. **3** And when she could hide him no longer she took for him a basket made of bulrushes, and daubed it with bitumen and pitch; and she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds at the river's brink. **4** And his sister stood at a distance, to know what would be done to him. **5** Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, and her maidens walked beside the river; she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to fetch it. **6** When she opened it she saw the child; and behold, the babe was crying. She took pity on him and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.' **7** Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' **8** And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. **9** And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child away, and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed him. **10** And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son; and she named him Moses, for she said, 'Because I drew him out of the water.'

11 One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. **12** He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. **13** When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together; and he said to the man that did the wrong, 'Why do you strike your fellow?' **14** He answered, 'Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?' Then Moses was afraid, and thought, 'Surely the thing is known.' **15** When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses.

But Moses fled from Pharaoh, and stayed in the land of Mid'ian; and he sat down by a well.

Reflection

THE SECOND half of the Book of Exodus will give us later the revelation of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, the details of the Covenant, and the complex instructions round the construction of the portable sanctuary. First, though, we have eighteen chapters, giving us the story of Moses and his call to lead the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. We hear stories of plagues and Passover and the beginnings of the journey. The Israelites will spend forty years in the desert: a slave people becomes a nomadic people. That nomadic people in time will embark on conquering and capturing the territory which their history - probably handed down orally rather than written down - assures them was the land in which their forefathers the patriarchs once lived. Underlying all this is the firm conviction that God has chosen Israel for special blessing. The chosen people will be governed by a divine covenant, given to them on Sinai. This covenant will be celebrated in an elaborate cultus, with priests, and feasts, and sacrifices.

At this early part of the story - we are still in chapter two - it is interesting to notice that Moses, brought up in an Egyptian court, and not at all aware of any special call or role, recognises that the Hebrews are his own people, and, with righteous indignation, kills an Egyptian who is attacking one of them. Moses becomes a fugitive from an angry Pharaoh, thus foreshadowing the calling of the People of God to escape and journey towards the Promised Land.

Wednesday in Week 15 [Year 1]

14th July

Reading

Exodus 3:1-6, 9-12 (RSV)

Moses at the Burning Bush

3 Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Mid'ian; and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³And Moses said, 'I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.' ⁴When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here

am I.' ⁵ Then he said, 'Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' ⁶ And he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

[⁷ Then the LORD said, 'I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, ⁸ and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Per'izzites, the Hivites, and the Jeb'usites.]

⁹ And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.' ¹¹ But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?' ¹² He said, 'But I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain.'

Reflection

A FUGITIVE, Moses is minding the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro, Priest of Midian, and comes to Horeb (also known as Sinai). There, probably finding watching sheep leaves him much time to think, he is enthralled by a burning bush, which seemingly burns but is never consumed. It is unclear whether this is a natural or supernatural phenomenon: there have been theories that this is a particular desert flower that seems to be ablaze but there is no need for us to try to explain away or minimise visionary experiences. Angelic encounters were often associated with fire. For Moses, this is the moment of vocation, the moment when he is called to his life's work. He is to bring God's enslaved people from Egypt to Sinai, thence to journey on to the Promised Land. It is important to notice that, until this moment, there is no indication that Moses would expect an experience of the God of the Hebrews. He might well have been interested in the pagan deities of his father-in-law's people, the Midianites. Yet we are left in no doubt that this encounter is with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses takes off his shoes as he is commanded, for he knows himself to be on hallowed ground. He

hides his face because of an understanding that no one can look on God and live to tell the tale.

Thursday in Week 15 [Year 1]

St Swithun, Bishop

15th July

Reading

Exodus 3:13-20 (RSV)

The Divine Name Revealed

¹³ Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his Name?' what shall I say to them?' ¹⁴ God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you."' ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you": this is my Name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. ¹⁶ Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, "The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, 'I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt; ¹⁷ and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.'" ¹⁸ And they will hearken to your voice; and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, "The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, we pray you, let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God." ¹⁹ I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. ²⁰ So I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all the wonders which I will do in it; after that he will let you go.'

Reflection

MORE significant even than his calling, which we heard about yesterday, is Moses' discovery of who God is. Though God appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as 'God Almighty', (*El Shaddai*), they did not know him as *YHWH* ('LORD') (Ex 6:3) and they certainly did not know, as was

revealed to Moses, what his Name means. The term *El Shaddai*, 'God Almighty', is used in Genesis in connection with the blessing of Abraham (17:1), Isaac (28:3), and Jacob (35:11) but we have to wait for Exodus 3:14 for God to reveal that his Name is 'I AM WHO I AM.' We are now into matters of philosophy: God is disclosed as the ground of being and source of existence. Other translations of the Hebrew are 'I AM WHAT I AM' or even 'I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE'. And, in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, the phrase is translated as 'I AM HE WHO IS'. The word YHWH – the Tetragrammaton, so called because it means 'four letters' – has no vowels. It is forbidden for Jews to speak the Divine Name aloud and, in recent years, the Holy See has asked Catholics not to either. English Bibles tend to use their own version of the Tetragrammaton, putting the four letters in upper case ('LORD'). But *YHWH* is not the only Name we are given here. God announces another Name: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you'. 'This', says God, 'is my Name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations'.

So, to summarise what we have learnt in the Book of Genesis and the first few chapters of the Book of Exodus, '*El Shaddai*', God Almighty, is the God not only of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but is to be remembered as such throughout all generations. He revealed himself to Moses and further disclosed that he is 'I AM HE WHO IS', the ground of being and source of existence. We not only encounter him ourselves, but see him face to face, when Jesus discloses who he is in the seven 'I AM' sayings in St John's Gospel. And there is an eighth 'I AM' saying in the Fourth Gospel, when speaking now to a hostile audience Jesus says 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM' (John 8:58).

Friday in Week 15 [*Year 1*]

16th July

Reading

Exodus 11:10 – 12:14 (RSV)

The First Passover Instituted

Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

12 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³ Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month they shall take every man a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household; ⁴ and if the household is too small for a lamb, then a man and his neighbour next to his house shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats; ⁶ and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening. ⁷ Then they shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. ⁸ They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled with water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. ¹⁰ And you shall let none of it remain until the morning, anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹ In this manner you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's passover. ¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever.

Reflection

OMITTED from our scheme of readings this week are the ten plagues, which signify divine combat between the God of the Hebrews and the Egyptian gods. Each plague confronts and overwhelms the powers of a particular deity. The One God takes on and defeats ten tribal gods and yet Pharaoh's heart remains hardened. As we move on to consider the slaughter of the Passover lambs, my first instinct was to wonder why this passage was set for Friday and not for Thursday, the day we associate traditionally with the Last Supper and the Passover Meal. But, reflecting further, there is much more to the Passover than a meal. In ancient Egypt

the destroying angel passed over the houses of all those marked with the blood of the Passover lambs that had been sacrificed. In the Passion of Christ meal and sacrifice are two stages in a Christian Passover which involves also the harrowing of hell and Christ raised again to life. The Hebrew Passover in Egypt is not the same as the Christian Passover in our churches – there are several important differences as well as important similarities – but the Jewish Passover tradition itself developed considerably. For one thing, in the original Passover, it is the father in each Hebrew home who presides. We have not yet got a Levitical priesthood, nor a place of communal sacrifice. Later on we shall find that, once it loses its Temple and its priesthood, Judaism celebrates the Passover Feast differently. It is back in the home and, without a Temple, modern Judaism puts a lamb shank bone into the Passover ritual, but no lambs are killed. There are important continuities between the Jewish Passover and the Christian celebration of Passover. There is the annual celebration, in conjunction with the seven days of Unleavened Bread (*mazzot*), the concept of remembering the past – bringing the past in the present in order to prepare for the future, one might say, and, in Catholic understanding, the two acts of meal and sacrifice are there, just as they were in the days of Moses and the first Passover.

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