

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

28th August – 4th September 2022



The Holy Spirit inspires Pope St Gregory the Great, who dictates plainsong to a scribe so that it can be written down

WEEK 22 YEAR 2

28th August – 4th September 2022

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthendred
book for Sunday morning Mass: hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
St Mary's is usually open each day from 9am until late afternoon.

SUNDAY 22C			[Green]
28th August	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am	Mass at St Patrick's	
	6pm	Holy Mass	<i>Private Intention</i>

WEEK 22 (Year 2)

Monday 29th August - Thursday 1st September
No Mass

Friday 2nd September *Feria* [Green]
8.30am Holy Mass (*Hendred House*)

Saturday 3rd September St Gregory the Great [White]
No Mass

SUNDAY 23C			[Green]
4th September	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>Pro populo</i>
	11.15am	Mass at St Patrick's	
	6pm	Holy Mass	<i>Private Intention</i>

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979

aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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

GIVING TO THE PARISH BY REGULAR STANDING ORDER OR GIFT

BANK DETAILS: PRCDTR East Hendred, St Mary

Sort Code: 309304 Account Number: 00877183

To arrange Gift Aid, contact : hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



THE HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER

We pray that the death penalty, which attacks the dignity of the human person, may be legally abolished in every country.

NATIONAL & DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTIONS

Monday 29 th	Residential Care Homes in the Diocese
Tuesday 30 th	Parish Bereavement Support Groups
Wednesday 31 st	Diocesan Liturgical Advisory Group
Thursday 1 st	<i>(National:)</i> Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation <i>(Diocesan:)</i> Knights of St Gregory
Friday 2 nd	Society of St Gregory (Church Musicians)
Saturday 3 rd	The Apostolic Nuncio to this Country

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

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

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 28th August - 3rd September: Mathilda Dearlove, Charles James Arthur France, Charles Thomas Western, Gertrude Murphy, Percy Barry, Fr Abban Quinn, Helena Brown

Reflection – *Men & Women in St Luke's Gospel*

St Luke often pairs men and women in his stories:

- Zechariah & Elizabeth introduced (1:5-7)
- Elizabeth (with Zechariah) conceives a child (1:24-25)
- Elizabeth & Zechariah name their child 'John' (1:57-63)
- Joseph & Mary go to Bethlehem (2:1-7)
- Shepherds visit Joseph & Mary (2:15-20)
- Simeon & Anna encounter the Holy Family (2:22-38)
- Jesus (12 years) goes with Mary & Joseph to Jerusalem (2:41-52)
- Simon Peter's mother-in-law is healed (4:38-39 [also in Mark])
- Simon the Pharisee and an anonymous sinful woman (7:36-50)
- Jesus' disciples include the Twelve and named women (8:1-3)
- Jesus' Mother and brothers (8:19-21 [also in Mark])
- Parable about someone beating male and female servants (12:45)
- Father vs. son, mother vs. daughter (12:53 [also in Matthew])
- Jesus' priority over father & mother &c [14:26 [also in Matthew]]
- Jesus speaks of adultery & divorce (16:18 [also in Mark])
- 'Remember Lot's wife' (17:32)
- Parable of widow and unjust judge (18:1-8)
- 'Honour your father and mother' (18:20 [also in Mark])
- Disciples must leave family (18:29 [also in Mark])
- Woman with seven husbands (20:27-38 [also in Mark])
- Widow and others and the Temple treasury (21:1-4 [also in Mark])
- Jesus' relatives at the Cross, include women (23:49 [also in Mark])
- Women returning from the Empty Tomb and the Eleven (24:9-11)
- Two disciples (one male one female?) on Emmaus road (24:13-35)

h/t Fr Felix Just SJ (adapted)

<https://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Luke-Pairs.htm>

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

APOLOGIES

Apologies for gaps in the Mass Schedule. Fr Andrew is suffering from sciatica and is resting. Weekday Masses resume on Monday 12th September. Thanks to Canon Peter Turbitt and Fr David O'Sullivan for helping out on Sundays. **There will be no Mass on Friday 9th September.**

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 21st August 2022, 219 people viewed, 71 machines looking only at St Mary's. 37 of these were in the UK, 26 in the USA and 8 elsewhere in the world. 119 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.



Join us to find out more about CAFOD's World Food Crisis Appeal

On **Saturday 10th September** there is an online meeting from 10:30 am to 12:30pm at which Catherine Ogolla CAFOD's Country Representative for Kenya and Uganda will give an update on the desperate situation in East Africa . On **Saturday 17th September** there is a CAFOD meeting at St Bede's church hall from 10:30am to 12 noon to hear from Ibrahim Njuguna CAFOD's Surge Country Representative for Africa about the World Food Crisis and the difficulties facing communities in East Africa . Please book your place for either meeting by contacting Jo Lewry on portsmouth@cafod.org.uk or call 07710 094447 .

GATHERING TOGETHER IN CHRIST

Our St Mary's and St Augustine's Bible study cum Prayer group will be meeting again on **Tuesday, September 6th**. We shall be using Luke, chapter 15 with its parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Prodigal Son, to help us learn, discuss and pray together. Since some of us found it difficult to hear in St Mary's Parish Rooms we will continue to meet for the time being in the Holy Family Room in St Mary's church. If you feel like an evening with coffee, good biscuits, friendship and the opportunity to be together in prayer, you will be very welcome. We begin at 7.30 pm and finish between 8.30 and 9.00. For more information, contact Geoff Bailey; gjbshoes@gmail.com, 01235 76222, or Denis Smith; 01235 765564; djbm.smith@ntlworld.com

ST BERNADETTE RELIC TOUR IN UK

Happening in the next few days: see <https://stbernadette.org.uk/>

CLOSER TO CHRIST CAMPAIGN

The public launch of the Funding Campaign, Closer to Christ, in the parish will take place on 11th September.

We have approached a selection of people in advance of the launch so that the amount at the launch is well on the way to the target. For further details, see the Campaign Newsletter below, with its hyperlink to a table of parishes and data.

If those I have spoken to already could make a commitment by the end of August at the very latest we should be very well-placed. Not only that but Matt Bloomer, who is helping us, will be able to show progress in his monthly report to the trustees.

Please respond to Matt Bloomer MBloomer@ccsfundraising.com

MISSIONARY COMMUNITIES

The Bishop unveils a ten-year Mission Plan: *You Shall Be My Witnesses*:
<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/communications/news/enews/>

This plan will affect everyone in the diocese. The plan was announced to the clergy on 13th July and consultation with everyone will take place in the coming months. Under the plan, between July 2023 and December 2027 parishes will be reorganised and estate rationalised. Our new 'Missionary Community' or 'Parish' will be an amalgamation of Abingdon, Buckland & Faringdon, Didcot & Wallingford; Hendred, Hinksey, Wantage & Lambourn. Teams of clergy will serve each 'Parish'.



Welcome to the latest edition of the ***Closer to Christ*** Campaign Weekly Newsletter.

It's been another week of milestones in the Campaign, with over 800 pledges now received! In addition to this, we were delighted to see another parish reach its goal! Find out who [here](#).

Wishing you all a pleasant Bank Holiday weekend.

Closer to Christ Campaign Team

CHILDREN.....

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. We shall resume at 9.15am on Sunday 11th September in St Mary's Parish Rooms.

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 ADULTS

DAVE & GEMMA

I have asked Dave & Gemma, a couple at St Mary's, who are marrying later this year, to head up and liaise our work with young adults. If you are interested in any of the things below – or other activities – have a word with them. They can be reached on davegem2022@gmail.com

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/>

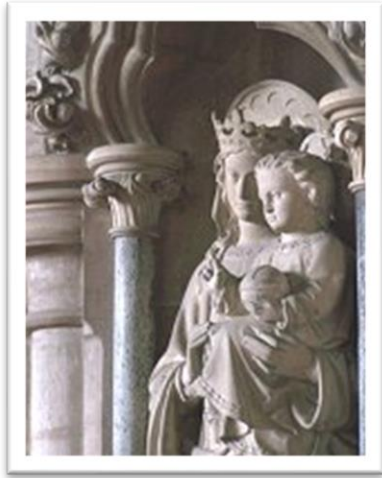
FLAME

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



**Twenty-Second Sunday in
Ordinary Time (C)
28th August 2022
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Miserere mihi, Domine

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long. O Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of mercy to all who call to you.

Cf Ps 86:3, 5

Collect

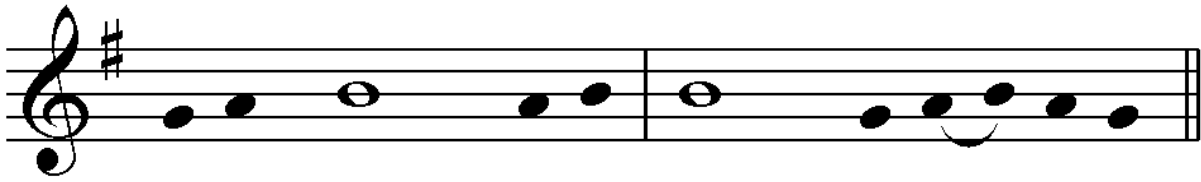
God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, you may nurture in us what is good and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever

First Reading

Sirach 3:17-20, 29 (RSV)

My son, perform your tasks in meekness; then you will be loved by those whom God accepts. The greater you are, the more you must humble yourself; so you will find favour in the sight of the Lord. For great is the might of the Lord; he is glorified by the humble....The affliction of the proud has no healing, for a plant of wickedness has taken root in him. The mind of the intelligent man will ponder a parable, and an attentive ear is the wise man's desire.

Revised Standard Version Bible, Ignatius Edition, copyright © 2006, by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.



R/ In your goodness, O God, |
 you prepared a *home* for the poor.

The just shall rejoice at the presence of God;
 they shall exult with *glad* re-joi-cing.
 O sing to the Lord; make music to *his* name.
 The Lord is his name, exult *at* his pre-sence. *R/*

Father of orphans, defender of *wi-dows*,
 such is God in *his* ho-ly place.
 God gives the desolate a home to *live* in;
 he leads the prisoners forth into *pro-*spe-ri-ty. *R/*

You poured down, O God, a gene-*rous* rain;
 when your people languished, you restored their ~
in -her- i -tance.

It was there that your flock began *to* dwell.
 In your goodness, O God, you provi-*ded* for the poor. *R/*

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Second Reading

Heb 12:18-19, 22-24 (RSV)

For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers entreat that no further messages be spoken to them. ... But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel.

Gospel Acclamation



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

If a-ny-one loves me, he will *keep* my word :
and my Father will love him, and we *shall* come to him.

Gospel

Lk 14:1, 7-14 (RSV)

One sabbath when Jesus went to dine at the house of a ruler who belonged to the Pharisees, they were watching him. Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he marked how they chose the places of honour, saying to them, ‘When you are invited by any one to a marriage feast, do not sit down in a place of honour, lest a more eminent man than you be invited by him; and he who invited you both will come and say to you, “Give place to this man,” and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, “Friend, go up higher”; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For every one who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’ He said also to the man who had invited him, ‘When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your kinsmen or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.’

Prayer over the Offerings

May this sacred offering, O lord, confer on us always the blessing of salvation, that what it celebrates in mystery it may accomplish in power. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(VI De pignore aeterni Paschali)

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 in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this

body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal. Form having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery. And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

Communion Antiphon

Quam magna multitudo

How great is the goodness, Lord, that you keep for those who fear you.

Ps 31:20

Prayer after Communion

Renewed by this bread from the heavenly table, we beseech you, Lord, that, being the food of charity, I may confirm our hearts and stir us to serve you in our neighbour. 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 22 Year 2)

Monday	1 Corinthians 2:1-5	Luke 4:16-30
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 2:10-16	Luke 4:31-37
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 3:1-9	Luke 4:38-end
Thursday	1 Corinthians 3:18-23	Luke 5:1-11
Friday	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Luke 5:33-39
Saturday	1 Corinthians 4:6-15	Luke 6:1-5
Sunday 23C	Wisdom 9:13-18	
	Philemon 9-10, 12-17	Luke 14:25-33

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Food for the Journey

Weekday Readings

29th August - 3rd September 2022 Week 22[ii]



St Gregory the Great, 3rd September

OVERVIEW OF THE WEEK

MOST of this week we stay with the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, which we began at the end of last week. Composed in 56-57 AD, the letter is definitely by St Paul himself, writing from Ephesus to a church including both Jews and Gentiles. A major theme in this Letter is to discover unity in Christ Jesus in place of factionalism. The early Christians, many of whom were uneducated, also wrestled with the difficulty of preaching to the sophisticated. St Paul came up with the concept of 'The Foolishness of God' and talks of the Crucified Christ as 'a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles'. Gentiles, informed by Greek philosophy are in pursuit of wisdom and, according to the wisdom of the world, the Cross is utter foolishness.

So much for the story so far. This week's passages continue to explore St Paul's missionary preaching whilst we encounter the extraordinary missionary figures of England. On 3rd September St Gregory the Great is celebrated as a feast day. Gregory, who sent St Augustine, is a towering figure, but the holiness and energy of the saints of our native land continue to inspire us. St Aidan, St Cuthbert, and the saints of Lindisfarne were living and preaching in a hostile climate and yet it is to them that we owe the establishing of the Faith in this country.

Collect for Week 22

GOD OF might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, you may nurture in us what is good and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever

Monday 29th August

The Passion of St John the Baptist

Reading

1 Cor 2:1-5 (RSV)

Proclaiming Christ Crucified

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. ²For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling; ⁴and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, ⁵that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Reflection

ST PAUL spends more than three chapters dealing with the factionalism that exists in the Corinthian Church. Paul, Apollos, Cephas (Peter): there are groups claiming allegiance to each of these. It seems to be a matter of who evangelized whom, who baptized whom. We are talking about the different loyalties the different believers have as a result, though then, as now, most loyalties are trumped by referring directly to Christ, and accordingly some said 'I belong to Christ'. In today's readings, St Paul is setting out his stall as someone speaking from a position of weakness and trembling. He is relying entirely on the Gospel of the Crucified Christ, on the power of God rather than on human wisdom. Contrasting human wisdom (rhetoric) with the power of God is, of course, itself a rhetorical device and, despite his protestation, St Paul is engaged in sophisticated debate. Moreover it is a strategy which always works: to speak from a position of humility and, having gained an audience, to speak then with authority and insight.

Tuesday 30th August

SS Margaret Clitherow, Anne Line, and Margaret Ward, Martyrs

Reading

1 Cor 2:10-16 (RSV)

We have the Mind of Christ

¹⁰ God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit.

¹⁴ The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The spiritual man judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶ 'For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?' But we have the mind of Christ.

Reflection

THE CONTRAST here is between the 'unspiritual man' and the 'spiritual man' but St Paul is at pains to point out that this is not about human activity but divine gift. The 'unspiritual man' does not discern spiritual gifts; they are beyond his understanding. The 'spiritual man' is equipped with spiritual gifts by the Spirit. One senses that St Paul is discriminating between the formal adherent who doesn't quite get it and the converted and committed Christian who has received the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. It is the difference between those who think they know how it all works and those who have the mind of Christ. A point of reflection is that many, if not most, of us have a toe in both camps. At times we feel 'unspiritual' and are uncertain about spiritual gifts. At other times we feel 'spiritual' and feel equipped by the Spirit. This is where we must learn to rely more completely on the 'Giving Gift', as it has been called, God's Holy Spirit to which we seek to be open.

Wednesday 31st August

St Aidan, Bishop, & All Saints of Lindisfarne

St Aidan, Bishop, (born c590, died 31 August 651) was an Irish monk and missionary who worked in Northumbria, converting the Anglo-Saxons. He founded a monastic cathedral on the island of Lindisfarne, served as its first bishop and travelled around, preaching to both the nobility and to the poor, including children and slaves. He is known as the Apostle of Northumbria. Lindisfarne was a place of great holiness and there were many there living lives of heroic discipleship, not least St Cuthbert whom we celebrate on 4th September. St Bede the Venerable's *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation* is a meticulous source for the lives of the Anglo-Saxon saints.

Collect

LORD GOD, you sent the gentle Bishop Saint Aidan to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ: grant us, by his prayers, to live as he taught in simplicity, humility, and love for the poor. 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

1 Cor 3:1-9 (RSV)

On Divisions in the Corinthian Church

But I, brethren, could not address you as spiritual men, but as men of the flesh, as babes in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving like ordinary men? ⁴For when one says, 'I belong to Paul,' and another, 'I belong to Apol'los,' are you not merely men?

⁵What then is Apol'los? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apol'los watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither he who plants nor he who waters is

anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ He who plants and he who waters are equal, and each shall receive his wages according to his labour. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Reflection

WE HAVE already reflected on the factional attitudes of the Corinthians, claiming allegiance to Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or Christ. St Paul here uses the analogy of the nursing mother – we find something similar in 1 Thess 2:7-8 and Gal 4:19. Elsewhere he is like a father (1 Cor 4:14-21; 1 Thess 2:11-12; Gal 4:19; Philem 10). Whether mother or father, he is nurturing and bringing up those who are infants in the Faith, fed with milk and not yet ready for solid food. Later we have a horticultural image, showing clearly that he, Paul, did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but it is God who gives the growth. St Paul is very specific about the condition in which they presently are. They are not 'spiritual men' but 'men of the flesh, and behaving like ordinary men'. This is based on a basic distinction between *Pneuma* and *Sarx*, technical terms with a Greek label. *Pneuma* is 'Spirit' as in 'Holy Spirit' and *Sarx* is 'Flesh' as in 'All Flesh is Grass'. 'Spirit' is eternal and immortal. 'Flesh' is animal and mortal. A generation ago, these terms were thought too specialist and hard to understand and the new Bible translations tended to find paraphrases, none of which were very clear or exact. The most helpful way through is to translate the text and then, where necessary, explain it. That said, it is not very hard to see that much in Creation – plants, trees, animals – is born, grows, decays, and dies, whereas God created us human beings to grow, and grow, and grow, and, though our bodies decay and die, our personalities – the human soul – live on for ever with God, if we accept his friendship.

Thursday of Week 22

1st September

Reading

1 Cor 3:18-23 (RSV)

¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If any one among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, 'He catches the wise in their craftiness,' ²⁰ and again, 'The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.' ²¹ So let no one boast of men. For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apol'los or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; ²³ and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Reflection

WE HAVE already encountered in 1 Corinthians the themes of wisdom, foolishness, boasting of different human leaders. Paul, Apollos, and Cephas (Peter) had all been given credit for the building up of the faith, where the credit should rightly be given to God and the power of the Gospel. Paul quotes a couple of texts (Job 5:13; Ps 94:11) sharply to remind those who are too sure of themselves of the futility of human wisdom.

Friday of Week 22

2nd September

Reading

1 Cor 4:1-5 (RSV)

The Ministry of the Apostles

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³ But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. ⁴ I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God.

Reflection

WHEN St Paul says 'it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court' it sounds a little defensive. We have no indication that the Corinthians are being critical of St Paul. It is more that he is setting out what the ministry of Apostles is. The legal imagery – 'human court', 'judge', 'acquitted', 'judges' – is helpful as St Paul points ahead – here and as the Letter reaches its conclusion – to the Coming of the Lord, which will be a Day of Judgment. The Apostles are not just those who bind and loose in the name of the Lord. They are also 'stewards of the mysteries of God', a rich phrase, which in the life of the Church, has come to apply both to the sacraments and to the Gospel. The Apostles are custodians and guarantors of both. During the current pandemic, we have re-named the ushers at Mass in East Hendred 'stewards'. They are no longer simply welcoming people and available to help – though those important tasks remain. They are now the people who prepare and safeguard the congregational area and look to the safety of the congregation. If they are not exactly 'stewards of the mysteries of God', they are certainly the stewards of the place where the mysteries of God are proclaimed and celebrated.

St Gregory the Great

Saturday 3rd September



St Gregory the Great (540-604). From a patrician family, Gregory served as a magistrate in Rome before becoming a monk. He was papal

legate in Constantinople and became pope in 590.. He reformed church discipline and liturgy, re-organised the papal territories, and sent St Augustine as a missionary to the English in Kent. He is one of the four Latin doctors of the Church and is credited with the development of Chant, which, in his honour, is called 'Gregorian'. The illustration is of the Holy Spirit, as a dove, perched on Gregory's right shoulder, conveying the sacred chant to him. Gregory meanwhile dictates it to a brother monk, a scribe.

Collect

O GOD, who care for your people with gentleness and rule them in love: through the intercession of Pope Saint Gregory, endow, we pray, with a spirit of wisdom, those to whom you have given authority to govern, that the flourishing of a holy flock may become the eternal joy of the shepherds. 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

1 Thess 2:2-8 (RSV)

St Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our visit to you was not in vain; ²but though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the face of great opposition. ³For our appeal does not spring from error or uncleanness, nor is it made with guile; ⁴but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but to please God who tests our hearts. ⁵For we never used either words of flattery, as you know, or a cloak for greed, as God is witness; ⁶nor did we seek glory from men, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. ⁷But we were gentle^[a] among you, like a nurse taking care of her children. ⁸So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

Reflection

THE FIRST Letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians is believed to be the earliest bit of Christian Scripture we have. It was written fewer than 20 years after the Resurrection and reveals that when Paul was in Philippi, at an earlier stage in his journey round Greece, they gave him a hard time. He seems in today's reading to be talking to Gentile converts in Thessalonica – those who 'turned to God from idols' 'serve a living and true God' (1 Thess. 1:9).

This much we learnt, earlier this year, on 27th May, as we celebrated the feast of St Augustine of Canterbury. Though, in the longer perspective, St Augustine was less successful than sometimes thought, he made considerable headway in Kent, and did his best to fulfil the commission of his master, St Gregory. The painstaking approach, of which St Paul speaks to the Thessalonians, is probably what lies behind not only St Paul's own missionary work but that of St Gregory and St Augustine.

There is much wisdom in this passage: courage is needed and lack of guile; there is no place in Christian preaching for flattery and greed; there must be gentleness and affection and a sense of sharing. The image of 'a nurse taking care of her children' is a very striking one, especially amidst the typically male-framed discourse of the time.

St Gregory walks tall, even amongst the best of those who have served as Pope. Whether it was governing his subjects, inspiring and caring for the clergy with his *Pastoral Rule*, re-ordering the liturgy, presiding over the music of the Church, he was outstanding. Such figures inspire in us what St Paul calls 'the hope to which God has called [us]' (Eph 1:18), 'Christ in [us], the hope of glory' (Col 1:27)
