

DEANERY OF ST EDMUND CAMPION

ENGLISH MARTYRS—

VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE PASTORAL AREA

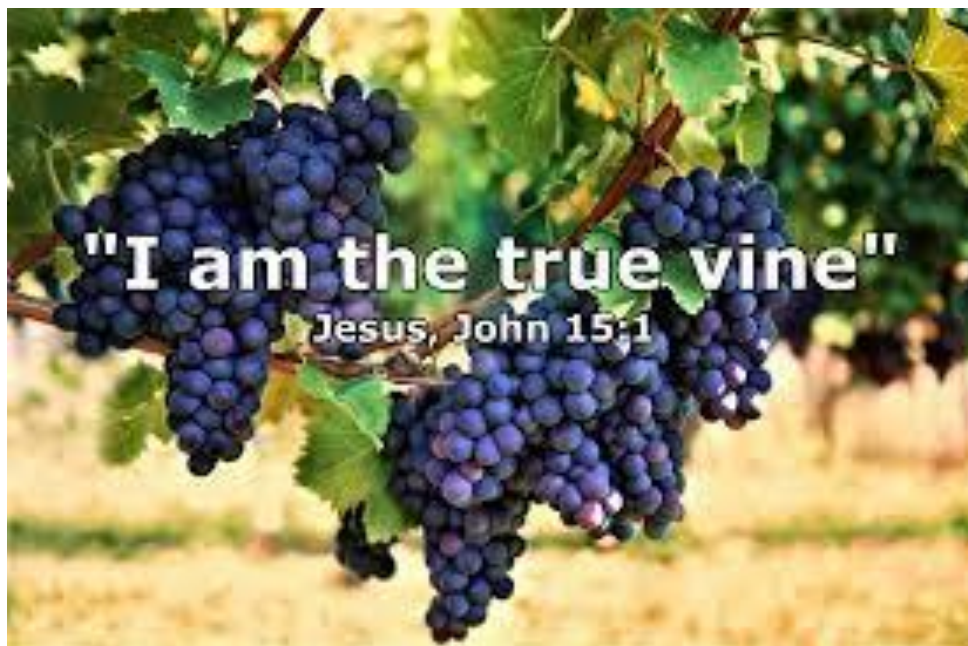
www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

Fifth Week of Easter

15th – 22nd May 2022



Fifth Week of Easter

15th- 22nd May 2022

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

Church open from 9am each day

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

15th May	9.30am	Parish Mass	[White] Pro populo
	11.15am	Mass (St Patrick's)	
	12.30pm	Holy Baptism	Emily Abigail Socha
	6pm	Holy Mass	FM Cecilia Margaret Mary Dearlove 1942

Monday	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Easter</i>		[White]
16th May	9.15am	Holy Mass	Ann Connolly

Tuesday	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Easter</i>		[White]
17th May	9.15am	Holy Mass	Victims of Sexual Abuse

Wednesday	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Easter</i>		[White]
18th May	9.15am	Holy Mass	Private Intention (Annie Furlong)

Thursday	Dedication of the Cathedral of St John, Portsmouth		
19th May	9.15am	School Mass	The Cathedral

Friday	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Easter</i>		[White]
20th May	8.30am	Holy Mass (Hundred House)	

Saturday	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Easter</i>		[White]
21st May	No Mass		

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

22nd May	9.30am	Parish Mass	[White] Pro populo
	11.15am	Mass (St Patrick's)	
	6pm	Holy Mass	

CONTACT DETAILS

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Reflection – *I and the Father are one.* John 10:30

IN EXODUS chapter 3, as Moses is keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, God reveals himself to Moses 'in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush'. God says to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he says to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you",' (v. 14). We need to keep in our minds several things here. For one thing, Moses is serving as a shepherd. For another, God reveals himself in a burning bush, a bush not consumed by the fire – a present moment, not a moment where something starts and finishes. Third, God tells Moses his Name: I AM WHO I AM. God is entirely in the present. He has no history, no beginning. He has no future, no ending. He is the Eternal Present. Fourth, God reveals himself to send Moses on a mission: 'Say this to the people of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you".'

If we are going to begin to understand the significance of this incident, we have to remember all these four things. Let's put them in a slightly different order. God chooses to reveal himself. There is no need for him to do so. The whole universe could function without us ever discovering anything about God, who he is and what he does. And, in fact, some people do think that the whole thing happens without God. Second, God reveals himself as the Eternal Present, I AM WHO I AM. That is the Name he gives himself. It is the Sacred Name, not for reading aloud. It is a Name which is it is forbidden to utter aloud in Hebrew and Catholic worship. In fact, in the Hebrew Bible, the vowels used are those of another word, so that whenever the Sacred Name appears in the scrolls, the reader says *Adonai* instead. The Sacred Name has four consonants – Yod, He, Waw and He, or, as we would say, Y, H, W, H. This *tetragrammaton* – these four letters – are translated as LORD in the English Bible and Lectionary, and, to indicate the *tetragrammaton*, the word LORD is given with the four capital letters.

We need to understand all that if we are going to understand the significance of what Jesus says about himself in St John's Gospel. On Good Shepherd Sunday (8th May) - and, remember, God revealed himself to Moses whilst he was watching over the sheep, and, for that matter, the angels of Bethlehem announced the coming of Jesus 'while shepherds watched their flocks by night' – we thought of Jesus as the

Good Shepherd. As the Alleluia verse put it, 'I AM the good shepherd, says the Lord: I know my own sheep and my own know me'. But the mention of shepherds and sheep should not distract us from the most important thing in the sentence. Jesus says, 'I AM'. We are encountering God himself. It is God himself who is speaking. Jesus is Emmanuel, God-with-us. The Risen Lord, in our midst, is God himself in our midst.

And it is in St John's Gospel that we discover most not only about Jesus but about God. This is clear from the verse we began with (*John 10:30*): 'I and the Father are one', says Jesus. This is not the first time we come across this. There are a several places in St John's Gospel where Jesus tells us this in other words. For example, (*John 8:58*) Jesus says this to the Jewish leaders: 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM'. Calling himself by the Divine Name was blasphemy, in their view, and the religious authorities 'took up stones to throw at him', to stone him to death but he hid himself. And then (*John 14*), answering the very modern-sounding religious doubts of Philip – 'Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied' – Jesus says, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, "Show us the Father?" Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?'

And, of course, we discover exactly who Jesus is in the very first verse of St John's Gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' And so it should not be too much of a surprise to discover Jesus calling himself 'I AM'. Some scholars go further and suggest that whenever we meet God in the Old Testament – Moses at the Burning Bush for example – the One whom we meet is Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity. God the Father is One whom we never meet, except through Jesus. Cardinal Schönborn has described him as '*The Human Face of God*'.

In Hebrew thought, seven is the perfect number – and so it is no surprise to discover in St John's Gospel that there are seven discourses in which Jesus describes himself as 'I AM'. 'I AM the bread of life' *John 6:35*. 'I AM the light of the world' *John 8:12*. 'I AM the door [of the sheepfold]' *John 10:9*. 'I AM the good shepherd' *John 10:11*. 'I AM the resurrection and the life' *John 11:25*. 'I AM the way, and the truth, and the life: no

one comes to the Father, but by me' *John 14:6*. 'I AM the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser' *John 15:1*.

On Good Shepherd Sunday, we focused on the image of the Shepherd, on pastoral work (the work of the shepherd), on vocations to the priesthood, and on how ideas of the shepherd and his sheep and the flock gathering for pasture (the congregation), permeate the Bible. And all that is important. Most important of all, though, is for us to understand that Jesus the Risen Lord is the Eternal Word, the Eternal Present, and that, in him, we encounter God Himself, for as Jesus himself says, *I and the Father are one*. That is Whom we meet, the One who condescends to be consumed, in the Blessed Sacrament, in Holy Communion.

Fr Andrew

Livestream Viewing

FROM Pentecost Sunday, when the Sunday and Holy Day Mass Obligation returns (see below), those who are able to attend Church for Mass cannot normally fulfil the Mass Obligation by watching on Livestream. This is a decision of the Catholic Bishops' Conference. A 'congregation' is, by definition, a 'gathering of the flock': audiences listen in, congregations gather together. However there are many for whom watching the livestream is a sensible decision: those who are frail or who have transport difficulties, those managing the complex needs of babies and small children &c. People in these circumstances are dispensed from the Mass Obligation. Equally there are many celebrations of Mass which are not part of the Sunday and Holy Day Mass Obligation which of course it is beneficial to watch.

The Sunday Obligation

ONE OF the characteristics of the Catholic Faith is the Sunday Obligation: the requirement that we 'keep the Sabbath Day holy', as the Ten Commandments put it, by being at Mass on Sunday. To miss Mass deliberately has long been regarded as a 'mortal sin', a sin which separates us from God.

During the pandemic, the Sunday Obligation was lifted by the Bishops of England and Wales, recognising that, for many, attending Mass in person could be difficult or impossible. And, for a time, no public masses were celebrated. The Bishops have decided to re-introduce the Sunday Obligation with effect from Pentecost, 5th June 2022. Catholics are under no obligation to attend Mass in their own parish and one of the tasks of Catholics when travelling, visiting relatives &c has long been to find out where they can attend Mass when away from home. At East Hendred we often welcome visitors³ with relatives who live locally or otherwise on holiday.

Two points about the Sunday Obligation which are worth thinking about. First, the notion of 'obligation' is not about compulsion. No one is compelled in this matter. 'Obligation' like 'religion' has a root word which is about 'binding'. We are talking about a covenant relationship here not a penal code.

Second, since the earliest times, Sunday has been regarded as a celebration of Easter. St Augustine talks about the seven days of creation, with God resting on the seventh day (Saturday) but rising from the dead on the eighth day, Sunday being the first day of eternal life, a day which is everlasting. On Sunday we enter afresh, week by week, into the Paschal Mystery. The Sunday Mass is a celebration of the Thursday Supper, the Friday Sacrifice on the Cross, the Saturday entombment, the Sunday Resurrection and the Coming in Glory at the End of Time. All of that and it is all of that that we are invited to participate in and refresh in our Sunday Mass. The first opportunity for Sunday Mass is on Saturday night (locally available in Didcot and Wantage). The main opportunities in our parish are Sunday morning (9.30am and 11.15am) and Sunday evening (6pm). No one is too busy to manage any of these, or similar opportunities, here or elsewhere.

Fr Andrew

The Rosary

The Rosary has five sets of ten beads each preceded by a separate bead. The Our Father is said on the separate bead, a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads, and a Glory be... whilst holding the chain before proceeding to the next separate bead. It is customary to begin, on the short chain, with the Creed (holding the crucifix), an Our Father, three Hail Marys and a Glory be... At the end of the chaplet (set of five mysteries), hold the medal and say the Hail Holy Queen....

The Five Joyful Mysteries (Monday and Saturday)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | The Annunciation | <i>Luke 1:26-38</i> |
| 2 | The Visitation | <i>Luke 1:39-46</i> |
| 3 | The Nativity | <i>Luke 2:1-7</i> |
| 4 | The Presentation | <i>Luke 2:22-32</i> |
| 5 | The Finding in the Temple | <i>Luke 2:42-52</i> |

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday and Friday)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | The Agony in the Garden | <i>Mark 14:32-38</i> |
| 2 | The Scourging at the Pillar | <i>John 18:33 – 19:1</i> |
| 3 | The Crowning with Thorns | <i>Mark 15:16-20</i> |
| 4 | The Carrying of the Cross | <i>Matthew 27:31-34</i> |
| 5 | The Crucifixion | <i>Luke 23:33-48</i> |

The Five Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | The Baptism in the Jordan | <i>Matthew 3:13-17</i> |
| 2 | The Wedding at Cana | <i>John 2:1-12</i> |
| 3 | The Proclamation of the Kingdom | <i>Luke 4:14-21</i> |
| 4 | The Transfiguration | <i>Mark 9:2-8</i> |
| 5 | The Institution of the Eucharist | <i>1 Corinthians 11:23-26</i> |

The Five Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday and Sunday)

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | The Resurrection | <i>Luke 24:1-6</i> |
| 2 | The Ascension | <i>Luke 24:50-53</i> |
| 3 | The Gift of the Holy Spirit | <i>Acts 2:1-4</i> |
| 4 | The Assumption of Our Lady | <i>1 Corinthians 15:20-26</i> |
| 5 | The Coronation of Our Lady and the Glory of the Saints | <i>Revelation 12:1-6</i> |

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 lift 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.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S MAY PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTION

Sunday 15 th	Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy, in the Diocese
Monday 16 th	Diocesan Department for Educational Chaplaincies
Tuesday 17 th	Victims of Sexual Abuse (National Prayer Cycle) Parish of Our Lady of Mercy & St Joseph, Lymington
Wednesday 18 th	Community of St John the Evangelist, Lee-on-Solent
Thursday 19 th	Anniversary of the Founding of the Diocese (1882)
Friday 20 th	Parish of St Saviour, Totland Bay
Saturday 21 st	Parish of St Mary, Ryde

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

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

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 15th - 21st May: Harold Davies, Frances Smith, John Joseph Wallington.

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

FINANCE COUNCIL

The Hendred Finance and Buildings Council met on Thursday 12th May 2022 and, amongst matters discussed, we bring three to your attention.

(1) COVID Precautions

Now the infection levels are much lower, we are no longer enforcing the wearing of masks and social distancing. People are asked to make their own prudential decisions but, in particular, to respect the needs of those who continue to wear masks and keep a distance. We shall keep this matter under constant review.

(2) Second Collections

To ensure that money for the general fund and for particular causes is properly separated, loose cash for Second Collections will be accepted only on the day of the Second Collection. Money donated subsequently will need to be in one of the yellow envelopes marked with the particular cause. To ensure Gift Aid, the yellow envelopes used for Second Collections should have either the name or the number of the donor or both.

(3) St Mary's Parish Rooms

Work is well-advanced on St Mary's Parish Rooms and we hope that in a few weeks' time we shall be able to make use of them.

ASCENSION DAY

The Ascension of the Lord, Thursday 26th May, is a Holy Day of Obligation when in normal times all Catholics are asked to come to Mass. There will be two masses that day in the parish, 9.30am and 6pm. The school will be attending at 9.30am.

COLLECTIONS

On Sunday 28th May there will be a Second Collection for the Catholic Communications Network. Please use the yellow envelopes provided if you can: gift aid then can be collected.

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 8th May 2022, 198 people viewed, 72 machines looking only at St Mary's. 35 of these were in the UK, 25 in the USA, 12 from other countries. 111 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

PARISH SECRETARY

Contact Ma Lluïsa Jarne on office@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk If you need to speak to her in person, she is available at one of the St Mary's Sunday masses and also on Mondays, 6pm-8pm, on 07983045824.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL – CHANGE OF DATE

The next meeting will now be on Thursday 23rd June at 8pm. We shall meet in St Mary's Parish Rooms. As the Council is reconstituted, in the first instance all those who took part in the Standing Committee during the pandemic are invited to this meeting.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

[Easter Activities](#) - Try some of these activities and worksheets. Remember: Easter is a season not just a day!

[The Meaning of Easter Video](#) - The English names for our liturgical holidays ('holy days') are so interesting. Here's a little history behind the word 'Easter'.

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East Hendred Catholic Parish



**Fifth Sunday of
Easter (C)
Antiphons,
Prayers and
Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Cantate Domino

O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance. alleluia.

Ps 98:1-2

Collect

Almighty ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us, that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism may, under your protective care, bear much fruit and come to the joys of life eternal. 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

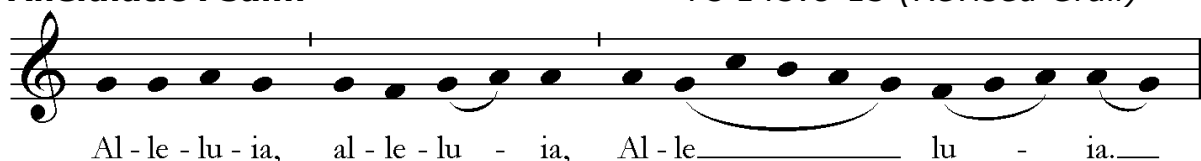
First Reading

Acts 14:21-27(RSV)

Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra and to Ico'nium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they believed. Then they passed through Pisid'ia, and came to Pamphyl'ia. And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attali'a; and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. And when they arrived, they gathered the church together and declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Alleluiatic Psalm

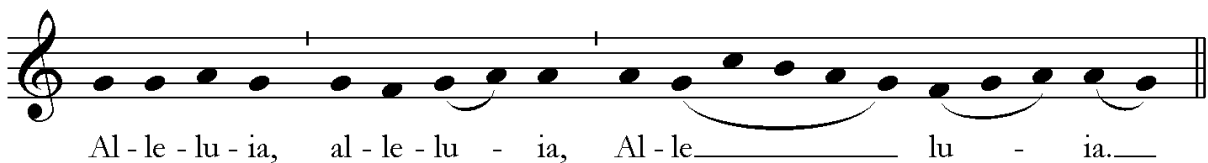
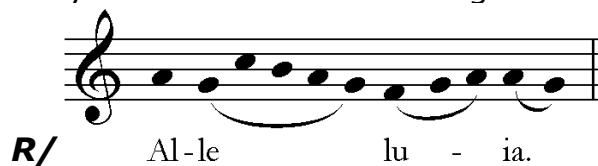
Ps 145:8-13 (Revised Grail)



The Lord is kind and full of compassion, ~
 slow to anger, abounding in *mer - cy*.
 How good is the Lord to all, ~
 compassionate to all *his crea - tures*. **R/**

All your works shall thank you, O Lord, ~
 and all your faithful ones *bless* you.
 They shall speak of the glory of your reign ~
 and declare your *migh - ty* deeds. **R/**

To make known your might to the children of men, ~
 and the glorious splendour of *your* reign.
 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; ~
 your rule endures for all ge - *ne - ra - tions*. **R/**

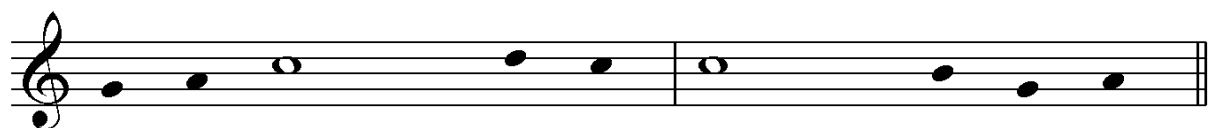
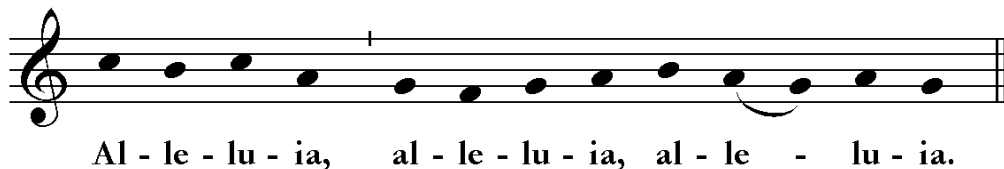


Second Reading

Apocalypse 21:1-5(RSV)

Then I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.' And he who sat upon the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.'

Gospel Acclamation



Je - sus said: 'I give you a new *com-mand-ment*:
 Love one another, just as I *have* loved you.

Gospel*John 13:31-35 (RSV)*

When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and in him God is glorified; if God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Prayer over the Offerings

O God, who by the wonderful exchange effected in this sacrifice have made us partakers of the one supreme Godhead, grant, we pray, that, as we have come to know your truth, we may make it ours by a worthy way of life. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface*(De Christo sacerdote et victima)*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but in this time above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed. By the oblation of his Body, he brought the sacrifices of old to fulfilment in the reality of the Cross, and, by commending himself to you for our salvation, showed himself the Priest, the Altar, and the Lamb of sacrifice. Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise, and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

Communion Antiphon*Ego sum vitis vera*

I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

Prayer after Communion

Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life. Through Christ our Lord.

Ant.
6.
R

E-gí-na cáeli * læ-tá-re, alle-lú-ia: Qui- a
 quem me-ru- ísti portá-re, alle-lú-ia: Re-surréx-it,
 si-cut dix-it, alle- lú-ia: Ora pro no-bis De-um,
 alle-lú- ia.

Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven, alleluia.
 he whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia.
 as he promised hath arisen, alleluia.
 pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia.

V/ Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia:
R/ for the Lord has risen indeed, alleluia.

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

16th – 20th May 2022

Scripture Reading (Easter Week 5)

Monday	Acts 14:5-18	John 14:21-26
Tuesday	Acts 14:19-28	John 14:27-31
Wednesday	Acts 15:1-6	John 15:1-8
Thursday	Acts 15:7-21	John 15:9-11
Friday	Acts 15:22-31	John 15:12-17
Saturday	Acts 16:1-10	John 15:18-21

Next Sunday

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (C)

Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

Apocalypse 21:10-14, 22-23 John 14:23-29

Monday in the Fifth Week of Easter

16th May 2022

Collect

MAY your right hand, O Lord, we pray, encompass your family with perpetual help, so that, defended from all wickedness by the Resurrection of your Only-Begotten Son, we may make our way by means of your heavenly gifts. 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. Amen.

Reading

John 14:21-26 (RSV)

The Holy Spirit, the Counsellor, will teach you all things

Jesus said to his disciples: ²¹He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.' ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?' ²³Jesus answered him, 'If a man loves me, he will

keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

²⁵ 'These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.'

Reflection

WE HAVE very little idea of what took place during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. We have some Resurrection Appearances and twice we are assured by St John that much else happens. At the end of John 20 we are told:

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

At the end of John 21 we hear much the same:

²⁵ But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

By contrast with this limited amount of information, there is considerable material in what are sometimes called 'The Farewell Discourses', chapters 14 to 17. These words are spoken between the Last Supper and the Arrest of Jesus and it is highly possible that what we have here is material from the time spent by the Risen Lord with his disciples or material from Jesus' earlier ministry or indeed both.

In today's passage, Jesus speaks of the One who, after him, will encourage the Church, teach, and bear witness. The word used in older translations was 'Comforter' – one who comforts in the sense of strengthening. Other words are 'Advocate' (Jerusalem Bible) and 'Counsellor' (Revised Standard Version). We cannot limit, or even describe, the Breath of God which is the Holy Spirit, so it is good that we have a few inadequate words. What is promised is a Divine Person who is more than a Comforter, more than an Advocate, and more than a Counsellor. Certainly he will comfort us – give encouragement and strength. Certainly he will speak up for us – helping us to understand the

will of God and to express ourselves as we try to expound it to others. And he will be a Counsellor, guiding us into all truth and protecting us as we seek to make our way and live the Christian life.

Tuesday in the Fifth Week of Easter

17th May 2022

Collect

O GOD , who restore us to eternal life in the Resurrection of Christ: grant your people constancy in faith and hope, that we may never doubt the promises which we have learned from you. 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. Amen.

Reading

John 14:27-31 (RSV)

Jesus bequeathes to his disciples the gift of Peace

Jesus said to his disciples: ²⁷ `Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, "I go away, and I will come to you." If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place, you may believe. ³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; ³¹ but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go hence.'

Reflection

THE GIFT of Jesus to his disciples as he prepares to leave them is Peace, a peace such as the world cannot give. It is hard to do justice to the word 'Peace' which, in context, refers to a state of wholeness and perfection, tranquil and permanent. Our awareness of its importance has been heightened by the building in of the 'Sign of Peace' into our eucharistic celebrations, a sign now notably missing from our lives, where even a simple handshake – let alone an embrace – is presently not available beyond the four walls in which we live. Yet we need to remember that Jesus is here speaking to his disciples: there is no mention

of any physical expression of Peace. Peace can be given and shared in a word.

It is also important to notice that the gift of Peace does not bring about ideal conditions. Jesus and later his disciples were faced with hardship, danger, and death. 'The ruler of this world is coming', says Jesus, and, though he has no power over Jesus, Jesus does as the Father commands. Missing from the Gospel passage in the lectionary are the final few words of the chapter. 'Rise, let us go hence'. This should serve to remind us that we are now at the end of the Supper and going out into the night where events seemingly very different from the wholeness and perfection of which Jesus speaks are about to take place.

Wednesday in the Fifth Week of Easter

18th May

Collect

O God, restorer and lover of innocence: direct the hearts of your servants towards yourself, that those you have set free from the darkness of unbelief may never stray from the light of your truth. 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. Amen.

Reading

John 15:1-8 (RSV)

Jesus the True Vine

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.'

Reflection

WE READILY respond to the metaphor of the Vine. It's a very simple image. Jesus is like the tree itself – the vine – and we, his followers, are the branches. Branches which do not flourish are pruned away, allowing for fresh growth. The Father is the Vinedresser. The imagery is very much rooted – to use a suitable metaphor – in the Old Testament, where Israel is seen as the Lord's vineyard (Isaiah 5; Jeremiah 12) or as a 'choice vine' (Jeremiah 2), a 'luxuriant vine' (Hosea 10). We may worry about the idea of being 'pruned away': am I bearing fruit, am I productive? This worry often translates into worry about everyday living. Am I a good friend, parent, spouse, teacher? Apparently many people worry about Imposter Syndrome – feeling as though they are not really up to doing whatever it is they are supposed to do. Self-worth is not something most of us are very good at.

I suggest that the more important thing in this passage to reflect on and take to heart is the word 'abide'. I looked up the meaning of 'abide' on the internet. I'm told that it has a particular biblical meaning – and certainly we did come across it a little while ago a couple of times in the story of the Road to Emmaus ('Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.' Luke 24:29). The definition I found was that 'to abide' is 'to remain stable or fixed in a state', 'to continue in a place'. Nowhere is this stronger than in the last verse of Psalm 23, abiding in the House of the Lord. The longing to be in the Lord's Temple – a longing of which have a heightened awareness at present – is there in Psalm 84 as well as in today's Psalm, 122. But we mustn't get stuck on the idea of the Lord's House – except, of course, that it is the place where Christ in his sacramental Presence lastingly abides. The Risen Christ, as we discover in the New Testament, over and over again, is God's New Temple, into which we are built as Living Stones. 'And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb' (Rev 21:22). It is certainly helpful that we have a number of different metaphors for living *in Christo*, in Christ. We are members of his Body. He is the Temple of which we are part. He is the True Vine, of which we are branches. He encourages us 'to bear much fruit, and so prove to be [his] disciples.'

Thursday in the Fifth Week of Easter

19th May

O God, by whose grace, though sinners, we are made just and, though pitiable, made blessed: stand, we pray, by your works, stand by your gifts, that those justified by faith may not lack the courage of perseverance. 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. Amen.

Reading

John 15:9-11(RSV)

Abide in my love

Jesus said to his disciples: ⁹ 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.'

Reflection

THE GOSPEL yesterday was about Jesus the True Vine and the importance of 'abiding' in his love. In fact, 'abiding' in the love of Jesus is the main point the image of the Vine is conveying. The fruits of this 'abiding', like the fruits of the Vine, are entirely dependent on the branches of the Vine being well-maintained and properly attached to the trunk of the tree. The way to 'abide' in the love of Jesus is keep his commandments and we shall be considering that further in tomorrow's Gospel.

Friday in the Fifth Week of Easter

20th May

Collect

GRANT us, Lord, we pray, that, being rightly conformed to the paschal mysteries, what we celebrate in joy may protect and save us with perpetual power. 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. Amen.

Reading

John 15:12-17 (RSV)

Love one another as I have loved you

Jesus said to his disciples: ¹² 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ This I command you, to love one another.

Reflection

IN THE Gospel, we begin and end with the command to love one another, and, as the opening verse makes clear, the love which the disciples must show is the love with which Jesus has loved them. This is a theme addressed further in 1 John 4:10-11. 'In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.'

The love of God, shown by Jesus, is a radical love, in which he lays down his life for his friends. This laying down of life is not only an expiation – a cleansing – but an atonement, establishing an entirely new relationship between God and humankind. We become 'friends' (*philoï*) and not 'slaves' (*douloï*). We enter freely into a loving relationship with God not because we choose to but because he chose us. This sounds soft and comfy, or even elitist and privileged, until we realise that our calling is to 'go and bear fruit'. As we know, for a chosen few, throughout history, bearing fruit has entailed sharing in the laying down of life in faithful witness. For everyone else, the call is for lasting fruit that 'should abide'. There's that word 'abide' again that we met a couple of days ago. Called to bear lasting fruit, we are called into a lasting relationship of fruitful love with God and with one another.

The May Magnificat

Gerard Manley Hopkins SJ
(1844–89)

MAY is Mary's month, and I
Muse at that and wonder why:
Her feasts follow reason,
Dated due to season—

Candlemas, Lady Day;
But the Lady Month, May,
Why fasten that upon her,
With a feasting in her honour?

Is it only its being brighter
Than the most are must delight
her?

Is it opportunist
And flowers finds soonest?

Ask of her, the mighty mother:
Her reply puts this other
Question: What is Spring?—
Growth in every thing—

Flesh and fleece, fur and feather,
Grass and greenworld all
together;
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throstle above her nested

Cluster of bugle blue eggs thin
Forms and warms the life within;
And bird and blossom swell
In sod or sheath or shell.

All things rising, all things sizing
Mary sees, sympathising
With that world of good,
Nature's motherhood.

Their magnifying of each its kind
With delight calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify the Lord.

Well but there was more than
this:
Spring's universal bliss
Much, had much to say
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-
dapple
Bloom lights the orchard-apple
And thicket and thorp are merry
With silver-surfèd cherry

And azuring-over greybell makes
Wood banks and brakes wash
wet like lakes
And magic cuckoocall
Caps, clears, and clinches all—

This ecstasy all through
mothering earth
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's
birth
To remember and exultation
In God who was her salvation.