

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor
Registered Charity no. 234025

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Newsletter for the week of 28th April 2024 Sunday Readings Cycle B Weekday Readings Cycle II

Readings for the 5th Sunday of Easter Acts 9:26-31; Psalm 21; 1John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8

Saturday 27th April 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 5th SUNDAY of EASTER

Sunday 28th April 10.30pm MASS of the 5th SUNDAY of EASTER

Monday 29th April FEAST: ST. CATHERINE of SIENA, consecrated virgin, Doctor of the Church

Tuesday 30th April (Optional: St. Pius V, pope, religious)

Wednesday 1st May 11.30am Mass (Optional; St. Joseph Worker)

Thursday 2nd May St. Athanasius, bishop, doctor of the Church

Friday 3rd May 11.30am Mass FEAST: SS. PHILIP & JAMES, Apostles

Saturday 4th May 10.00am Mass FEAST: THE ENGLISH MARTYRS

10.30-11.00am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 4th May 5.30pm 1st Mass of 6th Sunday of Easter

Sunday 5th May 10.30am Mass of 6th Sunday of Easter

Readings for 6th Sunday of Easter Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; Psalm 97; 1John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17

VISIT & APPEAL for NETWORK for a BETTER WORLD



This weekend we welcome Barbara Charles from Network for a Better World (N4BW), a lay missionary group which works for the relief of poverty with specific support for woman & children in a rural parish in Southern Malawi. Network for a Better World was established in 2012 by a small group of returned lay missionaries, who wished to continue to support some of the most marginalised people in our world today. They are based in the UK and work in a remote area of rural Malawi in partnership with the Montfort Fathers & the local people. Barbara Charles will speak at the end of Mass about the work of the organisation and how we can be involved in building up the Church communities in the developing world and will also make an appeal.

CRAFT CLUB

Next Wed 1st May 12.15-2.30pm Craft Club meeting, then in a fortnight Wed 15th May

RING 01625 423576 NOT 423576

The St. Edward's phone has been upgraded to be on the broadband and is now a digital phone. As a result the area code (01625) needs to be used together with the number.

DIOCESAN MASS FOR MARRIAGE

Sat 8th June 12noon at St. Columba's Pas Newton, Chester CH2 1SA for any parishioners celebrating a special wedding anniversary in 2024.

VACANCY for DIOCESAN DIRECTOR of SCHOOLS.

The Diocese is seeking to recruit a Director of Schools and applications are now open. Details of the role and the application process can be found at <https://www.tes.com/jobs/vacancy/director-of-schools-birkenhead-2040730>

TRUSTEE VACANCY WITH MARRIAGE CARE

Marriage Care is a Catholic organisation providing marriage preparation & relationship counselling services across England, Wales & Gibraltar and they are looking for Trustees to strengthen their board & help to continue to provide vital relationship support services to the Catholic community & beyond. Please visit: www.marriagecare.org.uk for more information or email: volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Last Sunday Collection £207.50

GET IN TOUCH QUICKLY –IF YOU ARE SICK If you or your relative enters Macclesfield Hospital let Fr. Peter know as soon as possible tel: 01625 423576 or by e-mail st.edmacc@gmail.com

DIARY of EVENTS

-Next Thurs 2nd May 7am-10pm Community Room in use for election of Police & Crime Commissioner

-Mon 6th May Public Holiday

-Thurs 9th May The Ascension of Our Lord- a Holyday of Obligation

-Tues 14th May Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

“Intricately woven by the Lord” : A Pastoral Reflection on Gender by the Bishops of England & Wales

24th April 2024

The full document, and the full executive summary, can be read & downloaded by clicking on the links just below.

[Pastoral Reflection: Intricately Woven By The Lord](#)

[Summary: Intricately Woven By The Lord](#)

Extracts from the Executive Summary

The human person, intricately woven in secret, by a loving God.

The wonder of the human person is grounded in the mystery of God who, as the psalmist relates, formed us and knows the depths of who we are. (Ps. 139:13-15). The image of God, shines forth in every person and is with this in mind that the Bishops, building on the statement issued in April 2018, offer this pastoral reflection.

Accompanying those who struggle with gender dysphoria is a complex but essential pastoral task. In every human person, regardless of how they understand their identity, the image of God shines forth. (*Evangelium vitae*, 34). Pope Francis warns against views that deny ‘the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman & envisages a society without sexual difference, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family’ (*Amoris Laetitia*, 56).

All are welcome in the Church and, in fidelity to the example of Christ, the Church seeks always to walk respectfully, sensitively and compassionately alongside people in all the complexities of life, including people’s struggles with gender identity.

Gender Identity Theory proposes that it is ‘inner gender identity’ rather than biological sex that makes a person a man or a woman (or neither). This view leads to a dualistic understanding that separates the material from the spiritual and raises pastoral challenges for the Church, as well as the fields of law, medicine, education, business and religious freedom. With Pope Francis, we distinguish pastoral care of the person experiencing these struggles and ‘[trans]gender ideology’. For the Christian, leading people to the fullness of life in Christ must always be a journey rooted in truth as well as compassion. This accompaniment goes hand in hand with a holistic understanding of the human person.....

..... Both soul and body determine what it means to be human. The body has meaning and importance now and into eternity. This reflects the wonder of the person of Jesus, who is put to death, rises from the dead in his body and ascends to the Father. Our body and soul find harmony through the saving work of Christ.

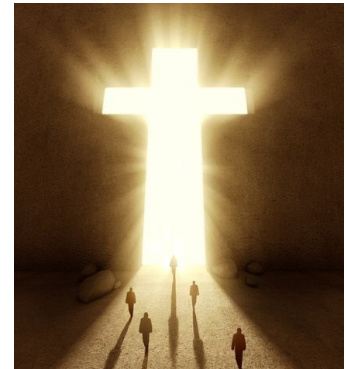
Since the body shares in the dignity of the image God and was created by God, we must regard the body as good. We honour it, resisting medical interventions, hormonal and surgical, to ‘reassign’ gender where these destroy the body’s fertility or sexual function. Especially ‘the young need to be helped to accept their own body as it was created.’ (*Amoris Laetitia*, 285).

Being male or female is fundamental to the understanding of the human person. There is a fundamental equality and distinctiveness in being created man or woman. This is good and willed by God. (Gen 1:27). We must learn how to value our own body in its femininity or masculinity. (*Laudato Si* , 155). The sexual identity of the person as man or woman is not purely cultural or social construction. It belongs to the specific manner in which the image of God exists. We cannot separate the masculine and feminine from God’s work of creation. (*Amoris Laetitia*, 286).

We cannot encourage support for reconstructive or drug based medical intervention that harms the body. Rather, our aim is to assist in the rediscovery and cherishing of humanity as created by God. This commands gentleness, respect, patience and love, for primacy always lies with the grace of Christ. The divine plan is a ‘source of objective inspiration for the deeply personal process of making decisions.’ (*Amoris Laetitia*, 305).

There are some children and young people who experience gender incongruence/dysphoria. Pastoral accompaniment must flow from an acceptance and celebration of the body as created, respect for parents as primary educators and uphold best practice in terms of safeguarding principles. Medical intervention for children should not be supported. Social ‘transition’ can have a formative effect on a child’s development and this should be avoided with young children.

This pastoral accompaniment requires care in the choice of language. Sensitivity and a desire to show respect are important, yet care should be taken to resist the temptation to adopt the language of gender ideology in our institutions. Following the example of the encounter of the two disciples with Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-35), an authentic pastoral accompaniment is one which walks alongside people with compassion, sensitivity and respect. As long and demanding as it might be, it becomes a ‘pilgrimage with Christ to the Father’. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 170). Such pastoral accompaniment is not an assertion of the self, but a recognition that we are each wonderfully made by God.



THE Wednesday
WORD



Encountering Christ
The Wednesday Prayer Custom
for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

1

Read

The Gospel for Sunday 21st April 2024

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep and runs away as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; this is because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well. They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock and one shepherd. The Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me; I lay it down of my own free will, and as it is in my power to lay it down, so it is in my power to take it up again; and this is the command I have been given by my Father."

Taken from John 10:11-18 The Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year B

2

Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

Each year on this 4th Sunday of Easter there is a reading from John about the Good Shepherd. To think of ourselves as woolly and cuddly sheep, obedient to the shepherd, would be a mistake. Sheep are renowned as being silly, contradictory creatures, always starting off in the wrong direction, getting themselves into tangles and difficulties. In the Holy Land they are scraggy beasts, pastured on rocky and often dangerous ground, amid boulders and cliffs, threatened by wild animals and marauders. It was not simply a matter of the shepherd sitting on a rock and idly playing his pipe. He needed to be on the alert to save the sheep from hurting themselves. So Jesus as the good shepherd is kept well occupied by our foibles, our stubbornness, our mistakes and our fears. Again, as in this Sunday's other two readings, there is the reassurance of a close relationship with the Father. Jesus knows us intimately, just as he knows the Father. It is questionable whether in real life a shepherd should lay down his life for his sheep. What would happen to the remainder of the flock? But it is an expression of Jesus' whole-hearted devotion to the flock that he shepherds. **What is a shepherd's job with the sheep? How can Jesus act as your shepherd? Who do you think of as shepherds in your life? What do you value most in those who guide you?**

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, joy, forgiveness, hope or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is TRUST!

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 21st April 2024**



1st Reading: Acts of the Apostles 4:8-12

Carrying on the Life of Jesus

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter said, "Rulers of the people, and elders! If you are questioning us today about an act of kindness to a cripple, and asking us how he was healed, then I am glad to tell you all, and would indeed be glad to tell the whole people of Israel, that it was by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the one you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this name and by no other that this man is able to stand up perfectly healthy, here in your presence today. This is the stone rejected by you the builders, but which has proved to be the keystone. For of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved."



The Acts of the Apostles shows that the Church carries on the life of Jesus. Under the leadership and power of the Spirit the Church represents the Risen Christ in the world of the first century and of today. So Peter and Paul work the same sorts of miracles as Jesus did, as signs and works of power. They heal people, raise the dead, forgive sins and spread the Good News of the sovereignty of God, just as Jesus did. In less spectacular ways the life of the Church community still continues the work of Jesus. Peter explains that all this is done 'in the name of Jesus'. The name signifies the power of a person. So we are baptised in, or even into, the name of Jesus, and in this way take on his personality and his power in the Spirit. We become the company of Jesus. It is in his name or power that we hope. In the early years of the Church, Christians were known as those over whom the name of Jesus had been pronounced, that is, those who have entered under Jesus' patronage and who trust in his name.

What does it mean to be a part of "the company of Jesus"?



2nd Reading: 1 John 3:1-2

Sharing the Heritage of Jesus

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us. My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.



From beginning to end this first letter of John is a meditation on Christian love and its implications. The innermost motivation of all Christian activity is the awareness that we have been raised to the sonship of God and to be co-heirs of God with Jesus. This is a new sort of 'sonship', for both women and men have been raised to it, whereas in the world of the apostles only sons (not daughters) could inherit. This 'sonship' enables us to call God 'Father'. When Paul speaks of this, he uses the Aramaic word 'Abba' as a sort of talisman and guarantee that we can pray 'Father', using the same address as Jesus himself used. 'Abba' is not a children's word like 'Daddy', as has sometimes been supposed, but is the expression of a warm and responsible adult relationship. Just as Jesus' sonship to the Father consisted in doing perfectly the Father's will and being about the Father's business in his whole life, so the Christian, spurred on by this relationship, is drawn to a heartfelt obedience to God. This must be a challenge for us.

Do we always act as children of the Father, being truly his representatives in the world, striving to bring his will to completion in all that we do?

“...striving to bring his will to completion in all that we do.”

The Wednesday Word Encountering Christ: Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**