

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

Father Peter Cryan

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Newsletter for the week of 22nd May 2022

Sunday Readings Cycle C

Weekday Readings Cycle II

Readings for 6th Sunday of Easter: Acts 15:1-2,22-29; Psalm 66; Apocalypse 21:10-14,22-23;; John 14:23-29

Saturday 21st May 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 6th SUNDAY of EASTER

Sunday 22nd May 10.30am MASS: 6th SUNDAY of EASTER

Monday 23rd May 9.30am Mass

Tuesday 24th May Solemnity: Our Lady Help of Christians, patron of the Diocese

Wednesday 25th May No Mass St. Bede the Venerable, priest, religious, doctor of the Church

Thursday 26th May 11.00am Holyday Mass The ASCENSION of the LORD

Friday 27th May No Mass St. Augustine of Canterbury, bishop, religious, missionary

Saturday 28th May 5.30pm 1st Mass of 7th Sunday of Easter

Sunday 29th May 10.30am Mass: 7th Sunday of Easter

Readings for 7th Sunday of Easter: Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 96; Apocalypse 22:12-14, 16-17, 20;; John 17:20-26

A face mask/ covering is now **optional** in the church & community Room. Hand sanitizing continues to be **desirable**. Care for **safe physical distancing** for oneself & fellow worshippers is more than ever needed.!

NEW ARRANGEMENTS AT MASS

- church benches & statues are returned to the original position;
- individual invitation “*The Body of Christ*” & the response “*Amen*” at Holy Communion is restored;
- the offertory collection is restored;
- the offertory procession returns;
- the entrance procession at Sunday 10.30am Mass returns;
- the present non-tactile sign of peace continues.

ASCENSION THURSDAY MASS

Next Thurs. 26th May 11.00am Mass for the Holyday. As a result there will be No Mass either on Wednesday or Friday this week.

INVITATION TO ST. ALBAN’S BI-CENTENNIAL MASS WITH CARDINAL NICHOLS

Sat 11th June at 2.00pm – Open Air Mass at St Alban’s Pr. Sch. Priory La. celebrated by *Cardinal Vincent Nichols* to celebrate 200 years of a parish for the Macclesfield area- with a picnic to follow. Entry is by ticket only, but Fr. Peter Burke invites St. Edward’s parishioners to join them in the celebration. A £5 per adult suggested donation goes to the Church roof repair. Reserve a ticket now for later collection in order to know numbers from St Alban’s website <https://stalbanmacc.org.uk/>. Note: there will no parking at the primary school.

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES:

As all Covid restrictions have been eased, we can now return to Lourdes. Our Diocesan Pilgrimage will take place 29th July – 4th Aug by *air* and 28th July – 5th Aug *overland*. Prices start from £440 which includes travel, full board accommodation & full pilgrimage programme. Download details & booking form from the pilgrimage site www.shrewsburypilgrimage.co.uk or the Pilgrimage Office, Curial Offices, 2 Park Rd South, Wirral, CH43 4 UX

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED GIVING

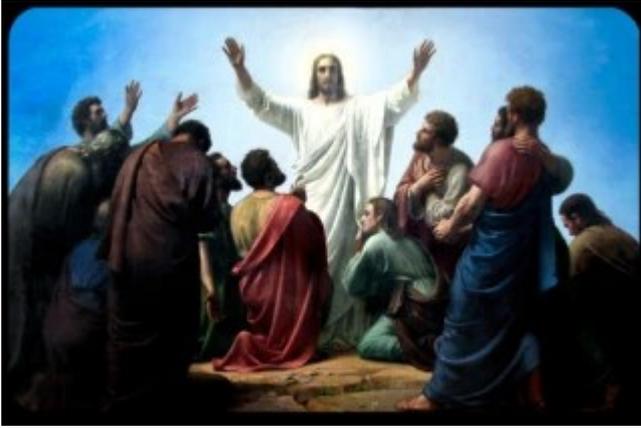
Last Sunday’s Offertory £176.00

RETURN TO MASS AT PENTECOST

The Conference of the Bishops of England & Wales have issued an invitation: “*Looking forward to the forthcoming feast of Pentecost, we now invite all Catholics who have not yet done so to return to attending Mass in person*”

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

UNDERSTANDING THE ASCENSION - Why did the disciples rejoice if Jesus was departing?



No sooner have the disciples regained their Lord in the resurrection than he is gone again. “And as they were looking on,” writes Luke, Jesus “was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9). And yet, their reaction is one of rejoicing! “And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the Temple blessing God” (Lk 24:52-53).

Were the Ascension merely a departure, we might wonder how much the disciples really cared for Jesus. The imagery of the scene suggests, however, that something different than a farewell is underway. By his rising in a cloud, Christ reveals himself in this moment as the one spoken of in the prophecy of Daniel: “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed” (Dan 7:13-14). Put simply, the Ascension signals Christ’s enthronement as king. That’s certainly cause for rejoicing.

This, though, is not the end of the story. Christ’s Ascension in the Acts of the Apostles is preceded by the disciples’ question, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6) and by Christ’s assurance that the disciples will “be my witness” (Acts 1:8), precisely so as to spread the kingdom. The enthronement of Christ in the Ascension relates directly to this task. What “Jesus began to do before he was taken up” (Acts 1:1) will now, through his Ascension and the gift of his Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:8; 2:1ff.), be carried through in the disciples as they witness to Jesus “in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

It is important to see that what takes place here is not the handing on of a mission that once belonged to Christ but does so no longer. It is rather the drawing of the disciples into the ongoing mission of Christ by drawing them into his body (1 Cor 12:27). St. Luke relates that “in the first book,” the Gospel of Luke, he “dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach” (Acts 1:1). In Acts, his second book, St. Luke narrates what Jesus does now in and through the Church – and this after his Ascension. We can, then, understand the Ascension not as a going away but as a departure which opens to the world a more intimate form of union. And certainly, that too is cause for rejoicing!

What’s more, the Ascension announces emphatically just what such a union brings about. If in earlier resurrection appearances Jesus cleanly vanishes from sight (e.g. Lk 24:31), in the Ascension he remains present in all of his bodilyness. He is not taken up from his body, but in it, and so union with Christ enfolds both his humanity and our own.

It is here that the Ascension most strains our imagination, for we fail in trying to conceive of “the irreversible entry of his humanity [and so his body!] into divine glory” (§659). The Ascension is no literary fiction, and yet if we conceive of this event with an understanding of the body as we experience it now, Jesus’ departure becomes unintelligible. We are left to imagine him careening continually skyward. This, of course, is not what Scripture means to convey. It insists both that Jesus does not leave his humanity behind and that what his humanity becomes in this moment defies imagining. “What we will be has not yet been revealed” (1 John 3:2).

In speaking of the Resurrection, the Catechism [of the Catholic Church] teaches that Christ’s rising from the dead leaves, as it were, a footprint in history. It “could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles’ encounters with the risen Christ.” Even so, the resurrection remains “as something that transcends and surpasses history” (§647). Jesus enters “life beyond time and space” (§646), and while for a period “his glory remains veiled under the appearance of ordinary humanity” (§659) as he eats and drink with his disciples, it remains so no longer in the Ascension. “Jesus’ final apparition ends with the irreversible entry of his humanity into divine glory” (§659). In this way the Ascension reveals both the permanence of the Son’s union with his humanity and so also the whole of what that humanity stands open to become. It announces the reality towards which the Church in her humanity is drawn and which – as seen in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin – it already becomes. And certainly, that too is cause for rejoicing!



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 22nd May 2022 - The Sixth Sunday of Easter

1 Relax & Remember

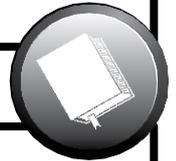
Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Then read the Gospel, preferably 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.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for Sunday 22nd May 2022 - The Promise of the Spirit (John 14:23-29)

Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him. Those who do not love me do not keep my words. And my word is not my own: it is the word of the one who sent me. I have said these things to you while still with you; but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you. Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me say: I am going away, and shall return. If you loved me you would have been glad to know that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you this now before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe."



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

In these final discourses of Jesus at the Last Supper (as he sketches the outlines of his future Church) there are four passages which promise the coming of a Paraclete or Advocate, the Holy Spirit. 'Paraclete' and 'Advocate' mean the same: someone who is called to your side as a supporter, often in a legal situation. The Father will send this Paraclete, in the name and power of Jesus, so that the Paraclete will make Christ present in the Church in a new way. The Paraclete will strengthen Jesus' disciples with Christ's own strength. The Paraclete will lead the disciples into all truth, so that they gradually come to a fuller understanding of all the implications of the teaching of Jesus. Like any legal advocate, the Paraclete will provide the followers of Jesus with the power in teaching and argument to withstand opposition. This is the power which will guide the Church in ages to come, not only the official teachers of the Church, the successors of the apostles, but all the faithful who preserve and enrich the tradition of the Church by their prophetic office. The decree of Vatican II on the Church leaves no doubt that not only the call to sanctity but also participation in the prophetic office of Christ extends to all the members of the Church; this is an inspiring and awesome responsibility for us all.

For what special task do I most need the Paraclete's strength and guidance?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 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. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.



*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*

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS



Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 22nd May 2022

First Reading: *The Council at Jerusalem*

Acts 15:1-2. 22-29

Some men came down from Judaea and taught the brothers, "Unless you have yourselves circumcised in the tradition of Moses you cannot be saved." This led to disagreement, and after Paul and Barnabas had had a long argument with these men it was arranged that Paul and Barnabas and others of the church should go up to Jerusalem and discuss the problem with the apostles and elders. Then the apostles and elders decided to choose delegates to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; the whole church concurred with this. They chose Judas known as Barsabbas and Silas, both leading men in the brotherhood, and gave them this letter to take with them: 'The apostles and elders, your brothers, send greetings to the brothers of pagan birth in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. We hear that some of our members have disturbed you with their demands and have unsettled your minds. They acted without any authority from us, and so we have decided unanimously to elect delegates and to send them to you with Barnabas and Paul, men we highly respect who have dedicated their lives to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accordingly we are sending you Judas and Silas, who will confirm by word of mouth what we have written in this letter. It has been decided by the Holy Spirit and by ourselves not to saddle you with any burden beyond these essentials: you are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from fornication. Avoid these, and you will do what is right. Farewell.'

This was the crucial meeting of the whole Church at Jerusalem where the decision was made that Christianity was not only for Jews but was open to the gentiles too. Paul's activity in receiving gentiles into the Church had created a crisis: was not God's promise to Abraham limited only to Jews? Was it not limited only to those who observed the prescriptions of the Law? Could the Spirit of the risen Christ really dwell in and activate the uncircumcised? The staggering breakthrough achieved here at Jerusalem totally altered the course of history. Today's reading jumps to the concluding instructions and omits the details of the debate which, in fact, provides a model for a community discussion: in the awareness of the presence of the Spirit the apostles and elders heard the facts of the case, listened to the opinions on both sides of the question put forward by experienced leaders, and then made their decision in the Spirit. The letter of instructions which follows is also a model of its kind, firm in its decisions, but firm also in its appreciation of individual consciences. The restrictions imposed on gentile Christians were designed to make fellowship with Jewish Christians possible without outraging their sensibilities.

How do I make decisions in my life? Could I learn anything from the apostles in this reading? Is there some way in which I could be more involved in the life of the Church – in the Parish, for ex

Second Reading: *The Holy City of Jerusalem*

Revelation 21:10-14. 22-23

In the spirit, the angel took me to the top of an enormous high mountain and showed me Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down from God out of heaven. It had all the radiant glory of God and glittered like some precious jewel of crystal-clear diamond. The walls of it were of a great height, and had twelve gates; at each of the twelve gates there was an angel, and over the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; on the east there were three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. The city walls stood on twelve foundation stones, each one of which bore the name of one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. I saw that there was no temple in the city since the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were themselves the temple, and the city did not need the sun or the moon for light, since it was lit by the radiant glory of God and the Lamb was a lighted torch for it.

The description of the New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ, begun in last week's reading, continues to be highly symbolic. The twelve gates of the city (drawn from a prophecy in Ezekiel) face the four quarters of the compass, to show that the city embraces the whole universe and is four-square solid. They symbolise the twelve tribes of Israel and so also the twelve apostles. The richness of the city is hinted at in the sparkle of precious stones, not only of diamonds but of many others too. The dimensions of the city are vast: a cube of 1,500 miles in each direction. No need for the light and warmth of the sun, for the Lord God and the Lamb provide a single source for the city's nourishment and illumination. No need for a sacred area, for the presence of the Lord God and the Lamb make the whole city a sacred area. This vision is the ultimate goal of creation, when we share in the very life of God, the ultimate fulfilment of 'thy Kingdom come'. The Letter to the Ephesians expresses it in this way: the whole universe is 'headed up' into Christ, thus making sense of creation and bringing creation to its completion.

If I really lived in the presence of God, what would be the most daunting thing - and what the most encouraging

The ultimate goal of creation, when
we share the very life of God.

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The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God* w:
www.wednesdayword.org e: info@wednesdayword.org