

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

Father Peter Cryan

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Newsletter for the week of 8th May 2022

Sunday Readings Cycle C

Weekday Readings Cycle II

Readings for 4th Sunday of Easter: Acts 13:14,43-52; Psalm 99; Apocalypse 7:9,14-17; John 10:27-30

Saturday 7th May 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 4th SUNDAY of EASTER

Day of Prayer for Vocations

Sunday 8th May 10.30am MASS: 4th SUNDAY of EASTER

Monday 9th May 9.30am Mass

Tuesday 10th May (St. John de Avila, priest, doctor of the Church)

Wednesday 11th May 11.00am Mass

Thursday 12th May (Ss. Nereus & Achilleus, martyrs)

Friday 13th May 12noon Mass (Our Lady of Fatima)

Saturday 14th May 5.30pm 1st Mass of 5th Sunday of Easter

Sunday 15th May 10.30am Mass: 5th Sunday of Easter

Readings for 5th Sunday of Easter: Acts 14:21-27; Psalm 144; Apocalypse 21: 1-5; John 13: 31-35

A FACE MASK/ COVERING & HAND SANITIZING ON ENTRANCE ARE REQUIRED BOTH IN CHURCH AND IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Last Sunday's Offertory £166.00

S/O April £861.0

PARISH FINANCIAL COMMITTEE

This Sunday 8th May 6.00pm: meeting in the Community Room

FRIDAY MASS TIME CHANGE

It's worthwhile to try a change to Mass at 12noon as the 7pm time received so little support. Please may some parishioners take the opportunity of the new time to come to a weekday Mass.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Mon 16th May 7.30pm Agenda items by next Sunday 8th May to Chair Judy Bailey email: judyb100@hotmail.co.uk.
mob: 07773 979371; Vice-Chair: Steve James email sjames2@btinternet.com; mob:07946 148531; Sec: Denise Beck email: denesque@hotmail.co.uk mob: 07769 536103

CHRIST the KING PRIMARY SCHOOL

After several years of overcoming the challenges of bringing a joint Catholic Church & Church of England voluntary aided school into a Catholic Multi Academy Trust, *Christ the King Primary school* has been able to join the *Holy Family Multi Academy Trust* which includes All Hallows College, St. Alban's Pr. Sch., St. Mary's Pr. Sch Congleton and St. Paul's Pr. Sch. Poynton. It now will be properly part of this family of schools with greater mutual support and the pooling of resources.

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 St. Alban's 200 years - 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 from 11th April for later collection in order to know numbers by going to St Alban's website <https://stalbanmacc.org.uk/>. Note: there will no parking at the primary school.

MISSIO THANKSGIVING MASS

Next Wed 11th May at 7pm A Thanksgiving Mass with *Bishop Mark Davies*, to thank God for all those who are praying and supporting the Red Boxes and the work of Missio, will be celebrated at St Michael & All Angels Church, New Hey Road, Woodchurch, Birkenhead CH49 5LE All are welcome including *Missio Secretaries, Benefactors, Red Box holders* and anyone interested in the mission of the Church.

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES:

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

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

HOW THE CATHOLIC FAITH PERSISTED IN THE MACCLESFIELD AREA

It seems possible that from the time of Elizabeth I in the 1580 & 90s the Catholics in the Macclesfield area had Mass at Sutton Hall. In 1860 during alterations to one room in the Hall, 17 paintings were discovered built up in a recess in the wall and this recess may have been a priest's hiding hole. By this time Catholics were only able to hold on to their faith when they had the protection of a local gentleman. It is feasible that it was through the protection of Sir Humphrey Davenport who succeeded to the Sutton Hall estate on marriage to Mary Sutton that a priest began to reside at Sutton Hall. He was the son of Margaret Davenport of Bramhall, one of the most renowned recusants, (as persecuted Catholics came to be known) in the County of Cheshire.

Joseph Gillow in his book *Catholicity in Stockport* (1902) considered that it was "highly probable that the Rev. Francis Ffitton was here [Sutton Hall] in the early seventeenth century" This Francis Ffitton was ordained priest in April 1600 in the seminary at Douai in Northern France. Joseph Gillow goes on to relate that ;" In all probability he [Francis Ffitton] resided at Sutton, and was the donor of the ancient chalice bearing his name ...which was used by the priests of the mission for close on two hundred and fifty years. Sometime during the 17C a chapel at Sutton Hall was built.

Another piece of evidence of continued residence of a priest was that 1698 Sir Rowland Bellasis, the descendant & owner of Sutton Hall arranged for an annuity to be paid "to such priest or priests as should assist the Catholics of Sutton." It was at this time following the Oates Plot in 1678 & the accession of William & Mary in 1688 (the "Glorious Revolution") that a 30 year period of increasingly severe laws against Catholics were put in place making it increasingly difficult to hold on to the Catholic Faith.

The secession of the 4th Viscount Fauconberg of Sutton Hall in 1700 mirrored this tendency in England as a whole during the 18C that increasing numbers of wealthy families became disenchanted with the prospect of seemingly exclusion from power and bare sufferance in society. So, without the patronage and support of the wealthy many congregations ceased to exist. The Jacobite failures of 1715 and 1745 subjected Catholics to even greater antipathy and suspicion. The looting of Macclesfield in December 1745 by the army of Bonnie Prince Charlie only made matters worse.

By 1767 there was a list made of thirty eight Catholics in the area : 21 of whom lived in Macclesfield town and 17 in Sutton who were largely artisans and craftsmen. The list names a Mr Hulme as the priest but as someone chiefly residing in Manchester. By this time the priests at Sutton were finding it more & more difficult to reside permanently at Sutton and the priest would move between Sutton, Manchester and then Townley Hall near Blackburn.

However during this difficult time the small congregation of Catholics continued to meet for Mass and to manage to evade discovery by varying the place of celebration from the chapel in the Sutton Hall to a hay-loft above a stable at Ridge Hill Farm and to a house at Sutton Lane Ends built in 1720 for the Misses Orme.

In 1743 a Catholic youth named Birchenough showed someone in black, alighting from a coach in Macclesfield Market Square, the way to the Misses Orme's house where he served Mass for the celebrant who, he was told, was a Bishop- probably the Bishop of the Northern District.

When the French Revolution in 1779 occurred many French including religious communities fled across the channel to take refuge in England. And just like now with the Ukrainian invasion & refugees, there was immense sympathy for the French refugees. The mood of suspicion & resentment for Catholics changed to compassion & toleration. The law was changed in 1778 that allowed Catholics to acquire land and open a school without incurring imprisonment for life. In 1791 law was changed to allow Catholics, clerical and lay, freedom to worship on fulfilling certain legal formalities.

In November 1794 Rev. Edward Kenyon was appointed the first parish priest of St. Mary's Mulberry St, in Manchester (the Hidden Gem), and a refugee priest of the French Diocese of Reims, Abbé Louis Robin, took pastoral care of the Macclesfield area starting the first known baptismal register in 1795 and working in Macclesfield until 1801.

By 1801 the number of Catholics was about ninety and there was an influx of Irish weavers to work in the growing silk industry in the town. After the failed rebellion in Ireland by Wolf Tone in 1798 a large number of Irish came to Stockport and in 1798 Stockport became a separate mission from St. Mary's Mulberry St.. Then in 1801 Fr. James Blundell, the priest at Stockport, took on the extra pastoral care of Macclesfield and Sutton. In the same year 4 lay members of the Macclesfield Catholic Community acquired land at Broken Cross Lane (now Chester Rd) and St. Michael's Chapel was opened on it on 25th August 1811.

Finally, on 17th April 1821, Fr. John Hall, a newly ordained priest, took up the pastoral care of Catholics in the Macclesfield area – a new parish was founded with a new parish priest.

This account is drawn from "The Churches And Chapels of Macclesfield Vol 1 The Catholic Community" by Dennis Whomsley 1989



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 8th May 2022 - The Fourth 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 8th May 2022 - Jesus the Good Shepherd (John 10:27-30)

Jesus said, “The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from me. The Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone, and no one can steal from the Father. The Father and I are one.”

3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection. *Jesus' teaching on the Good Shepherd is the nearest saying approaching a parable in John's gospel. It is so important that the Church puts it before us on the fourth Sunday of Easter in each of the three cycles of readings. Apart from its obvious sense of Jesus looking after his sheep – and silly, confused sheep at that – this image receives special meaning from the figure of the shepherd in the Old Testament. God is the primary shepherd of Israel, who pastures his sheep in pastures green so that they fear no evil (Psalm 23). In Ezekiel 34 God promises to free Israel from the self-centred shepherds who keep the sheep for their own advantage, and to send them a true shepherd after his own heart, a second King David, who will tend them as God himself would care for them. Thus, in putting before us each year in Eastertide this proclamation that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Church is affirming the risen Christ as the divine Shepherd who tends his flocks. Particularly in these verses we see the unity of the risen Christ and the Father in their role of shepherds of the sheep, just as in our second reading from the Book of Revelation we see the unity of the LORD God and the Lamb, both revered on the one throne.*

What is involved in imitating Christ as shepherd?

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 8th May 2022

First Reading: *Paul Turns to the Gentiles*

Acts 13:14. 43-52

Paul and Barnabas carried on from Perga till they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here they went to synagogue on the sabbath and took their seats. When the meeting broke up, many Jews and devout converts joined Paul and Barnabas, and in their talks with them Paul and Barnabas urged them to remain faithful to the grace God had given them. The next sabbath almost the whole town assembled to hear the word of God. When they saw the crowds, the Jews, prompted by jealousy, used blasphemies and contradicted everything Paul said. Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, "We had to proclaim the word of God to you first, but since you have rejected it, since you do not think yourselves worthy of eternal life, we must turn to the pagans. For this is what the Lord commanded us to do when he said, "I have made you a light for the nations, so that my salvation may reach the ends of the earth." It made the pagans very happy to hear this and they thanked the Lord for his message; all who were destined for eternal life became believers. Thus the word of the Lord spread through the whole countryside. But the Jews worked upon some of the devout women of the upper classes and the leading men of the city and persuaded them to turn against Paul and Barnabas and expel them from their territory. So they shook the dust from their feet in defiance and went off to Iconium; but the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

In the Acts of the Apostles we witness the Christian message spreading to the ends of the earth. Yet three times Paul, as he does this, is rejected by his own people and forced to turn to the gentiles: once here in Asia Minor, once in Greece and finally in Rome. Each time he does so with a biblical gesture, shaking the dust off his feet, shaking out his cloak, finally in Rome quoting the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah ("You will indeed listen, but never understand ..."). Perhaps in God's providence this rejection of Paul's preaching was the means by which the Gospel reached beyond Judaism.

What can I do to help the mission to bring Christ (like Paul) to all nations?

Second Reading: *The Innumerable Gathering of the Redeemed*

Revelation 7:9. 14-17

I, John, saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. One of the elders said to me, "These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

“Bring the Christian values as a leavening of society.”

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In his vision John sees the countless numbers of the redeemed as they will be gathered at the throne of the Lamb. Their palms are the palms of victory and their robes, curiously washed white in blood, are the sign of integrity and innocence. The Book of Revelation was written at a time, whether of bloody persecution or not, when the temptation was overwhelming to submit to the dominance of Rome. This was not only political subjection but religious too, for the Lord Emperor was worshipped as a god. In every city there was an altar to Rome and to Augustus: the greater the city, the greater the temple. Worship of the Emperor and Rome set the whole tone for society. To join this worship was the only way to success and prosperity. Yet if Augustus is Lord, Christ cannot be LORD. Christians had to opt out of the emperor cult, and many paid with their blood. The victory was not by arms but by endurance. Today also there are many practices and beliefs in our society which Christians must opt out of – and yet we must also vigorously opt in, to bring the Christian values as a leavening of society.

Do I give too much ground to the idols and standards of contemporary society?

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