

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

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Newsletter for the week of 5th May 2024 Sunday Readings Cycle B Weekday Readings Cycle II

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

Readings for the Ascension of the Lord Acts 1:1-11 ; Ephesians 4:1-13; Mark 16:15-20

Saturday 4th May 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 6th SUNDAY of EASTER

Sunday 5th May 10.30pm MASS of the 6th SUNDAY of EASTER

Monday 6th May

Tuesday 7th May

Wednesday 8th May 11.30am Mass

Thursday 9th May 11.30am Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (in church)

7.00pm Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (in the Community Room)

Friday 10th May (Optional: St. John of Avila, priest, doctor of the Church)

Saturday 11th May 10.00am Mass

10.30-11.00am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 11th May 5.30pm 1st Mass of 7th Sunday of Easter

Sunday 12th May 10.30am Mass of 7th Sunday of Easter

Readings for 6th Sunday of Easter Acts 1:15-17,20-26, 44-48; Psalm 102; 1John 4:11-16; John 17:11-19

SOLEMN HOLIDAY of the ASCENSION

Next Thursday 9th May

- **9.30am** for the Christ the King Primary School Community in the church .

- **11.30am** in the church

- **7.00pm** in the parish community room – entrance by parish community room door only

The Ascension Holyday is a holiday of obligation in England.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Tues 14th May 6.30pm in the Community Room. Agenda items by next Sunday to Chair Caroline Mottram

Caroline.mottram@talktalk.net Vice Chair John Mears john_mears@outlook.com Sec. Sarina Bloor

tribalhq@ntlworld.com

CRAFT CLUB

A week on Wednesday **Wed 15th May** 12.15-2.30pm Craft Club meeting, then on Wed 12th June

DIOCESAN MASS FOR MARRIAGE

Sat 8th June 12noon at St. Columba's Plas 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>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GREAT GENEROSITY

Last Sunday Collection £181.00

Network for a Better World Appeal £183.30

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

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.

DIARY of EVENTS

-This **Mon 6th May** Public Holiday

-**Next Sun 12th May** Day of Prayer for World Communications with retiring collection.



A Pastoral Letter

Sunday 5th May 2024

On the Month of Mary

Dear brothers and sisters,

I write at the beginning of this month of May, a month devoted to renewing our love for Mary, the Mother of God, who at the foot of the Cross, was given to us as our motherⁱ. It is Mary, full of grace and free from sin, who perfectly lives Christ's command "*To love one another*"ⁱⁱ. As the Second Vatican Council declared: "*By her maternal love, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by danger and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home*"ⁱⁱⁱ. It is in this confidence that we turn to Our Lady amid all the troubles of time saying in the words of Pope Francis: "*God has given you to us and made your Immaculate Heart a refuge for the Church and all humanity. By God's gracious will you are ever with us; even in the most troubled moments of history ...*"^{iv}

Amid the death and destruction of the First World War, the Church not only worked for peace, she joined in continuous prayer together with the Mother of Christ. The Church sensed in that troubled hour the closeness of Mary as an ever-present mother. During this worldwide prayer, Our Lady appeared to three children in the tiny hamlet of Fatima in Portugal, to remind us that the peace of the world demands we turn away from our sins and turn more trustfully to God. As in all the appearances where Our Lady in modern times, she called us to renewed Eucharistic faith and love. This is a message for us to rediscover in a year which Pope Francis has dedicated to "*rediscovering the great value and absolute need of prayer in persona life, in the life of the Church, and in the world*"^v.

In calling us to deeper prayer, the Mother of God invites us to accept her motherly help. Our Lady specifically invites us to pray with her the Gospel prayer we call 'The Rosary', that might draw closer to her Son, by meditating on the mysteries of His life, death and resurrection.

The Rosary, we can say, is a precious gift from Mary herself to help us contemplate Christ in the mysteries of His joy, His sorrow, His light and His glory. In the Rosary, it is with Mary's gaze and Mary's wonder that we keep our eyes fixed on Him. This prayer has accompanied me, and I have come to treasure it more and more along the path of life. At the Chrism Mass, I personally reflected on how the Rosary has formed an unbroken chain linking every scene and moment of my life with Gospel contemplation, intercession, reparation and praise and thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity.

The Church and the witness of her Saints encourages us all to find in the Rosary, "*The depth of the Gospel message in its entirety*" and a prayer "*destined to bring forth a harvest of holiness*"^{vi}. As Pope Saint John Paul noted, this prayer can rightly be called "*Mary's prayer: the prayer in which she feels particularly united with us (for) she herself prays with us*"^{vii}.

The month of May is an opportunity to take up this prayer anew. Let us turn to the Mother of God, who is our mother too, praying in the words of Pope Saint John Paul that amid the darkest shadows of time, "*There be revealed once more, in the history of the world, the infinite saving power of the Redemption: the power of merciful love! May it put a stop to evil. May it transform consciences. May your Immaculate Heart reveal for all the light of Hope.*"

May this be so for us with Mary's help.

+ *Mark*
Bishop of Shrewsbury

i Cf. Jn. 19: 27; ii Jn. 15:17 iii Cf. Lumen Gentium Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council No. 62; iv Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 25th March 2022 v Angelus Address 21st January 2024; vi Pope John Paul II Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae No. 7; vii Reference needed to Pope John Paul II 13th May 1982

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 5th May 2024

LOVING LIKE GOD

Jesus said to his disciples, “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants anymore, because a servant does not know his master’s business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me; no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name. What I command you is to love one another.”

Taken from John 15:19-17 The Sixth 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.

Like so many of the great discourses of Jesus in the gospel of John, today’s reading is not a shorthand record of Jesus’ words, but will have been written up after the event. Most probably there were several slightly different versions of what Jesus said at the Last Supper. In any case, one can see that the author has in mind two different contexts: Jesus’ own historical situation at the Last Supper and the situation of the early Church, where the disciples are being tested hard in their mission. They need encouraging by Jesus’ own example of his sacrifice and by his promise of real friendship; they are friends, not servants, specially chosen by Jesus to bear fruit that will last. So we too are welcomed as friends, chosen and commissioned by Jesus to go out and bear fruit, but reminded that we must be prepared to pay the price. There is no fruit without pruning. Jesus had just given the example of service by washing the feet of his disciples. If we are to share the joy of Jesus we must be ready to join him also in laying down our lives for our friends.

Do we ever have to make hard choices for Christ?

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 LOVE!

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 5th May 2024**



1st Reading: Acts 10:25-26. 34-35. 44-48

The Conversion of Cornelius

As Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him, knelt at his feet and prostrated himself. But Peter helped him up. "Stand up," he said. "I am only a man after all!" Then Peter addressed them: "The truth I have now come to realise," he said, "is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him." While Peter was still speaking the Holy Spirit came down on all the listeners. Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter were all astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should be poured out on the pagans too, since they could hear them speaking strange languages and proclaiming the greatness of God. Peter himself then said, "Could anyone refuse the water of baptism to these people, now they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have?" He then gave orders for them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterwards they begged him to stay on for some days.



Jesus was the Messiah of Judaism, bringing to completion the promises made to Abraham. It came as a surprise to the first Christians that the salvation brought by Jesus was meant not just for Jews alone but for all the peoples of the earth. This is the scene where it happens. Peter has been prepared for it by a vision which annulled the Jewish food-laws. Then he was summoned to bring the gentile Cornelius to the faith. Now, even while he is speaking to Cornelius and his household, the Spirit takes matters (so to speak) into his own hands and comes down upon Cornelius. This is Pentecost for the gentiles. Today we may be tempted to think of our own group as the chosen ones, neglecting the breadth of God's love and desire that all people should turn to him and be saved. We can read again and again that Jesus actually went out of his way to welcome lepers, prostitutes, tax-collectors, and we still find it hard to believe that to God they are not 'undesirables'. It is all too easy for us to stay snugly wrapped up in our own neat cocoons. Remember: God has no favourites.

How far does the message of Christ extend beyond Christianity?



2nd Reading: 1 John 4:7-10

Christian Love

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.



When John was writing, the Jews regarded gentiles as 'dogs'. This did not mean beloved pets, for dogs in John's world were either frightening guard-dogs or filthy scavengers. The first reading showed us God actually taking gentiles to himself by sending the Spirit upon them. The second reading now meditates on the nature of that love. The old saying, 'I love him but I can't stand the sight of him,' will not do if God is love itself and love itself is the nature of God. If God is not only the source of love and of life, but simply is love itself, even the distant 'wishing somebody well' from my heart is not enough. Would any of us be satisfied and comfortable with the idea that God doesn't actually like me but wishes me well in a distant sort of way? Love generates affection, respect, trust, a desire to come closer to the other. It is comforting to know that I am a son of God and can call God 'Abba', 'Father', but the consequence of this knowledge is more daunting: you too – whoever you are, whatever faults I see in you – are also the closest member of my family.

Do the faults of your family impede or enhance your love?

“ **God is love itself.** ”

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**