

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year A • Psalter Week 3



On this Sunday between the feasts of the Ascension and Pentecost, the Church puts before us the final prayer of Jesus from the Gospel according to John.

Jesus is aware that his departure is imminent, as his first words are, “Father, the hour has come”. His leaving the disciples will be by way of the cross, but this is the means by which he and the Father will be glorified. For John, all the aspects of the paschal mystery take place at the crucifixion, and the crucial meaning of the resurrection is not that Jesus comes back to life (as Lazarus did), but that his existence is radically transformed and glorified.

Jesus’ work of revealing God is nearing its end. He prays for his disciples, that God will be a Father to them and care for them in the midst of a hostile world. He has made known God’s name, that is, all that can be known about God: it is this which makes possible the gift of eternal life. He asks that they be kept in the Father’s name and so experience the unity that Jesus and the Father enjoy. Jesus’ prayer ends with his declaration that he is returning to the Father, which is the meaning of the ascension, but there is still the final act of the paschal (or Easter) mystery to come – the sending of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. ■

REFLECT

In the Gospel passage, Jesus says that he has made God’s name known: that is, he has revealed all we can know about God. The tradition of the Church is the reflecting of the people of God on the word and what it means for the life of Jesus’ disciples today. Our understanding of what the word signifies develops: the manner in which it is expressed has to adapt to changing circumstances while preserving the essential teaching; this is what we mean by tradition. In the Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, we find that the most frequent references to the Holy Spirit occur in the chapter on tradition.

The same document teaches officially that no new public revelation is to be expected before the glorious manifestation of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Throughout the history of the Church, there have been groups which have claimed secret or mystical knowledge which is denied to run-of-the-mill Christians. Individuals have alleged that they have been given privileged information through visions or other experiences. The Church always treats such assertions of personal supernatural communications with a high degree of caution, if not suspicion.

No one, and no particular group, has any advantage over anyone else when it comes to knowledge of God. The teaching of Jesus is available to anyone who is open to accepting it: in this way, eternal life is offered to all. It is the Holy Spirit who will lead us into the complete truth. ■

LEARN

For John, the Fourth Evangelist, eternal life consists in knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

No one has to believe in any particular apparition of a supernatural figure.

In biblical thought, to know the name of a person is somehow to have access to that person’s deepest being: hence the name of God YHWH is never pronounced in the Hebrew Bible.

DO

Look up at the sky: then look at a crowded street; where do you think Jesus is more likely to be found today?



SAY

Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent

(John 17:3)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you;
of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face;
hide not your face from me, alleluia.

GLORIA

Glorify to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Graciously hear our supplications, O Lord,
so that we, who believe that the Saviour of
the human race
is with you in your glory,
may experience, as he promised,
until the end of the world,
his abiding presence among us.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 1:12-14

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles
After Jesus was taken up into heaven, the
apostles went back from the Mount of Olives,
as it is called, to Jerusalem, a short distance
away, no more than a sabbath walk; and
when they reached the city they went to the
upper room where they were staying; there
were Peter and John, James son of Alphaeus
and Simon the Zealot, and Jude son of
James. All these joined in continuous prayer,
together with several women, including Mary
the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 26

Response:
I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land or the living.
or
Alleluia!

- The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink? (R.)
- There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,

to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple. (R.)

- O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer.
Of you my heart has spoken:
"Seek his face." (R.)

SECOND READING

1 Peter 4:13-16

A reading from the first letter of Peter.

If you can have some share in the sufferings
of Christ, be glad, because you will enjoy
a much greater gladness when his glory is
revealed. It is a blessing for you when they
insult you for bearing the name of Christ,
because it means that you have the Spirit of
glory, the Spirit of God resting on you. None
of you should ever deserve to suffer for being
a murderer, a thief, a criminal or an informer;
but if anyone of you should suffer for being a
Christian, then he is not to be ashamed of it;
he should thank God that he has been called
one.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;
I will come back to you, and your hearts will
be full of joy.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 17:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
John.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

"Father, the hour has come:
glorify your Son
so that your Son may glorify you;
and, through the power over all mankind
that you have given him,
let him give eternal life to all those you have
entrusted to him.

And eternal life is this:
to know you,
the only true God,
and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
I have glorified you on earth
and finished the work
that you gave me to do.

Now, Father, it is for you to glorify me
with that glory I had with you
before ever the world was.
I have made your name known
to the men you took from the world to give
me.

They were yours and you gave them to me,
and they have kept your word.
Now at last they know
that all you have given me comes indeed
from you;
for I have given them
the teaching you gave me,
and they have truly accepted this, that I
came from you,
and have believed that it was you who sent
me.

I pray for them;
I am not praying for the world
but for those you have given me,
because they belong to you:
all I have is yours
and all you have is mine,
and in them I am glorified.
I am not in the world any longer,

but they are in the world,
and I coming to you."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
(all bow during the next two lines)

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, the prayers of your faithful
with the sacrificial offerings,
that through these acts of devotedness
we may pass over the glory of heaven.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Father, I pray that they may be one
as we are also one, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Hear us, O God our Saviour,
and grant us confidence,
that through these sacred mysteries
there will be accomplished in the body of the
whole Church
what has already come to pass in Christ her
Head.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

NEWSLETTER



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

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Web Site: www.stthomasofcanterbury.com St Thomas of Canterbury

Parish Priest: Canon Anthony Charlton email: anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Fr Sylvester Adeniyi CSSp Parish Administrator: Miss Linda Scott

St Thomas' Shop (01227 462896): open Sunday mornings & weekdays (Times on Shop Door)

University of Kent Chaplaincy: Fr Tom Herbst (01843 230 774) email: tjherbst@gmail.com

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School: Head Teacher: Miss Lisa D'Agostini (01227 462539)

St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School: Exec Prin Mr M Walters; Academy Prin: Mr J Rowarth (01227 826200)

Office closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. You can still phone or email

Sunday 24th May: Seventh Sunday of Easter

Jn 17:1-11

**Live streaming of Mass at 9:30:
Go to the parish website to watch it**

Michael & Margaret Reynolds RIP (*Reynolds*)

11.00am: John Delaney RIP

Monday 25th May: St Bede the Venerable

Jn 16: 29-33

12 noon: Betty Scott (Birthday) (*Scott Family*)

Tuesday 26th May: St Philip Neri Jn 17:1-11

12 noon: Holy Souls—COVID-19 (*M..McGillie*)

Wednesday 27th May: St Augustine of Canterbury

(Proper of Saints: Lk 10: 1-9) Jn 17: 1-19

12 noon: Frederick Prior RIP (*Mrs Prior*)

Thursday 28th May: Feria

Jn 17:20-26

12 noon: Tony Pham RIP

Friday 29th May: St Paul VI, Pope Jn 21: 15-19

12 noon: Vinod Anthony & Family Thanksgiving

Saturday 30th May: Feria

Jn 21: 20-25

12 noon: Maureen & George Handley RIP
(*Catherine Handley*)

Sunday 31st May: Pentecost Sunday

Jn 20:19-23

9.30am: Thanksgiving (Martina)

11.00am: Mary, William & Tony Ashman RIP
(*Catherine Ashman*)

THANK YOU to everyone who continues to send in their Mass donations, weekly collections and other very generous payments to the parish funds. The Masses will get said - we are though limited to one a day (2 on Sunday) at the moment so it may take a little longer. Thank you too for all the generous donations to our SVP and to CAFOD. Please be assured they are being passed to the right people.

PARISH MATTERS

MAY DEVOTIONS

Archbishop John invites everyone in the Diocese to join him for a special online gathering on Wednesday 27th May. He will be leading a live streamed May Devotions, including a Scriptural Rosary at 7pm from the Cathedral. At this time when we are asked to be more isolated than usual it is an opportunity to "spiritually gather" together.

CAFOD COVID-19 has already hit many of the wealthier nations, affecting both health and economy. However, those in less fortunate circumstances and in poorer countries are facing a humanitarian disaster. CAFOD are expanding and adapting their programme to prevent the spread and reduce the risk of coronavirus in communities. Every step taken now to get food and clean water to families, particularly those in refugee camps, will help prevent deaths and reduce suffering. Those who would like to donate to the CAFOD Coronavirus appeal can do so here <https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies/Coronavirus-appeal?>

HELP TO CARE APP - an innovative new, free mobile phone app to support people who care for others in Kent and Medway was launched on 11th May 2020. Created by The Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) it is designed to help people spot the signs of a problem and find the right information and advice if they are worried about someone's health and wellbeing. Further information at: <https://www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/news-and-events/news/nhs-and-social-care-launch-app-support-people-who-care-others>

Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Pat Gill, Angeline Frizell, Alan Skeet, Louisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Maurice Crosland, Barbara Brett, Hannelore Hall, Mary Dittrich, Kathleen Hutchinson, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, David Bull, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Bill Parker, Fr Paul Perry, Anne Queenan and Bernie Fisher.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of: Ray Scott, Margaret Stevenson, Daniella Rosher, Archbishop Emeritus Peter Smith, Maria Bryant, Pamela Dodds Fr Gerry Flood, Roberto de Paco, John Todd, Carol Mary Kidby, Anna Hesketh, Tom Hodges & Rebecca Judge.

Please pray for those whose first anniversaries are this month: Berli Sammut, Norah Pitt and James Chamberette

From Fr Anthony ...

Over the entrance to our church of St Thomas is a Papal tiara with the crossed keys beneath it. A pair of blue tits have made a nest behind it and as I write they are constantly flying back and forth feeding their young. The symbol of Papal authority has become their home. This is only temporary. Soon their chicks will fly the nest.

It is sad and difficult time for us when our church is closed because of the pandemic. This week I met a parishioner who was sitting on a bench in the garden in front of the church praying the rosary. She had come to be near the Blessed Sacrament. I know we can pray anywhere and that we don't need a building order to pray. We are though sentient beings that respond to beauty and symbols. Our building is a wonderful space for prayer. Many people come and light a candle, pray for a loved one or sit in silence before the tabernacle. The church comes into its own when we celebrate the Mass together as a family. The church building is a reminder that we are the living stones built into a spiritual house.

Now we have celebrated the feast of the Ascension we are like the apostles who return to the upper room: "All joined in continuous prayer together with several women including Mary the mother of Jesus". They were preparing to receive the Holy Spirit that transformed their timidity into powerful witness of the Gospel. At Pentecost we celebrate the birthday of the Church. The men and women locked in fear in the upper room came out as the Church, filled with the Spirit and ready to make disciples of all nations. As we are thankful for the church building and its importance we also need to heed the images of the early church given in the first reading; a community gathered together with Mary praying and watching and writing, listening to what God has in store for us. Let us be united this week in prayer although we cannot be physically together, asking the Spirit to fill us with his joy love and wisdom.

Here is Pope John XXIII Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Renew your wonders in this our day, as by a new Pentecost.

Grant to your Church that, being of one mind and steadfast in prayer with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and following the lead of Blessed Peter, it may advance the reign of our Divine Saviour, the reign of truth and justice, the reign of love and peace. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, in your power and might to renew the face of the earth.

Holy Spirit, awaken the whole human race and help us to build bridges of trust that open our hearts to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY
SUNDAY MAY 24TH**

theme: "That you may tell your children and grandchildren" (Ex 10:2)

The Pope recently recognised that the media should become a primary platform for evangelisation; *'Studying new ways and means to communicate the Gospel of mercy to all people, in the heart of different cultures, through the media that the new digital cultural context makes available to our contemporaries is something that is very much in my heart'*.

In his Message for World Communications Day 2020, Pope Francis looks to the Bible as 'the great love story between God and humanity' with Jesus at its centre. Read Pope Francis' message here:

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20200124_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html

THE CATHOLIC HERALD is changing from a weekly to a monthly publication. From May, subscribers will receive 12 monthly issues and will have 24-hour access to their new website as well as a weekly podcast from Rome and their historic archives. For more information on subscription packages see: <https://Catholicherald.co.uk/subscribe> or telephone 020 7448 3607 or 3618 or telephone 01227 462896.

SOUTHWARK CATHOLIC YOUTH SERVICES

Southwark Catholic Youth Service has launched a YouTube channel and produced a short mini-series 'Christ is Alive'. The 6 bite size 2min videos follow the reflections of Matthew, Fletcher, Martha and Niamh on Pope Francis' document *Christus Vivit*. There are questions for reflection and supporting resources. It is an invitation for young people to focus on staying spiritually healthy and to ponder some of the big questions about life. Please encourage young people to subscribe and follow the series.

www.youtube.com/southwarkcatholicyouthservice

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

If you have a real need for this sacrament, Fr Sylvester and Fr Anthony are willing to celebrate this with individuals face to face, with all necessary COVID-19 safety precautions, not in the church building or in the priest's house but outside with social distancing rules. Please phone to arrange a suitable time.