

Stained glass depiction of the Last Supper by Joseph Edward Nuttgens (1952) in St Etheldreda's Church, London

Today's reading comes from the meditation Jesus makes with his disciples during the Last Supper. In some ways, we could understand it as part of his last will and testament. It is the culmination of the disciples' training.

The Fourth Gospel presents Jesus in the light of the female figure of Wisdom in Jewish writings, the one who gathers disciples, teaches them with a view to their becoming "friends of God". Jesus tells those around him that the term "servants" is no longer applicable to them, as they have progressed to the final level: their training is now complete. Normally, disciples would choose the rabbi whose teachings they found most meaningful and by which they could order their life. Jesus is unusual, in that, as he says, "You did not choose me, no, I chose you."

There is also, in this passage, a hint of the making of a covenant between Jesus and his disciples. There is no account in John of the instituting of the Eucharist with its mention of the cup containing "the blood of the covenant" and the giving of the command to "do this in memory of me", as we find in the versions of Mark, Matthew and Luke. Here, we find Jesus saying, "This is my commandment: love one another" and in this way "remain" (or abide) in his love, which is the reflection of the Father's love for Jesus. ■

SAY

Thus may we Godward move, finding God in others.

(Percy Dearmer – adapted)

DO

Read through the Renewal of Baptismal Promises from the Easter Vigil liturgy: renew them in the light of today's reading, making the Sign of the Cross with holy water.

LEARN

John uses the female figure of Wisdom, who functions as God's agent, from the Jewish scriptures, to express his understanding of Jesus and his mission.

The female figure of Wisdom (*Hokmah* or *Sophia*) becomes the masculine Word (*Logos*) in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel.

The training of the disciples of Wisdom or Jesus is complete when they can be described as "friends of God".



REFLECT

A person's last words are often highly valued by his or her family and friends and treated as being of great significance. People's dying wish can be regarded as sacred and those close to them will go to great lengths to see that it is carried out, even though it may not make much sense to those left behind.

There are a couple of rather demanding ideas which occur in our Gospel reading today. One is that *Jesus* has chosen *us*, rather than the other way round. Most of us were baptised as infants and brought up in a Christian environment: sometimes people of this sort may envy those who came to the faith or the Church later in life, after making an adult decision for themselves. There are many reasons why people give up the practice

of the faith, but one reason may well be that some never really believed in the first place. Each Easter, we are all invited to renew for ourselves the baptismal declaration of faith and the promises made on our behalf by our parents or godparents. We may regard this as simply a formal exercise, part of the Easter liturgy, or we can make it a really personal act of commitment to God in the person of Jesus, whom we are freely choosing to follow as disciples.

Another challenging lesson from our extract from John's account is that Jesus sums up his commandments in the deceptively simple phrase to "love one another". This means that we have to be much more aware of ourselves and how we treat other people – a rather challenging prospect. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard;
proclaim to the ends of the earth:
The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

GLORIA

Glory 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

Grant, almighty God,
that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion
these days of joy,
which we keep in honour of the risen Lord,
and that what we relive in remembrance
we may always hold to in what we do.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

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.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 97

Response:

The Lord has shown his salvation to the
nations.
or
Alleluia!

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R.)
2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. (R.)
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. (R.)

SECOND READING

1 John 4:7-10

A reading from the first letter of St John.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus said: "If anyone loves me he will keep
my word,
and my Father will love him, and we shall
come to him."
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 15:9-17

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

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 any more,
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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

May our prayers rise up to you, O Lord,
together with the sacrificial offerings,
so that, purified by your graciousness,
we may be conformed to the mysteries of
your mighty love.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

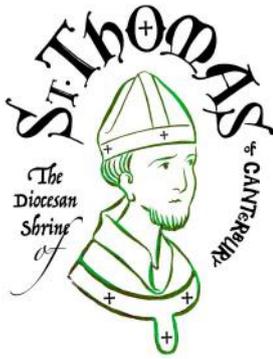
COMMUNION ANTIPHON

If you love me, keep my commandments,
says the Lord,
and I will ask the Father and he will send you
another Paraclete,
to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty ever-living God,
who restore us to eternal life in the
Resurrection of Christ,
increase in us, we pray, the fruits of this
paschal Sacrament
and pour into our hearts the strength of this
saving food.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

NEWSLETTER



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

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Web Site: <https://stthomasofcanterbury.com>  St Thomas of Canterbury

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

Assistant Priest: Fr John Howard

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Parish Administrator: Miss Linda Scott

St Thomas' Shop (01227 462896): OPEN SUNDAYS FROM AFTER 9.30 MASS UNTIL 12 NOON

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)

The Parish Office is open Mondays, Tuesdays,
Thursdays and Fridays 9.30am to 3.00pm
(closed 12.30 - 1pm for lunch)

ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED

6..00 pm (Vigil): Mary Irwin - RIP (*Dempsey Family*)

Sunday 9th May: Sixth Sunday of Easter Jn 15: 9-17

8.00am: People of the Parish

9.30am: Fr Jeff Cridland - welfare (*Sue Purbrick*)

11.00am: Kathleen Fitzgibbon - RIP (*Josie Carr*)

6.00 pm: Deceased members of Barreto & Teles families (*Novlyn*)

Monday 10th May: Feria Jn 15: 26-16:4

7.30 am: Rodolfo Ignacio - RIP

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Charlotte Purbrick - welfare (*Sue Purbrick*)

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

Tuesday 11th May: Feria Jn 16: 5-11

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Lucy Heloise Purbrick (*Sue Purbrick*)

6.00pm: Live-streamed Prayer

Wednesday 12th May: St Pancras, Martyr Jn 16:12-15

7.30 am: Joe Buyers - RIP (*Oliver Mannion*)

10.30am - 11.30pm: Reconciliation

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Thanksgiving (*Hilary McKernan*)

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

Thursday 13th May: Ascension of the Lord Mt 28:16-20
SOLEMNITY

9.30 am: Andrew Peter Kanny - RIP (*Kanny Family*)

12 noon: Gus Purbrick - welfare (*Sue Purbrick*)

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

8.00pm: Rodolfo Ignacio - RIP (*Ignacio Family*)

Friday 14th May: St Matthias, Apostle Jn 15: 9-17

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Peter and Saily Ingrams (*Tessa Metcalfe*)

1.00pm: Church open for private prayer and adoration

6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

7.30pm: Stephen - renewed faith and vocation

Saturday 15th May: Feria Jn 16: 23-28

10.30am - 11.30pm: Reconciliation

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

12 noon: Thomas Kirby - RIP

6.00 pm (Vigil): David Heap - RIP (*Christine Heap*)

Sunday 16th May: Seventh Sunday of Easter Jn 17:11-19

8.00am: Rhys Scott on his birthday

9.30am: Becky Judge - RIP

11.00am: Welfare of Sharon Long (*Josie Carr*)

12.15: Baptism of Thomas Spier

6.00 pm: People of the Parish

2nd Collection: **Communications Sunday**

PARISH MATTERS

Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Angeline Frizell, Luisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Barbara Brett, Mary Dittrich, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Bill Parker, Lucy Purbrick, Josie Carr, Simon Lam, Sr Anne Bross (formerly of our parish), Pippa Swan, Fr John Slater, Jennifer Lang, Pauline Lilford, Barbara Markham, Patricia Gray, Patrick Sellars, Sr Margaret McGrath, Angela Nichols and Jean Boyce

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Patricia Collins, Andrzej Czupkowski, Chris Bateman, Pia Iannacci, Antonio Iannacci, Ellen Fitzgerald, Anna Koeller, Fr Michael Gwinnett, Ann Sexton, Paulina Manfredini, Fr Michael Boland, Fr George Webster, Theresa Ramsundar, Canon Frank O'Sullivan, Margaret Willis, Rev Paul Saunders, Sylvia Guy, Pat Gill, Baby Layla Green, Paul Card, Alan Skeet, Rodolfo Ignacio, Isabella Bannon, HRH Prince Philip - Duke of Edinburgh, Dean Brazier, Marion Nash and Fr Kevin Alban (O.Carm)

Please pray for those whose 1st anniversaries are this month:

Thomas Hodges, Gertrande Brock, Rebecca Judge

COLLECTIONS: Our retiring collections:

This weekend: 08/09 May: There is no second collection

Next weekend: 15/16 May: Communications Sunday -

This collection supports the work of the Catholic Communications Network (CCN) providing up-to-date features, news releases and podcasts, promoting the gospel and developing the public profile of the Church and its teachings.

As coronavirus brings devastation across India, **CAFOD** is working with experienced local Church agency, **Caritas India**, to provide vital support to poor and marginalised communities. Donations to CAFOD's Coronavirus Appeal will help Caritas India distribute PPE kits to frontline health workers, promote COVID & vaccine awareness campaigns, and set up safely run isolation & quarantine centres. You can donate online here: cafod.org.uk/give. Please keep praying for the people of India and all those affected by the pandemic.



MAY ROSARIES 2021 Pope Francis has invited Catholics and Marian Shrines around the world to dedicate the month of May to a marathon of prayer for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic. The theme is "The whole church was fervently praying to God" (Act 12: 5) He encourages us to recite the Rosary to pray for an end to the pandemic during the month of May. If you would like to lead the praying of the Rosary, at 11.30am before the 12 noon Mass, Monday to Friday, during May, please email Linda in the Parish Office.

From Fr Anthony ...

If you type LOVE in the google search engine the result is about 13,250,000,000 results. When I talk to couples who are preparing for marriage I always ask them "what does love mean to you?" No two answers are the same. The author C.S. Lewis wrote a book based on radio talks he gave entitled "The Four Loves" These four loves were Affection (storge) which covers an array of loves. Like animals, the care of mother to babe is a picture of affection. It relies on the expected and the familiar. Lewis describes it as humble. "Affection almost slinks or seeps through our lives," he says. "It lives with humble, un-dress, private things; soft slippers, old clothes, old jokes, the thump of a sleepy dog's tail on the kitchen floor, the sound of a sewing-machine..." Affection can sit alongside other loves and often does. Then there is Friendship (philia). Lewis says this is often dismissed. "To the Ancients, Friendship seemed the happiest and most fully human of all loves, the crown of life and the school of virtue. The modern world, in comparison, ignores it." Why? Perhaps we know it's the most time consuming, the least celebrated, the one we could live without. The next form of love is Romantic love (eros). Different than friendship, lovers, "are always talking to one another about their love" and "are normally face to face, absorbed in each other," says Lewis. The danger in romantic love is to follow blindly after a feeling of passion. Then, we celebrate the passion and think its absence means such love has died. Certainly, true romance is not so fickle. Finally we have Charity (agape). This is the love that Jesus talks about in the Gospel this weekend. This is what we are all called to. 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. Affection, friendship and romantic love are each the training ground for charity to grow. It's also a rival to the three. Lewis mentions St. Augustine's deep loss of a friend who says that such desolation is what occurs when we give our heart to anything but God. "All human beings pass away," says Lewis. "Don't put your goods in a leaky vessel. Don't spend too much on a house you may be turned out of." Yet, we are made to love and we are in want of it. If we play it safe, we are not living out the Gospel, but burying the coin in the safe ground, as the parable says.

Love gives meaning to our lives. We have all been called to love. Jesus has chosen us. "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."

God, my Father,
may I love You in all things and above all things.
May I reach the joy which You have prepared for me in
Heaven.
Nothing is good that is against Your Will,
and all that is good comes from Your Hand.
Place in my heart a desire to please You
and fill my mind with thoughts of Your Love,
so that I may grow in Your Wisdom and enjoy Your Peace.

Dear husband and wife!

An **online** 'Building a Better Marriage' opportunity is being held on JULY 10th 2021 running from 9am -1pm. The course offered means that you can attend the course from your own living room and **there is no group sharing!** For further information **contact: Carole - Tel: 07983524727 - email: mflkent@rcaos.org.uk**

YEAR OF ST JOSEPH: 33 day consecration to St Joseph

Starting: 1st May St Joseph the Worker
Ending: 2nd June with consecration to St Joseph at 6.30pm in the Church
Follow the devotion at home using the book; Consecration to St Joseph: The Wonders of our Spiritual Father by Fr Donald Calloway. You can order the book online. Join us for the Litany to St Joseph after Livestream Evening Prayer (Monday-Friday)
Holy Hour: Beginning on Saturday the 8th May and throughout the 33 day consecration, there will be a Holy Hour between 10.30-11.30 am on Saturdays, starting with 15min input on the devotion to St Joseph.

A Covid-19 vaccine confidence webinar has been organised for the faithful of Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster, with the cooperation of Hertfordshire County Council and Hammersmith & Fulham Council, and other local authorities. It will take place on Saturday 15th May 2021 from 10am to 11.30am and will feature a panel of eminent medical experts led by Prof Kevin Fenton, Regional Director of Public Health London. The panel will share the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccines. There will be an opportunity for participants to ask questions anonymously. To join the webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/99627319556> Passcode: 546617

THE SHRINE PROJECT

Our Church was designated a Diocesan Shrine in 2019. Canon Anthony has commissioned a design specification for our Martyr's Chapel as a fitting setting for our holy relics. This is the very earliest stages of the project and we have a lot to do to establish whether this design is right for us and how much it will cost if the right one. Then, the small (!) matter of fundraising as well as establishing a team to implement the project. Canon Anthony wants to share with you the proposed design specification, prepared by a well-known iconographer, Ian Knowles (<https://www.artgiftedbygod.co.uk/profile/ianknowles/>). Details of the design specification are displayed in the church near Our Lady's altar. Please let Fr Anthony and/or the Parish Office know if you have any views on the proposed design.

Fundraiser for Pax Christi. In the week from 15 to 21 May, Pax Christi, the Catholic Peace organisation, will be trying to raise funds to make up for lost income due to Covid19. Fausta is having a dance-a-thon, Bruce is delivering a peace message to foreign embassies in London, Matt is cycling 50 miles visiting peace sites, Pat is going on a walk from Victoria to the Peace Pagoda in Battersea Park, Rachel will be cycling for 75 miles, to celebrate Pax Christi's 75th anniversary. More fundraisers are joining the fun. Please go to their website www.paxchristi.org.uk/register-you-interest/ for details on how you can sponsor them. Thank you, Arn Dekker