



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 16th May 2021 - The Seventh 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 16th May 2021 (John 17:11-19): Sharing Christ's joy to the full

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: 'Holy Father, Keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. While I was with them, I kept those you have given me true to your name. I have watched over them and not one is lost except the one who chose to be lost, and this was to fulfil the scriptures. But now I am coming to you and while still in the world I say these things to share my joy with them to the full. I passed your word on to them, and the world hated them, because they belong to the world no more than I belong to the world. I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth.'

3 Reflect

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

Surprisingly, this wonderful final chapter of Jesus' discourse after the Last Supper comes in the Sunday readings only on this Sunday (in each year of the three-year cycle). In the whole discourse (John 14-17) Jesus is preparing his disciples for the time of the Church, after his death and resurrection. In this final chapter, however, he is speaking of his death itself, or rather of his consecration by his death. How exactly it is the actual words of Jesus we do not know, but it is a great prayer which is fully in accord with what Jesus would have been thinking on this daunting occasion. The prayer centres on the Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Kingdom or Kingship of God by the sanctification or consecration of the world, especially in the sanctification of the disciples, praying also for the deliverance of the disciples of Jesus from evil (as in the final petition of the Lord's Prayer). Fully in view of his own approaching sacrifice Jesus prays that by his own glorification his disciples also may be consecrated. The prayer is also a fitting preparation for Pentecost at which the Church is consecrated by the coming of the Spirit.

What do I bring to others? Is it Christ's joy?

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.**



WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 16th May 2021



First Reading: *The Twelve Tribes of the New Israel*

Acts of the Apostles 1:15-17. 20-26

One day Peter stood up to speak to the brothers – there were about a hundred and twenty persons in the congregation: 'Brothers, the passage of scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit, speaking through David, foretells the fate of Judas, who offered himself as a guide to the men who arrested Jesus – after having been one of our number and actually sharing this ministry of ours. 'In the book of Psalms it says: Let someone else take his office. 'We must therefore choose someone who has been with us the whole time that the Lord Jesus was travelling around with us, someone who was with us right from the time when John was baptising until the day when he was taken up from us – and he can act with us as a witness to his resurrection.' Having nominated two candidates, Joseph known as Barsabbas, whose surname was Justus, and Matthias, they prayed, 'Lord, you can read everyone's heart; show us therefore which of these two you have chosen to take over this ministry and apostolate, which Judas abandoned to go to his proper place.' They then drew lots for them, and as the lot fell to Matthias, he was listed as one of the twelve apostles.

During Eastertide we have been working through the Acts of the Apostles, listening to the progress of the earliest community. Now, on the final Sunday before Pentecost, we suddenly return to the very beginning, the very first incident after the Ascension. This is important for three reasons. Firstly, it shows the importance of the apostolic body, the Twelve. With the defection of Judas it was still important that there should be that number. Not only is it a good solid number, three times four, but also it is the number of the tribes of Israel, and the apostolic community is the continuation of the Chosen People. Secondly, but still in the same sense, it fulfils the scripture, as Peter points out. The early Christian reflection in the New Testament on the events of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord is constantly linked to the scriptures, and a multitude of details is shown to be 'in accordance with the scriptures'. It was obviously important for the community to know that everything that occurred was running according to the will of God for the Christian community as it was expressed in the scriptures. Thirdly, the witness of the Twelve had included the earthly life and ministry of Jesus as well as to the final events of his life; we need to know about these in order to see that Jesus was proclaiming and bringing the Kingship of God by his teaching and his healing.

What difference does it make to me that I belong to the Church?

Second Reading: *God lives and loves in us*

1 John 4:11-16

My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us. We can know that we are living in him and he is living in us because he lets us share his spirit. We ourselves saw and we testify that the Father sent his Son as saviour of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. We ourselves have known and put our faith in God's love towards ourselves. God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him.

To conclude the series of readings about the love which God shows to us, and which we in our turn should show to one another, comes this lovely Trinitarian reading, obviously also preparing for Pentecost and Trinity Sunday. The love of Father for Son is an eternal factor, technically known by theologians as the 'circuminsession' ('sitting in and around' or mutually enveloping each other). That love reaches to us in time by God's sending of his Son to us to give us a share in his Spirit. So in Christ and in his Spirit we too are enveloped in that cloud which is the divine love. If we take this seriously we can hardly abstain from passing on that love to others. Love is not something private, for myself, but is something transitive, passing on and on the warmth and openness from one person to another. If I love you, you will love me, and our love will pass on and ignite others.

Do I really pass on God's love to those around me?

“ If we take this seriously we can hardly abstain from passing on that love to others. ”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*
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