



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023 - 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 Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023 - The High Priestly Prayer of Jesus (John 17:1-11)**

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 time 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 to 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 am coming to you.'



**3** Reflect

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

*The discourse of Jesus given by John after the Last Supper is of a special literary genre. It was a convention that the final instructions of a great leader for his future community should be gathered together in the context of a final meal. Jesus' life and purpose is summed up in this great prayer. The discourse is shot through with the warmth of the relationship of Jesus to his Father and with the fact that Jesus came to do the will of the Father. But most striking of all is the stress on the glorification of Jesus. The earliest kerygma about the Resurrection, as we have it in Paul's writings, is not about the empty tomb, but is about the glory of the risen Christ, that Christ is lifted up to his full participation in the divine glory of the Father. The hymn in Colossians puts him as first-born in creation and now first-born from the dead, so that he can be first in every way. Philipians declares that he must receive the homage of bending the knee in the worship due only to God. This is not blasphemy, for it is 'to the glory of the Father' that the Risen Christ should share in this glory. In a way this gospel reading is a meditation on the effects of the culmination of the Ascension for the Risen Christ.*

**What do we mean by 'the Glory of Christ'?**

**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 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023



## First Reading: *Back to Jerusalem*

### Acts of the Apostles 1:12-14

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 and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, 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.

*There is a sort of dazed feeling about this reading, a sort of suspended animation. Jesus has left his disciples, telling them just to go back into the city and wait for the coming of the Spirit. It was a definitive parting, described in terms of the prophet Elijah going up to heaven in a fiery chariot, leaving his cloak to Elisha as a guarantee of his continued presence and influence. But by contrast Jesus left his disciples nothing, not even a cloak, and they can only wait in a sort of limbo of hope, surely puzzling what this promised coming of the Spirit could be. In the gospels, especially that of Matthew, the Risen Christ had told them to go out and proclaim the Good News to all people, but here they are left without any further instructions, and obviously nonplussed about how to do this. From time to time we find ourselves in the same situation, not knowing how we should proceed, even if we are searching and determined to do the will of God. We can only wait, perhaps with the comfort of the company of others who cannot see their way forward, until the Lord sends his Spirit to direct us and make clear the way forward.*

**What is the best remedy for feeling deserted?**

## Second Reading: *The Spirit of God resting upon us*

### 1 Peter 4: 13-16

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.

*In this pause between the Ascension and Pentecost, the first letter attributed to Peter prepares us both for the coming of the Spirit and for the trials and sufferings which the mission of the disciples will bring them. Christians are not promised a smooth or trouble-free life of ease and merriment. The blessings of the Beatitudes should never be translated 'Happy are...'. The blessedness promised is the assurance that God's hand is hovering over us, and that no ultimate harm can befall us. One of the themes, however, of the history of the early community in the Acts of the Apostles is that trouble and persecution are the inevitable condition of following the persecuted and triumphant Christ.*

**Do I ever conceal my Christianity to avoid trouble?**

“Trouble and persecution are the inevitable condition of following the persecuted and triumphant Christ.”

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

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