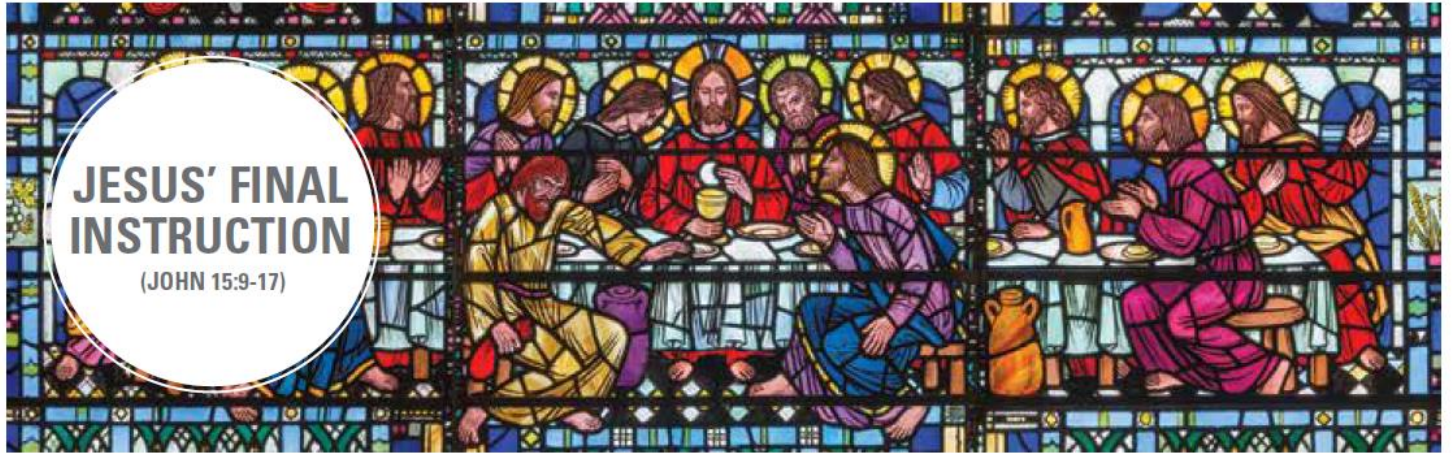


# Sunday Message

## THE WORD

Year B • Psalter Week 2



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 Jesus tells those around him that the term "servants" is no longer applicable to them, as they have progressed to the final level: their training is now complete.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. ■

## 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. ■

## 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".



**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 it 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**

Psalm 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.

**Our Lady & St Edmund of Abingdon**  
**1 Radley Rd, Abingdon on Thames, Oxon, OX14 3PL**

We are a *LiveSimply* parish aiming to live Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity with the Poor

Parish Priest: Fr. Jamie McGrath Tel: 01235 520375  
Parish Secretary: Lisa Paterson Tel: 01235 520375  
Office Hours: 10.30am-12.30pm Tuesday to Friday  
Office Email: abingdon@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

*We live stream all services*

Safeguarding Team: Tel. 07572 935 230  
Visits at JR Hospital: Priest/Chaplain 01865 221732  
Visits and Help: Society of Vincent de Paul Group, contact via Parish Office  
Parish Website: [www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk)  
Primary School: St. Edmund's School, Radley Road, Abingdon, OX14 3PP Tel 521558



Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Reg. Charity No 246871

[www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

### OFFICE CLOSURE DATES

Please note that the parish office will be closed on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May. Also from Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July until Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August.

### PRIVATE PRAYER

We are blessed that the church can be open, but for **private prayer only**, on the following days and times:

✠ **Tuesdays: 12pm to 1pm**  
✠ **Fridays: 12pm to 1pm**

### MASS BOOKINGS:

On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May you can book for Masses from Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May to Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

**PLEASE** remember to give as many dates and times when you could attend, and book **on** the Monday – otherwise you may be disappointed. Also be clear on the number of people you are booking for and let us know if you would like to attend more than one Mass during the week.

## HOW TO BOOK FOR MASS

### No Internet Access?

Phone **07395 946827** EACH MONDAY between 10am and 11am ONLY to book a place for the FOLLOWING week

### Have Internet Access?

**DON'T** phone. Instead, email: [contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk](mailto:contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk) EACH MONDAY, to book a place for the FOLLOWING week

### CONFESSIONS

By appointment only for now. Please contact the **parish office** to book an appointment.

### NEWSLETTERS

We are currently still not able to offer any printed material in church. Please bring your own newsletter with you if you would like to (you can download it from our website).

### 6<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter (Year B)

**Attendance through booking system only, but also available on our live stream**

#### Sunday 9 May

10.15am Mass

2.00pm Mass in Polish

6.30pm Mass

#### Sixth Sunday of Easter

(Private intention)

(Special intention)

#### Monday 10 May

9am Mass

(Special intention)

#### Tuesday 11 May

NO Mass See: [www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/english-martyrs-vale-of-white-horse](http://www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/english-martyrs-vale-of-white-horse) for other masses

#### Wednesday 12 May

7pm Mass

(Theresa Harrold, RIP)

#### Thursday 13 May

9am Mass

7pm Mass

#### The Ascension of the Lord

(Special intention)

(Hamish Ewing, RIP)

#### Friday 14 May

7pm Mass

#### St Matthias, Apostle

(Doreen & Tony Taylor intentions)

#### Saturday 15 May

12pm Mass

(Anthony Oliver intentions)



### SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot today receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

# Year of the EUCHARIST

## YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST

In our Diocese of Portsmouth, we will begin a Year of the Eucharist starting on the Feast of Corpus Christi, 6th June 2021. In these years 2020 to 2022, Bishop Philip is inviting everyone in the Diocese to undertake by God's grace a period of intense, spiritual renewal. The purpose ultimately is to help us realise our diocesan ambition of *Bringing People Closer to Jesus Christ through His Church*. The Year of the Eucharist, which will follow on from the Year of the Word, will be a unique opportunity for the Diocese as a whole to rekindle our love for Jesus Christ really and truly present and active in the Holy Eucharist.



## FUNDRAISER FOR PAX CHRISTI

In the week from 15<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>st</sup> 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/](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk/register-you-interest/) for details on how you can sponsor them.

## MONTH OF MAY

Pope Francis has asked for a marathon of prayer around the world throughout May for an end to the pandemic. The initiative, behind which the Pope has thrown his support, involves 30 Marian Shrines from various parts of the world and it takes place under the theme *"The whole Church was fervently praying to God,"* which recalls a verse in the Book of Acts (12:5). The Rosary will be broadcast on *Vatican News* daily at 6pm Rome time (5pm UK time). A link to this online site is available on the News page of our website.



## VACANCY

### Tutor of Ancient History.

Our Lady's Abingdon seeks an experienced, committed tutor to teach the OCR Ancient History A level specification on a 1:1 basis within our Sixth Form from September 2021. The commitment is 6 x 40 minute periods per week, term time only, over a two year term. For further details and an informal chat about the position please call the school direct on 01235 524658.



## WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021 is World Communications Day, when we are asked to pray for all communicators and to give generously to a Second Collection. The Communications Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales supports the mission of the bishops to proclaim the love of Jesus Christ. Pope Francis has released his message for the 55<sup>th</sup> World Communications Day on the theme of *"Come and See" (Jn 1:46) - Communicating by Encountering People as They Are*. You can read his message through the News page of our website.

## PRAYING THE ROSARY DURING MAY

The month of May is dedicated to Our Lady – a great intercessor for our prayers. Why not join the group of people who pray the Rosary on Zoom on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays each week at 8pm? Just email for the joining instructions: [contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk](mailto:contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk)

## ASCENSION DAY PRAYER

O Lord Jesus, I adore you, Son of Mary, my Saviour and my Brother, for You are God. I follow You in my thoughts, O first-fruits of our race, as I hope one day by Your grace to follow You in my person into heavenly glory. Until then, do not let me neglect the earthly task which You have given me. Let me labour diligently all my life with a greater appreciation for the present. Let me realize that only by accomplishing true human fulfilment can I attain Divine fulfilment and ascend to You at the completion of my work.  
Amen.