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After the Consecration we acclaim the mystery of faith:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

or

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

or

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer: Amen.

The Communion Rite

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Deliver us...

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And with your spirit.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Behold the Lamb of God...

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.

Prayer after Communion

Look upon your flock, kind Shepherd, and be pleased to settle in eternal pastures the sheep you have redeemed by the Precious Blood of your Son...
Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

At the end of Mass the people respond:
Thanks be to God.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

**The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth;
by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.**

All make the Sign of the Cross as the priest says:

Priest In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People Amen.

The priest greets the people in one of these ways:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And with your spirit.

or

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
And with your spirit.

or

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

One of the following acts of penance is now made:

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

(all strike their breast and say:)

through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;

therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints,

and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

or

Have mercy on us, O Lord.
For we have sinned against you.

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.
And grant us your salvation.

or

Lord, have mercy. *or* Kyrie, eleison.
Lord, have mercy. Kyrie, eleison.

Christ, have mercy. *or* Christe, eleison.
Christ, have mercy. Christe, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. *or* Kyrie, eleison.
Lord, have mercy. Kyrie, eleison.

After the absolution all respond: Amen.

The 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.

The Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
lead us to a share in the joys of heaven,
so that the humble flock may reach
where the brave Shepherd has gone
before... **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading Acts 13:14. 43-52

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

We must turn to the pagans.

Paul and Barnabas carried on from Perga till they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here they went to synagogue on the sabbath and took their seats.

When the meeting broke up, many Jews and devout converts joined Paul and Barnabas, and in their talks with them Paul and Barnabas urged them to remain faithful to the grace God had given them.

The next sabbath almost the whole town assembled to hear the word of God. When they saw the crowds, the Jews, prompted by jealousy, used blasphemies and contradicted everything Paul said. Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly. "We had to proclaim the word of God to you first, but since you have rejected it, since you do not think yourselves worthy of eternal life, we must turn to the pagans. For this is what the Lord commanded us to do when he said:

I have made you a light for the nations,
so that my salvation may reach the ends
of the earth."

It made the pagans very happy to hear this and they thanked the Lord for his message; all who were destined for eternal life became believers. Thus the word of the Lord spread through the whole countryside.

But the Jews worked upon some of the devout women of the upper classes and the leading men of the city and persuaded them to turn against Paul and Barnabas and expel them from their territory. So they shook the dust from their feet in defiance and went off to Iconium; but the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm Psalm 99

R. We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

or Alleluia!

1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy. **R.**
2. Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his flock. **R.**
3. Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age. **R.**

Second Reading Apocalypse 7:9. 14-17

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.

The Lamb will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water.

I, John, saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. One of the elders said to me, "These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

**I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my own sheep and my own know me.**

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel John 10:27-30

I give eternal life to the sheep that belong to me.

Jesus said:

"The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;

I know them and they follow me.

I give them eternal life;

they will never be lost

and no one will ever steal them from me.

The Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone,

and no one can steal from the Father.

The Father and I are one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Homily

The 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.**

The bidding prayers now follow:

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

If the prayers of blessing are said aloud the people acclaim each time:

Blessed be God for ever.

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters)...

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at
your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good
and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

Grant, we pray, O Lord,
that we may always find delight in these
paschal mysteries,
so that the renewal constantly at work
within us
may be the cause of our unending joy...
Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

The priest gives praise to God and all acclaim:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the Lord.**

Hosanna in the highest.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth;
by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
lead us to a share in the joys of heaven,
so that the humble flock may reach
where the brave Shepherd has gone before.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 13:14. 43-52

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul and Barnabas carried on from Perga till they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here they went to synagogue on the sabbath and took their seats.

When the meeting broke up, many Jews and devout converts joined Paul and Barnabas, and in their talks with them Paul and Barnabas urged them to remain faithful to the grace God had given them.

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I have made you a light for the nations,
so that my salvation may reach the ends of the earth."

It made the pagans very happy to hear this and they thanked the Lord for his message; all who were destined for eternal life became believers. Thus the word of the Lord spread through the whole countryside.

But the Jews worked upon some of the devout women of the upper classes and the leading men of the city and persuaded them to turn against Paul and Barnabas and expel them from their territory. So they shook the dust from their feet in defiance and went off to Iconium; but the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 99

RESPONSE: *We are his people, the sheep of his flock.*

Or *Alleluia!*

1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy. **R.**
2. Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his flock. **R.**
3. Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age. **R.**

SECOND READING Apocalypse 7:9. 14-17

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.

I, John, saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. One of the elders said to me, "These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my own sheep and my own know me.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 10:27-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said:

"The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;
I know them and they follow me.
I give them eternal life;
they will never be lost
and no one will ever steal them from me.
The Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone,
and no one can steal from the Father.
The Father and I are one."

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

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant, we pray, O Lord,
that we may always find delight in these paschal mysteries,
so that the renewal constantly at work within us
may be the cause of our unending joy.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*The Good Shepherd has risen,
who laid down his life for his sheep
and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Look upon your flock, kind Shepherd,
and be pleased to settle in eternal pastures
the sheep you have redeemed
by the Precious Blood of your Son.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

be too hard on ourselves; we gently bring ourselves back from things drawing us away from our primary purpose which is to “be still and know that I am God”.



REGULARITY

Regularity is the most important thing when trying to pray. Even if we find our prayer time has been filled with distraction and disappointment, we should be consoled that we have given that time – along with our honest desire to pray – to the Lord. The offering we have made to the Lord does not have to measure up to our standards; the Lord sees what is in our hearts. Make a commitment and try to stick to it. Yes, there will be days when all does not go quite to plan, but there will be other days when we find ourselves in a wonderfully enriching time of communing with the Divine.

Many spiritual writers talk about developing a habit of prayer; making the effort to develop such a routine will be well worth it.

Paul Maddison is a priest of the Diocese of East Anglia and a fellow traveller on the road of Christian perfection. He has recently set up an online spiritual direction service, which can be found at www.divinethread.org

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.

FIRST READING Acts 13:14. 43-52

PSALM Psalm 99

RESPONSE We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Or Alleluia!

1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing for joy. **R.**
2. Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us, we belong to him, we are his people, the sheep of his flock. **R.**
3. Indeed, how good is the Lord, eternal his merciful love. He is faithful from age to age. **R.**

SECOND READING Apocalypse 7:9. 14-17

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me. Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 10:27-30

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.

Next Sunday's Readings:

Acts 14:21-27
Apocalypse 21:1-5
John 13:31-35



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AN ATTITUDE OF PRAYER

Admitting our weakness and humanity is a prerequisite for prayer. To overcome this fragility it is valuable to commit to regularity in prayer, even down to trying to pray at the same time each day – try using the alarm on your phone. The devil will help us to find all sorts of reasons and excuses not to pray, but to get into the habit of praying is a great opportunity to kick that distraction into touch. If we truly want to follow the Lord, we do need to give ourselves space in which we can hear his voice. Many people find that first thing in the morning works for them, maybe before anyone else is up and about, and before the bustle of the day begins. Some people find that last thing at night works for them. Choose the most appropriate time for you and try to stick to it: if the time you initially choose proves to be difficult, then change to a different time; prayer should not become a burden or task.

A common question is the length of time we should spend in prayer. Again, there are no hard and fast rules here, it depends on what works for each of us. Sometimes we use the excuse of being busy to shorten our prayer time; Charles Wesley, the great Methodist preacher, knowing his day would be particularly busy, would get up an hour earlier and pray for a longer period than usual to support his busy day. Praying is not an exam, a race, or an endurance test; the regularity and depth of our prayer should be our focus. Much like an athlete in training, the benefits come from the consistency and power of our prayer, not the length of time spent on the exercise. We should be gentle on ourselves at first but stick to our commitment. Delia Smith, the cook and spiritual writer, started out by praying for ten minutes each day and used an egg timer to alert her when the time was up, so she did not have to keep peeping at her watch.

As in any important task we undertake, focus is important when we are trying to pray. Distractions will come, but if there is something to draw us gently back to what we are doing, it can be extremely helpful. Use a word or phrase repeated with each breath, a picture, an object, even something in the hand; accept that it will be a while until we are able to completely still ourselves. St Augustine reminds us that the desire to pray is itself a prayer. Some find that a piece of gentle music can be extremely valuable in helping them to pray. When we get sidetracked, we should not

Divine Thread



We continue this Easter series on prayer with Fr Paul Maddison.



8 MAY 2022

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR C

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV

Sunday Homily

4th SUNDAY OF EASTER

8 MAY 2022

YEAR C

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV

“But the disciples were filled with joy
and the Holy Spirit.”

Illustration

Richard Attenborough is someone who has done many different things, and achieved much in his long life. In his younger years he was an actor in the theatre and in film. Later on he became a film director and has produced some outstanding work. But, as he said himself, he never wanted to be a film director, he just wanted to direct one film. That film was *Gandhi*.

In 1962 he was handed a biography of the great Indian leader and, once he had read it, he knew he had to make the film. It took him another twenty years before he achieved his goal, but the result was well worth the wait.

The film tells the story of a man of peace who spent his life fighting against the injustice and violent tendencies of the world. In one scene, we see the Mahatma very weak from fasting in an attempt to curb the violence in his own land. From his sickbed he says, “All the lessons of history tell us that violence never succeeds. For a time it appears to win, but in the end it always fails. Always.”

Gospel Teaching

Like Gandhi, the early Christian Church found itself faced with the constant threat of violence. At first its opponents offered argument, and verbal abuse, then it developed into threats and assaults, and eventually Christians found themselves facing arrest, imprisonment and even death. The apostle Paul experienced all these things, in an ascending order of hostility throughout the course of his missionary life. His visit to Antioch in Pisidia with Barnabas is welcomed by the local people, but resented by the Jewish community, his own people. Paul and Barnabas are expelled from the city.

The Christian community in Rome suffered terrible treatment at the hands of the emperor, Nero. They were made scapegoats for the fire that destroyed a great part of the city. They were most cruelly dealt with to distract the population from uncomfortable rumours about the emperor himself. The shock of this violence prompted John the apostle to write about them and to reassure the followers of Jesus that all would be well.

The people who went “through the great persecution”, as John describes it in today’s second reading, were the Christians of Rome, who suffered at the hands of Nero in AD 64. John tells us that God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. He wants us to persevere in our faith and in our love and not to yield to the temptation to turn to violence ourselves.

Our great example in all this is Jesus: the one who describes himself as a shepherd, who cares for his sheep, even to the point of laying down his life for them. In conversation with the Jewish religious leaders, Jesus speaks of his true followers as those who listen to his voice. That voice speaks of peace; it also speaks of justice and truth. It is a voice that will not be silenced. Violence cannot stop the force of truth.

Application

Today’s generation, like every generation that has gone before, is plagued by violence. People suffer greatly through the anger, hostility and downright viciousness that occur every day around the globe. The evil that people do lives after them, spawning more evil in its turn, creating cycles of violence.

Looking at history, as Gandhi did, do we learn the lesson it teaches? Looking to Jesus, do we hear his voice? As the followers of Christ, are we true members of his flock, living peaceful lives? John, in his vision, sees a huge number of people, made up from every nation, race, tribe and language. They are people who have suffered, but who have come through suffering and are now victorious. That victory is not only over the violence of others, but also over the temptation to violence that we find in ourselves. This is the greater victory, the victory over ourselves.

Gandhi was inspired in his life by the teaching of Jesus in the Beatitudes: “Blessed are the peacemakers.” In his turn, Gandhi inspired Martin Luther King, who led the great movement in America in the 1960s for justice and equality. Both these men, Gandhi and King, met with violent deaths. But they were not defeated. Their message, their voice, their example lives on.

In the face of evil, Jesus does not ask us to do nothing. He asks us to do everything that will lead people into the ways of peace.

SUNDAY PLUS

The voice of encouragement

Destined for eternal life

By Paul Higginson

I remember my parents telling me about a hell fire and brimstone homily they had heard before I was born. The priest had half-scared them to death by depicting a vivid picture of eternal pain and suffering that might one day lie in wait for them. I'm not sure what text he was preaching from, but it certainly wasn't today's Gospel! Here Jesus tells us that we are his sheep and "I give them eternal life; they will

never be lost, and no one will ever steal them from me". What wonderful words of encouragement! Our faith is not based on fear of a vengeful, unforgiving God. This is just not who God is. Why do we find it so difficult to understand and accept that God is all-embracing, unconditional love and forgiveness? We are his sheep and he is our Good Shepherd; he is always keeping watch over us and we will never be stolen from him.

Of course, sometimes people create hell for themselves here and now by their actions. If we choose to



do wrong then the consequences for us are invariably pain, discomfort and suffering in this life. But as for the next life, remember that Jesus goes back and finds the lost sheep and brings them home. We are destined for eternal life with Christ: that is the extraordinary promise of today's Gospel – our

vocation is to help create the Kingdom of Heaven on earth now and to experience it fully in the life that is to come.

Following decades in the classroom and as a parish catechist, Paul Higginson is finding that retirement gives him even more opportunities to support his parish.

Prayer to discover your vocation

Almighty God,
You have made me to know you,
To love you, and to serve you,
And thereby to find and fulfil myself.

I know that you are in all things
And that every path can lead me to you,
But, of them all, there is one path especially
By which you want me to come to you.

Since I will do what you want of me,
I pray you; send your Holy Spirit to me;
Into my mind to show me what you want of me;
Into my heart to give me the determination to do it,
And to do it with all my love, with all my mind,
And with all my strength, right to the end.
Amen.

Diocese of Elphin, Ireland

"Wherever the Spirit sends you, I encourage you to enable the men and women of our time to discover the mercy of God who loved us to the point of dwelling among us."

Pope Francis

Lord, as you called
your disciples,
call us now.
Open our ears to
listen to you calling;
Open our eyes to
see you;
Open our hearts
to your love.
Help us to hear you,
to experience your
presence with us
and to love you.
And loving you,
let us serve you,
our servant King.
✚ Amen.

Feast of the week
Tuesday 10 May

St Joseph
de Veuster

(1840-1889)
(Damian of Molokai)

Leprosy used to be a death sentence. When diagnosed with this infectious disease that had no known treatment or cure, people were banished from their families, homes and society to live in isolation or in leper colonies and settlements. It was a life of total ostracism, loneliness, disfigurement, pain and suffering.

Some brave souls ignored the objections of wider society and cared for people suffering from what is today known as Hansen's disease and can be treated.

When, in 1873, Fr Damian agreed to travel to the colony of Molokai, he knew that he was signing his own death certificate. Undeterred, he spent the last eleven years of his life caring for the people of Molokai. He built houses, schools, roads, hospitals, and churches. He dressed residents' ulcers, dug a reservoir, made coffins, dug graves, shared pipes, and dipped his hand into their dishes of food to eat with them. He gave medical and emotional support that others refused to offer, scared for their own well-being. He eventually died of Hansen's disease on 15 April 1889, aged 49.



Today:
Acts 13:14, 43-52
Apocalypse 7:9, 14-17
John 10:27-30

Monday:
Acts 11:1-18
John 10:1-10

Tuesday:
Acts 11:19-26
John 10:22-30

Wednesday:
Acts 12:24-13:5
John 12:44-50

Thursday:
Acts 13:13-25
John 13:16-20

Friday:
Acts 13:26-33
John 14:1-6

Saturday:
Acts 1:15-17, 20-26
John 15:9-17

Next Sunday:
Acts 14:21-27
Apocalypse 21:1-5
John 13:31-35