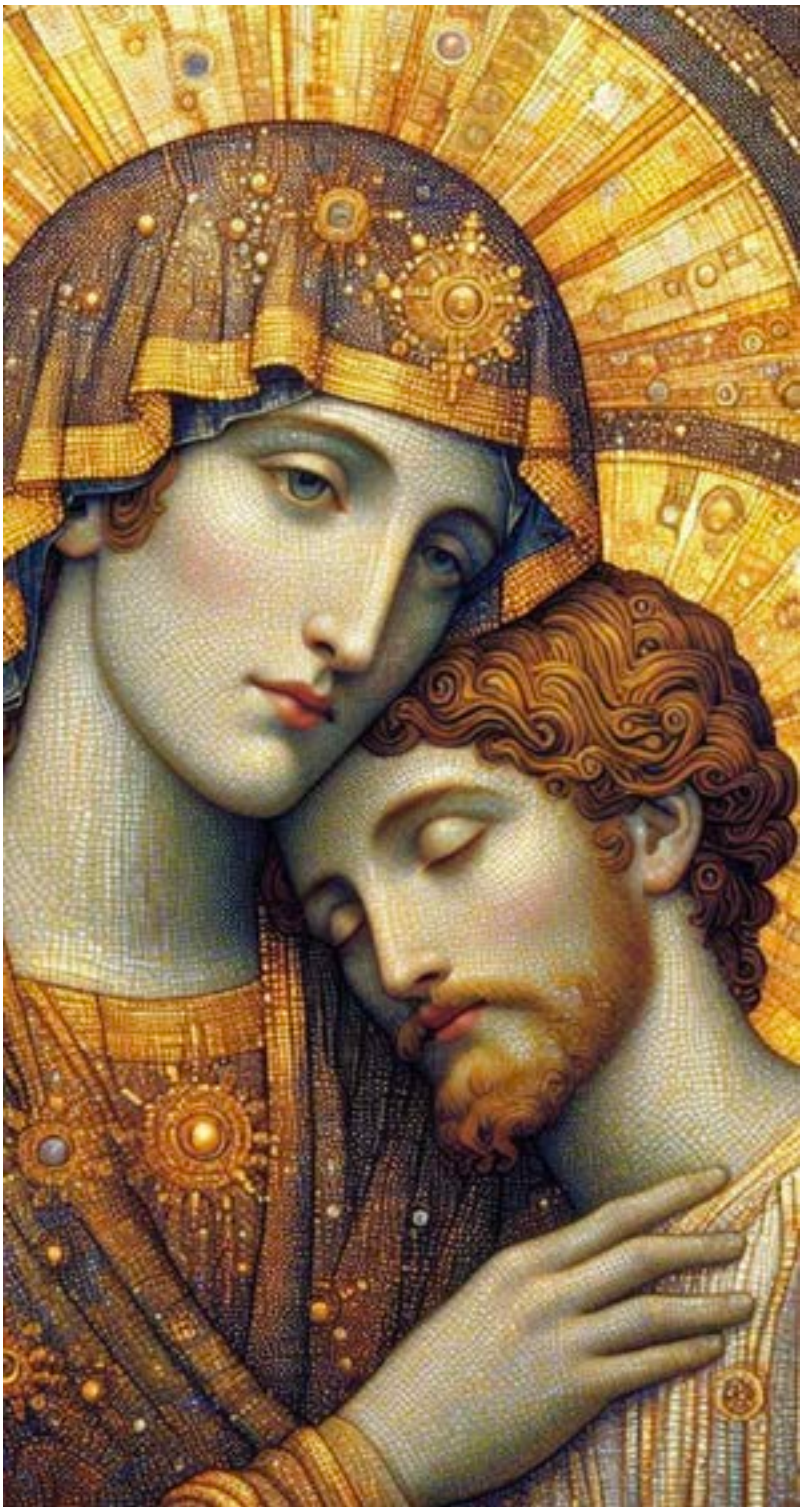


HIGH TIDE

*Parish
Magazine*

*Weymouth
St Paul
with Fleet*

SEP 2024



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Name-calling, sarcasm, utterly difficult personality, constant criticism of ~~others~~ everyone, hyper-sensitivity, and an old man who got offended by everything. Yes, this is one of the Church's saints. Of course, great scholar, polyglot, brilliant writer, gentle to the poor, example of prayer. The same person. Well aware of his grave shortcomings, he was constantly remorseful of them, beating his chest with a stone: St. Jerome.

Dealing with anger and other sins - the example of St. Jerome

34

The person who knew all the faults of character of St. Jerome the best was St. Jerome himself. Though he never managed to get rid of his bad temper and sharp tongue, he constantly fought against it. What is expected of Christians is not some sinless purity and perfection but a sincere and constant fight against their own sins and faults.

Know the Bible

36

Considered one of the most boring books of the Bible, the Book of Leviticus is actually a beautiful and fascinating book if we understand its main theme and why it was written. Give it a try!

The Psalms: Psalm 41

38

David calls the congregation of the believers to listen to his "story" - his grave illness, his persecution by his enemies - only to burst out in praise for God's gracious help and to encourage everyone to trust in God who is always faithful.

Our Lady of Sorrows, funerals, and grief in general

40

There is something deeply unchristian and concerning in how people try to force their left-behind loved ones to be cheerful at their funerals. Also, in general, we have forgotten how to deal with grief. In this article we look at the example of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Peter M.J. Stravinskias: The Compassion and Joy of Our Lady of Sorrows

42

How, following the example of Our Lady, compassion can lead to a serene joy even amidst grief and loss.

*Many thanks to all who have contributed to the Parish Magazine and to Liz Evans for the proofreading. The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 29th September**. Please, send all articles, information, news you wish to be publish by Sunday 22nd Sep.*

Front cover: "Jesus and Mary" (detail)
by samitdigitalart

From the Vicar

Dearly Beloved,

Did you know that dinosaurs had cancer? I did. I know, it's weird. Not the fact that they had cancer but that I knew about it. The reason is that I participated in a theological conference which tried to explore the themes like creation, sin, death, and one of the main topics was animals and suffering. While it seems a great topic for bored armchair theologians, actually the whole question is of utmost importance. Here is why.

St. Paul clearly teaches what the Book of Genesis, too, seems to confirm: namely that death, or certainly its unnatural parts (agony, fear) entered our world by sin. God did not create or originally wanted them, it was Adam and Eve's choice. So far so good. What is the problem? The problems are dinosaurs and cancer. They existed millions of years before man.

Recent studies showed that some animals are clearly in distress during the process of dying and aware, to some extent, of any grave illness they might have. Tests with antidepressants showed shocking results: they helped these animals. Not with pain but with anxiety and fear.

In theology we always knew (well, not always, but for centuries) that animals did not live for ever even before Adam and Eve's sin. We knew they died. However, we never realised that they suffered. Not physically. Again, that we knew. Mentally, so to say.

So what should theology make of this? Did God explicitly want and create a world where *evil* things, such as decay, suffering, cancer, and death, are part of the game? Would a god that is ok with *all that evil* be even the God we believe in?

The attempted solutions and answers are many and varied, changing slightly from one theologian to another. The best solution, as always, I believe comes from St. Thomas Aquinas who quietly pointed out 800 years ago already that not everything we perceive as evil *is* actually evil... But this is not easy for us to accept. Especially when it comes to cancer, illness, suffering, or death. Accepting that what we abhor might *actually* be part of the plan and providence of a wise and loving God... we just do not have an intellect, or brain, or heart, or horizon big enough.

For many of us at St. Paul's during the last few years September has become associated with Walsingham — its Holy House, beautiful shrine, and warm gardens. It is a spiritual home for a great number of people in our congregation, me included. Initially we had decided (*fine, I pushed for it...*) to have our pilgrimage in September rather than in July to avoid the traffic caused by holiday makers and excessive heat, especially during the bus

journey. The real reason, however, is that September is a very Marian month. We celebrate the birth of Our Lady (8th), we rejoice in her Most Holy Name (12th), and we also commemorate her Seven Sorrows (15th). In this Parish Magazine I have decided to put an emphasis on this last Feast.

Most of you would probably be able to number at least few of her seven sorrows. The big, shocking question is: what's there to celebrate?? (1) A new mum takes joyfully her firstborn to the Temple... to be told of his future atrocious Passion. (2) A young family, full of hopes, suddenly must leave everything because a crazy king wants to kill their baby. So they flee to Egypt. (3) It's enough to watch just one Netflix series on this topic to easily imagine the hell Mary and Jesus went through when the Child disappeared in Jerusalem for three days. Was he kidnapped? Killed? Abused? (4) My mother texts me in anguish 100 times a day when I have tonsillitis... Imagine Mary seeing Jesus flogged, crowned with thorns, beaten, carrying the cross on his way to be killed. (5) Mary stands under the Cross, hears the nails breaking bones, tearing flesh, destroying nerves. Sweat of agony, blood, dung and dirt from the streets drops on her from her dying Son. (6) She remembers how she used to hold and nurture her newborn baby with his little pink fingers and toes. Now, broken into pieces, covered in dirt, bled and suffocated to death on the Cross, they lay that dead body in her arms. This is how they gave him back to her. (7) But at least she can still look at his face, hold his body. Now even that is taken away from her - they enclose him in a dark, cold tomb and she cannot go after him, cannot be with him or even just see him.

The Seven Sorrows. What on earth is there to celebrate? One evil after another, in seemingly never-ending sequence. And yet, not everything we perceive as evil *is* actually evil... But this is not easy for us to accept. That all these sorrows, each one of them, had a place in the plan of a wise and loving God. That they were all turned into something we now call the "*great work of salvation.*"

Mary, Our blessed Lady, suffered through it physically, mentally, and spiritually. There is no question about that. At the same time, she never lost her faith, hope, or love. Or her serene joy. I cannot imagine her smiling even just for a second at these Seven Sorrows but her heart was serene and there was joy in it. A joy we struggle to understand. A joy she only managed to keep because she knew that not everything we perceive as evil *is* actually evil and that they can be part of the plan of a wise and loving God - impossible as it might be for us to understand. She didn't, either. But she believed. And that is what we must learn from her, Our Sorrowful Mother.

Assuring you of my prayers, I am,
ever yours in Christ,

Fr. Gregory⁵

Much more than a Sunny Day

Sharon Waight writes:

The sun shone, the view of Fleet spectacular, the beautiful garden and home so generously provided. The scene was set for a wonderful occasion, our bring-and-share picnic lunch saying farewell to Fr. James and to thank him for his love and ministry at Fleet and St. Paul's.

Whilst this beautiful context was set, much more happened.

Being generous and gracious – the home and garden so generously opened and provided for us all to enjoy our bring-and-share lunch. People so generously brought delicious food to share.

Being open minded – to be open to the idea of coming together, which for many was in a different location and setting. For opening up minds, thinking more deeply about the possibility of what a different opportunity can bring. Taking the opportunity offered to get to know and build relationships and solidarity.

Being trusted and trustworthy – to all who helped, supported others to achieve their wish of being at the picnic lunch. Offering lifts, supporting and guiding people walking from cars to the beautiful garden and on the return journeys.

Being and 'doing' – Sometimes just being and doing, is not about the 'task', preparing or serving food, or putting out and away chairs and tables. 'Doing' is just being there, sitting next to someone chatting and getting to know them, supporting them and just enjoying each other's company, enjoying the moment and making that moment count for ourselves and others.

Being and 'giving' - Being 'present' at our picnic lunch, being and giving is more about making that moment count showing respect, being respectful, listening and giving our time and attention respectfully, with joy and generously. Utilising the opportunities that our bring and share lunch, community chats and get togethers offer us all.

Fleet and St. Paul's picnic lunch wishing Fr. James well in his future demonstrated these virtues and values and what being in our church communities is all about. These begin to sum up being and showing compassion, one of the strongest and most prominent value, both divine and human, of Jesus' ministry.

Sending Fr. James our love, prayers and grateful thanks for his compassionate care during his ministry with us.

Thank you to all who supported, helped and made the day such a beautiful occasion for us all to enjoy.



II-Konvoj ta' Santa Marija

Gerald Duke writes:

I was pleased to find Jeanne James' article in the August High Tide. Lammas being the first day of harvest for wheat would today be a bit of a worry as no wheat crop would have ripened so early. An earlier start to harvest in days of yore would have been necessary when the wheat was cut by hand and stacked in the field to dry in stooks. Once dry, the stooks would have been thrashed, separating the grain from the straw which would have been used for thatching and the grain for milling into flour. Thatching straw is produced in this way today using traditional long straw varieties.

The other item of interest to me with a local connection was mention of the sandwich. The Sandwich family live at Mapperton House near Beaminster and their gardens are well worth a visit. The family and house were featured in a highly embarrassing TV programme a few years ago called *Ladies of London*. Highly cringeworthy. See Mapperton.com or a Daily Mail article at <https://tinyurl.com/3a2buwpt>

Of more local interest, Victor Montague was the son of The 9th Earl of Sandwich. He was Private Secretary to Stanley Baldwin, from 1932 to 1934. He briefly served in France in 1940, during the Second World War. A year later, he was elected MP for South Dorset, replacing Viscount Cranborne. He was elected in the following five general elections, and continued as MP for South Dorset until 1962 when his father died. He succeeded to his father's titles and automatically joined the House of Lords, meaning he could no longer sit in the House of Commons, and as such resigned his seat.

Lord Sandwich, as he had become, disclaimed his peerages along with the likes of Viscount Stansgate (Tony Benn) and Lord Hailsham (Quentin Hogg) under the Peerage Act 1963. As Victor Montagu, he unsuccessfully stood as the Conservative candidate at Accrington at the 1964 general election and did not sit in the House of Commons again.

Sadly, none of this was what I was really looking for but I found it later in High Tide in an article *The Assumption of Mary (15th August)* which I found most enlightening. Many will know of my interest in Malta. There, everything shuts down, not just for the day but some businesses for a week or even two weeks. One such business has supplied our church with incense on occasions. There will certainly be much celebration and very loud fireworks from dawn to dusk for many days.

Malta also celebrates another event on the 15th August referred to as the *Il-Konvoj ta' Santa Marija* or *Santa Maria Convoy*. A very full version of the story can be found on Wikipedia at <https://tinyurl.com/2djrwnm6>.

Essentially just five of 14 supply ships involved in Operation Pedestal made it to Grand Harbour, but that was enough for Malta. August 15, 1942 saw the arrival of the Ohio in Malta: the badly damaged American oil tanker crewed by British sailors, with destroyers alongside physically supporting her and preventing her from sinking, moving slowly through the minefield outside Grand Harbour, Valletta. The ship reached Malta safely after being torpedoed and attacked from the air. They were enough for Malta to survive the stranglehold of the German and Italian forces and prevent capitulation. Many lost their lives to relieve Malta.

As Malta marks the 82nd anniversary of the Santa Marija convoy, which saved the island from the Second World War, it is interesting to look back at associated aspects.

August 15, Santa Marija of 1942, was the first of four joyous days of relief, all four days dedicated to Our Lady. It was followed by September 8, 1943, the Nativity of Our Lady (Il-Vitorja), with peace with Italy and the arrival of its modern fleet to lie “at anchor under the guns of the fortress of Malta”.

Then, on May 8, 1945, the surrender of Nazi Germany, and on August 15, 1945, the surrender of Japan.

Feeling and Emotions: same thing?

Irene Leader writes:

Feelings and emotions are similar, but they are different.

The way we think affects our emotions and feelings, and these affect our behaviour. This is more complicated than I have portrayed it, but at a basic level:

Thousands of thoughts pass through our brain each day. All these thoughts are filtered through what we believe. These are our core beliefs, which I have called beliefs of our heart.

Emotions

Emotions are short-term and come from our thoughts and change many times a day depending on what we are thinking; what we focus our attention on. To change our emotions, we change our thoughts.

If I think, *'I don't want to go out at night in the dark; I am scared of what might happen.'* The emotion is fear, and the feeling is dread, with the accompanying physical feeling of nausea/sickness. The behaviour is not to go out, because then the feeling of sickness goes.

However, we know that we can change our behaviour by changing our thoughts: *'I don't want to go out, but I need to go out.'* I still have the emotion of fear, but I change my thoughts. I think, *'I need to overcome this fear. Jesus teaches me not to fear because He is with me. I can take a torch, and I will go out in the strength of the Holy Spirit.'* The result is: I am much less fearful, and the more I think and visualise this, the feeling of sickness reduces. The behaviour is: I go out.

So, all these thoughts which go through our brain, leading to different emotions, are coloured/distorted by our heart beliefs and affect the way we perceive a situation. This is why we all see the same situation differently, for example, a telephone call or a fairground ride.

Heart Beliefs

Our beliefs may be conscious, and we are aware of them, but mainly they come from our sub-conscious mind, deeply buried, and forgotten, but still there. The way we believe affects the way we live our life because, as we filter everything through these beliefs, it affects our perception of things. Like that expected telephone call that never came – can reinforce a deeply held belief that no one likes me, without contemplating that perhaps the person is ill.

Our heart beliefs affect how we think about ourselves, events that happen, our relationships with others, including our relationship with God. These beliefs are our spiritual glasses – they have a significant impact on the way we see the world around us. Just as physical glasses can change how we see the physical world.

We can see the world through God's glasses of truth, or through world-view glasses that distort the truth.

These beliefs programme us to behave in a certain way. So it becomes very difficult to think or behave differently from the way we have been programmed. For example, do I ever ask myself why do I keep saying or doing a certain thing (Romans 7:15-20)?

A default expression of 'I am so stupid,' or 'I can't believe I am that dozy.' Immediately correct that, 'No, I am not; God didn't make me stupid/dozy.'

Feelings

Feelings come from deep inside us, from these heart beliefs. As Proverbs 23:7 says, 'For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.'

Feelings are made slowly and are long-term. For example, you can start to feel depressed and don't know why. Coming from our sub-conscious, you can see something that reminds you of something or somebody — a smell, a taste, a sound — they can all evoke memories hidden deep within us that bring out feelings as if you were there now. This is why it is hard to change how we react, the way we think, our behaviour, or how we perceive things, because we have to change our heart beliefs to change our feelings.

Most often our own spiritual battle ground is the mind.

Our life is being constantly redirected because of our feelings. If we are not aware of the root cause of these feelings, we start creating new thoughts to explain why they are there. These thoughts create new emotions which affect our behaviour. We are slowly being programmed. Once this happens, there is no amount of willpower (behavioural modification) that can stop this, only God.

We need to constantly be on the alert to counteract false statements emanating from our false beliefs: 'God didn't make me like this, I am His child, I am a new creation in Christ, I have the Holy Spirit living in me' etc.

Deuteronomy 30:19 teaches us to choose life by being constantly aware of God's blessings and not succumbing to the curses of this world. Therefore, quote scripture like Jesus did with His temptations in the desert. The more we align our thoughts with His thoughts and experience the accompanying emotions from this new way of thinking, the more we form new heart beliefs. St. Paul calls this 'renewing the mind' (Ephesians 4:22-24).

Mushrooms

September is certainly the time of nice, proper mushrooms, so here are two dishes I love both cooking and eating... :)

Lasagna — In the July 2023 Magazine (*available on our website as all High Tides*) there was a recipe for a Pesto Lasagna. I can copy that here almost word by word but with mushrooms.



You will need 4-5 packs of mushrooms of any kind. Slice them not too thin. Heat a frying pan with no oil or butter and then “*dry fry*” your sliced mushrooms until they lose all the water. You will see how after a few minutes they will release an awful lot of water. Fry them until all that liquid evaporates. This way the mushrooms will have a more concentrated taste and a firmer consistency. They will not become mushy or too soft during cooking.

Season with salt and pepper. If you want to, you can add some crushed garlic and/or finely chopped parsley. Let it cool.

Make some Béchamel (1 litre of full fat milk, 100 grams of fine flour, 100 grams of non salted butter, a pinch of salt and some grated nutmeg). Melt the butter on medium heat, add the flour and stir properly and constantly until it has a (very) light brown (-ish) colour. Add the milk slowly while “*stirring like crazy*” and then heat and stir it continuously until you have your preferred consistency. Béchamel must not be runny but it shouldn't be too thick either—remember, it will thicken as it cools down.

That's it... and 6 pieces of fresh (not dry!!) lasagna sheets. Don't precook the lasagna sheets—they will be soggy!

Now, pour a generous spoonful of Béchamel in the bottom of your lasagna dish, and start the layers: lasagna sheet, Béchamel, mushrooms, grated Parmesan. Be generous with the Béchamel as the lasagna sheets will absorb some of it. Top the last layer of lasagna sheet with Béchamel, plenty of cheese and a bit of olive oil. In it goes in the oven (180C, fan) for 15-20-25 minutes—you will see, it really depends on your oven: until the top is nice brown and crispy. Let it cool for 10 minutes before serving. It's also very nice cold (even fridge-cold).

Risotto — Prepare the mushrooms as above and put them aside. Heat some olive oil in a large and low pan (like a sauté pan) with 2-3 peeled and gently crushed garlic cloves. Make sure they don't burn. Remove the garlic before it starts browning.

Put in the rice (risotto rice is the best as it releases more starch than other types, making the risotto more creamy) and fry it for a few minutes, until the rice becomes “glassy”.

Pour in one glass of white (dry or sweet, your choice!) wine and wait until the alcohol evaporates. Otherwise your risotto will have a bitter taste. You can tell from how the steam smells whether or not there is still alcohol.

Mix in the mushrooms, season with pepper and a **little** bit of salt. It is very easy to over-salt a risotto so you should always salt it at the end, if necessary. You only need a little bit of salt at this point to make sure the rice is not tasteless. Add some boiling hot vegetable stock. That's it.

Stir quite often and replace stock as needed. Make sure your risotto-in-the-making is always moist. Only bring it to the desired consistency in the last 2-3 minutes. At the same time, 2-3 minutes before it's done, add some finely chopped parsley or catnip (yes, catnip pairs brilliantly with mushroom) to the risotto and finish the cooking process.

Once the rice is cooked, take the pan off the hob, wait half a minute, and then stir in with quick and decisive movements some butter. The butter and the quick stirring together (releasing more starch) will make your risotto really creamy. Serve it hot — and enjoy!

On quiches... — Now, mushrooms can be a lovely ingredient for quiches. I am not going to give you a “proper” (?) quiche recipe as it is a more popular dish in the U.K. than on the continent and so most probably you all have a better recipe or methods than I do.

On the continent, and especially in Italy, quiches are equally popular but a bit different. They are called “savory cakes” (*torta salata*) and the ingredients are as varied as those of a quiche. Mushrooms are often combined with leeks, potatoes, sausage, bacon, ham, courgette. *Or* or *and*.

What I encourage you to do is to try the continental version which is somewhat healthier as it has less fats. The pastry is the same and so is the baking method. The ingredients (vegetables, meat, fish, rarely cheese) are mixed not with cream but with **ricotta** (normal or reduced fat) plus one whole egg. Season to taste (in Italy a dash of nutmeg is very popular) and bake it as you normally would: grease tin coated with breadcrumbs, at 180 Celsius (fan) until the top has a nice colour. You will get an equally tasty dish but with lower calories and fats.

Where did the phrase come from (3)

Jeanne James writes:

Burning the candle at both ends

Once upon a time, the only light in a house was provided by a candle called a taper, which was usually kept alight on a holder beside the fire. If special visitors came and more light was required, the taper was lit at both ends. These days, the phrase means to exhaust oneself by getting up early and working hard until late at night.

Rule of thumb

Before thermometers were invented, brewers would dip a thumb or finger into their alcoholic concoction to find the right temperature for adding yeast. Too cold, and the yeast wouldn't grow. Too hot, and the yeast would die. Nowadays, the expression 'rule of thumb' means a broadly accurate guide or principle.

Another possible derivation for this phrase comes from an ancient custom whereby men were permitted to beat their wives – but only with a stick no thicker than their thumb. This is also where the phrase 'to have someone under your thumb' comes from.

Mind your own beeswax and Crack a smile

Our ancestors' personal hygiene left much room for improvement. As a result, many people developed acne scars by adulthood. Women would spread beeswax over their skin to smooth out their complexions. When they were speaking to each other, if a woman began to stare at another woman's face, she was told to 'mind her own beeswax'. These days, this is a tongue in cheek way of telling someone to mind their own business.

The wax-smoothing practice also led to the phrase 'crack a smile'. When a woman with beeswax on her face smiled, the wax would sometimes crack!

Mind your Ps and Qs

In old England, ale used to be drunk in pints and quarts. When customers got unruly, the innkeeper would yell at them to 'mind their pints and quarts' – in other words, to 'settle down'.

Grog

In 1794, Admiral Vernon of the British fleet decided to water down the Navy's rum. Needless to say, the sailors weren't too pleased and gave Admiral Vernon the nickname Old Grog – after the stiff wool program coats he wore. The term 'grog' soon began to mean the watered down drink itself. When you were drunk on this grog, you were 'groggy' – a word still in use today.

To wet your whistle

Many years ago, pub customers had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic mugs. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. 'Wet your whistle' is a phrase inspired by this practice. These days, the phrase has simply come to mean 'to have a drink'.

Honeymoon

It was the accepted practice in Anglo-Saxon England that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink (it was supposed to make the wife fertile and the husband virile). Mead is a honey wine – and because the Anglo-Saxons used a lunar calendar, this period was called the 'honey month', or what we know today as the 'honeymoon'.

Goodnight, sleep tight

In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes, the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. That's where the phrase came from.

One for the road

During the middle ages, the condemned were taken from London city gaols to Tyburn Hill for execution. En route, along what is today's Oxford Street, the cart stopped and they were allowed one final drink at a country inn situated on the road. The 'one' they were drinking was for the road to death. These days, the phrase is used for the final drink before heading home.

To bring someone down a peg or two

In olden times people would share a drinking vessel called a 'pigin', which was passed around the drinking circle. When it was your turn to drink, you drank down to your mark, or 'peg'. If you upset the crowd you had to

miss a few turns, hence you were brought down a ‘peg or two’. Nowadays, the phrase means to reprimand someone acting arrogant.

Pressed for an answer

Horribly, people used to have heavy weights loaded onto their chests in an effort to squeeze a confession out of them at an interrogation. They were, quite literally, ‘pressed for an answer’.

By hook or by crook

There are several potential derivations for this phrase. One is that peasants were permitted under ancient forestry acts to take from the forests only that which they could reach from the edge with their hooks or shepherds crooks.

Another version has it that Cromwell vowed to take Waterford in Ireland attacking either via the village of Hook or Crook. Today, the phrase means ‘by any means possible’.

What a shambles!

Travel to the walled city of York in northern England and you’ll undoubtedly enjoy time in its narrow, cobblestoned streets – which were known as ‘the Shambles’ in bygone times.

Traditionally, this is where traders erected their temporary stalls and sold their wares, long before the idea of a permanent shop was feasible. In fact, such streets were a feature of all towns. You can imagine the chaos as traders fought for space in these unregulated areas. It would truly have been shambolic!



Show a leg

When the ships of old were about to leave port, sometimes sailors tried to smuggle ladies aboard, concealing them in their hammocks. The officers or mates would do a final inspection of the ship and crew before she left. Anybody in a hammock was bidden to ‘show a leg’. Should a hairless and shapely one dangle, the owner was usually a ‘Jill’ rather than a ‘Jack Tar’ – and eviction swiftly followed!

Today, the phrase is used when trying to rouse someone from sleep.

**Calendar, Service times,
and Prayer Intentions**

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for September 2024

SUN	1 st	14TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	8am, 10.30am
MON	2 nd	St. Stephen, King of Hungary	9am
TUE	3 rd	St. Pius X Pope	—
WED	4 th	<i>Feria</i>	—
THU	5 th	St. Lawrence Justinian Bishop	—
FRI	6 th	<i>Feria</i>	—
SAT	7 th	<i>Of Our Lady</i>	9.30am
SUN	8 th	15TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	9 th	<i>St. Gorgonius, Martyr</i>	9am
TUE	10 th	St. Nicholas of Tolentino	—
WED	11 th	<i>Sts. Protus & Hyacinth, Martyrs</i>	—
THU	12 th	The Most Holy Name of Mary	—
FRI	13 th	St. John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor	—
SAT	14 th	Exaltation of the Holy Cross	9.30am
SUN	15 th	16TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	16 th	St. Cornelius Pope, Cyprian Bp., Martyrs	9am
TUE	17 th	<i>The Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi</i>	—
WED	18 th	St. Joseph of Cupertino (<i>Ember Day</i>)	—
THU	19 th	St. Januarius & Comp., Martyrs	—
FRI	20 th	<i>St. Eustace & Comp., Mart. (Ember Day)</i>	—
SAT	21 st	St. Matthew Ap. & Evang. (<i>Ember Day</i>)	9.30am
SUN	22 nd	17TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	23 rd	Padre Pio (<i>Ember Day</i>)	9am
TUE	24 th	<i>Our Lady of Ransom</i>	9am
WED	25 th	Monthly Requiem	10am
THU	26 th	<i>St. Cyprian & Justina, Martyrs</i>	6pm
FRI	27 th	St. Cosmas & Damian, Martyrs (<i>anointing</i>)	12pm
SAT	28 th	St. Wenceslaus duke, Martyr	9.30am
SUN	29 th	DEDICATION OF ST. MICHAEL	10.30am, 5pm
MON	30 th	St. Jerome	9am

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless thy holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding and kindle my affections; that I may worthily, attentively, and devoutly recite this Morning Prayer, and so be meet to be heard before the presence of thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. O Lord, open my lips. **R.** And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

V. O God, make speed to save me. **R.** O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

V. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him!

R. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

V. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his.

R. O come, let us worship him.

V. The sea is his, for who but he made it; and his hands fashioned the dry land. O come, let us worship and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us! For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

R. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

V. Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, on the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, and put me to the test, and they saw my works.

R. O come, let us worship him.

V. For forty years I loathed that generation, and I said: They always err in heart, they have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath: they shall not enter my rest.

R. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

R. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

HYMN

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle
Sing the last, the dread affray;
O'er the cross, the victor's trophy,
Sound the high triumphal lay:
Tell how Christ, the world's Redeemer,
As a victim won the day.

God, his Maker, sorely grieving
That the first-made Adam fell,
When he ate the fruit of sorrow,
Whose reward was death and hell,
Noted then this wood, the ruin
Of the ancient wood to quell.

Wherefore, when the sacred fullness
Of the appointed time was come,
This world's Maker left his Father,
Sent the heav'nly mansion from,
And proceeded, God Incarnate,
Of the Virgin's holy womb.

To the Trinity be glory
Everlasting, as is meet;
Equal to the Father, equal
To the Son, and Paraclete:
Trinal Unity, whose praises
All created things repeat. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow (please see next page).

1	119 v. 17-40	Jonah 3 Revelation 3,14-end	3	51	1 Kings 2,1-12 Acts 13,44-end
2	50	1 Kings 1,5-31 Acts 13,13-43	4	54	1 Kings 3 Acts 14

5	55	1 Kings 4,29-end Acts 15,1-21	18	77	1 Kings 17 Acts 20,1-16
6	56	1 Kings 6,11-28 Acts 15,22-end	19	78 v. 1-39	1 Kings 18,1-20 Acts 20,17-end
7	57	1 Kings 8,1-30 Acts 16,1-5	20	78 v. 40-end	1 Kings 18,21-end Acts 21,1-16
8	119 v. 57-72	Jonah 4 Revelation 8,1-5	21	49, 117	1 Kings 9,15-end 2 Timothy 3,14-end
9	63	1 Kings 8,31-62 Acts 16,6-24	22	119 v. 153-end	Isaiah 45,9-22 Revelation 14,1-5
10	68	1 Kings 9,1-9 Acts 16,25-end	23	79	1 Kings 21 Acts 22,1-21
11	70	1 Kings 10,1-25 Acts 17,1-15	24	83	1 Kings 22,1-28 Acts 22,22-30
12	71	1 Kings 11,1-13 Acts 17,16-end	25	85	1 Kings 22,29-45 Acts 23
13	73	1 Kings 11,26-end Acts 18,1-21	26	87	2 Kings 1,2-17 Acts 24
14	2, 8, 146	Genesis 3,1-15 John 12,27-36	27	88	2 Kings 2,1-18 Acts 25,1-12
15	119 v. 105-120	Isaiah 44,24 - 45,8 Revelation 12,1-12	28	89 v. 1-18	2 Kings 4,1-37 Acts 25,13-end
16	75	1 Kings 12,25-end Acts 19,8-20	29	34, 150	Daniel 12,1-4 Acts 12,1-11
17	76	1 Kings 13,11-end Acts 19,21-end	30	89 v. 19-end	2 Kings 5 Acts 26,1-23

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS

Ant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because through your Cross you have redeemed the world.

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, *
 who has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
 born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets God promised of old *
 to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,
To show mercy to our ancestors, *
 and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: *
 to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
 holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
 for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
 by the forgiveness of all their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
 the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
 and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
 and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *
 world without end. Amen.

Ant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because through your Cross you have redeemed the world.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (the world), for those in need, and for the dead. Then follows the Collect:

O Lord, we pray that your grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: 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. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

V. The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life.
R. Amen. V. Let us bless the Lord. R. Thanks be to God. V. And may the
souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
R. Amen.

Morning Prayer ends with the final Antiphon of Our Lady:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, who by the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become a worthy dwelling for Thy Son; grant that we who rejoice in her commemoration may, by her gracious intercession, be delivered from present evils and from everlasting death. Through the same Christ our Lord.
R. Amen

EVENING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.
R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...
V. And the Word was made flesh.
R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. O God, make speed to save me. R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

HYMN

Thirty years among us dwelling,
His appointed time fulfilled,
Born for this, he meets his passion,
For that this he freely willed:
On the cross the Lamb is lifted,
Where his life-blood shall be spilled.

He endured the nails, the spitting,
Vinegar, and spear, and reed;
From that holy body broken
Blood and water forth proceed:
Earth, and stars, and sky, and ocean,
By that flood from stain are free.

Faithful cross! above all other,
One and only noble tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peers may be;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron!
Sweetest weight is hung on thee.

Bend thy boughs, O tree of glory!
Thy relaxing sinews bend;
For awhile the ancient rigour,
That thy birth bestowed, suspend;
And the King of heavenly beauty
On thy bosom gently tend!

Thou alone wast counted worthy
This world's ransom to uphold;
For a shipwrecked race preparing
Harbour, like the ark of old;
With the sacred blood anointed
From the smitten Lamb that rolled.

To the Trinity be glory
Everlasting, as is meet;
Equal to the Father, equal
To the Son, and Paraclete:
Trinal Unity, whose praises
All created things repeat. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	119 v. 1-16	Exodus 12,21-27 Matthew 5,1-20	3	60	Wisdom 2 Mark 10,1-16
2	59	Wisdom 1 Mark 9,38-end	4	61	Wisdom 3,1-9 Mark 10,17-31

5	62	Wisdom 4,7-end Mark 10,32-34	18	82	Wisdom 13,1-9 Mark 13,1-13
6	64	Wisdom 5,1-16 Mark 10,35-45	19	84	Wisdom 16,15-end Mark 13,14-23
7	65	Wisdom 5,17-end Mark 10,46-end	20	86	Wisdom 18,6-19 Mark 13,24-31
8	119 v. 41-56	Exodus 14,5-end Matthew 6,1-18	21	119 v. 33-40	Ecclesiastes 5,4-12 Matthew 19,16-end
9	66	Wisdom 6,12-23 Mark 11,1-11	22	119 v. 137-152	Exodus 19,10-end Matthew 8,23-end
10	67	Wisdom 7,1-14 Mark 11,12-26	23	93	1 Maccabees 1,1-19 Mark 14,1-11
11	69	Wisdom 7,15-end Mark 11,27-end	24	94	1 Maccabees 1,20-40 Mark 14,12-25
12	72	Wisdom 8,5-18 Mark 12,1-12	25	102	1 Maccabees 1,41-end Mark 14,26-42
13	74	Wisdom 9 Mark 12,13-17	26	104	1 Maccabees 2,1-28 Mark 14,43-52
14	110, 150	Isaiah 63,1-16 1 Corinthians 1,18-25	27	105	1 Maccabees 2,29-48 Mark 14,53-65
15	119 v. 73-88	Exodus 18,13-26 Matthew 7,1-14	28	91	2 Kings 6,8-17 Matthew 18,1-10
16	80	Wisdom 11,21-end Mark 12,28-34	29	138, 148	Daniel 10,4-end Revelation 5
17	81	Wisdom 12,12-21 Mark 12,35-end	30	107	1 Maccabees 3,1-26 Mark 15,1-15

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Ant: O Holy Cross, upon you the Life of the world hung, upon you Christ openly triumphed, and his death trampled down death for ever.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,+
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;*
 he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed;+
the Almighty has done great things for me*
 and holy is his name.
He has mercy on those who fear him,*
 from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm*
 and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones*
 and lifting up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things*
 and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,*
 to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our ancestors,*
 to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
 and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
 world without end. Amen.

Ant: O Holy Cross, upon you the Life of the world hung, upon you Christ openly triumphed, and his death trampled down death for ever.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (world), for those in need, our Benefactors, and for the dead. Then the Collect is said:

O Lord, we pray that your grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: 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. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

V. Let us bless the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God. **V.** And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R.** Amen.

Optional private prayer to be said after Evening Prayer: To the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, to our Lord Jesus Christ Crucified, to the fruitful Virginity of the most blessed and most glorious Mary, always a Virgin, and to the holiness of all the Saints be ascribed everlasting praise, honour, and glory, by all creatures, and to us be granted the forgiveness of all our sins, world without end. Amen.

Prayers to Jesus Crucified - Here I am, good and gentle Jesus, kneeling before you. Most earnestly I pray and ask you to engrave upon my heart a deep and lively faith, hope, and charity, with true sorrow for my sins and a firm resolve to amend them. O great passion! O deep Wounds! O Blood shed in abundance! O God of meekness! Have mercy on me and grant my request if it be for my salvation. O blessed Jesus, most mighty Lion of Judah, King immortal and most victorious, remember the sorrow that you suffered when all your powers of heart and body failed you utterly, and when you bowed your head and said, "It is finished." Remembering your anguish and sorrow, blessed Jesus, have mercy on me in my last hour. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, I thank You, who laid down your life for me so meekly. You bore the nails so patiently, You were raised upon the cross so mercifully, You hung there so painfully, You wept so bitterly, You cried aloud piercingly, You shed your blood plentifully, and for me, a sinner, You suffered death unquestionably. Now, Lord Jesus Christ, I commend myself to your love, to the power of your passion, to the depths of your endless mercy. Jesus Christ, in your immeasurable pity, keep alive within me the memory of your bitter death, of your holy wounds, so that in sickness and in health, I may remember your mercy. Gentle Jesus, defend me from all danger, and keep me so that I may stand before You in joy. Defend my soul, Lord Jesus Christ, which You have bought with your precious blood. Amen.

Prayer to Our Lady of Sorrows - Our Mother of Sorrows, with strength from above you stood by the Cross, sharing in the sufferings of Jesus, and with tender care you bore him in your arms, mourning and weeping. We praise you for your faith, which accepted the life God planned for you. We praise you for your hope, which trusted that God would do great things in you. We praise you for your love in bearing with Jesus the sorrows of his Passion. Holy Mary, may we follow your example, and stand by all your children who need comfort and love. Mother of God, stand by us in our trials and care for us in our many needs. Pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer

17th Sunday after Trinity: *LORD, we pray thee that thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Here we address the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as the LORD, in Hebrew YHWH, the revealed Name of God given to Moses at the burning bush in the wilderness (Exodus 3). He is “I AM WHO I AM” and “I AM WHO I SHALL BE” and “I AM & SHALL BE WHO I WAS.” He is the utterly faithful One from generation to generation and from age to age.

And his Son, the One Mediator between God and Man, who also shares the name of LORD is “*the same yesterday, today and for ever*” (Hebrews 13,8).

To this eternally existing, infinite and ineffable God, who came to us in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of the almighty Father, we are most highly privileged to be able to bring our petitions and to offer our praise and thanksgiving.

Here we use a verb *prevent* whose meaning in this context is the old one: to anticipate, to forestall, to be beforehand with. And we make two petitions which are connected to each other. First of all, we ask that the grace (the personal presence and unmerited mercy) of God may always both go before us and come behind us, so that we are always surrounded on all sides by the divine presence and infinite care.

In the second place, being thus placed within the gracious favour of God, we ask that we shall continually respond in faith and faithfulness to be and do that which is pleasing in his sight -- loving God with all our being & loving our neighbour as ourselves.

There is great strength in the word *always*. We need God’s personal presence and assistance not sometimes, not even often; but, rather, always.

Let us be clear that the LORD, the Blessed, Holy and Undivided Trinity of the Father, together with the Son and the Holy Ghost, is wholly desirous of being with his children in a complete and satisfying way for their salvation and their general good. His promises of his presence and his help are many.

What he looks for in us is faith and faithfulness so that we are truly, consciously and continually his people and he is known by us always as our covenant God.

The Rev’d Dr Peter Toon (+2009)

Charity, good manners, and driving

(based on an article by George Weigel for *The Dispatch* 31 July 2024)

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says some interesting things about charity, the supreme theological virtue that, as St. Paul wrote in Colossians 3,14, “*binds everything together in perfect harmony.*”

CCC 1828: “The practice of the moral life animated by charity gives to the Christian the spiritual freedom of the children of God. He no longer stands before God as a slave, in servile fear, or as a mercenary looking for wages, but as a son responding to the love of him who ‘first loved us’ (1 John 4,19).”

CCC 1829: “The fruits of charity are joy, peace, and mercy; charity demands beneficence and fraternal correction...it fosters reciprocity...it is friendship and communion...”

Charity is also the virtue informing *good manners*. And the sorry condition of good manners among us these days is perhaps a point in favour of those who argue (inaccurately, in my view) that our countries have become post-Christian countries. But even if we’re not yet a post-Christian country – one in which appeals to Christian truths and moral norms have zero public traction – we are rapidly becoming a post-Christian culture, as demonstrated by the fact that both high culture and pop culture indulge and often promote bad manners. And since politics is downstream from culture, we should not be surprised at the state of political debates, campaigns, and the culture of politics in general.

Good manners embody respect for others. Good manners ease the inevitable frictions of social life, which is why good manners were part of a comprehensive code of humane, civilised, adult behaviour. Public officials were once expected to display good manners, even in debate; John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon were not terribly fond of each other by 1960, but their four presidential debates were characterised by good manners, not puerile hollering.

Good manners extend to driving. Herewith, then, and with the *Catechism’s* teaching that “fraternal correction” is a fruit of charity in mind, are some proposals for good-mannered driving.

Rubbernecking is an offence against good driving manners. Innumerable traffic jams are caused by inconsiderate drivers slowing down to a crawl to ogle a crash scene. Stop it. If your life is so dull that a broken-down car or a collision’s aftermath provides a *frisson* of interest or excitement, something is awry. Find other stimulants (legal, of course). And when you pass an accident at a reasonable speed, not a crawl, say a prayer for those involved.

Loitering in the right lane is an offence against good driving manners. Many places now deploy electronic signage reading “The right lane is for passing not cruising.” This admonition has had as much discernible effect as King Canute ordering the incoming tide to cease and desist. Car after car squats in the passing lane, blithely (or ignorantly) creating delays for everyone. Paying attention to what’s behind you on the road is a sign of respect for others – which is a matter of good manners, which are an expression of charity. So be not a squatter.

Fiddling with a cell phone while driving is not only bad manners, it’s illegal and is an offence. Show some respect for yourself and others by paying close attention to what you’re doing. Endangering others and/or not respecting the law in such a serious matter are mortal sins.

“Hiding behind your screen” is an offence against good driving manners. Of course, I am not talking about the windscreen of your car. You should, indeed, be “hiding” behind it at all times. I am referring to a behaviour widespread on internet. (Presumed) anonymity brings out the worst of people as so clearly demonstrated by recent events (the shameful riots and vandalism across the country). Hateful words, threats, indecent expressions... from the “anonymity” and “safety” (*everyone online can be traced*) of their computers, many people become animals. The same can be said about the “anonymity” and “safety” (*see road-rage incidents*) of the inside of our car. Only because the other driver (or cyclist, horse rider, pedestrian, etc.) cannot hear you, or cannot see you, or even if they can, they cannot get to you... it does not mean it is alright to utter (shout, whisper, think) offensive, or hateful, or in general uncharitable words. God can see and hear you perfectly well, as can your Guardian Angel.

Driving when you shouldn’t is an offence against good driving manners. I don’t mean under the influence of alcohol or drugs. That shouldn’t even be a question. I am talking about something much more difficult. I am talking about the time in our life when our reflexes have slowed down, or our joints stiffened up, or our attention and focus weakened due to age to the extent that our driving is potentially dangerous to ourselves and to others. This is perhaps the scenario that takes the most courage, humility, and charity — to ask a trusted loved one: do *you* think I should be driving? And, then, to listen to their advice. Limiting our own freedom of movement is not easy. Endangering our own life and safety, and that of others, is a lack of charity, is a grave sin

The recovery of good manners as expression of charity is essential to the renewal of our deteriorating culture. Good driving manners are a modest place to begin that renewal, especially for people of faith.

Saint of the month: St. Jerome, Confessor and Doctor of the Church The grumpy Patron of curmudgeons

30 August

Other than being the Patron Saint of librarians, scholars, and translators, St. Jerome is also the Patron of grumpy people. Most of the saints are remembered for some outstanding virtue or devotion, but he is frequently remembered for his bad temper! Anyone who taught error was an enemy of God and truth, and Saint Jerome went after him or her with his mighty and sometimes truly sarcastic pen.

Holy Scriptures — Let's start with something undiscussed: St. Jerome is one of the greatest biblical scholars. Full stop. He translated most of the Old Testament from the Hebrew. We must thank him for the version of the Bible called the Vulgate. Jerome also wrote commentaries which are a great source of scriptural inspiration for us today. He was an avid student, a thorough scholar, a prodigious letter-writer and a consultant to monk, bishop, and pope. Saint Augustine said of him, "What Jerome is ignorant of, no mortal has ever known."

In order to be able to do such work, Jerome prepared himself well. He was a master of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldaic. He began his studies at his birthplace, Stridon in Dalmatia. After his preliminary education, he went to Rome, the centre of learning at that time, and thence to Trier, Germany, where the scholar was very much in evidence. He spent several years in each place, always trying to find the very best teachers. He once served as private secretary to Pope Damasus.

After these preparatory studies, he traveled extensively in Palestine, marking each spot of Christ's life with an outpouring of devotion. Mystic that he was, he spent five years in the desert of Chalcis so that he might give himself up to prayer, penance, and study. Finally, he settled in Bethlehem, where he lived in the cave believed to have been the birthplace of Christ. Jerome died in Bethlehem, and the remains of his body now lie buried in the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome.

Personality — It might be surprising to find Jerome amongst the Saints. He was a proper curmudgeon. Sometimes a misogynist grump. Never politically correct, and intellectual who didn't do small talk and was (to put it mildly) not inclined to suffer fools gladly.

He attacked just about everybody for anything. His style being caustic, sarcastic and harsh, Jerome made lots of enemies. They returned the attacks,

gossiping about him and mocking his gait and smile (??) and his accomplishments. That's when he got offended and left Rome for the Palestine desert.

Amidst all his theological and scriptural writings, he found enough time to write against Ambrose (later a saint), rebuke Augustine (later a saint, doctor, and one of the greatest theologians), call Rufinus a pig, condemn women with make-up or wigs, mock priests who wore silk vestments... and the list does not end here. It is telling that just a few years before his death, his monastery was burned to the ground by an unknown group of individuals...

Undeniably, Jerome was irascible, sarcastic, morbidly sensitive, resented any criticism, had a prickly character, and was somewhat unbalanced.

However... — That said, St. Jerome had a lot of virtues. His great love of God, his devotion to Our Lady, his dedication to worship, his deep prayer-life and asceticism. In the cave he lived in Bethlehem, he opened a free school for children and a hospice for pilgrims, “*so that should Mary and Joseph visit Bethlehem again, they would have a place to stay.*” He was always gentle with the poor and downtrodden. But. All this would have been in vain if he did not have another virtue: repentance.

While he was swift to anger, he was even more swift to feel remorse. Always more severe on his own shortcomings than on those of others. He is often depicted with a stone in his hand, beating his breast in contrition. He was well aware of his bad temper and he did much penance because of it. A pope is said to have remarked, on seeing such a painting of Jerome, “*You do well to carry that stone, for without it the Church would never have made you a Saint...*”

St. Jerome and the lion — Finally, a lovely legend from his life. One day toward evening, when Jerome was seated with the other monks to hear the sacred lessons read, a lion suddenly limped into the monastery. The other monks fled at the sight of the beast, but Jerome greeted him as a guest. The lion showed him his wounded foot, and Jerome called the brothers and ordered them to wash the animal's feet and to dress the wound carefully. When they set about doing this, they found that the paw had been scratched and torn by thorns. They did what was necessary, and the lion recovered, lost all his wildness, and lived among the monks like a house pet.

St. Jerome rightly warns us against worldliness, sentimentality, intellectual shallowness and cowardice. He reminds us to fight the good fight with all our might, and if he descended into sarcasm and satire, he was also always aware of his own weakness, temptation and soiled humanity.

Dealing with anger and other sins — the example of St. Jerome

Once, St. Jerome encountered the Christ Child and told Him that he had given Jesus everything he could think of: his life, his work, his possessions, etc.

However, Jesus responded, “I want still more from you.”

After St. Jerome exhausted every possibility he could conjure, he said to Jesus, “All that’s left is my misery.” Jesus replied, “That’s what I want from you – your misery.” We too have to give Christ our everything, including our miseries and mistakes.

As we have seen in the previous article, St. Jerome could be quite difficult to get along with and made many enemies along the way. His anger came across in his frequent correspondence with friends and foes alike. He was known for name calling and biting words which expressed his anger and lack of charity. Jerome could be bitter, hold grudges, and try his friends’ patience with his anger. Part of the issue was his pride. He certainly was a learned man. With all of his learning, he would not suffer fools and was quick to point out in an angry tone what had irritated him.

The important thing is that Jerome repented of his anger. 1) He *knew* that he needed to overcome sinful anger. 2) He felt *remorse* for it; 3) *asked forgiveness* for it, and 4) did *penance* for it. All this he did rooted in *prayer* and strengthened by the Sacraments. Jerome knew that he suffered from this vice, and he knew that it hurt other people. Jerome prayed to overcome his anger, and he never stopped fighting against it.

We all struggle with some temptation of the heart, and we know that we need to overcome it. Following St. Jerome’s example:

1) we must clearly know our vices — our help in this can be a spiritual director, an honest friend, confession, and examining our conscience daily;

2) we must have remorse — it is a virtue and so it can be practiced; if remorse does not come to us naturally, we can always recite prayers such as the Act of Contrition asking God to make us truly and truthfully feel what we say with our lips;

Act of Contrition: *O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.*

3) we must ask for forgiveness — firstly, of God, in prayer and in Confession because every sin offends God first of all; then we must ask for

forgiveness of the person we sinned against. Without this act of rectitude and humility, our remorse will always remain false or at least very deficient.

4) we must embrace penance for our sins — sin is stealing. We deprive God of our love and obedience we owe him when we sin; we rob our neighbour of his dignity or peace or joy or many other things when we insult, offend, or hurt them in any way. Penance is a form of spiritual restitution and it can have many shapes and forms. The best practice is to ask our confessor, priest, or spiritual friend to impose a penance. A wisely chosen form of penance is a great help in combatting vice and sin and will help us to develop corresponding virtues.



4) finally, the most important thing is prayer and the Sacraments — relying on our own strength will inevitably lead to failure. Prayer and the Sacraments can obtain for us every necessary grace (supernatural help) to grow in holiness. We may never completely be free of a certain vice or sin (as the example of St. Jerome shows) but we can always become a better version of ourselves, daily, little by little, making sometimes slow but steady progress with God's help. Also, if we do not pray, we will quickly forget *why* we want to become a better Christian, a holier person and we will most probably give up even trying.

A prayer written by St. Jerome: *O Lord, show Your mercy to me and gladden my heart. I am like the man on the way to Jericho who was overtaken by robbers, wounded and left for dead. O Good Samaritan, come to my aid. I am like the sheep that went astray. O Good Shepherd, seek me out and bring me home in accord with Your will. Let me dwell in Your house all the days of my life and praise You for ever and ever with those who are there. Amen.*

Know the Bible! - The Book of Leviticus



The third Book of the Bible, Leviticus, is certainly not the most popular one... The name comes from the tribe of Levi, responsible for the maintenance of sacred spaces and objects. The Book of Levi is the story of how Israel interacted with God dwelling among them.

Theme — in the whole Book God gives messages to Moses and/or Aaron, most of which they have to pass on to Israel. The repeated message is: “*be holy as I am holy.*” But what does holy mean? Literally, it means separate, set apart, sacred. Israel saw God as completely above all creation (and other gods of the nations). However, as we saw in Exodus, God descended from above to dwell with his people. This is something huge in the ancient world: an all-powerful, cosmic and sacred Being is now living in a regular tent with mortal people. To be faithful, this is not an easy thing to deal with.

Moses, under the instruction of God, makes a Tabernacle (tent). It becomes the sacred space where heaven and earth touch, divine and human meet. The problem: the Holy is surrounded by the unholy — the people cannot live up to God’s “standards”, even Moses is unable to enter the Tabernacle. So... what now?

By the end of Leviticus Israel will have learnt the laws, rules, and ceremonies that will allow them to live with and interact with their God. An order of priests is instituted who become custodians of ritual cleanness or purity so that the relationship between God and Israel is not severed.

There is a very tangible, evident consequence of being around God without being pure: death. Throughout Leviticus we see how God’s immeasurable holiness consumes, like fire, everything that is impure. Leviticus is God’s extended helping hand for Israel. If Israel is going to be close to his God — the only One who can protect, guide, and provide for them in the wilderness — then they are going to need to set themselves apart from the rest of the world. They must be more holy, more “set apart”, more reverent than the rest of the world *because* their God is holy. In a word, Leviticus is a

rulebook given to various groups within Israel on how to coexist in a very close proximity with such a holy and powerful Being.

Structure — The structure of the Book of Leviticus is very simple and straightforward and can be divided in three parts.

1) The book starts (chapters 1-15) with rules for the priests, these mortal people who stand in a very dangerous place: between God and Israel. They are responsible for the sacrifices and rituals that help remove uncleanness and impurity from Israel, individual, objects, and places.

Aaron is anointed as High Priest and his four sons are made priests. However, because two of them approached God in a ritually inappropriate way, they died. This shows the gravity of the violation of the laws of ritual cleanness and purity.

2) After the rules of purity for priests, the next part of Leviticus (chapter 16) deals with the purity of the Holy Place: the Tabernacle. How to cleanse and keep ritually clean the Tent of the Meeting. The whole ritual and the day on which it is performed has a special name: the Day of Atonement.

Once a year a “full wipe” is made to make sure that sins, offences are removed from the place where the priests meet God. Two goats are used: one of them is killed and sacrificed, the other is burdened, by the High Priest laying his hands on it, with the sins of Israel and expelled into the desert (scape goat).

3) The third part of Leviticus (chapters 17-27) is known as “The Holiness Code”. These are rules and guidelines for Israel. Some of them are for the priests, but most of them are for the people. Standard for the priests are higher as they interact with God directly.

Moses and Aaron receive instructions from God about various festivals and they will teach the people how to celebrate and worship God. A main, returning topic throughout Leviticus is how God freed Israel from Egypt.

In this section Israel must face a choice. Moses warns them: they can either live in such a way that they maintain this ritual cleanness and purity and this will bring blessing on them. The other option is to disregard, to their own peril, these ritual laws, and by doing so, to disregard this powerful and most holy God who dwells among them. This will bring on them the curses outlined in the book.

The Book of Leviticus is a truly fascinating book even for us because of the underlying concept: Israel truly believed that these rules and ceremonies will help them to physically coexist with God, Creator of the whole world.

The Psalms

Psalm 41: Cured from an illness and preserved from enemies

Psalm 41 starts with verses (1-3) of exhortation: how and why it is good to follow God's ways. After this we have the middle part (verses 4-10) in the form of classic lament where David describes his illness and persecution — not as his present state (God has already saved him!) but rather to remind himself of God's goodness and to help the congregation to see God's greatness. We know that when David is writing Psalm 41, he had already been saved as the concluding verses (11-12) are verses of praise and thanksgiving.

Verses 1-3 — The opening “beatitude” is addressed to the congregation, gathered for a feast, and declares blessed are those who pay attention to the lowly. But who are these lowly? Is this simply a call to be compassionate and generous towards all those less fortunate than we?

While the Old Testament often reminds the Israelites about their duties towards the poor and oppressed, this does not seem to be the case in Psalm 41. The “lowly” David is referring to is he himself because of the persecutions he suffered and the grave illness that befell him. What David is saying, then, is this: you are truly blessed if you listen to me. But why?

David is convinced if people listen to his “story”, they will start sharing his joyful gratitude for God's help he received. David stands in front of the congregation as a living witness to God's gracious protection and help. He was cured, refreshed, and saved; he is the one “*called blessed in the land*” because of the gifts God has bestowed on him. This is not a prideful boasting but rather David becomes a warning and a promise to the faithful: behold, this is who our God is. He keeps his word, he is our Protector, he hastens to the help of his people.

As we reflect on this Psalm, we must certainly ask ourselves: is this my attitude when I cannot escape misery and suffering? Am I willing - in the sure hope of God's saving help - to become a witness for the community of believers through constant prayer, hopeful trust, and ready praise?

Verses 4-10 — To highlight even more God's goodness and mercy, David describes the misery he was saved from by quoting his lament he had addressed to God during his illness and persecution. We know that he is “quoting” himself because the Psalm suddenly becomes a prayer addressed not anymore to the congregation but directly to God, both opening and closing with a petition for grace.

This petition for grace reveals David's inner thoughts about himself. He truly knows, without pretending, that every evil that has befallen him, is the punishment of his own sinfulness.

Yet again we must stop and reflect on our own attitude when it comes to suffering, be it physical or spiritual. While, based on Jesus' teaching, we do not see God as One who punishes every sin directly and pays back in the way of "eye for an eye", and we do not think suffering is good *in itself*, we, Christians, also know that suffering can become salubrious. Not the one we inflict on others but the ones that we accept once they turn out to be inevitable. Yes, a Christian soul rightfully prays for deliverance from suffering but it also offers it for his or her own sins, and for the sins of the world, *until* his/her deliverance. While we await God's help, we unite what we must suffer to the sufferings of Christ and offer it to God. In doing so, we are transformed more and more into the likeness of the Suffering Servant and High Priest, Christ Jesus crucified. Only this attitude can shed light on the otherwise problematic words of St. Paul: "*I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church*" (Colossians 1,24)

David's own admission of sinfulness is not in contradiction with his lament above the unfairness and injustice of his enemies. Sincere knowledge of having sinned against God does not exclude the conviction of being innocent as far as particular accusations of human adversaries are concerned.

The verses, unfortunately, are also a picture of the incomprehensible and yet so very common hard-hearted unkindness of man who cruelly assails the helpless and vulnerable, and hopes to gain something from it for himself. All this becomes even more repulsive when religious "arguments" are used for self-justification.

It is worth noting that verse 9 is quoted in John 13,18 and is applied to the traitor Judas. With this link the whole Psalm receives a very clear Messianic sense, a sense confirmed by the figure of Christ who not only himself suffered persecution and "was struck" by suffering but who clearly identified himself, and continues to identify himself, with all those who suffer.

Verses 11-13 — Gratitude to God takes over again but the greatest joy of David is not the fact that persecutions and illness have ceased but that he can appear before God's face again. This "restored relationship" with God that matters the most to David. These verses are the biblical foundation of the prayers in the Mass for the Sick where we pray that the sick may not only be healed but also given back to the Church and may present themselves in the congregation to give thanks to God.

Our Lady of Sorrows, funerals, and grief in general

There is a “lost feast day” this September in the Calendar as the 15th of the month falls on Sunday. Sunday takes over most feasts, in this case the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. Meditating on the seven sorrows of Our Lady - *the prophecy of Simeon; the flight into Egypt; the loss of the Child for three days; Mary’s encounter with Jesus on his way to Calvary; Mary standing at the foot of the Cross; Jesus’ body is laid into Mary’s arms; Jesus’ body is closed in the tomb* - St. Alphonsus Liguori writes that Mary is Queen of the Martyrs because of the intensity and life-long duration of her suffering with Jesus. Yet she is the example of a grief that walks the Way of the Cross enflamed by faith, hope, and charity.

On a first look, Our Lady of Sorrows is confusing. It’s a whole day, a whole “Feast” Day, devoted to sorrow. How does one celebrate and commemorate sorrow? What’s more, Mary’s the Queen of Heaven, and Heaven’s a place of eternal happiness. How does that fit with Our Lady of Sorrows? We see her draped in dark clothing, a tear falling down her cheek, seven swords of sorrow piercing her heart. What do we, on our journey towards Heaven, have to learn from this woman, filled with grief?

Firstly, that grief is OK. It is human, it is natural, and suppressing it is unhealthy. Modern day Christian funerals tend to forget this. People leave the most incredible instructions for their funeral with cheerful music and colourful dresses, banning any sign or expression of sorrow.

How unbiblical. How unhealthy. How inhuman.

Firstly, we should approach our death with humble trembling over our sins rather than overconfident that we will go straight to heaven. Has our faith been strong like those of the Martyrs? Our charity ardent like theirs? And our life given to God totally like theirs? Why would then we assume that we go directly to heaven without even a day of Purgatory, making our funeral into a beatification rather than into a humble and penitent prayer?

Secondly, as mentioned above, grief is human, is healthy, is biblical. Do we think Our Lady did not have hope? Or her faith was weak? Or she did not trust God’s promises? Do we think she did not know the immense value of her Son’s death - how many souls will now finally be saved! Yet, with the strongest and greatest faith, hope, and charity any human could have, there she stands, filled with sorrow, with tearful eyes, with her heart pierced and broken.

As we approach death, hopefully we grow in virtues day after day. Such as charity and compassion. Be compassionate to your loved ones, friends, and church family. Allow them to grieve, to express their sorrow, to be tearful. Let them be human, help them be healthy.

Our Lady of Sorrows teaches us that in our fallen world, where death and sin are our realities, grief is a necessary part of love. If we love, we will experience loss and hurt. Our Lady of Sorrows gives us a place for our sadness, our distress. She sits with us in the moments that can't be fixed, that can't be made better in this life. Like a loving friend, she empathizes with our grief. She doesn't judge or chastise, or tell us to "cheer up" or "get over it." She listens, all the while pointing back to the hope that only her Son can provide.

So how can we grieve like the Mother Mary?

Realise and Forgive — Mary constantly pondered in her heart both the joys and sorrows of her life (Lk 2,19), her grief always growing as the agony of her Son approached. Take time to realise and reflect upon the cause and source of sorrow. Most often, grief requires forgiveness that we are called to extend seventy times seven times (Mt 18,22), both to others and to ourselves. Constant and honest forgiveness is the slow healer of grief.

Realise, like Mary, that grief is not the end. Even as Mary continually remembered her Son's looming death, she also knew he would rise triumphant. This did not erase her sorrow, but provided it with a basis of hope that joy and life have the final say.

Confide in Community — Though grief often isolates us, one way to find healing is through confiding your sorrows and engaging in community. Though it often takes courage, reaching out to friends, family, and church allows us to share our sufferings and "bear one another's burdens" (Gal 6,2). Allow others to be companions in your grief, just as our Mother was to her Son and still is to us. The Way of the Cross is not walked in isolation, but in the compassionate companionship of the Body of Christ.

Hope with Vision — Mary's grief is an example of sorrow lived with faith, hope, and charity. They encourage us to persevere in tribulations and make us see that present sorrow will give way to eternal joy.

Compassion and Charity — Even in our own suffering, bear in mind Mary's own Seven Sorrows with compassion. Transform self-pity, or even righteous grief, into pity for our Mother. In times of suffering and grief, it is good to develop a devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows, perhaps praying her beautiful Litanies or the Rosary of Sorrows.

This will help us to develop compassion for those throughout the world that are suffering. Extend compassion, a listening ear, and service to those who, maybe, are grieving for the same reason. Allow grief, touched by hope, to grow to compassion and active charity to comfort the sorrowful, a spiritual work of mercy. Compassion, at its root, means "to suffer with," and once others have suffered with us, we in turn, may suffer with them.

The Compassion and Joy of Our Lady of Sorrows

by Peter M.J. Stravinskias (originally for *The Dispatch*, 15 Sep 2023)

The Church throughout the world celebrates the Triumph of the Cross on September 14, and the Roman Rite fittingly follows that up the very next day with its commemoration of Our Lady of Sorrows. Only the most heartless, insensitive person would not be moved by that list of sorrowful events, as the *Stabat Mater* plaintively demands: “*Who, on Christ’s dear Mother gazing, Pierced by anguish so amazing, Born of woman, would not weep? Who, of Christ’s dear Mother thinking, Such a cup of sorrow drinking, Would not share her sorrows deep?*”

The gifts of the Magi gave Mary a sneak preview of her future joys and sorrows. The Infant was King (gold), Priest (frankincense) – and Lamb of Sacrifice (myrrh). Surely, a mother could raise a hearty “Amen” to the first two, but to the third? And here she must have returned in her mind’s eye to the Temple scene not many days before when the old man Simeon prophesied about a sword piercing her heart (Lk 2,35). It seems that joys tinged with sorrows were the pattern for the Blessed Mother: Simeon declares the Child responsible for the “rise” of many in Israel, but also for the fall of many; the adolescent Jesus is found among the doctors of the Law in the Temple, but He then reminds His Mother that His real place is not with her; she brims with pride as He enthralled the multitudes with His preaching, but then hears rumblings of dissatisfaction.

Quite naturally, one might be moved to ask how one can experience such bitterness without becoming bitter. The answer lies in the development of compassion, which comes from the Latin word for “suffering with” another. Our Lady “suffered with” her Son and endeavoured to cultivate the same attitudes as He: total abandonment to the will of the Father; unreserved love for a world in need of salvation; a desire to heal and make whole; a willingness to be a victim on behalf of those who did not even know they needed saving.

Thus, the union of minds and hearts of Jesus and Mary resulted in a union of suffering – compassion. This is no cheap “tea and sympathy” approach to life; it is the very essence of what it means to be completely with and for the other. Our Lady epitomised compassion, rendered not only to her Son but even now to all her Son’s brothers and sisters in the Church, of which she is – by God’s design – the compassionate Mother.

Perhaps most amazingly, our Blessed Mother is not only compassionate but joyful as she proclaims in her Magnificat: “*My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.*” The source of her joy, of course, is none Other than the

Holy Spirit. Now we can connect the dots: The Holy Spirit. . . Mary. . . joy. If Our Lady is truly the ideal disciple, the one who hears the Word of God, reflects on it, and acts upon it through the Holy Spirit's presence within her, then she should likewise be the very paradigm of Christian joy.

Joy is to be distinguished from any type of superficial hilarity. Rather, it is the quality which enables us to live our lives here below with calmness and serenity. Hence, six times during Our Lord's High Priestly Prayer at the Last Supper, we hear Him exhort His disciples to live in joy – a joy, He asserts, which no one can take from us (Jn 15-16). St. Paul would even command his flock to “rejoice always” (Phil 4,4) – a line which became the Introit the Third Sunday in Advent, while its companion verse (Is 66,10) does similar duty for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, suggesting to us that even in a penitential spirit, the true disciple will have cause to rejoice.

Why? Because we view things from the perspective of eternity, that is, from the vantage-point of all things in Christ, who has won the victory for us and in us.

Undoubtedly, this was the joy with which the Blessed Virgin was imbued through all the vicissitudes of her own earthly pilgrimage, as well as the earthly life and ministry of her own dear Son, which became the joys and the sorrows of Mary herself. With that kind of mindset, we can see why the Church wisely invokes her in her litany as “the cause of our joy.”

Cardinal Newman's meditation for the thirteenth station of the cross ties all this together quite beautifully. He writes:

O Mary, at last thou hast possession of thy Son. Now, when His enemies can do no more, they leave Him in contempt to thee. As His unexpected friends perform their difficult work, thou lookest on with unspeakable thoughts. Thy heart is pierced with the sword of which Simeon spoke. O Mother most sorrowful; yet in thy sorrow there is a still greater joy. The joy in prospect nerved thee to stand by Him as He hung upon the Cross; much more now, without swooning, without trembling, thou dost receive Him to thy arms and on thy lap. Now thou art supremely happy as having Him, though He comes to thee not as He went from thee. He went from thy home, O Mother of God, in the strength and beauty of His manhood, and He comes back to thee dislocated, torn to pieces, mangled, dead. Yet, O Blessed Mary, thou art happier in this hour of woe than on the day of the marriage feast, for then He was leaving thee, and now in the future, as a Risen Saviour, He will be separated from thee no more.

Our Lady's sorrows and, from a strictly human perspective, her inexplicable joy in the midst of them give us the confidence to make our own the final verse of the Stabat Mater: “*When this earthly frame is riven, grant that to my soul is given all the joys of Paradise! Amen.*”

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