

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

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Sixth Sunday of Easter 25th May 2025

(Sunday cycle year C, weekday cycle year 1, psalter week 2)



“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word”

Creator of the universe, you made the world in beauty, and restore all things in glory through the victory of Jesus Christ. We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed, the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love and peace, to the glory of your name. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Sat 24 th	10.30am	Maureen Seacombe	Saturday of Easter 5
	6.00pm	For the Parish	Sixth Sunday of Easter
Sun 25 th	9.30am	Pope's intentions	
Mon 26 th	No Mass today		St Philip Neri (memorial)
Tue 27 th	9.30am	Archbishop-elect John Sherrington	St Augustine of Canterbury (feast)
Wed 28 th	9.30am	Margaret Mary Cowsley	Wednesday of Easter 6
Thu 29 th	9.30am	Peter Prescott	The Ascension of the Lord (solemnity)
	6.00pm	Peace in the world	
Fri 30 th	9.30am	Holy Souls	Friday of Easter 6
Sat 31 st	10.30am	Margaret Holden	The Visitation of the BVM (feast)
	SECOND COLLECTION: WORLD COMMUNICATIONS		Seventh Sunday of Easter
	6.00pm	Deceased members of the Phelan family	
Sun 1 st June	9.30am	For the Parish	

First Saturday of the month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the sick during 10.30am Mass

This week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister	
Sat 24 th		L Lomax		P Cook	
Sun 25 th		B Cook		L Rigbye	
Bidding prayers	B Kellett	Children's Liturgy	As arranged	Collection counters	P & J Kitchen
Next week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister	
Sat 31 st		C Williamson		G Hopkinson	
Sun 1 st June		F Fordyce		S Schofield	
Bidding prayers	L Lomax	Children's Liturgy	As arranged	Collection counters	L & M Gardner

Last weekend attendance: 124, collection £346.42 – thank you!

Readings: Acts 15:1-2,22-29, Revelation 21:10-14,22-23, John 14:23-29

Last week, we reflected upon those first century Christian communities who, far from living in uninterrupted peace and harmony, were beset with persecutions, splits and divisions.

The example in today's first reading is about whether the non-Jewish converts should be circumcised like their Jewish converts and whether they must conform to the Jewish ritual laws.

Paul and Barnabas, we are told, had been involved in *no small dissension and debate* with some who had come from Judea where Jewish conformity to the Mosaic law was unquestioned.

And so, they sent Paul, Barnabus and some others off to Jerusalem to discuss the problem with the apostles who met with the elders to discuss the problem.

In the end it is Peter and James who make the pronouncement that was agreed upon, and Paul and Barnabas return with the letter we have just heard, which concludes with the gentiles not having to conform rigidly to the Jewish laws but that they should at least abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood ... and from sexual immorality.

The *Acts* need to be read in full for a better understanding, but for us here and now, what might have grabbed our attention was the controversy and debate which sounded quite heated. (Paul and Barnabas were to have another debate between themselves, so heated that they parted company and, as far as is known, remained un-reconciled.)

Debates and differences, especially concerning the work of God, happen in any age and we can draw encouragement from this account of the early Church as we find ourselves facing controversial issues, change, appeals to head office and the prospect of having to see things differently.

In today's Gospel, having just washed their feet, Jesus is preparing his disciples to face a great change in **their** lives with his imminent departure and, not just that, but an extremely painful departure ... his death.

How will they cope without him in their midst with his reassuring words, miracles, his facing up to the bullies of the day, the love he exuded and the hope he gave to them and so many others?

He has already told them that if anyone loves him, he and the Father will come and make their home in them ... what a comforting thought.

But as they blink with incomprehension, he adds: *These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. The Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you, so let not your hearts be troubled or afraid.*

Those same words he speaks to us in our hearts and at every Mass – for they are all embedded in there somewhere.

So, as we continue our journey of *no small dissension and debate* during these troubling times, let us call upon those four great Saints: Peter, Paul, James, Barnabas and others, to intercede on our behalf, that the Father and his Son remain in and with us and keep us grounded in the Spirit of love, charity and hope.

Reflection

We must go out to Pure Life, Pure Truth, Pure Love for that is the definition of God. He is the ultimate goal of life; from Him we came and in Him alone do we find peace. (*Ven Fulton Sheen*)

With Prayers,

Fr Raphael.

This week's commemorations

St Philip Neri (16th c) remembered for his care for rich and poor alike. He founded the *Oratorians* who shared a common life but did not take vows. Also remembered for his pranks in order to make an important point: such as standing on his head if people were too serious, shaving half his beard off to make them laugh or having them walk around (Rome) carrying a cat as a penance to make some point usually to combat pride, melancholy or the hero worship too often accorded to him by starry-eyed members of the faithful or aspirants to the priesthood. He simply exuded the happiness of one very close to God.

St Augustine of Canterbury (d 604) a monk and later prior of a monastery in Rome, in 596 he was chosen by Pope Gregory to lead 30 monks to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons. They landed at Ebbsfleet in 597 and were received cautiously by King Ethelbert. By 601, Ethelbert and many of his people were baptised. He built the cathedral at Canterbury and established a see at London.

Ascension Thursday: In the Office of Readings for this Solemnity, St Augustine says *Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him.*

Is it possible for our hearts to ascend to heaven with him?

Yes, and he quotes the following: *If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God...*

He goes on: *Christ is now exalted above the heavens but still suffers on earth all the pain that we the members of his body have to bear.*

How do we know? Is there any scriptural evidence?

Yes, Augustine replies; when Christ called from above *Saul, Saul why do you persecute me?* And when he said *I was hungry and you gave me food.*

St Augustine then asks why do we on earth not strive to find rest with him in heaven even now through the faith, hope and love that unites us to him. For while in heaven he is also with us and we while on earth are with him. *For we cannot be in heaven, as he is on earth, in his divinity, but **in** him we **can** be there by love.*

He did not leave heaven when he came down to us; nor did he withdraw from us when he returned to heaven. Augustine continues; *the fact that he was in heaven even while he was on earth is borne out by his own statement: No one has ever ascended to the Father except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, **who is in heaven.***

St Augustine explains that this is all possible because we are part of the Body of Christ who is its head.

He concludes: *Out of compassion for us, he descended from heaven and although he ascended alone, we also ascend, because we are in him by grace. Thus no one but Christ descended and no one but Christ ascended;*

not because there is no distinction between the head and the body, but because the body, as a unity, cannot be separated from the head.

The Visitation of the BVM: The Gospel of Luke tells us that, filled with the joy of the annunciation by the angel and the news that her cousin Elizabeth miraculously was also with child, Mary visits her. As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry saying: 'Of all woman you are the most blessed and blessed is the fruit of your womb...' which became the basis for the *Hail Mary*.

THURSDAY of this week is the Solemnity of the **ASCENSION OF THE LORD**, a Holyday of Obligation. There will be Mass at 9.30am and 6.00pm.

NEXT SUNDAY is **World Communications Day** when we are asked to support the work of the Communications Directorate of the Bishops' Conference by the **SECOND COLLECTION**.

Please keep your eye on the "**TRANSITION COMMUNICATIONS**" section of our website – it will be updated regularly as new information becomes available.

Please remember in your prayers **BISHOP JOHN SHERRINGTON** who will be installed as Archbishop of Liverpool **THIS TUESDAY**, May 27th.

We will say a **DECADE OF THE ROSARY** after weekday Masses throughout May.

PLEASE PRAY for Peter Prescott who has died, for those who are sick or housebound including Ann Green, Fr Laurence Mayne and Bill Warbrick, as well as for those who have died and whose anniversaries occur about this time. We've also been asked to pray for the daughter of a parishioner who is having a difficult pregnancy.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 24 is number 44, Jeanne and Keith Slater. If the proposed closure goes ahead, this will be our last block of 10 weeks and those who paid for the full year will be refunded the unused subs. If, as we all hope, the parish doesn't close down, the 100 Club will continue as now.

CYCLE OF PRAYER: During Easter we are asked to pray for: New Members of the Church; Vocations; The Right Use of the Media; the Church; Human Work.

Preston Orpheus Choir (which includes a number of our congregation) are having an "**INTRODUCTION TO HANDEL'S MESSIAH**" next **Saturday** (31st May) in St Leonard's church, Marshalls Brow, Penwortham, PR1 9JA. There's a "Come and Sing" workshop in the afternoon followed by an informal performance in the evening. More details on the poster at the back of church and on the choir's website: www.prestonorpheuschoir.org.

Bidding Prayers – 6th Sunday of Easter – 25th May 2025

(Priest) Jesus tells us not to let our hearts be troubled or afraid and it is with these comforting thoughts that we believe that our prayers will be answered.

Let us pray for our Holy Father Pope Leo, the spiritual descendent of Peter. May he inspire all church leaders to guide us carefully in our faith and bring us closer to you. Lord in your mercy...

We ask you Lord to help political leaders, and all whose jobs influence public opinion, to be guided by your word and become genuine instruments of peace and justice. Lord in your mercy...

For all refugees, migrants and victims of war, we pray that they may find security, be restored to dignity and live in peace. Lord in your mercy...

May we reach out to people searching for employment or those threatened with redundancy. May the Holy Spirit guide and help them so that they may see a way forward in their lives. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for those in our parish who may be feeling lonely or neglected. May we be generous in reaching out to them with love and practical support. Lord in your mercy...

At a time when our Parish community faces an uncertain future, may we have the wisdom, courage and serenity to address any issues, safe in the knowledge that you will always guide us. Lord in your mercy...

We ask Mary our mother to help us during our daily lives. We think of her as we say, Hail Mary, full of grace...

We pause for a moment to present our personal petitions before God.

(Priest) Lord God, hear our prayers and those silently offered in our hearts through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.

All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.