



Encountering Christ

The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

1

Read

The Gospel for Sunday 1st June 2025

THE GLORY OF CHRIST

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: 'Holy Father, I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realise that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you love me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Father, Righteous One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them.'

Taken from John 17:20-26 The Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year C

2

Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

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

The final chapter of Jesus's sayings at the Last supper is a prayer which both gives meaning to the sacrifice which Jesus is about to make and at the same time is a meditation on the Lord's Prayer. In today's portion Jesus speaks to his Father (also 'Our Father') with that perfect love which he will express most fully in his acceptance of torture and death on the cross. The story of the Crucifixion is not a story of rejection, but is the story of the most perfect union of Father and Son in love and willing obedience. It will make the Name, that is the love, of the Father fully known ('Hallowed be thy Name'). It will also grant Jesus that 'glory which he had before the foundation of the world' (Thy Kingdom come). But the kingdom is not complete without those who believe in Jesus and belong to him. The completion of the Kingdom is the work of the Spirit which is to come upon the Church at Pentecost. The story of its completion is, with all its twist and turns, its failures, its chastisements and its recoveries, the history of the Church. Which petition of the Lord's Prayer is most important to you?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is HELPER !

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. 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.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS +

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 1st June 2025**



1st Reading: Acts 7.55-60

The Martyrdom of Stephen

Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'I can see heaven thrown open' he said 'and the son of Man standing at the right hand of God'. At this all the members of the council shouted out and stopped their ears with their hands; then they all rushed at him, sent him out of the city and stoned him. The Witnesses put down their clothes at the feet of a young man called Saul. As they were stoning him, Stephen said in invocation, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and said aloud, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them'; and with these words he fell asleep.



This reading fulfils a dual purpose. It reflects both on the position of Jesus after the resurrection, seated at the right hand of God, and on his first martyr, Stephen. These are the two inspirations of the life of the Church, here combined. The martyrdom of Stephen closely reflects the passion of Jesus: just as Jesus proclaims to the High Priest that he will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of the Father, so Stephen now sees Jesus standing at the right hand of God. This image to describe the glory of the Risen Christ is drawn from Psalm 110 (Greek 109). In other writings of the New Testament, e.g. the Book of Revelation, the exalted Christ shares the very throne of God: there is one throne and one godhead. It is fitting that on the Sunday before Pentecost these two inspirations of the life of the Church should be combined, for the Church relies upon this vision of the glory of Christ, and in that confidence bears witness to the truth of the Gospel even to the extent of martyrdom, a word which in itself means 'witness'.

How do I witness to Christ?

We need to make ready and 'have our robes washed clean'.



2nd Reading: Revelation 22.12-14, 16-17, 20

The Final Coming of Christ

I, John, heard a voice speaking to me: 'Very soon now, I shall be with you again, bringing the reward to be given to every man according to what he deserves. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Happy are those who will have washed their robes clean, so that they will have the right to feed on the tree of life and can come through the gates into the city.' I, Jesus, have sent my angel to make these revelations to you for the sake of the churches. I am of David's line, the root of David and the bright star of the morning. The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' Let everyone who listens answer, 'Come.' Then let all who are thirsty come; all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free. The one who guarantees these revelations repeats his promise: I shall indeed be with you soon. Amen; come, Lord Jesus.



The hope of a speedy second coming of Christ was especially vivid in the first generation of the Church. Paul envisaged (in 1 Thessalonians 5) that in his own lifetime Christ would appear 'on the clouds of heaven' in a triumphal procession, to be joined by those Christians who were still alive. The final words of today's reading may be translated either 'the Lord is coming' or 'Come, our Lord', depending on how the words of the Aramaic expression Maranatha are divided; in either case the expectation of Christ's return is vivid and pressing. In the later writings of the New Testament the accent has changed, so that 2 Peter 3.8 says that for the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and the stress is on the suddenness and unexpectedness of the final coming, 'like a thief in the night'. The coming of the Lord which, in today's reading, is to happen very soon is the coming of the Lord in the Spirit at Pentecost, for which we need to make ready and 'have our robes washed clean'.

If Christ knocked on my door today, would I be ready?

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

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**