

St John the Evangelist, Poulton

1st June 2020

Monday of the 9th Week in Ordinary Time

Feast of Mary, Mother of the Church

(Eleventh Monday of Isolation)

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Thanks to those who replied to my last scripture reflection with your own thoughts – if you want to be taken off the email list, or know anyone who may appreciate the contact, please let me know – or print it for a neighbour. (If you have only just started to receive these daily reflections it is because I have only just found your address, sorry) Thanks. Fr Peter.

Messages from Fr Peter: Please pray for Chris Taylor – she is very poorly
Thanks for your feast day messages.
I took your offerings for the Foodbank to Fr Alf yesterday. He was telling me how busy they had been and grateful for all the donations St John's has given recently and over the years.

(Daily Scripture is available from www.universalis.com)

Genesis 3:9-15,20

After Adam had eaten of the tree the Lord God called to him. 'Where are you?' he asked. 'I heard the sound of you in the garden;' he replied 'I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.' 'Who told you that you were naked?' he asked 'Have you been eating of the tree I forbade you to eat?' The man replied, 'It was the woman you put with me; she gave me the fruit, and I ate it.' Then the Lord God asked the woman, 'What is this you have done?' The woman replied, 'The serpent tempted me and I ate.'

Then the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this,
'Be accursed beyond all cattle,
all wild beasts.

You shall crawl on your belly and eat dust
every day of your life.

I will make you enemies of each other:
you and the woman,
your offspring and her offspring.

It will crush your head
and you will strike its heel.'

The man named his wife 'Eve' because she was the mother of all those who live.

John 19:25-34 ©

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son.' Then to the disciple he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.

After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said, 'I am thirsty.'

A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in the vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said, 'It is accomplished'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the sabbath – since that sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water.

(What is God saying to you as you hear his Word here?)

If you thought you had not heard of this feast before – then that will be because it is a recent addition to our calendar by Pope Francis for the Monday after Pentecost. Mary is a quiet, but regular, companion to the disciples in the Gospels. She is present at most of the important events but seldom actually speaks (The Wedding at Cana, Last Supper, Ascension, Pentecost and, most notably, at the death of Jesus). Mary is a strong woman, as we can see from when

she does speak – especially the Magnificat! – but I always imagine that her presence and her glance would have been enough for those present – like that of most ‘strong’ women (That’s ‘strong’ – not ‘bossy’!)

The second Vatican Council rediscovered or underlined some of the more scriptural titles of Mary and this is one of those. Being placed on the day after Pentecost reminds us that, as we move into “ordinary Time”, we human beings who have been empowered by the Spirit of God make ‘now’ far less than ‘ordinary’. The faith-filled human acts of Mary cooperating with her Lord are a model for us as the whole Church. Though it may not be obvious in some statues of her Mary does not want us to think “didn’t she do well to follow my Son”, but “I have done this so that you know you can too”.

Have a look at this section I copied from an announcement at the time – and then notice the scriptural message in today’s readings. (See especially * below)

Dated 3rd March 2018:

Pope Francis has decreed that “the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church,” should be inscribed in the Roman Calendar on the Monday after Pentecost and be celebrated every year in churches throughout the world.

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments announced this in a decree published by the Vatican today, March 3, and signed by the congregation’s prefect, Cardinal Robert Sarah, and its secretary, Archbishop Arthur Roche. The pope, who has emphasized many times the importance of Mary in the church, approved this last Thursday when he received the cardinal in a private audience.

A “memorial” is a lower-ranked feast day. Celebrations of feast days in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church are distinguished according to their importance and named either as solemnities, feasts or memorials.

The Memorial will be celebrated on the Monday after Pentecost in churches throughout the world.

The decree, signed by the two Vatican prelates, said “the joyous veneration” given to the Mother of God by the contemporary church “in the light of reflection on the mystery of Christ and on his nature” cannot ignore “the Virgin Mary, who is both the Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church.”

**It traced the history of this veneration down the centuries from the period of the early church as is reflected in the writing of St. Augustine (354-430) and St. Leo the Great, who was pope from 440-461. It recalled that St. Augustine said “Mary is the mother of the members of Christ, because with charity she cooperated in the rebirth of the faithful into the Church” while St. Leo said “the birth of the Head is also the birth of the body, thus indicating that Mary is at once Mother of Christ, the Son of God, and mother of the members of his Mystical Body, which is the Church.”*

The Vatican prelates in the decree recalled that “as a caring guide to the emerging Church Mary had already begun her mission in the Upper Room, praying with the Apostles while awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit.” Then, in the course of the centuries, “Christian piety has honoured Mary with various titles” that are in many ways equivalent” such as “Mother of

Disciples, of the Faithful, of Believers,” but also under the title “Mother of the Church” as is found in the texts of spiritual authors and the magisterium of Popes Benedict XIV and Leo XIII.

All this laid the foundation that enabled Blessed Paul VI, at the conclusion of the Third Session of the Second Vatican Council, Nov. 21, 1964, to declare the Blessed Virgin Mary as “Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors, who call her the most loving Mother.” Paul VI decreed at the same time that “the Mother of God should be further honoured and invoked by the entire Christian people by this tenderest of titles.”

The congregation’s decree laid down that “the memorial therefore is to appear in all Calendars and liturgical books for the celebration of Mass and of the Liturgy of the Hours,” and provide the relative liturgical texts for this purpose.

Pope Francis announced a year to reflect on “Laudato Si” after Covid-19

24th May 2020 – 24th May 2021

*“Today is also the fifth anniversary of the Encyclical *Laudato si’*, with which I sought to draw attention to the cry of the earth and of the poor. Thanks to the initiative of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the “*Laudato si’* Week” we have just celebrated will blossom into a special Year of the anniversary of *Laudato si’*, a special year to reflect on the Encyclical, from 24 May this year until 24 May next year. I invite all people of good will to join in, to take care of our common home and our most fragile brothers and sisters. The prayer dedicated to this Year will be published on the site. It will be good to pray it.”*

“I wish you all a good Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and arrivederci.”



Prayer for the special year of the anniversary of *Laudato si’*

Loving God, Creator of Heaven, Earth, and all therein contained.

Open our minds and touch our hearts,

so that we can be part of Creation, your gift.

Be present to those in need in these difficult times,
especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

Help us to show creative solidarity
as we confront the consequences of the global pandemic.

Make us courageous in embracing
the changes required to seek the common good.

Now more than ever, may we all feel interconnected and interdependent.

Enable us to succeed in listening and responding
to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

May their current sufferings become the birth-pangs
of a more fraternal and sustainable world.

We pray through Christ our Lord,
under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians, Amen.

PARISH NOTICES:

- **Know any parishioners housebound or who may need contacting?** - At the start of this lockdown a number of parishioners offered to find a way of being help to those parishioners who are in need or just housebound. Many people are in contact with the parish through this email or the WhatsApp group, but you may think of some who are not getting parish contacts – but they may get family support and food. If you have suggestions please email their names and addresses to the parish address and we can get parishioners to drop a message in to them. Thanks.
- **Local COVID19 Helplines** *(Official message from our Parish Organisers)*
The Wyre Council have a dedicated helpline for COVID19 isolation support. If you are struggling to get essential items, or need help, please ring 01253 891000 and select OPTION 7 when prompted. Alternatively, if you have access to the internet, you can fill in the online request for help here: https://www.wyre.gov.uk/forms/form/257/en/coronavirus_isolation_support_form

There is also another local network being organised by the Methodist Church - called POULTONCAN. The helpline there is 01253 670800 between 8am and 10pm, 7 days a week.

We have a group of parish volunteers who are going to be working with the council to respond to requests. If anyone would like to offer help, please email Jenny at jennifer.hillman.sutcliffe@gmail.com or telephone on 07568502749.
- **Parish WhatsApp Group:** Emily Halliwell (as part of the above group) has set up a closed parish WhatsApp account. I have finally been beaten into joining but am a bit of a WhatsApp virgin as yet! Emily says: “My number is 07969643648 if you want to be added just reply with your mobile number or text me. “
- **Local Bakery Offer:** Jane and Andrew Neal, who are always so generous to us by offering bread and cakes at parish social events, are offering delivered bakery goods to those who are in isolation or ill. However they also offer a “click-and -collect” service (You can stop outside the shop in Cleveleys) for those who have transport. You can order on line at neals-familybakery.co.uk
- Lancashire and South Cumbria website for current details on Hospitals & Corana Virus
<https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/coronavirus>

Thoughts contributed by Virus Times’ readers:

(A few of anonymous responses from these Virus Times Reflections from our parishioners: Thanks to contributors.)

From Last Night’s Jesuit “Welcome the Spirit” from reader:

In these times of Covid and a new normal - it was Another opportunity for us to be creative in our liturgy, in our prayer Holy Spirit was centre of the liturgy - not (institutional) church.

It was gentle, compassionate, kind, allowed others to speak, share, participate - not all clerical

Allowed all to be equal participants

Showed ‘universal church’

Showed how the pandemic affects all corners of the world; shows how the message of Jesus has already been in those places

Music was good

Just been Spirit Filled : through following our Pentecost Sunday Mass .

I was struck (Holy Spirit ?) by a phrase the priest used in his homily “the Acts Don’t end :they stop in order that we carry on the Discipleship for our time”

Happy Pentecost to us all!

This Morning at St Peter’s Hazel Grove the Mass readings were in Arabic and all bidding Prayers of which there were many languages from all over the world. It was quite a moving experience.

People being prayed for by our parish groups:

Various Older People we worry about	Whilst we are enjoying the promise of loosening lockdown we still have concerns for relations and friends who have signs of Covid-19 and who have been taken to Hospital. Please pray for these people – and for those we don't know as well.
Lyn Reynolds	Nana or mother-in-law to Jacinta and Michelle. In the Vic - Not diagnosed with Covid-19 but with similar breathing issues. Prayers please
Chris Taylor	Chris' son, David has asked for your prayers for her at this time as she is very poorly
John (and family)	Family friend of Emma who has died aged 49
Louie aged 13	The neighbour of a parishioner who has Leukaemia who is having a sudden set back. Prayer, please
From Jayne Clark	Could I please ask that our parishioners pray for all the staff in children's social care who are still working to safeguard children in our area and around the country. It never ceases to amaze me how hard they work generally, despite the abuse that they often are subjected to, but more so currently given the extra risk that they are putting themselves under to visit the vulnerable.
Maureen O'Connell & Family(<i>Not Covid-19</i>)	Mrs Donnelly's Mum
Paul Sharrock (<i>Not Covid-19</i>) (and family: Kathryn, Mary & Rachael)	Your prayer of healing for Paul is remarkable –Paul has been moved to a hospital nearer his family – we hope he can see them. <i>Fr Peter</i>
House-locked Parishioners	Who are worried and missing family
Parents home schooling AND home job-ing	Thank God for our parents
Our Teachers	Who are at school or preparing work for our children
Luke (<i>not Covid-19</i>) <i>Died Yesterday</i>	A young man recently married into a family I know in Australia, aged 30. (Fr Peter)
Hugh (Not Covid-19)	The brother of Emma, a friend of mine (Fr Peter), who has been found to have cancer only recently. He has three young children. Prayers Please