

Saint John Henry Newman

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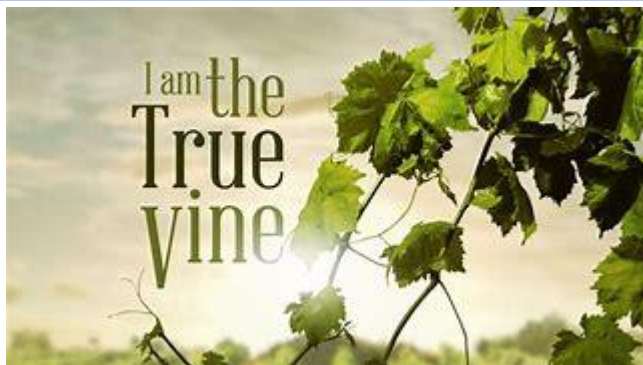


where heart speaks to heart

WEBSITE: www.newmanparishwarrington.com

27/28 April 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Page 264)



“Whoever remains in me and I in them will bear much fruit.”

“... the branches can do nothing without the vine, they need sap

to grow and to bear fruit. ... But Jesus needs us too, like the vine with the branches. Perhaps to say this may seem bold to us, so let us ask ourselves: *in what sense does Jesus need us?*

He needs our witness. The fruit that as branches we must bear, is the witness of our lives as Christians. After Jesus ascended to the Father, it is the task of the disciples—it is our task—to continue to proclaim the Gospel in words and in deeds. And the disciples—we, Jesus’ disciples—do so by bearing witness to his love: the fruit to be borne is love.

Attached to Christ, we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and thus we can do good to our neighbour, we can do good to society, to the Church. The tree is known by its fruit. A truly Christian life bears witness to Christ.” Pope Francis

In a matter of days, this arch-persecutor of the young Church becomes one of its star promoters—a startling phenomenon, which brings about the situation described in this Sunday's First Reading, where the Jerusalem disciples require some vigorous convincing before they can accept Saul as a fellow Christian.

Saul’s embrace of the Christian faith will plunge him into the paradox of Jesus’ own life and work. His sense of the Christian mission is that the Church is to embody Israel's vocation to be a light to the nations. His urgent sense that this “new creation” is meant to grow beyond the boundaries of the people of Israel will provoke further division, even as he works for unity. Such is the life of this uncompromising man. Dennis Hamm SJ

With my Eyes

One of the world's greatest festivals of contemporary art welcomes a special visitor this week. Pope Francis will be travelling to Venice to view exhibits at the 2024 Venice Biennale. And his first stop will be to view the Vatican's own exhibition, in a women's prison.



Art has a long and complex history in the Church, and a visit to the Vatican Museum bears this out as room by room we move through the centuries right up to the present day. Indeed, Pope John Paul II wrote this in his *Letter to Artists*:

“Those who perceive in themselves the kind of divine spark which is the artistic vocation [...] feel at the same time the obligation not to waste this talent but to develop it, in order to put it at the service of their neighbour and of humanity as a whole [...] Artists who are conscious of all this know too that they must labour without allowing themselves to be driven by the search for empty glory or the craving for cheap popularity. [...] There is therefore an ethic, even a “spirituality” of artistic service, which contributes in its way to the life and renewal of a people.”


The placing of the Vatican's contribution in a working prison is not an arbitrary choice. It is an artistic statement in itself; in that it turns our gaze onto one of the marginal groups whose welfare most concerns the Pope. While some are content to try and build walls, barriers and borders thinking that they solve the world's problems in themselves; the gospel message of conversion, reconciliation and mercy focusses on changing hearts, reforming patterns of behaviour and strengthening societies.

Under the title of "*With My Eyes*," the exhibition occupies the prison's chapel, cafeteria and other corridors to display the work of about ten renowned artists whose work in various ways highlight various themes and priorities of the Francis papacy — forcing visitors to go beyond their comfort zones and see realities of those that are often overlooked or neglected.

One of the artists, Corita Kent, spent the early years of her adult life as a religious sister. Then, when her art began to discomfort some senior Church leaders, she left to continue beyond the convent walls. Nevertheless, her work continued to reflect her concerns about the marginalised. Having lived in a convent, Corita might have a sense of what prison life is like, not only negatively but in human warmth and camaraderie.

As an additional point of engagement the Corita Art Center is partnering with the prison on several educational initiatives for the female inmates, in the spirit of their artist-educator-social justice advocate namesake.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's special possession,
 that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into
His wonderful light.



1 Peter 2:10

As our head is anointed with the Oil of Chrism on the day of our Baptism, we are reminded that we are receiving a share in the priesthood of Christ.

This brings us the privilege and responsibility of praying for the whole of creation and all humanity. To aid us in this the Church holds what are called special days of prayer to help focus our collective attention on

particular groups and situations. And just like busses these can arrive all at once. Thus it is that this week we are asked to pray:

- 🕯 On **Monday**, the Feast of Saint Catherine of Siena, for the whole of **Europe**, with minds perhaps turned towards the situation in Ukraine and its wider impact.
- 🕯 On **Tuesday**, for **those impacted by sexual abuse**, when we surely acknowledge the criminal behaviour of some and the complicity of others in senior church positions with a heartfelt *mea culpa*.
- 🕯 On **Wednesday**, Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker, we call to mind the dignity with which all **human work** should be regarded. Praying that this dignity will be reflected in fair pay, safe conditions, reasonable hours and task assignments and due respect for workers' rights. We pray too that those with the most arduous, challenging, and undervalued roles will receive due recognition.

Catherine of Siena - **On Loving Your Neighbour**

“God said: I have placed you in the midst of your fellows so that you may do to them what you cannot do to Me – that is, so that you may love your neighbour freely without expecting any return from him. And what you do to him I count as done to Me.”

“It is impossible to fulfil the law concerning love for Me, God eternal, apart from the law concerning love for your neighbours. These are the two feet of affection on which you must follow the commandments and counsels given you by Christ crucified.”




27-28 APRIL - FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER PAGE 264

Sat 27 April	7.00 pm	Terry Reardon
Sunday 81 April	9.00 am 11.00 am	Mike Barlow RIP Cath Maxwell Intentions
Mon 29 April	10.00 am	Parish Intentions (Tea & Toast)
Tues 30 April		No Services Today
Wed 1 My	10.00 am 2.30 pm	Jennifer McCourt RIP (Anniversary) Communion Candidates Mass
Thursday 2 May1	6.30 pm 7.00 pm	Quiet Adoration Joan Johnson RIP
Friday 3 May	10.00 am	Liturgy of Word and Communion

4 – 5 MAY – SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER- PAGE 266

Sat 4 May	5.30 pm	Arthur Trantum RIP
Sunday 5 May	9.00 am 11.00 am	Liam O’Callaghan RIP Josie Hall RIP

 KINDLY REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: For those requesting our prayers including *Barry Bennett, John & Marie Clowes, Harry Challoner, Margaret Daintith, Harold Entwistle, Mary Finn, Tony Graham, Rita Hutson, Barbara Lynskey, Rita Mahon, Kathleen Mannion, Roger Maxwell, Gerard Moulding, Marcos Sala, Vaughan Stone, Meryl & Tony Wernham, Gordon Whittaker, & Carol Worsley.*



Teas and Coffees will be served by **Team B** after the Saturday Mass on the **4th May**.

The vineyard of the LORD Almighty
 is the nation of Israel,
 and the people of Judah
 are the vines he delighted in.
 And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;
 for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

Isaiah 5: 7