

FROM THE LETTER TO DIOGNETUS:

“The Christian in the world Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or customs. They do not inhabit separate cities of their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. Their teaching is not based upon reveries inspired by the curiosity of men. Unlike some other people, they champion no purely human doctrine. With regard to dress, food and manner of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign.

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labour under all the disabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not expose them (*a way of getting rid of babies!*). They share their meals, but not their wives. They live in the flesh, but they are not governed by the desires of the flesh. They pass their days upon earth, but they are citizens of heaven. Obedient to the laws, they yet live on a level that transcends the law.

Christians love all men, but all men persecute them. Condemned because they are not understood, they are put to death, but raised to life again. They live in poverty, but enrich many; they are totally destitute, but possess an abundance of everything. They suffer dishonour, but that is their glory. They are defamed, but vindicated. A blessing is their answer to abuse, deference their response to insult. For the good they do they receive the punishment of malefactors, but even then they rejoice, as though receiving the gift of life. They

are attacked by the Jews as aliens, they are persecuted by the Greeks, yet no one can explain the reason for this hatred.

To speak in general terms, we may say that the Christian is to the world what the soul is to the body. As the soul is present in every part of the body, while remaining distinct from it, so Christians are found in all the cities of the world, but cannot be identified with the world. As the visible body contains the invisible soul, so Christians are seen living in the world, but their religious life remains unseen. The body hates the soul and wars against it, not because of any injury the soul has done it, but because of the restriction the soul places on its pleasures. Similarly, the world hates the Christians, not because they have done it any wrong, but because they are opposed to its enjoyments.

Christians love those who hate them just as the soul loves the body and all its members despite the body's hatred. It is by the soul, enclosed within the body, that the body is held together, and similarly, it is by the Christians, detained in the world as in a prison, that the world is held together. The soul, though immortal, has a mortal dwelling place; and Christians also live for a time amidst perishable things, while awaiting the freedom from change and decay that will be theirs in heaven. As the soul benefits from the deprivation of food and drink, so Christians flourish under persecution. Such is the Christian's lofty and divinely appointed function, from which he is not permitted to excuse himself.”

The Letter to Diognetus comes to us by very strange ways from the Second Century A. D. It is a very early “apologetic” text explaining Christians and their way of life.

3.

+ J. M. J. + JESUS, + MARY, and + JOSEPH +
Newsletter Supplement: 10th May Anno Domini 2026

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)

Pages 268 - 270 in the Parish Mass Book

(Music in Parish Mass Book begins page 320, Gloria: page 323, Preface Dialogue page 15, Holy, holy /Sanctus page 16, Mystery of Faith: “WE PROCLAIM ...” page 29,

ROSARY FOR LIFE.

Archbishop John Wilson is calling on all of us to join him in praying the Rosary for Life **this May (Month of Mary).**

Together, we will pray through the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries, each one offered for the most vulnerable facing growing threats to life: unborn children at risk of abortion, victims of war and persecution, people with disabilities, and the elderly and vulnerable. For video, audio and written versions of the Rosary for Life, visit rcaos.org.uk/rosaryforlife.

**Pray the Rosary.
Encounter Christ.
Defend life.**

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST:

A CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS RESOURCE.
The Archdiocese of Southwark has launched an exciting apologetics project to provide evidence-based answers to questions such as “Is Jesus God?” or “does prayer work?”

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST is designed to equip you with a deeper understanding of your faith, so you can confidently answer questions and be a joyful witness for the Lord Jesus and his Church.

Every Monday, a new video will be posted on **YouTube**, along with a worksheet to enable parishes, schools, youth groups and families to use them as part of their faith formation. To watch the videos and take part in this exciting project, please visit:

[rcaos.org.uk/
ambassadorsforchrist](http://rcaos.org.uk/ambassadorsforchrist)



The 48th Altar Servers' Rally for the Guild of St Stephen at The Friars, Aylesford, in which four of our Altar Servers were enrolled into the Archconfraternity of St Stephen, the first Deacon and Martyr:
CUI SERVIRE EST REGNARE
To serve [Him] is to reign.

4.

**A REMINDER OF
THE EASTER PRECEPTS,
also known as:
EASTER DUTIES:**

- 1. "YOU SHALL ATTEND MASS
ON SUNDAYS AND ON HOLY DAYS
OF OBLIGATION AND REST FROM
SERVILE LABOUR."**

This precept requires the completion of the Sunday observance by participation in the principal liturgical feasts that honour the mysteries of the Lord, the Virgin Mary, and the saints. It requires, also, abstinence from the labours and business concerns that impede the worship to be rendered to God, the joy that is proper to the Lord's Day, or the proper relaxation of mind and body.

- 2. "YOU SHALL CONFESS YOUR SINS
AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR."**

This precept ensures preparation for the Eucharist by the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which continues Baptism's work of conversion and forgiveness.

- 3. "YOU SHALL RECEIVE THE
SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST
AT LEAST IN THE EASTER
SEASON."**

This precept guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal Feasts, the origin and centre of Christian Liturgy.

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FASTING AND ABSTINENCE:

[...] The law of the Church requires Catholics on Fridays to abstain from meat, or some form of food, or to observe some form of penance laid down by the local Bishops' Conference.

(Code of Canon Law 1251)

The Bishops of England and Wales have decided that in England and Wales this penance should be fulfilled simply by abstain from meat and by uniting this to prayer. Those who cannot or choose not to eat meat as part of their normal diet should abstain from some other food of which they regularly partake.

BRING FLOWERS OF THE RAREST

Bring Flowers of the Rarest
Bring flow'rs of the fairest,
Bring flow'rs of the rarest,
From garden and woodland
And hillside and vale;
Our full hearts are swelling,
Our Glad voices telling
The praise of the loveliest
Rose of the vale.

Refrain:

**O Mary! we crown thee
with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels,
Queen of the May,
O Mary! we crown thee
with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels,
Queen of the May.**

Our voices ascending,
In harmony blending,
Oh! Thus may our hearts turn
Dear Mother, to thee;
Oh! Thus shall we prove thee
How truly we love thee,
How dark without Mary
Life's journey would be.

Refrain

O Virgin most tender,
Our homage we render,
Thy love and protection,
Sweet Mother, to win;
In danger defend us,
In sorrow befriend us,
And shield our hearts
From contagion and sin.

Refrain

Of Mothers the dearest,
Oh, wilt thou be nearest,
When life with temptation
Is darkly replete?
Forsake us, O never!
Our hearts be they ever
As Pure as the lilies
We lay at thy feet.

Refrain

REGINA CAELI

**said at 6am, 12noon & 6pm
instead of THE ANGELUS
during Eastertide:**

**Regina caeli, laetare,
Alleluia!**

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia!

**Quia Quem meruisti
portare, Alleluia!**

*For He Whom you
were worthy to bear, alleluia!*

**Resurrexit, sicut dixit!
Alleluia!**

Has risen as He said, alleluia!

**Ora pro nobis Deum.
Alleluia!**

Pray for us to God, alleluia!

*Rejoice and be glad
O Virgin Mary, alleluia!*

**For the Lord
has risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Let us pray:

**O God, Who gave joy to the world
through the resurrection
of Your Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
grant that we obtain
through His Virgin Mother,
the joys of everlasting life.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**



**PREPARE FOR PENTECOST AND
THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:**

PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT:

Come, O Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of Your faithful
and enkindle in them
the fire of Your love.

V: Send forth your Spirit
and they shall be created.

R: And You shall renew
the face of the earth.

Let us pray:

O, God, Who taught the hearts
of Your faithful by the light
of the Holy Spirit, grant that
by the gift of that same Spirit
we may be always truly wise
and ever rejoice in His consolations.
Through Christ Our Lord. **R: Amen.**

**INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
BY POPE JOHN XXIII.**

**Renew, Your wonders
in this our day,
as by a New Pentecost.**

Grant to Your Church that,
being of one mind and
steadfast in prayer with Mary,
the Mother of Jesus,
and following the lead of
the blessed Peter,
it may advance the reign of
our Divine Saviour,

the
reign
of truth
and
justice,
the
reign
of love
and
peace.
Amen.

