



**Wednesday 27th August 2008**

**Preparing for the Mass of  
Sunday 31st August 2008**

**1** *Relax & Remember*



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. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably 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.

**2** *Read*

**THE GOSPEL FOR SUNDAY 31st AUGUST 2008 – Matthew 16: 21-27**

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. 'Heaven preserve you, Lord,' he said. 'This must not happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's way but man's.' Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.'

**3** *Reflect*



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

*What a turn-around! Last Sunday Peter was being congratulated on at last realising the Jesus was the Christ. He was promised the keys and authority to make decisions valid in Heaven. Now Jesus shoos him away and tells him that he is Satan, the Tempter. Why the change? Jesus had told Peter that his role as Christ Messiah was to suffer and die in order to achieve his purpose, and Peter shied away from it. What is your particular soft option? What is the difficult task Christ is asking of you, and you avoiding? We are no better than his first disciples! In the gospel this will happen twice more: three times Jesus foretells his passion and each time the disciples simply fail to understand. Each time Jesus again puts it bluntly that you cannot be a Christian without following Jesus in carrying a Cross. We see people suffering the whole time, physical disabilities, breakdown of relationships, heartless treatment from others, financial worries - and then we grouse at a twinge of pain or a hurtful word. Carry the Cross behind Jesus? Yes, of course I will, but if you don't mind, I'll just take that section which is well padded and fits my shoulder nicely. No point in unnecessary splinters in my neck! **Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB.***

**4** *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. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, faithfulness, wisdom, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families.

**Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**