

## FROM THE FATHERS

From a Homily by Pope S. Paul VI

### *We proclaim Christ to the whole world*

Not to preach the Gospel would be my undoing, for Christ himself sent me as his apostle and witness. The more remote, the more difficult the assignment, the more my love of God spurs me on. I am bound to proclaim that Jesus is Christ, the Son of the living God. Because of him we come to know the God we cannot see. He is the firstborn of all creation; in him all things find their being. Man's teacher and redeemer, he was born for us, died for us, and for us he rose from the dead.

All things, all history converges in Christ. A man of sorrow and hope, he knows us and loves us. As our friend he stays by us throughout our lives; at the end of time he will come to be our judge; but we also know that he will be the complete fulfilment of our lives and our great happiness for all eternity.

I can never cease to speak of Christ for he is our truth and our light; he is the way, the truth and the life. He is our bread, our source of living water who allays our hunger and satisfies our thirst. He is our shepherd, our leader, our ideal, our comforter and our brother.

He is like us but more perfectly human, simple, poor, humble, and yet, while burdened with work, he is more patient. He spoke on our behalf; he worked miracles; and he founded a new kingdom: in it the poor are happy; peace is the foundation of a life in common; where the pure of heart and those who mourn are uplifted and comforted; the hungry find justice; sinners are forgiven; and all discover that they are brothers.

Remember: it is Jesus Christ I preach day in and day out. His name I would see echo and re-echo for all time even to the ends of the earth.

## Blessed God in his Saints: Irenaeus of Lyon (28th June)

On 28th June the Church celebrates the Feast of the Bishop and Martyr St Irenaeus of Lyon, one of the most influential Fathers of the Early Church and the first great Catholic theologian. Born in c 130 in Smyrna (modern-day Turkey) he learnt the faith from St Polycarp who had himself been a disciple of the Apostle St John. Irenaeus provides, therefore, an invaluable link between the generation of the Apostles and the generation that followed. Irenaeus succeeded to the See of Lyon after his Bishop was martyred during a bout of persecution. Irenaeus was himself to die a martyr's death in a subsequent persecution in c.200. His great gift to the Church is his systematic refutation of the heresy of Gnosticism – a heresy that is rife in our contemporary culture. His great work is called *Against the Heresies*. It is of huge significance in the articulation of orthodox catholic belief. The Gnostics claimed some private knowledge or secret revelation (*gnosis* is Greek for *knowledge*). Irenaeus powerfully refuted this by setting out a right belief in the Incarnation. He also emphasised the traditional elements of the Church, i.e. what had been handed down and passed on from the Apostles: the Episcopate, the Scriptures, and theological Tradition. St Irenaeus, pray for us!

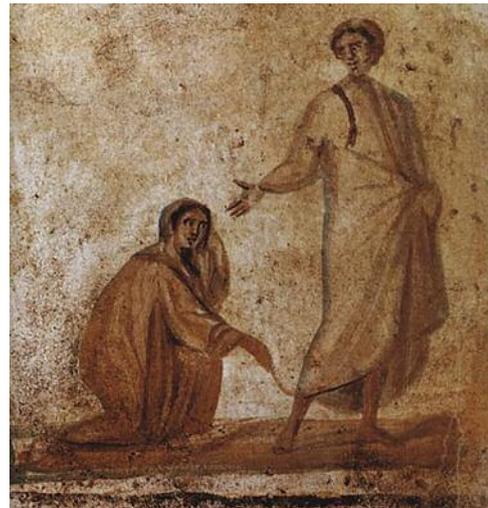
### *Collect for St Irenaeus*

O God who called the Bishop St Irenaeus to confirm true doctrine and the peace of the Church, grant, we pray, through his intercession, that, being renewed in faith and charity, we may always be intent on fostering unity and concord; through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

27th June  
2021

Forth Sunday  
after Trinity/  
Thirteenth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time

## Power to Heal



Today's Gospel reveals the power and energy at work in Jesus to heal. It is physical contact with Jesus that marks the moments of healing. Jairus pleads with Jesus to come and 'lay hands on' his daughter. The woman simply reached out and touched Jesus robe and is healed. Jesus senses, even in the press of the crowd that 'power had gone out from him.' When Jesus arrives at Jairus' house he enters the child's room and 'taking her by the hand he said to her, little girl I say to you, arise.'

Jesus still touches people to heal. The Church is his 'Body' and every one in the congregation is a vital part and member of his Body. To hold someone's hand, to give someone a hug is a source of healing. The 'laying on of hands' with prayer in the name of Jesus Christ has always been a channel of God's healing love and grace. In Holy Communion we receive the Body of Christ and through the Sacrament of his Body and Blood he is at work to heal and to renew body, mind and spirit.

There is another ingredient to the healing of the girl and the woman in the crowd, and that is faith: the simple trust in Jesus Christ as healer. Jesus says to the woman 'Daughter, your faith as made you well.' He is present here, today, with power to heal and make whole; seek it with Jairus for someone you love or, like the woman in the crowd; reach out to him in faith.