



**Live your lives in full consciousness of God's testing  
(Rev. Fulton Sheen)**

**29<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year 19 October 2025**

**Reflection Mgr Daniel McHugh**

**“When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Luke 18 8)**

A recent post I saw by a priest on the Internet contained a picture of the remains of a ruined monastery and this quote from the Venerable Fulton Sheen:

*“We are at the end of Christendom. Now, what is meant by Christendom? Christendom is economic, political, social life, as inspired by Christian principles. That is ending, we have seen it die ... however, these are great and wonderful days in which to be alive. It is not a gloomy picture – it is a picture of the Church in the midst of witnessing opposition from the world. And therefore live your lives in the full consciousness of this hour of testing, and rally close to the heart of Christ.”* (See Father R Vierling.)

Recently, the Ethnic Chaplaincies led a Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to Evesham: the ruins of the Benedictine Monastery there can lead us to reflect on the place of the Church in society today; it could be a gloomy picture, as Fulton Sheen says. On the other hand, it is an image that calls us to “rally close to the heart of Christ.” That is the message of the Gospel for the 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year. The persistence of the widow in the parable, leading to her receiving justice from the corrupt judge, is an image of Our Lord’s call to us, “Go pray and not lose heart.” In the case of Evesham, where the first public Apparition of Our Lady in the country took place in 701, people have continued to pray and not lose heart despite the setback of the destruction of the monastery built on the site of the Apparition and the lack of Faith today that can undermine the practice and devotion “in the midst of increasing opposition from the world” referred to by Sheen. The Pilgrimage Day to Our Lady of Evesham marking the Jubilee Year 2025, led one Cameroonian woman to say “it was a spiritually filled day indeed.” As we look around us in the Church community, we can see how the vision of Pope Leo of Migrants being “Missionaries of Hope” is a reality for which we give thanks.

**Monsignor Daniel McHugh**

Co-ordinator for Ethnic Chaplaincies in the Archdiocese



Connected with the role Migrants play in a Church where we are all called to be “Missionaries of Hope among all Peoples” (theme for World Mission Sunday) is the importance of prayer for Priestly Vocations. This past Sunday, the Ethnic Chaplaincies and Eastern Catholic Churches were invited by the Rector of St Mary’s Seminary, Oscott, to a Family Afternoon to see where training for Priesthood takes place and to pray for Priestly Vocations, especially in our Ethnic Communities. Families where the Faith is alive and flourishing are sure seedbeds for future priests, the leaders of our Catholic Faith.

The words of Our Lord at the end of the passage from the Gospel of Luke on the 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday – “when the Son of Man comes, will he find Faith on earth? – can seem especially applicable to those seeking to promote Priestly vocations: Jesus notes how easy it can be to lose heart. Happily, in the context of Ethnic Communities and Eastern Catholic Churches, it is good to see Priestly Vocations emerging and growing.

The lesson from Our Lord in the Gospel this 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday is that we should persist in prayer and not lose heart.

I found the Catechesis being given by Pope Leo at his Wednesday Audience on 8 October particularly helpful in this regard. The focus was the Resurrection of Jesus and how it transforms every aspect of our lives. The Pope said: *“there is no obstacle that can prevent us from recognising Christ’s presence in everyday life: the illusion that joy must be without wounds”*. Christopher Wells, in his report on the Catechesis at the Audience, writes: *“The disciples on the road to Emmaus were saddened when their expectations of the Messiah were disappointed, the Pope recalled. Jesus, though, helped them to understand that sorrow and pain do not negate God’s promises, but are instead “the very path by which God reveals the depth of his love.”* Wells continued: *“The Resurrection of Jesus, the Pope said, teaches us that no one’s life story is so marked by disappointment or sin that it can’t be “visited by hope”, that no fall is definitive, no night eternal, no wound destined to remain open for ever.”*

*“However far away we may feel, however lost or unworthy, there is no distance that can extinguish the unfailing power of God’s love.”*

Pope Leo emphasised that it is precisely in “our darkest moments” that Jesus comes to us, asking us to allow Him to remain with us and warm our hearts.”

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