

Collective Worship Week 29

Themes:



Celebrating our House Patrons 2:



St Margaret Clitherow



Helen Keller



Catherine McAuley




Rosa Parks

Day 1

The Vine and the Branches - Our Relationship with Jesus





I am the vine; you are
the branches. If you
remain in me and I in
you, you will bear much
fruit; apart from me you
can do nothing.

John 15:5

Next Sunday's Gospel reading reminds of us of the closeness of the relationship between Jesus and his people.

Jesus compares himself to a vine, while we are like the branches, growing from that vine.

The branches can't survive without the vine. They depend on it in order to stay healthy and bear good fruit.

As branches cling to the vine, we cling to Jesus, drawing our very life from him.

However, since we are given life from the vine (Jesus), we can't just sit back and do nothing in return.



This Gospel passage reminds us that it is our duty to use our time, gifts and talents to produce "good fruit" for the Kingdom of Heaven and the glory of God our Father.

From the moment we are baptised, we become disciples. As we grow, we are responsible for taking on a disciple's duty, to spread Jesus' teaching.

We can produce the best possible crop of fruit by spreading kindness, peace, joy and so on.

There is no end to the crop of good fruit that we can produce.

Some of the money raised from Year 7 baking last Christmas produced "good fruit" in a very literal way.

Through CAFOD's World Gifts programme, it paid for a fruit tree for a family in the developing world.

This tree will continue to produce fruit to help feed that family. Any leftover fruit can be sold to help provide an income.



Reflection:

Looking back over the last week, how have *you* produced "good fruit" through your words and actions?

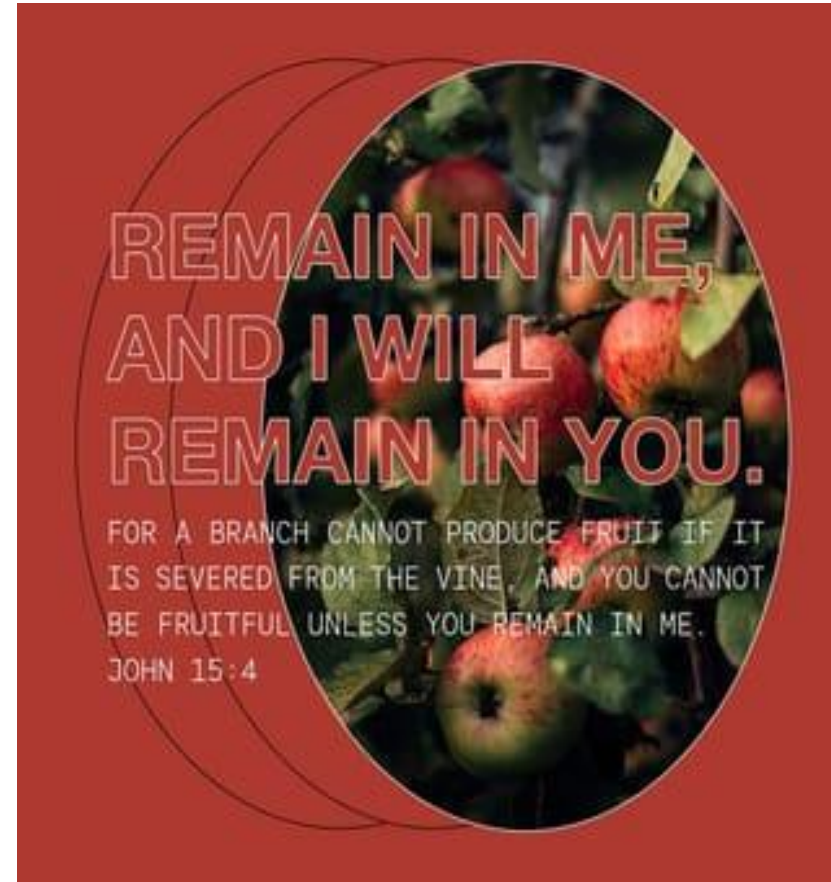
Day 1 Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

May I always feel close to you,
remembering that you walk
beside me in all my joys and
sorrows.

Help me to use my gifts, kind
words and deeds to produce
"good fruit" every day.

Amen.



Day 2

Celebrating our House Patrons 2:

St Margaret Clitherow



Margaret Clitherow lived in York. She was married to a butcher.

Her life changed dramatically when she became a Catholic in about 1574. It is believed she was inspired by the bravery and sufferings of Catholics under Elizabeth I.

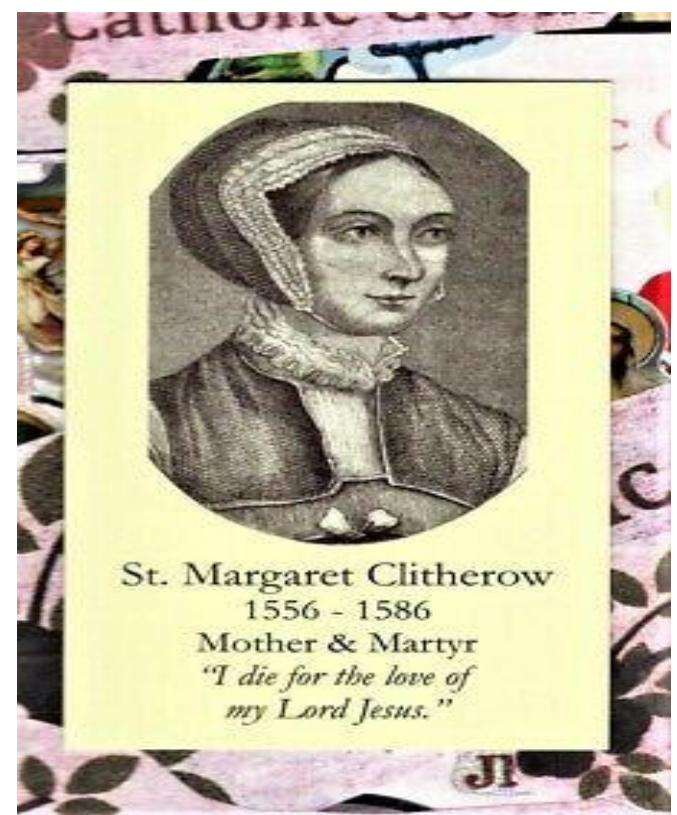
At the time, anyone who refused to attend Protestant services was known as a "recusant." Margaret's husband, John, remained a Protestant and had to pay fines on account of Margaret's behaviour.

Margaret provided accommodation for priests, and access to the Mass and the sacraments for her neighbours.

After being imprisoned several times for her actions, in 1585 providing shelter for a priest became an offence punishable by death.

Following a search of Margaret's house, a frightened child revealed the room used for hiding priests.

Margaret was arrested, but refused to plead before the court. She was executed in 1586.



Margaret died in defence of the Catholic faith, the priesthood, the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament.

She was declared a Saint on 25th October 1970. Her feast day is March 26th.

St Margaret Clitherow is one of the 40 English Martyrs, a group of people who died for their faith during a particularly difficult time for Catholics in this country.



Margaret's home in the Shambles, York, is now a shrine.

Inspired by her courage, it attracts visitors from all over the world.

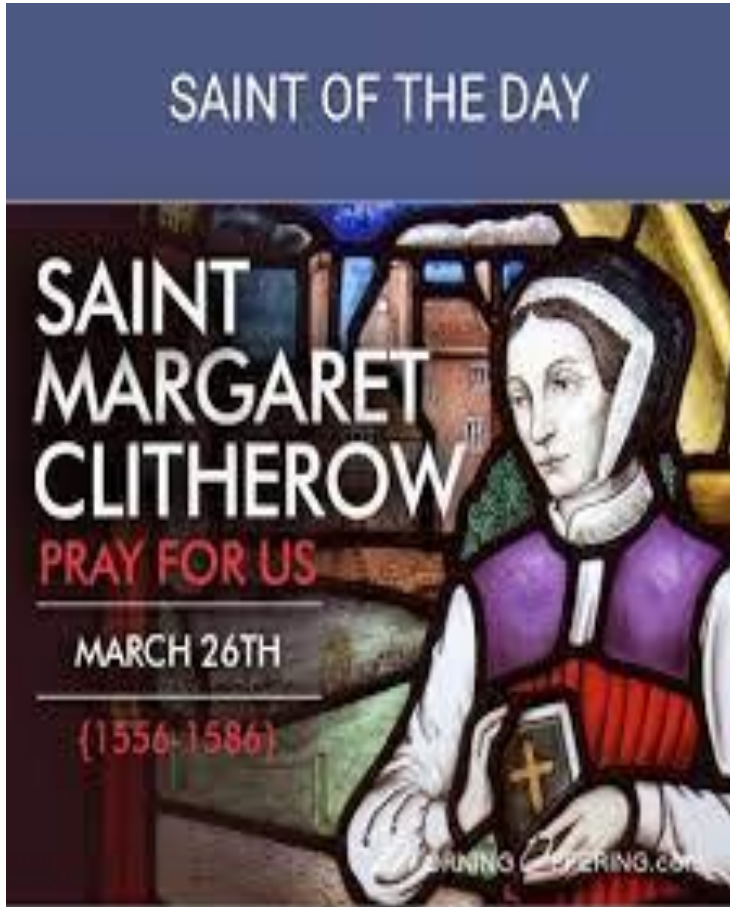
Day 2

Closing Prayer to Saint Margaret Clitherow

Dear Saint Margaret,

Inspired by your example of courage and faith, may we always try to do what is right, stand up for our beliefs, and never turn away those who need our help.

Amen.



Day 3 Celebrating our House Patrons 2:

Helen Keller



Helen Adams Keller was an American author, lecturer, and political activist born on June 27th, 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama, US.

She was the first blind-deaf person to receive a bachelor's degree.

Helen overcame unbelievable odds to achieve much and influence many, including world leaders.

She is remembered as a campaigner for women's rights (including women's suffrage), a socialist and an activist for both civil rights and the rights of working people.



In 1964, President Johnson awarded her America's highest honour, the Presidential Medal of Freedom

In 1991, *Life* magazine named her one of the most important figures of the 20th Century.



Today, the **Helen Keller International** organisation (founded in 1915) continues her work of serving humanity and supporting people to fulfil their potential, whatever their circumstances.





Challenge:

Despite starting out with many disadvantages, Helen achieved so much.

What do you hope to achieve in the "great adventure" of life?

Day 3 Closing Prayer

God our Loving Father,

Inspired by the example of Helen Keller, let us strive every day to be the best that we can be.

May we never forget that, whatever our circumstances, each of us is precious to You.

Help us to recognize that we can all use our gifts and talents to make this world a fairer, more caring place for all.

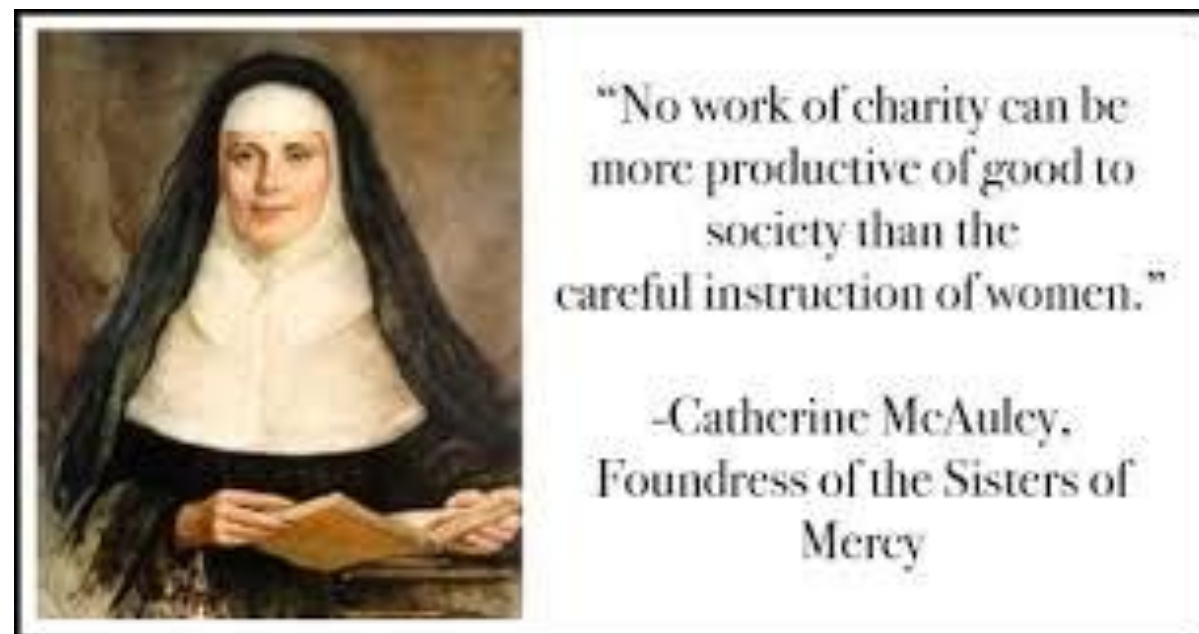
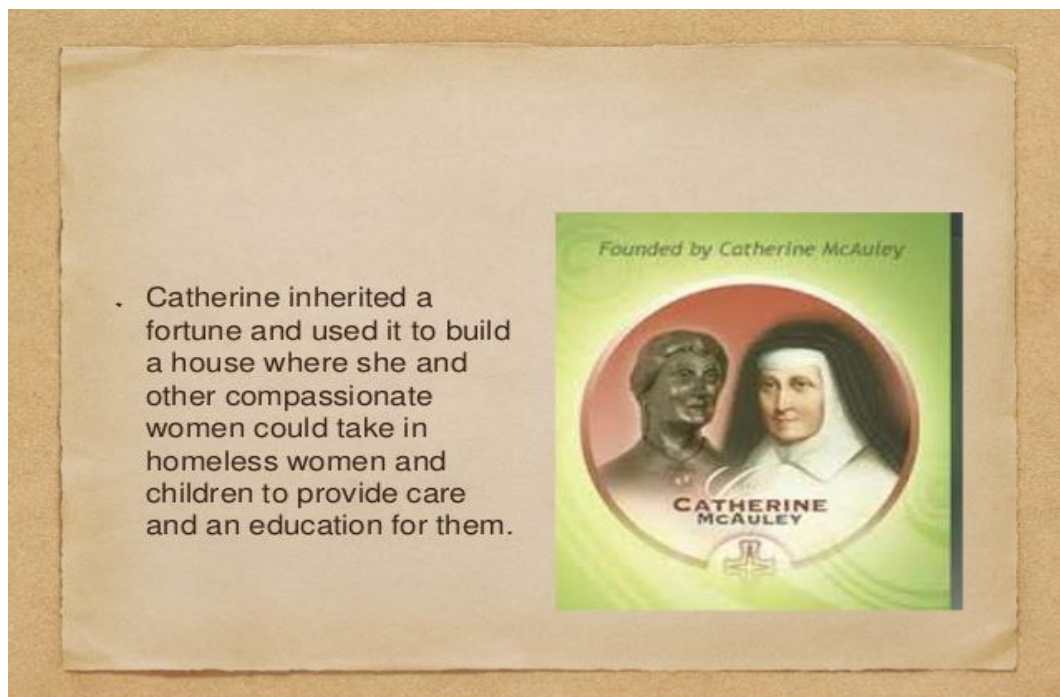
Amen.



Day 4 Celebrating our House Patrons 2:



Catherine was born in Dublin in 1778.



As Catherine's work grew, she and her friends began training for the religious life.

The Sisters of Mercy order was founded in December, 1831.



Catherine's work was groundbreaking.

She offered practical opportunities for education and training, which helped the poor to escape poverty.

In contrast, the government of the day's answer was to leave people to beg or put them in workhouses.



Today, all around the world, the Sisters of Mercy continue Mother Catherine's work.

Their roles include running schools and hospitals, practicing as lawyers, and working with the homeless.

They continue to live out Jesus' teaching by bringing practical help to those in need.



Day 4 Closing Prayer

We give thanks for the life and example of Mother Catherine McAuley.

She had the vision to break down barriers. Her drive and determination united people in working to free so many from the chains of poverty and disease. As her work continues around the world, may she inspire us, too, to shine the light of our gifts and talents onto our school community and our world.

Mother Catherine McAuley, pray for us,
Our Lady of Mercy, pray for us.

Amen.



Day 5 Celebrating our House Patrons 2:



Although the 1863 Emancipation Act granted slaves their freedom, black people continued to suffer from discrimination in the United States for many years, particularly in the southern states.

Segregation (the separation of races) meant that black people were forced to attend separate schools from white people, eat at separate restaurants, etc. Black people were also allocated the back seats on buses, away from whites.

On 1st December 1955, Rosa was sitting in the middle seats of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama.

Black people were allowed to use the middle seats so long as no white people wished to use them.

However, as the bus filled up, the driver asked Rosa to give up her seat for a white person.

She refused and was arrested.



Reflection:

Rosa's courageous act went on to make a huge difference.

Can you think of something you've done, however small, that has made someone's life better or improved a difficult situation?

Rosa's refusal to accept lesser treatment than a white person inspired black people to unite. They boycotted the city buses in Montgomery and pressed for a change in the law.

One of the leaders of this protest was a young Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.



Despite Rosa losing her job, and Martin Luther King having his home attacked, they kept the bus boycott going for 381 days.

As 75% of bus users were black, the protest resulted in a huge loss of money for the bus company.

In November 1956, the Supreme Court declared segregation on public transport illegal.



This picture shows Rosa seated on the front of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama after the Supreme Court ruling.

Rosa became a key figure in the civil rights movement.

US Congress called her "the first lady of civil rights" and "the mother of the freedom movement."



Day 5 Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Through one small but powerful act, Rosa Parks inspired people to unite and fight for justice.

Grant me the courage to stand up for my rights and those of others, knowing that I can make a difference.

Help me to understand that an attack on the rights and dignity of one person or one group of people is an attack on the rights and dignity of all.

Amen.

