

Homily - Ladyewell Pilgrimage – 20th June 2015



We come on pilgrimage to Ladyewell once more, to honour Mary, the mother of the Lord and to keep fresh the memory of our Lancashire martyrs. We pray today that Our Blessed Lady will continue to watch over us and the Church throughout the world, and bring us all ever closer in our love and understanding of her Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour.

We are in the month of June, a month traditionally dedicated to devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Devotion to the heart of Jesus is devotion to his love for us, symbolised by his divine heart burning with love for each one of us. He loved us to the end, and all he wants in return is our love for him. His own words are *'Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.'*

Devotion to the Sacred Heart reminds us that we will always find a welcome with Our Lord. He waits for us to come to him, especially if we are burdened, tired, or oppressed by the cares of daily life. He invites us to come to him, for he knows and understands well our human condition. A pilgrimage gives us the opportunity to be quiet and to step aside just to be with Jesus and his mother for a little while.

So let us open our hearts in the presence and company of the Lord Jesus here at Ladyewell. We belong to the family of Jesus, and we have many brothers and sisters in the faith. Let us pray for one another and support one another as we live out our own vocation as followers of Christ. The names of our Lancashire martyrs are inscribed in the shrine, and they too form part of our family, part of that great cloud of witnesses who surround us from their place in heaven. We call upon the martyrs today to intercede for us with the Lord that we might be given some of their courage and love for Jesus which sustained them through the sufferings and pains of martyrdom.

And finally, we remember the whole diocese of Lancaster in our prayers today at Ladyewell shrine, especially the sick and the weak, and those whom we would wish to remember, and all who will come here on pilgrimage throughout the course of this year.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

Our Lancashire martyrs, pray for us.

+Michael G Campbell OSA
Bishop of Lancaster