

PARISH BULLETIN

St Kieran's, the Catholic Church *in*

Campbeltown and Islay

Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain

19th March 2023

The 4th Sunday of Lent: *Laetare*

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Sunday, 19th March, 4th Sunday of Lent, The Bitter Lamentations, 9.45am, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

Monday: **No Mass**

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: Holy Mass, **10.00am**

Devotions: Wednesday: Mid-morning Prayer, 9.50am.

Friday: Adoration and Mid-morning Prayer, 9.30am.

Scripture Discussion: Friday: 10.30am

Saturday, 25th March, Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 26th March, 5th Sunday of Lent, The Bitter Lamentations, 9.45am, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay.

Sunday 19th March, Holy Mass, 4 pm

Easter Sunday, 9th April, Holy Mass and the Blessing of water, 4 pm



Psalm response

The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.

Gospel acclamation

*Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!*

Communion Antiphon

*The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed,
I saw and I believed in God.*

Hymns

Processional

52 Awake, awake: fling off the night (Keys)

Offertory

320 Lord, accept the gifts we offer (Mayhew)

Post Communion

337 Love divine, all loves excelling (Mayhew)

Final

455 Praise to the holiest (McLennan)

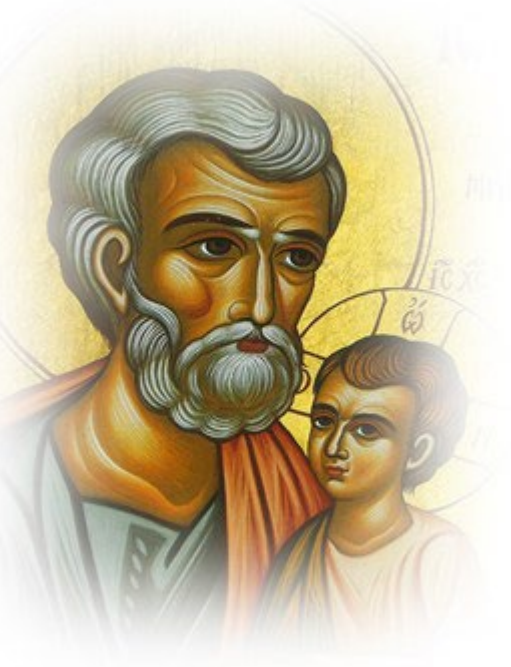
Take Five

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

Monday, Mar 20, 2023

SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Pull a chair up to the table



On the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, it is the custom in some places, especially Italy, to bless bread, pastries, and other food and give it to the poor. Legend has it that the tradition started in the Middle Ages after Sicilians prayed to Saint Joseph to end a

terrible drought. After rain finally came and produced a bountiful harvest, the food was shared with everyone in need. Saint Joseph's Table is now an annual celebration, where some wealthy Italian families invite the public to huge buffets, and no one is turned away. Show your gratitude for the blessings you've received by renewing your devotion to this special saint — a foster father to Jesus and us all.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22; Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a. "When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him."*

Tuesday, Mar 21, 2023

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Do you?

Jesus awakens hope when He puts a probing question to the man at pool of Bethzatha, "Do you really want to be healed?" And He then orders him to "get up and walk!" God will not force our hand against our will. The first essential step towards growth and healing is the desire for change. If we are content to stay as we are, then no amount of coaxing will change us. The Lord manifests His power and saving grace towards those who desire transformation of life in Christ. The Lord approaches each of us with the same probing question: "Do you really want to be changed, to be set free from the power of sin, and to be transformed into my holiness?"

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16. "Trees of every kind shall grow;*

their leaves shall not fade, nor their fruit fail."

Wednesday, Mar 22, 2023

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Sabbath prayer

Biblically speaking, there are many reasons to celebrate the sabbath. First, a sabbath rest brings to mind God's rest after the great act of creation. Second, we recall God's liberating action in our own lives, freeing us from the bonds of sin just as Jews were freed from bondage in Egypt. Finally, the great victory of Jesus over sin and death is cause for a sabbath celebration. Sabbath shouldn't be reduced to outward observances, but rather as a perspective that places God's accomplishing activity front and centre. We rest and rise again to carry on that liberating work to help bring about the reign of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 49:8-15; John 5:17-30. "My Father is at work until now, so I am at work."*

Thursday, Mar 23, 2023

COMMEMORATION OF SAINT TURIBIUS OF MOGROVEJO, BISHOP

Defend against injustice

Turibius of Mogrovejo was a highborn Spanish bishop in Peru during the late 1500s, a period of intense violence as the Spanish forcibly colonized the native people. Although many of the colonisers considered indigenous people to be less than fully human, Turibius learned their languages and fought for their rights. Who is vulnerable in your community? Is God calling you to take steps on their behalf?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 32:7-14; John 5:31-47. "How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God?"*

Friday, Mar 24, 2023

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Let's not turn our gaze away

We join with the international community today in remembering Saint Oscar Arnulfo Romero, archbishop of El Salvador, assassinated on this day in 1980 by a paramilitary member because he was an advocate for the poor and condemned military and landowner violations of basic human rights. Honouring Romero, the United Nations proclaimed this day the International Day for the Right to the Truth

Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims. Let us pray Romero's own words: "Let us be today's Christians. Let us not take fright at the boldness of today's Church. With Christ's light let us illuminate even the most hideous caverns of the human person: torture, jail, plunder, want, chronic illness." Saint Oscar, pray with us.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30.* "So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching."

Saturday, Mar 25, 2023

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Hear ye! Hear ye!

There is a tendency to put Mary on a spiritual pedestal and thereby distance her from the lives the rest of us live. But the point of Mary's exaltation is to point toward what all of us are called to, and capable of — a complete and radical response to our divine calling. Mary was fully human, and her response to God's call sets the standard to which we can all aspire.

God has some work to announce to each of us, our own annunciation. Claim your spot on the pedestal with your response!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38.* "May it be done to me according to your word."



Readings for the 4th Sunday of Lent

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

Seeing as God sees requires a shake-up in our secular values.

Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

The dark valley may seem fearful, but the Lord is our shepherd.

Ephesians 5:8-14

Darkness is in our past, but the Lord of light is our future.

John 9:1-41

Born blind? We all are. But there's hope for a cure in Jesus.

Words on the Word

Our spiritual blindness is inevitable, everyone of us is affected by sin. Sin in Holy Scripture is called darkness, and blindness. Each of us carries in ourselves the effect of sin, therefore is blind, unseeing. We are doubly blind. First, we cannot see that light which is God, which is Jesus Christ. We can only see what our senses are able to grasp. (. . .) there is yet another type of blindness: we are not able to see ourselves in the light. Each of us bears in ourselves an image of who we are but none of us is able to know ourselves in the whole truth. For the most part we form in our souls some image of ourselves and we don't realise that it is a false image, that it is fiction, that it is a lie. We are not who we think we are (. . .). however, we often have to face the truth about ourselves. And we're disgusted with ourselves. We can't stand ourselves. And this why we can't face the truth about ourselves, and again we escape into the fiction, to dreams, to lies about ourselves. But really we are who we are in the eyes of God. (Francis Blachnicki).

* * *

Told to do so by Jesus, the man blind from birth washed his eyes in the Pool of Siloam and he

not only saw the world, which had never seen before, and not just people, but also the One who is the light for the world.

A while later, he again met Jesus and confessed: “Lord, I believe”, and he worshipped Him. Between the first and second encounter with Jesus, from one to another and to the Pharisees gives his testimony about Jesus like this: “Now there is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don’t know where he’s come from! We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn’t do a thing (John 9:30-33).

As in the scene with the Samaritan woman, so in this Sunday’s Gospel the evangelist emphasises how important, and saving is an encounter with Jesus.

The ultimate aim of the healing of the man blind since birth is not just that he saw the beauty of the world, but that he saw Christ, believed and worshipped Him – then he went and told people he had met the one sent by God.

In this Sunday’s Preface we heard these words about Jesus Christ: “he has led the human race that walked in darkness in the radiance of the faith and has brought those born in slavery to ancient sin through the waters of regeneration to make them your adopted children”. What the Lord once did in a figurative way, healing the blind man, is now being done through faith. With the eyes of faith, we can, if we want, see in Jesus Christ the Living God, the Light of Truth and the Everlasting Life. To make this possible, Jesus Christ comes to us as a Light of Truth. The One who remains in union with the Father and Holy Spirit tells us about the mysteries of the living God, so that through Him we too have been able to see them. We who are not able to see this, let Jesus tell us about it so that He leads, the blind, from darkness to the light.

Jesus also gives a warning: “It is for judgement that I have come into this world, so that those without light may see and those with sight turn blind” (John 9:39). He directed the truth of these words to the Pharisees, but also indirectly to people, who today pretend that they are the ones who know everything better. It is precisely this viewpoint or pride that can make those who should recognise God and His holy will be blinded by their false convictions. Still more clearly we will hear in next Sunday’s Gospel, when Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb: “Lazarus, here! Come out!” (John 11:43). Will they believe in Him? No, they go and plan how to kill Him! The blind can gain sight, and the dead be returned to life, many saw it, but their hearts were closed. They even resort to piety: Jesus heals, and so works on the Sabbath – according to them it cannot come from God. Then they resort to terror, they throw the healed man out of the synagogue. It was their hearts and stubbornness that did not let them see the Son of God.

Let’s also examine our consciences as to whether we are not one of those who do not see the action of God and His light in our lives. Whether we are also one who like the blind from birth allow God to lead us, because He is light of the world and guides us to His light.

* * *

Let us pray in the words of Francis Blachnicki, who is in the process of being beatified:

Lord, You are the Light of the world, we are the unseeing, we are in the dark. Lord, my faith is very weak. I am not capable of forming a true image of who I am in Your eyes. Lord, I believe that You stood on my path, that You look on me, that

You permeate me. I believe that You want to be my light. You, who have received the power to send the Holy Spirit, send Him into my heart. May He become the light within me, so that in that light I would be able to recognise the truth about myself. I believe that You have already given me Your Spirit, but may he be manifest within me with new power, so that He become once again my light.

Lord, I believe in Your love. Sin, darkness and my blindness – I give all to You, I place everything in Your hands. Come, lord, be my light, send me Your light.

Amen.

Is There Life

After Death?

(cont.)

Do we have scientific proof for the existence of an immortal human soul, one that continues to live after the death of the body, but in an even more intense and complete way than on earth?

A Seven-Year-Old Boy

In January of 2000, seven-year-old Matteo Pio Colelli, who lived with his parents in San Giovanni Rotondo, contracted acute meningitis. The boy suffered from septic shock and severe damage to the kidneys, respiratory, cardiovascular, and blood clotting systems, as well as metabolic acidosis. Despite the great efforts of the doctors, the time of the child's death was approaching. Matte's parents began to call for the intercession of St. Padre Pio and they brought his relics to the boy's room. And then an amazing miracle happened: the dying Matteo awoke and regained full consciousness, while his

organs began to function perfectly. The doctors were shocked to find out that the patient no longer had the slightest damage to the brain, kidneys or other organs. Miraculously, the boy was healed completely. Dr. Alessandro Villella wrote: "I cannot give a scientific explanation for the complete recovery of little Mattea Colella; I believe that it must have been a supernatural event." (Antonio Socci, *Those Who Returned from the Beyond*, Kraków 2014). As Matteo was on the verge of death, his body was in such a state that, from a medical point of view, he could not see or hear anything, much less remember what

happened to him. However, as soon as he woke up, the boy related exactly what he had experienced during his clinical death: "I slept and looked at myself from behind the bed from the place where the pumps stood. Then, at one point, I saw many rays of strong light which were shining through the door. This light woke me up and first I saw Padre Pio and then angels on the other side. I saw him as an old man. I could see myself on this bed from a distance, through a round opening, and I was feeling good. I was near the devices, and Padre Pio with a white beard, wearing a long brown gown, gave me his right hand and said: 'Matteo, do not worry, you will recover soon,' and he smiled at me. And when you woke me up, I was sick and I was alone, Padre Pio and the angels were gone, I was looking for them and I was suffering."

The testimony of seven-year-old Matteo, who left his body as he neared death, shows that there is life after death, that a person has not only a body, but also an immortal soul, which continues to live after the death of the body and retains all intellectual and cognitive abilities.

Gloria Polo

On May 5, 1995, at the University of Bogota, Gloria Polo was struck by lightning. Her husband was not injured, but her cousin was killed instantly. Gloria was badly burned, and her heart stopped working. The woman was clinically dead and experienced an NDE. She left her body and found herself in a beautiful white tunnel of enchanting light that gave her joy and peace. Gloria realized she was really dead. She felt herself rising up until she reached a wonderful place which was such a beautiful garden that there are no words to describe it. It was then that she saw her deceased parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. It was a joyful moment for her. Gloria could hug each of them. It was then that she realised that the reincarnation that she had previously believed in was untrue. She was completely free from her body and was not subject to the constraints of time or space. She could hug her children. She saw their thoughts, but they did

not realise that their mother was with them.

Gloria's soul was then returned to her body, which was a very painful experience for her. She was taken to the hospital, and there, lying on the bed, she saw the figure of the Lord Jesus, who with great love asked her to repent of her sins and to ask for God's mercy. Gloria, however, did not have the awareness of or remorse for her sins. During the surgery, she found herself out of her body again, and it was then that she met the terrifying beings who came to "present her bill" for all the sins she had committed. When the woman tried to escape, she began to sink into a terrible, dark abyss.

from the evil spirits. She understood that this was a consequence of all her sins, especially the sins of impurity. It was then that she saw her whole life in the light of the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments). It was an extremely painful examination of conscience for her, which made her realise how terrible the consequences of sins are. Gloria saw all her sinful deeds, thoughts, and neglect in sequence, like in a movie. She began to apologize sincerely to Jesus. At the same time, she discovered the power of intercessory prayer, which so many people at that time were offering to God on her behalf. When Gloria awoke, her legs, burned by the



Gloria Polo, after a near-death experience, gives her testimony of the existence of life after death.

Disgusting unclean spirits attacked her from all sides. Gloria screamed in terror and thought that she was on fire because of a wave of hatred

lightning, and her scorched liver, lungs, kidneys, and ovaries were completely healed. It was a spectacular event. The head of the

department said that in 38 years of his medical practice

he had not seen such a great miracle.

(The third and final part next Sunday)

The Girl from Nazareth



Nazareth in Galilee. It is here that we meet Miriam – Mary for the first time in the Bible. In Her time, it was a small village near the Via Maris, the main route from the north to Egypt. Galilee as a geographical region stretches from the Litania River in present-day Lebanon to the valley of Jezreel. In biblical times, the term "Galilee of the Gentiles" was appropriate due to the fact that the Jewish population lived here next to the pagan population. The proverbial and biblical question:

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46) arose from the fact that the town was largely inhabited by pagans, whom the Jews despised.

Miriam of the tribe of David

Little is known about Mary's life before the Annunciation. According to tradition, she was a long-awaited child, expected by her parents, whom the Christians of the first centuries gave the names Joachim and Anna. They were living in Jerusalem, in the place where the church of St. Anna is. As a child, Mary was taken up to serve in the Jerusalem temple. The apocryphal Protoevangelium of James conveys a beautiful tradition of Mary weaving the veil of the tabernacle. The priests in Jerusalem decided to make a new veil for the temple, so they chose seven girls without blemish before God, from the tribe of David.

How Mary ended up in Nazareth is not known. According to the apocrypha, she went there to marry Joseph. At the end of the sixth century, an unknown pilgrim from Piacenza visited Nazareth. In his notes, he noted: "Jewish women are more beautiful here than anywhere else in the country." There is no reason to doubt that this was the case six centuries earlier. The Galileans living near Lake Gennesaret were engaged in fishing, while others in agriculture. In the Talmud it is said that whoever has not seen the lake of Gennesaret has not seen anything beautiful in life. The quiet music of reeds moved by the wind perfectly reflects the name of this body of water. Gennesaret means "harp" in Hebrew. However, the work of fishermen was not as romantic as the name of the lake. Fishing was often done at night, because at dawn the fish were said to be more willing to be gathered in the nets. During the day, damaged nets were repaired, and fish were traded on the shores of the lake or in the markets of larger towns. The lives of farmers were determined by the seasons.

Full of grace

Joseph, Mary's husband, was neither a fisherman nor a farmer. The evangelists all call him "the carpenter". The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, probably from the 6th century, contains an interesting note concerning him: "Joseph was working in construction in the coastal city of Capernaum; for he was a carpenter. He stayed there for nine months, and when he returned home, he found Mary with child. Overwhelmed and distressed, he exclaimed, "Lord, Lord, receive my spirit, for it is better for me to die than to live!". I don't think anyone is surprised by such a reaction of a man whom the Bible calls a righteous man (Matthew 1:19). The author of

the apocrypha probably written in Gaul, is unknown by name, referring to the information which was recorded in the Gospel of Matthew in this way: After the marriage of his mother, Mary, to Joseph, before they lived together, she found herself pregnant by Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18).

When the Angel Gabriel appears before the young Mary in Nazareth to tell her that God has chosen her to be the Mother of His Son, he calls her by the mysterious name *kecharitomene*. This Greek term means full of grace (Luke 1:30). It is interesting that the Bible repeatedly speaks of people filled with God's grace, but each time there is a two-word phrase. Stephen, for example, is said in the Acts of the Apostles to be full of grace (Acts 6:8), but Luke uses a two-word formulation here: *pleres charitos*. Meanwhile, in the case of Mary, the same author uses a term he probably invented himself to clearly distinguish the Mother of Jesus from other figures who are also endowed with grace. Luke was of Greek origin, so he could successfully create new words.

In the description of the Annunciation, it is worth paying attention to one more term – *genoito*. Mary describes herself as the handmaid of the Lord (Lk 1:38). Her cry: Let it be done to me! (Greek *genoito*; cf. Lk 1:38) is not, as some exegetes would like, marked by resignation or even determination. Mary asks: How will this happen? (Lk 1:34), but this is not a question of doubt, lack of faith or trust. On the contrary, it is a search for a faith that is fully conscious. Although the Latin *fiat* may suggest a certain shade of consent taken with resignation in the tone of "okay, let it be so", the Greek form, and thus the original one, is far from such overtones in Mary's consent. The optative form used here by Luke is extremely rare in the New Testament. The Greek *genoito* (Lk 1:38) is a joyful cry: "So be it! Let it be so!", which expresses a willing acceptance of God's will and an enthusiastic cooperation with it. This is the expression of Mary's willing spirit of service.

Prayer



Please pray for those who are sick, in need or have asked for our prayers: Lilian Cox, Madge McWhirter, Sarah Carmichael, Catherine Walker, Ailsa Stewart, Meg Douglas (Mull), Doleen Durnin, and Russell Carroll.

Please remember in your prayers Margaret Barrett whose funeral was Friday, **as well as** Annie McMillan (2005), Maureen McLaughlin (2018) **and all whose anniversaries occur at this time.**

News and Events

Tea and coffee in the hall after Sunday Mass. Our visitors are most welcome, please come along.

SCIAF Collection: this Sunday is SCIAF Sunday – the collection is for the work of Caritas in Ethiopia.

Fr Tony away on Wednesday 29th for the Chrism Mass in Oban. All are invited to attend the Chrism Mass, which is at 6.30pm, followed by refreshments.

Live streaming – on Facebook (see below for link).



campbeltown@rcdai.org.uk



www.stkieranscampbeltown.org



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Parish Priest: Fr. A. Wood, St. Kieran's, Campbeltown; Tel. 01586 552160