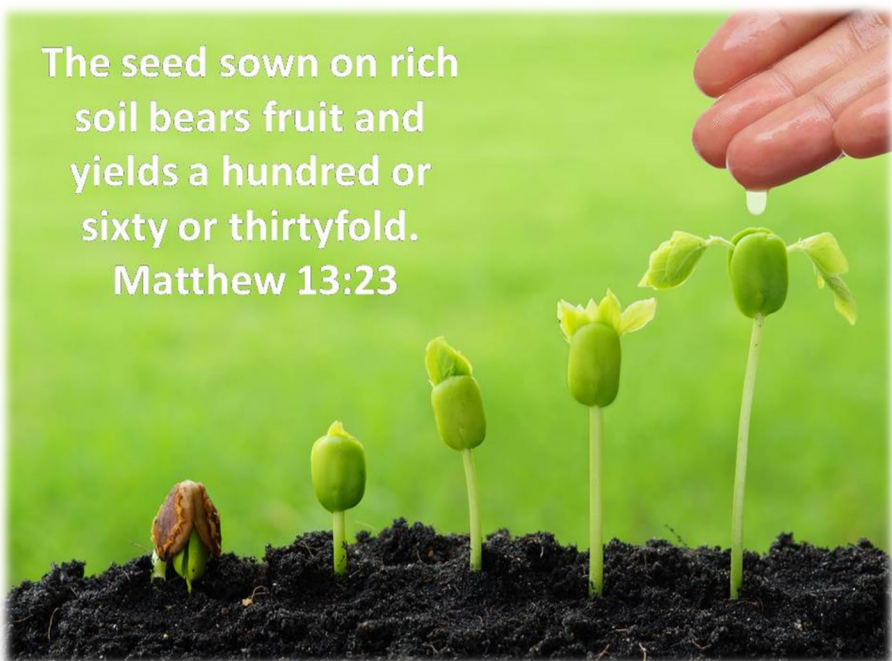


The seed sown on rich soil bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.
Matthew 13:23



PARISH BULLETIN

St Kieran's, the Catholic Church *in*

Campbeltown and Islay

Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain

16th July 2023

Hymns

Processional (Sunday Mass only)

SHEET Be still for the presence of the Lord (McLennan) [50]

Offertory

158 Gifts of bread and wine (McLennan) [135]

Post Communion

337 Love divine, all loves excelling (Mayhew,6,Blae)
[312,v.1,2,3,8]

Final

SHEET Give thanks with a grateful heart (McLennan) [139]

15th Sunday of Ordinary Time

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Sunday, 16th July, 15th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

Monday: Holy Mass, 6.00pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Scripture discussion: Friday: 10.30am

Devotions: Wednesday: Mid-morning Prayer and Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 9.45am

Friday: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Mid-morning Prayer, 9.30am.

Saturday, 22nd July, Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 23rd July, 16th in Ordinary Time, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

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

Sunday, 16th July, Holy Mass, 4.00 pm

Sunday, 6th August, Holy Mass, 4.00pm



Psalm response

Some seed fell into rich soil and produced its crop.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father,

*The seed is the word of God, Christ the sower;
whoever finds this seed will remain for ever.*

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

*Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me and I in him, says the Lord.*

Take Five

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

Monday, Jul 17, 2023

Heartfelt holiness

Like any family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph experienced misunderstandings, disagreements, and hurt feelings within the family unit. Some of those experiences are told in the gospels, but there were surely others we never learned about. The Holy Family is a model for all families in the struggles and joys of family life. There are many devotional prayers to the Holy Family, including a litany and even a devotion to the hearts of the Holy Family. Most Catholics are familiar with the images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, but perhaps less so with the Chaste Heart of Joseph. Consider adorning your family home with artwork of all three.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 1:8-14, 22; Matthew 10:34-11:1.* “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.”

Tuesday, Jul 18, 2023

Walk the way

Chorazin and Bethsaida had been blessed with the visitation of God. They heard the good news and experienced the wonderful works which Jesus did for them. Why was Jesus upset with these communities? The word alas is also translated as woe. It is as much as an expression of sorrowful pity as it is of anger. Why does Jesus lament and issue a stern warning? The people who heard the Gospel here very likely responded with indifference. Jesus scolds them for doing nothing! Repentance demands change — a change of heart and way of life. God's word is life-giving and it saves us from destruction — the destruction of soul as well as body. Jesus' anger is directed toward sin and everything which hinders us from doing the will of God. In love He calls us to walk in His way of truth and freedom, grace and loving-kindness, justice and holiness. Do you receive His word with faith and obedience or with doubt and indifference?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 2:1-15a; Matthew 11:20-24.* “She was moved with pity for him.”

Wednesday, Jul 19, 2023

Mercy me

Our tradition contains a variety of words to describe “missing the mark” when it comes to personal conduct: sin, transgression, and iniquity, a word used hundreds of times in scripture. Iniquity describes wilful harming, where we choose to hurt or act with malice. It gets at the character or quality of our intentions. In a sense, our actions

are all we really ever own. We carry them with us and we fall short at times. Thankfully, God's mercy is greater even than our iniquity. Examine your conscience, make amends where possible, and call upon the Lord's mercy. Ask God to crown you with kindness and compassion, as today's psalm promises.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 3:1-6, 9-12; Matthew 11:25-27.* “The Lord is kind and merciful. He pardons all your iniquities, he heals all your ills. He redeems your life from destruction, he crowns you with kindness and compassion.”

Thursday, Jul 20, 2023

OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINT APOLLINARIS, BISHOP, MARTYR

Inspiration for a dangerous mission

Today's saint, Apollinaris, was a bishop during the first century of the church, a dangerous time to be a Christian. Roman authorities and others disliked the followers of Jesus for disrupting social norms and threatening a social order that gave Roman emperors God-like authority. Christianity was also a new movement, making it even more untrustworthy. Apollinaris was bishop of Ravenna, Italy, and for that public role he was savagely beaten, later dying of his wounds. His martyrdom inspired early disciples. Who inspires you to live dangerously in faith?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 3:13-20; Matthew 11:28-30.* “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart.”

Friday, Jul 21, 2023

A beautiful work in progress

The "Sabbath rest" was meant to be a time to remember and celebrate God's goodness and the goodness of his work, both in creation and redemption. It was a day set apart for the praise of God, his work of creation, and his saving actions on our behalf. It was intended to bring everyday work to a halt and to provide needed rest and refreshment. Jesus quoted the Sabbath work involved in worship in the Temple. This kind of work was usually double the work of worship on weekdays. Jesus then quotes from the prophet Hosea (6:6): *I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.* While the claims of ritual sacrifice are important to God, mercy and kindness in response to human need are even more important.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 11:10—12:14; Matthew 12:1-8.* “I say to you, something greater than the temple is here.”

Saturday, Jul 22, 2023

**FEAST OF SAINT MARY MAGDALENE,
APOSTLE TO THE APOSTLES**

Who do you say she is?

No biblical figure is surrounded by more mystery than Mary Magdalene. Who was she, really? What we know from the texts, says Catholic writer James Carroll, is that she was a leader in the community of Jesus' followers. While the men abandoned Jesus in his hour of need, Mary was one of the women who stayed with him even through the Crucifixion. She was the first person to whom Jesus appeared after his Resurrection and the first to preach that Good News, and her status

as an apostle in the early Church rivalled even that of Peter. Over time, her status was questioned, her reputation tarnished. Powerful women have contended with such treatment throughout the ages. Mary Magdalene stands as a symbol for gender equity and justice as well as faithful witness.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Song of Songs 3:1-4b or 2 Corinthians 5:14-17; John 20:1-2, 11-18. "On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb."*

Readings for the 15th Sunday

Isaiah 55:10-11

The word of God does not take no for an answer but achieves its end.

Psalms 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14

God's abundance clothes the world and nourishes us all.

Romans 8:18-23

The Spirit is buried in the world and longs for creation's liberation.

Matthew 13:1-23

The word of God gives us many opportunities to embrace it.

Words on the Word

A world of values of various kinds swirls around us, the divine world, the angelic world, the brotherly world, the friendly world, as well as the hostile world, each given by God for our salvation, which is our true goal (Ch. Lubich).

The scene of sowing seed described in this Sunday's Gospel is taken from real life and everyone knows that not every seed sown will bear fruit. But there are mysteries and surprises in the parable. The first surprise of this parable: even the word of God may not bear fruit to the degree and extent we expect. Also, God's sowing can be smothered, because the Lord of Creation encounters a lack of understanding, silence and hatred. His word can also meet closed ears and hearts.

The coming of the Incarnate Word into the world is not a demonstration of strength and magnificence, but rather a demonstration of helplessness and the great importance of God's gift of freedom. Saint John captured the surprising helplessness of God towards man in the words: "He came to his own, and his own did not receive him" (John 1:11). Such helplessness can be an irritation in the modern world, which mainly strives for growth and development, for which effectiveness is most important.

"One economist who fiercely advocates economic development as the only source of human happiness was asked by an attentive listener:

- Is growth the only criteria of your theory?
- Naturally, because every increase in growth leads to prosperity!
- Don't cancer cells think in the same way? – asked the attentive listener.

The First Surprise

The term "successful" doesn't really apply to Jesus Christ. This irritates us. Couldn't Almighty God make the preaching of His Word more effective and successful? Couldn't His power be more effective? Couldn't His light be more captivating to the world? Couldn't the signs of His presence among us be more clear and full of transforming power?'

He wanted to become "like us in everything except sin", He wanted to experience helplessness as well. Parents often complain: all my advice and requests are in vain. Priests and school catechists say: probably all the seeds in my lessons fall on rocky ground. Today's Gospel reminds us that sowing is not about success, but about perseverance. The Lord does not present us with a successful man, but with a persistent sower who knows that some of the sowing will not come up. Our hope and joy should be not so much news of successes in the Church, but the awareness that the work for the kingdom of God continues.

*We must sow, even though our soil is poor
Although we lack ploughs and harrows for ploughing
We must sow even though the wind blows the seed away
Though the sower is followed by flocks of crows
We must sow without knowing which way
The wind will carry and throw seed onto the ground
Not knowing who and where will reap the harvest
In the harvest festival whose joyful singing will resound*

Surprise two

Despite numerous difficulties, evangelisation bears fruit: a hundredfold, sixtyfold, fortyfold . . . If we consider the huge struggle against Christianity that is being waged in the world today – the enormous persecution in Muslim countries, the fight against the Church in much of the mass media – the power of God's word is wonderful and astonishing. This miracle of the power of God's word is greater the greater the difficulties are. There are the martyrs – our perseverance and patience are also needed.

*We must not waste our strength or waste a day
We must sow, we must create a miracle
We are not allowed to hide grain in granaries
There is hunger in the world, there is still hunger in the world.
(religious song)*

Atheism

and belief in the existence of God



Atheism can be a stage on the path of a sincere search for truth, but there are cases that it is not only the result of lack of knowledge, but above all the fruit of sin, pride and the work of the evil spirit, who "is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

Atheists believe that there is only the material world, that there is no other reality than what we experience with our senses. In fact, atheism is the belief that there is no God, and often this belief is based on the metaphysical assumptions of Darwinism, according to which life originated in a completely random way and develops by evolution, which has no purpose.

What does the universe say about the existence of God?

All scientists who are guided by intellectual honesty agree **that the Universe in all its dimensions is logical and rational, therefore it points to the existence of God the Creator.** According to Nobel Prize winner in Physics Amos Penzias: "Astronomy leads us to discover a unique event: a universe that was created out of nothing, that needs a very delicate balance to ensure the ideal conditions for life to develop, and that it was created on the basis of (one might add here "supernatural") design.

The universe from the smallest atom to the largest galaxy points to the existence of a Creator God who brought the world into existence and keeps it in perfect working order

The universe from the smallest atom to the largest galaxy points to the existence of God the Creator, who brought the world into existence and keeps it in a state of perfect operation. Scientists claim that our Sun will give off more energy in one second than all mankind has produced since the beginning of its existence. This energy is created by nuclear fusion, which converts hydrogen into helium. The enormity of this energy and power is beyond any human imagination. Over a million planets like the Earth would fit inside our sun, which is a medium-sized star.

From Earth, we can only see 2,500 of the 200-400 billion stars that make up the Milky Way. Outside the Milky Way, there are 100 times more stars than there are grains of sand on all the beaches of the Earth. Scientists say that there are 100 billion stars in our galaxy, and there are about 100 billion galaxies like ours.

Astronaut Edgar Mitchell (of the Apollo 14 spacecraft) confessed, "When I went to the moon, I was a pragmatic test pilot. But when I saw planet Earth floating in the vastness of space, the sense of divinity became almost evident, and I knew that life in the universe was not just an accident."

The visible universe contains more than 100 billion galaxies, each containing hundreds of billions of stars. As hard as it is to comprehend, it is estimated that there are over a billion trillion stars in the universe. Scientists are unable to calculate the number of stars, because it is beyond their cognitive abilities. Only God the Creator "marks the number of stars, he calls them all by name. Our Lord is great and mighty; his wisdom is unspeakable" (Psalm 147:4-5).

Alan Sandage (1926-2010), an American astronomer and recipient of the William L. Crawford Prize, wrote: **"It seems unlikely to me that something so orderly could arise out of chaos. There must be some organisational principle. God is a mystery to me, but He explains the miracle of existence: why there is something and not nothing"**.

The universe has a sense and a logical structure, from the smallest atom to the largest galaxy. **Where does harmony and rational order come from in nature? This important question was asked by the**



greatest scientists: Newton, Einstein, Heisenberg and others. The only reasonable answer to this is that the source of order in the universe is the mind of God.

Isaac Newton wrote: "This beautiful arrangement of the sun, planets, and comets could only have come into being by the design and power of a rational and powerful Being."

British physicist Prof. Paul Davies highlights the fact that "if the ratio of the magnitude of the strong nuclear force to the electromagnetic force had been different from the existing 1:10¹⁶, stars could not have formed. The ratio of electromagnetic force to gravity requires an equally delicate balance: if it were 1:10⁴⁰ greater, only small stars could exist; if it were the same fraction smaller, the stars could only be large. The universe needs both big and small stars: the big ones produce elements in their fusion furnaces, and only the small ones burn long enough to support life [. . .] I have strong evidence that there is something behind all this [. . .]. **It is as if someone calibrated the numbers in nature to create the universe [. . .]. The impression of conscious design is overwhelming**".

Founders of quantum physics: Max Planck, Werner Heisenberg, Erwin Schrödinger and Paul Dirac saw a clear connection between the laws of nature and the mind of God. The creator of the quantum

theory, Max Planck, stated: "There is no matter as such. All matter originates and exists only by the force that causes the particles in the atom to vibrate and holds together this microscopic "solar system" of the atom. We must assume that this force is governed by a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is at the origin of all matter."

At this point, it is worth recalling the words of Werner Heisenberg delivered in Munich to the Alexander Humboldt scholarship holders: "Remember, the first sip from the cup of science leads to atheism. But if you drink from this cup persistently, you will find that at the bottom of it lurks the Lord God.

The truth about DNA shows that God exists

The claim of atheists that the emergence of life and the macro- and microcosm is a coincidence is completely ridiculous in the context of the latest scientific research.

Belgian Nobel laureate chemist Ilya Prigogine stated: "**The probability that the organic structures and the very finely coordinated reactions typical of living organisms were generated by chance is zero.**"

The converted leader of world atheism, the philosopher Antony Flew, writes so vividly about the faith of atheists: to believe that the universe and life arose by chance is the same as "believing that a herd of monkeys hitting a computer keyboard blindly will write a

Shakespeare sonnet."

Even the simplest living cell has the amount of information contained in 5,000 copies of a several-hundred-page book. An obvious question arises: were these extremely complex information and biological systems created by an Absolute Intelligence possessing Omniscience, or are they only the effect of the blind forces of nature?

DNA research reveals the existence of a huge amount of

Upon learning the truth about human DNA, any honest-minded person comes to the conclusion that atheism has no logical basis

information recorded in the computer code, which must come from an intelligent Being.

Human existence begins with a cell the size of a dot. Thanks to DNA, this cell knows how to form an organism composed of 100 million different types of cells, each of which has such a complex chemical mechanism of functioning that we are unable to understand it. The discovery of DNA has made us realise that it is the most condensed information mechanism known in the Universe.

Scientists who study DNA say that the truth about DNA clearly shows that there is a God.

What amazes scientists is that the information contained in the DNA molecule is separate from it, and it is only its carrier. This information is neither

matter nor energy, it can be described as complex software or a record of thoughts. Therefore, there is a logical conclusion that there must be an Intelligence that created this computer code.

Learning the truth about human DNA, every honest-thinking person comes to the conclusion that atheism has no logical basis, that it is a blind faith in the accidental origin of life and the entire Universe, which is a harmonious whole and functions according to the rules of logic.

One of the greatest scientific discoveries at the beginning of the 21st century was knowing the order of all the nucleotides of human DNA, i.e., sequencing the human genome. This discovery was made by a team of scientists working under the guidance of Prof. Francis S. Collins.

Sequencing of the human genome according to prof. Collins should prompt any intellectually honest scientist to give glory to God. Professor Collins stated that: **“We have the first insight into our book of instructions previously known only to God. The God of the Bible is the God of the genome. He should be worshiped both in the cathedral and in the laboratory. Everything he has created is majestic, amazing, complex and beautiful [...].** There is no conflict in being a rigorous scientist and a person who believes in a God who takes a personal interest in

each person. The domain of science is the study of nature. God's domain is the spiritual world, a reality that cannot be studied with the tools and language of science. It must be explored with the heart, mind and soul, but the mind must find a way to embrace both realities”.

The Nobel Prize-winning physicist Max Planck stated that there is no antithesis between science and religion at all, "since the one complements the other, [...] religion and natural science fight side by side in a never-ending crusade against unbelief and superstition [...] (and thus) ‘for God’”.

In the light of the latest scientific discoveries, we understand better the meaning of the following texts of Sacred Scripture: "For all men who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature; and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know him who exists, nor did they recognize the craftsman while paying heed to his works;. [...] For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator. (Wis 13:1,5); "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse" (Romans 1:19-20). Who? Those

"who by unrighteousness put the truth in bondage" (Romans 1:18).

Saint John Paul II explained that denying the existence of God is a special kind of stupidity that “there lies a threat to life. The fool thinks that he knows many things, but really he is incapable of fixing his gaze on the things that truly matter. Therefore he can neither order his mind (Prov 1:7) nor assume a correct attitude to himself or to the world around him. And so when he claims that “God does not exist” (cf. Ps 14:1), he shows with absolute clarity just how deficient his knowledge is and just how far he is from the full truth of things, their origin and their destiny” (*Fides et ratio*, 18). **However,** wrote St. John Paul II – **“If human beings with their intelligence fail to recognize God as Creator of all, it is not because they lack the means to do so, but because their free will and their sinfulness place an impediment in the way”** (*Fides et ratio*, 19).

On the other hand, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen emphasized that “atheism, in nine cases out of ten, is born from the womb of a bad conscience. Unbelief is born of sin, not of reason.”

We must sincerely ask the Lord God for the gift of faith: He assures us: "And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith" (Mt 21:22).

What's the purpose of Ordinary Time?

From the earliest biblical records, God's people have recognised ritual time as a divine gift that makes present the blessings of the past. Our Christian liturgical year embraces that understanding. Ordinary is a word we normally use to distinguish something from the unusual. "Ordinary Time" sounds like it marks routine weeks not contained within the more eventful seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, or Easter. Yet the mundane truth is, the term comes from the Latin *tempus ordinarium*, or "measured time." These are, simply, the numbered weeks of the year, ordered from 1 to 34.

Unlike other seasons that occur in uninterrupted blocks of days, Ordinary Time inhabits two sections of the calendar. The first is a five-to-eight week period between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday. Ordinary Time is then "interrupted" by the major seasons of Lent and Easter for about 14 weeks. The second, longer block of the season occurs after Pentecost, continuing to the end of the church year on the feast of Christ the King, which would otherwise be the "34th Sunday in Ordinary Time."

(An aside about the variant weeks: the date of Easter determines the liturgical year. Easter Sunday is determined by the Jewish custom of setting Passover on the first full moon after the spring equinox. Once the date of Easter is determined, we count six and a half weeks back to Ash Wednesday. Whatever time is left between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday is the length of the first segment of Ordinary Time, which in turn affects the count of the second.)

This merely establishes the territory of this season. Its purpose is grander than its name: maturity in Christian living. Every Sunday is a "little Easter," the Church Fathers remind us. Each Sunday we gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, just as each Friday we commemorate His death with a sacrificial act. Saturdays within Ordinary Time are observances of Mary, Mother of the Church, who exemplifies the "yes" of discipleship. Saints' feasts sprinkled through the weeks recall what martyrs and holy ones have made of their response in faith. The colour green marks the vestments and altar cloths to remind us of the growth in the Spirit expected of us. In fact, at an earlier time these ordinal weeks were considered part of Pentecost altogether: a full season of celebrating the life of the Spirit at work in the Church.

Prayer

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

Please remember in your prayers Sean McGrory 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.

Stella Maris: the collection for the apostleship of the sea was £110.

Private Retreat: Fr. Tony will be away from Thursday 3rd to Thursday 10th August. Bishop Brian will be here during the weekend to celebrate Mass in Campbeltown and Islay.



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