

23rd September

"Pray, hope, and don't worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer."

~ St. Padre Pío

PARISH BULLETIN St Kieran's, the Catholic Church in

Campbeltown and Islay Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain

17th September 2023

24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Hymns/Music

Processional (Sunday Mass only)

116 Dear Lord and Father of mankind (Hamel), 105 Offertory

762 Take me Lord (Mayhew), 465

Communion

342 Make me a channel of your peace (Keys, 4), 317 **Final**

175 God forgave my sin (McLennan, L), 148[v 1 & 2]

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Sunday, 17th September, 24th in Ordinary Time Holy Mass, 10.00am.

Monday: Holy Mass, 6.00pm

Tuesday and Friday: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Wednesday: Mid-Morning Prayer and Holy Mass, 9.50am

Friday: Adoration, Mid-Morning Prayer, 9.30am and Holy Mass, 10.00am

Saturday, 23rd September, *Vigil Mass*, 6.00pm

Sunday, 24th September, 25th in Ordinary Time, Holy Mass, 10.00am

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

17th September, Holy Mass, 4.00pm



Psalm response

The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:

love one another just as I have loved you, says the Lord. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

How precious is your mercy, O God! The children of men seek shelter in the shadow of your wings.

Take Five

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

Monday, Sep 18, 2023

Make of your life a mission of love

The centurion who approached Jesus was not only courageous, but faith-filled as well. He risked the ridicule of his cronies by seeking help from an itinerant preacher from Galilee, and mockery from the Jews. Nonetheless, he approached Jesus with confidence and humility. He was an extraordinary man because he loved his slave. In the Roman world slaves were treated like animals rather than people. The centurion was also an extraordinary man of faith. He wanted Jesus to heal his beloved slave. Jesus commends him for his faith and immediately grants him his request. Are you willing to suffer ridicule in the practice of your faith? And when you need help, do you approach the Lord Jesus with expectant faith?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 2:1-8; Luke 7:1-10. "I did not consider myself worthy to come to you; but say the word and let my servant be healed."

Tuesday, Sep 19, 2023

OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINT JANUARIUS, BISHOP, MARTYR The real magic of relics

The significance of saintly relics is best understood in light of basic Catholic teaching: Relics aren't talismans born of superstition, nor are they magical souvenirs from worship-worthy saints. Moreover, relics deserve the same basic respect as other human remains. This is key because, historically, relics have been the subject of misunderstanding and abuse, everything from pilgrims who would steal bits of saintly bodies to Martin Luther's objection when relics were sold and hoarded like baubles. God alone works miracles and is worthy of worship. Saints merely agree to be the conduit — in obedience to Divine Love sometimes paying the price with their martyrs' blood. Consider: The real miracle of Januarius' blood might be that he was willing to sacrifice it.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Luke 7:11-17. "A great prophet has arisen in our midst and God has visited his people."

Wednesday, Sep 20, 2023

MEMORIAL OF SAINTS ANDREW KIM TAEGON, PRIEST AND PAUL CHONG HASANG AND THEIR COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Be inspired to broaden your concern On this day in 1918, at the age of 58, Mary Theresa Dudzik entered into eternal life. She accomplished a lot of good in her time on Earth. After immigrating to Chicago from Poland at 21, she would invite poor elderly women and girls to her home. "I felt the misery and suffering of others, and it seemed to me that I could not love Jesus, or even expect Heaven if I were concerned only about myself," she wrote. Dudzik started the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago in 1893, the first order of religious women founded in Chicago. The community devoted itself to aiding the elderly and those in need. She received the honorary title of "Mother" in 1948 and is now a candidate for sainthood. Learn more about Venerable Mary Theresa Dudzik and her heroic virtue.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 3:14-16; Luke 7:31-35. "To what shall I compare the people of this generation?"

Thursday, Sep 21, 2023

FEAST OF SAINT MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

Witness value

When the name Saint Matthew comes up, many people recall him as the tax collector apostle who wrote the Gospel of Matthew. Modern scholarship has challenged the belief that Matthew the apostle wrote the Gospel with his name on it, and other details of Saint Matthew's death by martyrdom cannot be definitively proven. Maybe having precision about all aspects of Matthew's life is not the most important factor in this feast, however. The Church celebrates Matthew for being a faithful apostle and evangelist, things to which every Christian can aspire. Does your life evangelize, that is, bear witness to your belief?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 4:1-7,

11-13; Matthew 9:9-13. "Live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience."

Friday, Sep 22, 2023

Delve into fresh spiritual classics

We know that Mary Magdalene had lived a very troubled and tortured life. The Gospel records that Jesus freed her from seven demons. Joanna, wife of the king's chief financial officer, held significant social and political standing. What brought them together and united them in a bond of friendship and common service? Certainly, Jesus and His message of the kingdom of God had transformed this group of diverse personalities and temperaments. Each brought their gifts and resources to Jesus. Paul the Apostle reminds us that the Holy Spirit gives His gifts and graces to each and everyone for the common good of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7). While God needs no one, He nonetheless, chooses to work in and through each of us for His glory. No one is unimportant or unnecessary in God's economy. The least in His kingdom find a home and a mission at Jesus' side. Do you know the joy of serving Jesus in company with others who love him?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 6:2c-12; Luke 8:1-3. "Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness."

Saturday, Sep 23, 2023

MEMORIAL OF SAINT PIUS OF PIETRELCINA, PRIEST

The essentials of sainthood

Controversy shadowed the life of the mystical Padre Pio, as Pius of Pietrelcina was known. He was said to bear the stigmata, or wounds of Christ, though detractors claimed he manufactured the wounds with carbolic acid. However, one views such claims and counter claims, the undeniable fact is that he was a compassionate counsellor to the thousands who came to see him during his lifetime, a tireless servant who lived a simple life. At Padre Pio's canonisation Mass in 2002, Saint John Paul II said: "The life and mission of Padre Pio testify that difficulties and sorrows, if accepted with love, transform themselves into a privileged journey of holiness, which opens the person toward a greater good, known only to the Lord." You don't have to be a mystic or stigmatist to mirror the ministry of Christ in your own life — all you need is a kind heart and generous spirit.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 6:13-16; Luke 8:4-15. "And some seed fell on good soil, and when it grew, it produced fruit a hundredfold."

Readings for the 24th Sunday

Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7

The one who feeds resentment against another cannot expect healing from God.

Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12

God does not remain angry forever. Should we?

Romans 14:7-9

Life and death are the same for the believer because we belong to the Lord.

Matthew 18:21-35

How much should we forgive? Do we model ourselves after the servant or the Master?

Words on the Word

A new perspective

I would like to attune you to the Gospel by telling a nice and thought-provoking story from Korea.

"In a beautiful valley of chestnut trees near Haidju, there once lived a rich family whose granaries were never closed. And all those in service, farmhands and maids, were faithful to their owners. Except for one groom, whose lack of supervision led him to steal.

One evening, when he assumed that the entire family would not be home, he took a bag of rice from the granary and carried it in a hurry through the many yards outside. However, before the second gate, he suddenly stopped in fear. The lady of the house was standing in front of him.

'Forgive me,' muttered the groom, 'forgive me in the name of heaven!' The woman saw his evil intentions. 'Be silent and hurry,' she said, 'otherwise the master will see you'.

Embarrassed and confused, he slipped through another gate, but then stopped again. He stood before the master of the house. 'Forgive me! Forgive me! In the name of heaven'.

The Lord smiled. 'Hurry up, otherwise your mistress will catch you.'

Then the thief turned around and took the sack back to the granary."

The farmhand in our story experiences so much good will and sympathy that he cannot do otherwise than turn around and take the bag of rice to his farmers' granary.

Whoever meets good and merciful people can learn goodness and mercy.

Whoever experiences forgiveness and letting go can change and become a new person.

At least that's what we think - but listen for yourself. . .

The Gospel Mt 18:21-35

Yet it may happen otherwise. You don't necessarily have to act like that stable boy from Korea. Jesus tells us an alternative story that makes us realize that it is possible to stand by one's right even though one has experienced mercy and forgiveness oneself. You can also treat others ruthlessly, even though you are aware that you are completely dependent on the kindness and grace of other people. How is this possible?

Peter Spangenberg, an evangelical pastor and writer, knows the answer. He once said: "The journey from the head to the heart is said to be 30 centimetres, but it often takes a lifetime."

From the point of view of the head and mind, we know:

- Whoever experiences forgiveness must also be able to forgive;
- ► Without mutually showing good will and forgiving each other, no human coexistence can be successful.

However, on the way from the head to the heart, this truth encounters various obstacles. Resistance arises and makes it difficult to act from the heart that we consider appropriate and meaningful.

Three such obstacles spontaneously came to my mind, three roadblocks leading from the head to the heart. These are the three "why" questions.

First: Why should I be gracious? The underlying belief is that most people think only about their own benefits and insist on their rights. There is so much selfishness and elbowing around. Why me?

A new point of view could help me combat this blockage to my heart – taking a closer look at others. Then maybe I would discover how many people there are who accept me with my flaws; who love me despite my mistakes and failures; who support me even when I constantly disappoint them.

Realizing how much my life depends on the good will of other people – this could help me overcome the first roadblock.

Second: Why should I allow myself to be exploited? The belief behind this is that when I am gracious and generous, I come out badly and lose something. When I forgive the guilt and let something go, I suffer only losses.

A new point of view - a sharper look at yourself – can also help combat this blockage on the path from mind to heart. Perhaps then I will be able to discover that kindness is not a loss to me, but ultimately a gain. Because if I always act in accordance with the principle: "As you do for me, so I do for you" – then I not only bind someone else to his failure, but also myself. I do nothing else than check whether everything is going well. I make my behaviour dependent on the behaviour of the other person, I handcuff myself and incapacitate myself, I allow my own behaviour to be imposed on me.

Realize that forgiveness and generosity bring inner freedom; that they allow me to be independent; that they free me from my vanity - that could help overcome the second roadblock.

Third: Why do I always have to start? Behind this there is an internal opposition that I always have to make the first move. If I don't take the initiative and turn to the other person, he won't do anything on his own.

A new point of view can also help in overcoming this blockage in the path from the head to the heart - a more insightful look at the New Testament: it is always Jesus who takes the first step. It is always He who meets people. He leaves to the tax collector Zacchaeus, who on his own would not have been able to find a way to free him from his sense of guilt; he goes out to the adulteress who would not be able to save herself from those who considered themselves pious and righteous and demanded the enforcement of the Law. It is always Jesus who takes the initiative and allows others to feel His mercy - He invites the marginalized and sinners to His table; He forgives the guilty and gives them a chance to start over. And in his stories he justifies such behaviour. It tells about God who always pursues us with his kindness; about the Heavenly Father anticipating the desires of his earthly children.

Realise that it was always someone else who made the first move; that my life is completely dependent on the gift of God's mercy - this could help overcome the third street blockade.

"The journey from the head to the heart is said to be 30 centimetres, but it often takes a lifetime."

The story from Korea and the story of Jesus bring us closer to an important truth: without graciousness and willingness to forgive, our lives cannot be successful. If we realize, even from time to time,

▶ that the fate of each of us depends on the good will of other people;

- that we will feel free and at ease within if we are generous with each other;
- ▶ and that we believe in God who always precedes us with his mercy and who has made this clear to us in Jesus of Nazareth then, I hope, that the message of both stories will allow us to overcome those 30 centimetres separating the head from the heart.

He carried the cross of us all



Padre Pio wanted to fully realise his priestly and religious vocation and therefore he imitated Christ with all his strength in His love and humility. However, it was Christ Himself who made him a living image of His love, giving him the gift of stigmata.

For fifty years, Padre Pio bore the visible wounds of Christ's suffering and death on his body. All this time the stigmata remained intact, they were always fresh and bled, giving off a wonderful scent. By the time of his death they had completely disappeared, leaving no scars.

During the confession of his pupils on August 5, 1918, Padre Pio suddenly experienced a mystical vision. He saw an angel with a fiery spear who, as Padre Pio writes, "held in his hand something like a tool resembling a long, iron blade ending with a well-sharpened point that seemed to breathe fire. And he threw this hot tool with all his might at my soul. It was with great difficulty that I let out a moan. It seemed to me that I was going to die . . . I cannot describe my suffering . . . From that day on, I began to carry within me a fatal wound. I feel an open wound in the very depths of my soul, the source of my constant suffering.

On August 20, 1918, Padre Pio received visible stigmata. It was on Friday, at the hour when Christ was crucified. He describes this extraordinary event as follows: "I was sitting in the choir after celebrating Holy Mass when a strange state of rest, like a sweet dream, came over me. All my internal and external senses, as well as the capacities of my soul, were immersed in indescribable relief. While continuing in this state, I suddenly saw a mysterious figure next to me, similar to the one I had seen on August 5, except that it had blood on its hands, feet and side.

I experienced feelings that I will never be able to describe. I felt that I was dying, and I would have died if the Lord had not held my heart pounding in my chest. When the mysterious figure disappeared, I saw that my hands, feet and side were punctured, and blood was flowing from the wounds. Please imagine the suffering I experienced then and continue to experience every day.

The heart wound bleeds profusely, especially from Thursday evening until Saturday. I am afraid that I will die from loss of blood if the Lord does not listen to my groans and remove these wounds".

Padre Pio could not hide the bleeding wounds even though he wrapped them with handkerchiefs. The superior demanded to see them. After the examination, he wrote to the general of the order that these were genuine wounds through and through. There is a tear in the side from which blood constantly flows.

The news about the stigmata quickly spread throughout Italy and the whole world. For two years, on the orders of the Provincial and the Capuchin General, Padre Pio's stigmata were subjected to constant and meticulous medical examination. Studies have shown that these deep and bleeding wounds have a cause that science cannot explain. Not caused by mechanical trauma or chemical agents. The wounds had smooth edges, no infection, and were not healing at all.

In his report sent to the Holy Office, prof. Romanelli wrote that blood flowed from the wounds in such quantities that in a normal case there would be a risk of complete exsanguination. The wounds on the legs and arms are so deep that you can see right through them.

"It must be ruled out – the professor writes in his report – that the aetiology of Padre Pio's wounds is of natural origin . . . from a scientific point of view, it is impossible to explain their formation . . . or even classify them, due to their nature and clinical course, as ordinary surgical wounds. They have a completely different origin and cause. Padre Pio is a living miracle.

Dr. Giorgio Festa, in his account, stated that "Padre Pio's wounds and the haemorrhages that come from them have a source that our knowledge cannot explain . . . The blood that flows from cut veins in a living body does not have a pleasant smell. However, the blood that flows from Padre Pio's wounds has a subtle and delicate smell. This phenomenon defies all natural and scientific laws, goes beyond logical explanation, and we honestly cannot do anything other than confirm the facts."

For fifty years, until his death, Padre Pio's wounds bled and remained fresh, never causing abscesses, necrosis or degenerative changes. All these facts remain an unsolvable puzzle for science, being in complete contradiction with the laws of nature. Moreover, at the moment of Padre Pio's death, all the wounds mysteriously disappeared, leaving no scar. This was another great miracle.

Padre Pio felt extremely abased by having stigmata and that is why he wrote: "I will raise my voice to Him and I will not stop begging Him until He takes away from me – not torment or suffering, because I consider it impossible – but these external signs that cause chaos and cause humiliation impossible to describe and bear."

The Saviour did not listen to this request because Padre Pio's stigmata were to become a visible sign for all people of the extent to which God loved man. Christ made his wounds visible on the body of Padre Pio so that all people could see them and stimulate their hearts to greater faith and trust in His Mercy.

A Jesuit, talking to Father Pio, expressed surprise that despite receiving such great spiritual gifts, he did not lose humility. Padre Pio replied with a smile: "Imagine that someone asked you to transport a gold watch to be repaired in Milan. Wouldn't you be a fool if you boasted to your friends that you owned it? Wouldn't you be a thief if you kept it for yourself?"

Padre Pio said of himself that he "bears this cross for everyone." His wounds caused him constant pain.

"When I allow myself to sleep a little," he said, pointing to the wounds in his hands, "their pain increases unbearably."

Jesus Christ in the stigmata of Padre Pio showed us the wounds of His passion and death on the cross to remind us of the truth about His infinite love. It was He, the God-Man, who "burdened Himself with our suffering, bore our weaknesses . . . He was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquities" (cf. Is 53:4-5).

It is God himself, in the humanity of Jesus, who takes upon Himself the sins of all of us and experiences how terrible sin is in order to destroy it, defeat Satan and give all people a chance for salvation. From the moment of Christ's passion, death and resurrection, every human suffering, experienced in unity with Christ, becomes a path of salvation, a participation in the suffering through which Christ redeemed the world.

Padre Pio participated in the saving suffering of the Saviour in a unique way. He experienced all the stages of Jesus' suffering and agony on his own body. He experienced this especially during every Holy Mass, which is the embodiment of the mystery of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. During daily Holy Mass, Padre Pio experienced deep union with the crucified Jesus, suffering from human sins of unbelief and ingratitude. He confided that during the celebration of the Eucharist he suffered "from beginning to end in an increasing way. Mostly from consecration to communion".

Padre Pio suffered with Christ, united with Him in a love capable of the greatest self-sacrifice, but a love despised and rejected by many people. Padre Pio wrote down the words of Jesus' complaint that he heard during one of his visions: "With what ingratitude people respond to My love! I would be less offended by them if I loved less. My Father cannot bear them any longer. Lazy people do not make any effort to overcome temptations, what is more, they take pleasure in their sins. My most beloved souls, when they are tested, follow Me less and less zealously; the weakest of them succumb to fear and hopelessness, and the hottest ones gradually cool down. My Heart has been forgotten, who cares about My love? For many people, my churches have become entertainment theatres. Even from those who worked with Me, whom I had special love for and guarded like the apple of My eye; even from those who should share the bitterness of My Heart and help in the redemption of souls, I experience — who would believe it?! — ingratitude and forgetfulness. I look, my son, at many of them (here Jesus wept) who with hideous hypocrisy betray Me with sacrilegious communions, depriving them of the graces and inspirations that I constantly give them".

Padre Pio united his sufferings with those of Christ for the most hardened sinners.

He wrote: "How much it breaks my heart to see poor sinners . . . these unfortunate people have lost even the ability to consider what punishment awaits them in eternity. Jesus continues to call them to Himself, but they pretend not to hear anything; they run away from Him, not realizing that it is to their own destruction. What is the way for these [dead] to come back to life?"

There is only one way: to love them with the same love that Jesus loves them, that is, to take upon yourself the suffering caused by their sins, to experience for yourself the harm they have done to God through indifference, rejection and hostility towards His love. And in this experience of suffering, make amends and make reparation to God for the terrible harm and pain of the rejection of His love. Throughout his priestly life, Padre Pio constantly offered himself and his sufferings to God for the salvation of sinners. On the day of his priestly ordination, he decided that "he would be a holy priest and a perfect sacrifice."

He wrote to his spiritual director in 1910: "For a long time I have felt the need to consecrate myself to the Lord as a sacrifice for poor sinners and the souls in purgatory. This desire continued to grow in my heart, so that now it became, I might say, a strong passion. I have made this offer to the Lord many times, asking Him to send me other punishments prepared for sinners and souls in purgatory, even increasing them a hundredfold for me, if only He would convert and save sinners and quickly admit the souls in purgatory to heaven".

Appearing to Padre Pio (in 1913), the Lord Jesus asked: "My son, I need sacrifices to eliminate the just and divine anger of my Father; renew your total consecration to Me and do it without any reservations."

Throughout his life, Padre Pio repeated the act of sacrificing himself to God several times a day. By uniting himself in suffering with Christ, Padre Pio transformed his suffering into glory and joyful thanksgiving to God.

He wrote: "I enjoy suffering more than ever, and if I only listened to the voice of my heart, I would ask Jesus to give me all the worries of people; but I won't because I'm afraid of being too selfish by wanting the best part for myself: the pain. He comes begging for suffering, tears He needs them for souls . . . I became worthy to suffer with Jesus and like Jesus. Yes, I love the cross, only the cross; I love it because I always see it on Jesus' shoulders. Now Jesus sees clearly that my whole life, my whole heart is devoted to Him and His sufferings. I am crucified for love."

On the day of his priestly ordination, Padre Pio sang a wonderful song of love that sums up his entire earthly life: "Jesus, my breath and my life, today, as I tremblingly lift You up in the mystery of love, together with You I will be the Way, the Truth and the Life for the world, and for You a holy priest, a perfect sacrifice" (August 10, 1910).

Sharing his own experience, he wrote: "We cannot even understand how great a relief we bring to Jesus when, out of love for Him, we do not demand any consolation in order to participate in His suffering . . . The most beautiful act of faith flows from our hearts during the night of sacrifices and suffering and greatest efforts to do good; like lightning, it tears apart the darkness of your soul and carries you away through the storm to the heart of God . . . If love does not nourish and strengthen itself with the Cross, it is only a straw enthusiasm, not true love."

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 Balbino Otie Jnr (2016) and all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

News and Events

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

Special Collection next Sunday for Ecclesiastical Students of the diocese.

<u>Pastoral Letter on Vocations:</u> available in the church porch. (Arrived too late to be given out last week).

Receiving the Precious Blood at Holy Communion: the receiving of the Host at Holy Communion is the reception of the whole Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the sacrament. However, receiving both the Body and the Blood under both forms is a more complete and fuller sign of union with our Lord in the Sacrament. Therefore, both species, the Most Holy Body and the Precious Blood will be offered at Holy Communion for Sundays (including the Vigil Mass). There will be a chalice of the Precious Blood separate from the Priest's (reason: the priest celebrating the Eucharist must drink from the chalice).



Rather than sharing from the same chalice about which some people will be wary, the Body and Blood will be given by intinction by the priest. That is, the Host will be partially dipped into the Chalice and combined. Slightly larger communion wafers will be used for this and will have to be received on the tongue (for obvious reasons).



There will be members of the faithful who will still want only to receive the Host alone in the hand and so the Minister of Holy Communion should be approached with both hands cupped to receive in the hand.





There may also be faithful who prefer to receive **only the Host on the tongue**. They should signal this by approaching the Minister of Holy Communion with hands held together as in prayer.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion: An EMHC will be needed to hold the Chalice as the priest distributes Holy Communion. The EMHC should come into the Sanctuary, standing next to the priest, as he consumes Holy Communion himself. Then the EMHC will be given Holy Communion and then the Chalice to hold, standing next to the Priest.





