

ASH WEDNESDAY

PARISH BULLETIN St Kieran's, the Catholic Church *in*

*Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain*

11th of February 2024

6th Sunday of Ordinary Time

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

**Sunday, 11th February, 6th Sunday
of Ordinary Time, Holy Mass,
10.00am**

Monday: Holy Mass, **6.00pm**

Tuesday: Holy Mass, **10.00am**

Ash Wednesday: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Friday: Holy Mass, **10.00am**

Devotions:

Wednesday: Mid-morning Prayer, 9.50am

Friday: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Mid-morning Prayer and Holy Mass,
9.30am

Scripture Discussion: Friday: 10.30am

Saturday, 17th February, Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 18th February, First Sunday of Lent, Holy Mass, 10.00am

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

Sunday 18th February, Holy Mass, 4pm

Hymns/Music

Processional (Sunday only)

326: Lord Jesus Christ (Keys)

Offertory

307: Let us break bread together (Keys)

Communion

Тебе поём (We hymn thee)

Post Communion

Sheet: Be still for the presence of the Lord (Keys,UHOA20)

Recessional

Sheet: Will you come and follow me (Keys)



Psalm response

You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

*May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our mind,
so that we can see what hope his call holds for us.*

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon
God so loved the world
that he gave his Only Begotten Son,
so that all who believe in him may not perish,
but may have eternal life.

Take Five

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

MONDAY

12 FEBRUARY 2024

Take advantage of the trial period

Everyone experiences difficulties at some point in their lives. No matter how fortunate a person may be, going a lifetime without adversity is next to impossible. The early church from time to time went through trials of a different sort: hostility, persecution, and the general tension of living in a pagan world that did not share its beliefs. These days there is still friction between a life of faith and an increasingly secular world. The response of some is to condemn that world rather than engage it. On this score, however, contemporary Christians can learn from the first ones, who saw in trials the opportunity to grow in virtue and develop their faith.

Today's readings: *James 1:1-11; Mark 8:11-13. "Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials."*

TUESDAY

13 FEBRUARY 2024

Rise to the occasion

As any baker will tell you, a small amount of leaven — yeast — goes a long way, working its effect on a much larger mass of dough. For this reason Jews of Jesus' age saw the fermentation process brought on by leaven as a metaphor for a corrupting influence, something that in excess would overflow its container. Jesus warned his disciples to be on guard against the "leaven" of leaders — religious or political — who sought to manipulate the people by exercising authority beyond its proper bounds. Jesus had a healthy scepticism about authority not grounded in humility and respect. A wise attitude that history teaches us.

Today's readings: *James 1:12-18; Mark 8:14-21. "Watch out — beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod"*

ASH WEDNESDAY; DAY OF FAST AND ABSTINENCE

14 FEBRUARY 2024

Lent is a communal act

Lent is an annual opportunity for deep soul-

searching. What have I done, and what have I failed to do, to live up to my Baptism? Yet the repentance and conversion called for in this season is a communal decision, not a private one. Together we gather to accept our ashes. Publicly, we remind our fellow citizens that life is short and fragile every step of the way. In our practices of self-denial, greater attention to prayer, and generous almsgiving, we inspire each other with the courage to go the distance these 40 days.

Today's readings: *Joel 2:12-18; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18. "Gather the people, notify the congregation; assemble the elders, gather the children."*

THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

15 FEBRUARY 2024

Matters of life and death

"I want to live again!" George Bailey yells out in *It's a Wonderful Life*. On the brink of ruin in a moment of despair, George contemplates suicide, but with the help of an eccentric and ingenious angel, Clarence, he is given the chance to see how the world benefitted from his life despite his many perceived failures. His numerous acts of kindness were generative, enabling countless subsequent kind acts by others. The film's director, Frank Capra, once said of his role as filmmaker: "My films must let every man, woman, and child know that God loves them, and that I love them, and that peace and salvation become a reality only when they all learn to love each other." Words to live by.

Today's readings: *Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Luke 9:22-25. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it."*

FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

16 FEBRUARY 2024

Not so fast?

One out of six people in the present generation lives in extreme poverty. Not simply below the poverty line established by government organizations: Extreme poverty means living in danger of death because there is no food. By virtue of living in a country where food is made affordable by subsidies and meal programmes are available to make up the shortfall, it's easy to forget and hard to imagine the kind of suffering

starvation entails. If one in six neighbours were hungry, wouldn't the other five feed that person? Fasting, even abstaining from meat, reminds us that our neighbour is hungry — and of our responsibility to help.

Today's readings: *Isaiah 58:1-9a; Matthew 9:14-15. "This . . . is the fasting that I wish: . . . Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless."*

SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY
17 FEBRUARY 2024

Turn this thing around!

OK, so maybe Ash Wednesday came and went this past week while you were looking the other

way. Here's the good news (yes, we still celebrate good news during Lent!): As long as you have breath to breathe it is never too late for what the Greeks called *metanoia* — we call it repentance, but the literal meaning is more like the command "About face!" It's about turning your life around and heading in a better direction. We all have travelled a few highways and byways best left behind. If you're on one now, stop in your tracks, turn around, and get your *metanoia* on!

Today's readings: *Isaiah 58:9b-14; Luke 5:27-32. "Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth."*

Readings for the 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

Those who suffer from skin ailments and are declared unclean must live apart.

Psalms 32:1-2, 5, 11

The Lord removes blame, covers sin, and relieves guilt at the confession of fault.

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Make all of your decisions for the glory of God and avoid scandalizing others.

Mark 1:40-45

Jesus heals a leper who just can't keep quiet about the miracle.

Words on the Word

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The entire extent of the furniture of such a room consisted of bullrushes placed on the floor where the sick sleep; in one of the corners, they set up a fire to cook their food; there's no mention of chimneys. In one such room there is one family with all they possess. These unfortunate people wear whatever they have; finding an old sack or something like that and they're already dressed. Their food is mostly rice, some of which they receive from the mission every week. Apart from rice, the mission cannot give them anything else, because we live on alms. Those among the sick who can still work dig up the earth a bit and plant whatever they can get, e.g. cassava, sweet potatoes (a type of potato), beans, corn, etc. In a word, the poverty is terrible, poor people walk around and their wounds exposed, because they have nothing to wrap them in. There is no one with them, no doctor, no nuns, no infirmary, in other words no one at all . . . (The letters of Blessed John Beyzym, 1850-1912).

* *

Due to the nature of the disease, leprosy has always aroused repulsion. It was considered an incurable disease. It manifests itself in the fact that first the ability to feel pain ceases, and then the body even decomposes. The stench and the danger of infection were the reason why sick people were rejected and left to their own devices for centuries. The sick were forcibly removed from the community and contact with them was difficult. This is probably still the case in some parts of Africa.

In the account of Mark the Evangelist, a person suffering from leprosy asks Christ for healing and receives grace. We see Christ's care for a sick man and mercy for the one who seeks healing. What is important to Christ is the person. He does not seek publicity, which may obscure what is most important: the relationship with Christ. The sick person's statement: "If you want, you can cure me" proves his great faith. The healing performed by Jesus was somehow "provoked" by the sick person, who believed that he was standing before a man with non-human, that is, divine, healing power. The leper's faith is, so to speak, all in order.

First, he knows that Christ has the power to heal disease, which for the Jew meant healing the soul.

Secondly, the sick person's confession: "If you want", is not a request with the tinge of an order, but a request from a humble and believing person. We ourselves have many problems with our prayers, through which we sometimes want to persuade God to fulfil our will. This scene is symbolic. Leprosy is the symbol of a person who feels bad in their own skin and does not accept themselves. There are many reasons why a person does not accept themselves.

- This may be the result of upbringing, if they were told that they were not good for anything and were often a source of disappointment.
- Sometimes it is the result of too high expectations for yourself, not always matching your own capabilities.
- Sometimes the reason is resentment towards fate, because of a failed life, unfulfilled dreams, too few talents and abilities, etc.

There are also many other reasons why a person does not accept themselves and "feels bad in their own skin."

The gift of healing is not free, Christ gives the healed person a programme to implement. The command: "Go and show yourself to the priest" means: "Do not run away from people, join the human community and worship God. Control your destiny, get to know and accept yourself and your life better. Don't run away from yourself and your life. It is as it is."

Accepting one's own fate, accepting one's own limitations is ultimately acceptance of the presence of the cross in life, because – as Father Beyzym used to say: "Nowhere will you find a corner without a cross." We could say that when Jesus healed the leper, He gave him the following command: "Take up your cross and have the courage to live your life. Running away from yourself and your life is your disease".

* * *

*I found my freedom,
I am not afraid of what the world is.
I'm walking along the designated path,
I overcome problems.
I greet travellers with a smile.
Eyes forgotten about tears,
have only joy in them.
I am not afraid for my own self
because now is the time
to create yourself,
to explore the world.
(anonymous author, *The Courage to Live*)*

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving



The Word is near you. Ash Wednesday (Joel 2:12–18; 2 Cor 5:20–6:3; Matthew 6:1–6,16–18).

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday contains a Gospel, which is like a strategic action plan for us on how to experience Lent well. This strategy involves three stages.

The first is fasting. It is worth remembering that it does not depend primarily on, for example, not surfing the internet. It involves restricting food in meals. Today, for most of us this practice has been replaced by abstinence from meat and maybe luxury foods like sweets, and this only on two days in the year. But this has little to do with true fasting. During this holy time that begins on Ash Wednesday, it is worth limiting meals and feeling for yourself that man does not really live by bread alone.

The Fathers have said that by fasting, denying ourselves food and some pleasures, we gain time and certain financial resources. What to do with them? Time should be devoted to prayer, and what we have saved materially should be shared with the poorest. And these are the next two stages: prayer and helping the poorest (almsgiving). Without them, fasting – and Lent itself – makes no sense.

The Lord Jesus also tells us that all this must take place in secret. It is not about being ashamed of being a Christian, but rather about, on the one hand, showing respect for those we help (our help must not humiliate them!) and, on the other hand, making sure that our prayer is primarily about building our relationship God, not our good image in the eyes of others or our own.

Do these three stages of Lent have anything in common? Yes. It is love, without which all life makes no sense. Out of love we are to pray, out of love to support our brothers and sisters in need, and out of love to finally deny ourselves food for the body in order to discover that what gives us true life is the Word of the Living God.

Comfort My motherly Heart!



Every time we contemplate the passion of Jesus, our Saviour, with the eyes of our souls we look at the One who, out of infinite love for us, gave His life on the cross for our salvation. We also look at Mary, our Mother, who is opening her Heart to us on this and every day. What does she want to tell us?

On September 15, 2011, on the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, a Benedictine monk whose notes were published in the book *In sinu Jesu* heard the following confession from Mary:

“He is constantly abandoned in this Sacrament, neglected, betrayed by sinners –

and all this by His chosen ones, His beloved ones, priests who are supposed to be the consolation and joy of His Heart. [...]

My motherly Heart will not cease to suffer from the lack of reverence, indifference and ingratitude of so many souls towards the Sacrament of my Son's immortal love. [...]

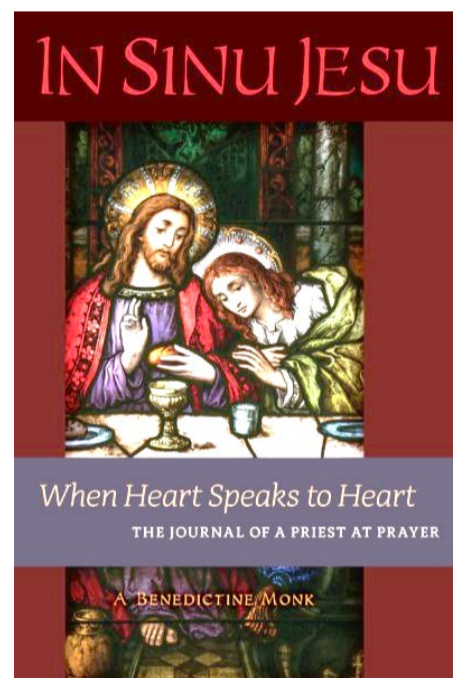
Yes, My beloved son, the eighth sorrow of My maternal, Immaculate Heart is that My Son is so often offended in the Sacrament of His Love... This sorrow of Mine will last until the end of time.” Let's immerse ourselves in her words and make our Mother's suffering our own.

Why did Jesus leave us the Blessed Sacrament?

Mary explained: *“It is through this Sacrament that He loves His own, having loved them to the end (John 13:1; Luke 22:15) – to the end of every created possibility and to the end of this passing world. His Eucharistic love transcends all the laws of transient nature: there is no greater miracle on earth than the real presence of my Son in the Sacrament of the Altar”* (September 15, 2011).

This love of Christ compels us to give our loving response, all the more generous when we realise that so often, instead of gratitude, He experiences silence, instead of presence – abandonment, instead of faithfulness – betrayal, instead of glory – abuse. . .

Mary explains in detail what causes pain to Her Heart and what is an expression of betrayal towards Jesus hidden in the Sacrament of Love.



They do not let others know Him

"How is He betrayed? His priests, my own sons, betray Him when they fail to make Him known, when by not teaching the mystery of His real presence they leave souls in the darkness of ignorance, without fire or light." (September 15, 2011).

The entry from October 10, 2007, includes one of Jesus' requests: *"I want you to speak to the faithful of the Holy Mass as a true sacrifice. They have forgotten this. No one thinks any more to tell them that the action of the Eucharist renews My sacrifice upon the Cross, and that I am present upon the altar as upon the Cross, as both Priest and Victim. It is the whole of My sacrifice of love that unfolds before their eyes. You must tell them this. I want you to be another John for My Heart. I will fill your spirit with My words of love, so that you may communicate them to those who so much need to hear them"*.

We find a similar promise and a similar call in a note dated October 29, 2007:

"I want also that you should speak to them of My solitude in the tabernacle. [...] They forget that I am not there like some inanimate object. It is My Heart that waits for you in the tabernacle; it is My gaze that, full of tenderness, fixes itself, from the tabernacle, on those who draw near to it. I am not there for My own sake. I am there to feed you and to fill you with the joys of My presence."

They discourage others

And here is the second reason for Mary's suffering: some priests *"betray my Son when, by their example, they discourage reverence, and adoration, and a loving attention to His presence."*

They betray Him when they offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass unworthily, and when they hand Him over to sinners who have no intention of giving Him their hearts and seeking His mercy and His pardon for their sins. [...]

This, too, is the eighth sorrow of my Heart: that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated quickly, with little reverence, with no thanksgiving, and with all the attention given, not to my Son, the Lamb, but, rather, to the human presence of His minister, who, by calling attention to himself, takes from God what belongs rightly to God alone: the loving attention of every heart during the Holy Mysteries." (September 15, 2011).

They leave Him alone

Mary also laments that Jesus remains alone in the tabernacle. He cries because some priests *"leave Him alone in locked churches and when they make it difficult or impossible for souls to approach His tabernacles and rest in the radiance of His Eucharistic Face. They betray Him when they allow His churches to become places of noise and worldly chatter, and when they do nothing to recall souls to the living mystery of His love, that is, His presence in the tabernacle."* (September 15, 2011).

These words of Mary also express the immeasurable suffering of Jesus. He himself speaks about it many times:

"My great sorrows: that the men whom I have chosen and set apart to be My friends and My priests show so little interest in remaining in My company, in listening to what I have to say to them, and in pouring out their hearts to Me. I wait for them. I look for their arrival. And I am disappointed because so few of My priests understand My desire in instituting the

Sacrament of love was that the priests who offer My sacrifice and nourish My people with My Body and Blood should also find in My Eucharistic presence the remedy for every loneliness, every fear, and every need for love — for the love that I cause them to crave. They suffer emptiness of heart without the love for which they were created. I am close to them. I wait for them. Why do they not come to Me?" (January 30, 2009).

"Waste" time

In the Benedictine monk's notes quoted here, the Lord Jesus gives various ways to satisfy the longing of His Eucharistic Heart: "wasting" time with Him, night adoration, opening adoration chapels and making reparation.

"This is what I want of you: time "wasted," spent in My presence. Time given to Me for My sake. I want all My priests to recover a sense of gratuitousness in their prayer. I want them to come to Me, and to remain with Me, for Me alone and for My sake, because I alone am worthy of all their love. Do you think that I was always meeting with My disciples to plan events, to organize and strategize and plot our course of action? All of this is the world's way of achieving what it sees as results. When I walked with My disciples, when I rested with them, our delight was in being together. They remained with Me for Me alone, and I remained with them out of My love for them, just as I remain in the Sacrament of the Altar out of the love I bear My whole Church, but especially, and first of all, My priests. Why do My priests not yet understand this? All of their priestly activity must flow out of their "being with Me," and thus, the fruit they bear will be abundant and vigorous — that is the fruit that will last." (February 3, 2009).

To those who will have the courage to "waste time with Him", Jesus promises the following graces: *"Come to Me in the Sacrament of My love, and I will continue to instruct you. When you are bewildered or at a loss, have recourse to Me and I will send forth My light and My truth" (February 3, 2009).*

"My Heart thirsts for the love of the saints. To those who come to Me, I will give love and holiness. And in this shall My Father be glorified. And this shall come to pass through the intimate action of My Spirit. Where I am present in the Sacrament of My love, there also is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son." (October 29, 2007).

"Wheresoever My priests return to prayer, there will I cause a vast harvest of priestly vocations to spring up. I will multiply My priests just as I multiplied loaves and fishes to feed the multitude in the desert. When priests forsake prayer, they forsake Me, and so I withdraw My blessing from their labours, and leave them to themselves, for without prayer — without Me — they can do nothing." (July 15, 2012).

Night adoration

Only in heaven will you know the worth of an hour so spent. Come to Me, then. Visit Me, and remain with Me by night, and I will work for you, and with you, and through you by day. By nocturnal adoration you will obtain from My Heart things which cannot be obtained from Me in any other way, especially the liberation of souls from the influence and oppression of the powers of darkness. More souls are saved and liberated by adoration made during the night than by any other form of prayer: this is the prayer that unites you most closely to My own nights passed entirely in prayer during My life on earth.

Come to Me, then, by night, and you shall experience My power and My presence at your side during the day. Ask of Me whatsoever you will by coming to Me at night, and you will experience My merciful help at break of day. I love with a love of predilection those whom I call to be with Me during the hours of the night. The prayer of adoration at night has the power and efficacy of that prayer made with fasting that I recommended to My apostles as the means of expelling demons from the souls whom they torture and oppress. For this reason, the demons fear and hate adoration made at night, while the angels rejoice over it, and place themselves at the service of the soul who desires to do it.” (November 12, 2012).

Adoration chapels

“When I am adored in a place, My hidden action upon souls is wonderfully increased. The place where I am adored becomes a radiant centre from which love, life, and light are diffused in a world in the grip of hatred, darkness, and death.

Chapels of adoration are not mere refuges for the devout. They are the radiant, pulsating centres of an intense divine activity that goes beyond the walls of the place where I am adored to penetrate homes, and schools, and hospitals; to reach even those dark and cold places wherein souls are enslaved to Satan; to penetrate hearts, heal the infirm, and call home those who have wandered far from Me.” (August 26, 2010).

Compensation

“There is a consolation that only My priests sojourning on earth, in the valley of the shadow of death, can offer Me. Only those who live for the altar and from the altar can give Me the consoling and adoring love that delivers Me from the sorrow that constrains My Sacred Heart. This is a mystery, of love, that I, who am all-glorious and the source of heaven’s glory and bliss, should nonetheless suffer the effects of man’s refusal to respond to My Eucharistic love with love. [...]

It is not difficult to carry out what I have asked of you. Give Me your presence. Offer Me your companionship. Abide in the radiance of My Eucharistic Face. Offer yourself to My Eucharistic Heart to be loved, and transformed, and used as an instrument of love and of healing for My priests, your brothers.” (March 16, 2010).

Be a victim of love!

“Shall I tell you more of this eighth sorrow of my Heart?” – Mary, our Mother, asks each of us today: “It is when you are lacking in generosity, when you fail to respond to love with love, when you are not generous in being present to Him who is present in the Most Holy Eucharist for love of you. I speak here not only to you, but to all my priest sons and to all consecrated souls who live with my Son under the same roof, and yet treat Him coldly, or casually, or with a distant formality. [...]

Do you not grieve with me over this eighth sorrow of my Heart, made up of many sorrows repeated again, and again, and again? [..]

Grieve with me today, and console my maternal and Immaculate Heart by adoring my Son, the blessed fruit of my womb, and by giving Him all that you are in an immolation of love.” (September 15, 2011).

Lent cleanses us from selfishness

Allow yourselves, then, to be imbued by the spirit of penance and conversion, which is the spirit of love and sharing. . .

From the Papal Message for Lent 1982



The liturgical period of Lent is given us in and through the Church in order to purify us of that remainder of selfishness and excessive attachment to things – material or otherwise – which keep us apart from those who have a right to our help: principally those who, whether physically near or far, are unable to live their lives with dignity as men and women created by God in his image and likeness.

Allow yourselves, then, to be imbued by the spirit of penance and conversion, which is the spirit of love and sharing. Imitating Christ, draw close to those who have been left naked and wounded, those whom the world ignores or rejects. Take part in all that is being done in your local Church to help Christians and all people of good will to obtain for each one of their brothers and sisters the means, including the material means, of living with dignity and of taking upon themselves their own human and spiritual advancement and that of their families.

May the Lenten collection, even in poor countries, allow you, through sharing, to help the local Churches of still less favoured countries to fulfil their mission as Good Samaritans towards those for whom they are immediately responsible: their own poor, the undernourished, those who are denied justice, those who are still unable to ensure their own development and the development of their communities.

Penance, conversion: this is the road to follow; not a sad one, but a liberating one suggested by the Lenten period.

Praying with Icons

Icon of the Mother of God: The Virgin of Vladimir

Belonging to God

To whom do we belong? This is the core question of the spiritual life. Do we belong to the world, its worries, its people and its endless chain of urgencies and emergencies, or do we belong to God and God's people? This question is not too difficult to answer. Our milieu – the persons and events we talk and agonise about, rejoice in and give thanks for – reveals to whom we truly belong. The tragedy is that for most of us this milieu is far from the divine milieu.

The icon, also known as "Our Lady of Tenderness," is one of the most venerated of all Russian icons. It was painted by an anonymous Greek artist at the beginning of the twelfth century. Around the year 1183 it was brought from Constantinople to Kyiv, and about twenty years later from Kyiv to Vladimir where it remained until 1395. Although the icon has been in Moscow for the past six centuries, it is still called "The Virgin of Vladimir." This sacred national treasure has miraculously escaped many fires and plunderers. It has undergone several restorations, yet the faces of the mother and child are still those of the original Byzantine masterpiece.

Contemplating this icon can be a profound experience. In trying to give words to this experience let's follow the movement from the Virgin's eyes to her hands, and from her hands to the child. These movements reveal the answer to the question: To whom do I belong?

The Eyes of the Virgin

People always try to seek eye contact with those we meet. It makes us feel accepted, or at least taken seriously. But as you try to make eye contact with the Virgin of Vladimir, you may realise it's impossible. At first this may disturb you. I must admit that I wanted her to look at me, to notice me as a unique individual, and to know me as her personal friend. But the Mother of God did not look at me. In stark contrast to most of the Renaissance Madonnas, whose familiar look engages us in an interpersonal relationship, the Virgin of Vladimir does not enter into our familiar reality; she invites us to enter with her into the eternal life of God. Her eyes look inward and outward at once. They look inward to the heart of God and outward to the heart of the world, thus revealing the unfathomable unity



between the Creator and the creation. They see the eternal in the temporal, the lasting in the passing, the divine in the human. Her eyes gaze upon the infinite spaces of the heart where joy and sorrow are no longer contrasting emotions but are transcended in spiritual unity. The meaning of Mary's gaze is further accentuated by the bright stars on her forehead and shoulders (only two stars are visible; one is covered by the child). They not only indicate her virginity before, during, and after the birth of Jesus, but also speak of a divine presence that permeates part of her being. She is completely open to the divine Spirit, making her innermost being completely attentive to the creative power of God. Thus, being mother and being virgin are no longer mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they bring each other to completion. Mary's motherhood completes her virginity, and her virginity completes her motherhood. That is why she carries in Greek the highest title that a human being has ever received: Theotokos, "The Bearer of God." Praying to the Virgin of Vladimir, we learn that although she is not looking at us, she is truly seeing us. She sees us with the same eyes she sees Jesus. They are the eyes which saw her Lord before she conceived Him, contemplated the Word before it became flesh in her and sensed God within before she heard the angel's message. With these eyes the Virgin sees the Child. Her gaze is not that of a proud mother of an exceptional baby; she sees Him with the faithful eyes of the Mother of God. Before seeing Him with the eyes of her body, she saw Him with the eyes of faith. That is why the Sacred Liturgy continues to praise Mary as the one who

conceived God in her heart before God was conceived in her body. As Mary sees Jesus, so she sees those who pray to her: not as interesting human beings worthy of her attention, but as people called away from the darkness of sin into the light of faith, called to become daughters and sons of God. It is hard for us to relinquish our worldly identity as noteworthy people and accept our spiritual identity as children of God. We so much want to be looked at that we are ill prepared to be truly seen. But the eyes of the Virgin invite us to let go of our old ways of belonging and accept the good news that we truly belong to God. (next week: The Hands of the Virgin)



Prayer

Please pray for those who are sick, in need or have asked for our prayers: Tommy McGrory snr, Lilian Cox, Sarah Carmichael, Ailsa Stewart, Meg Douglas (Mull), and Doleen Durnin.

Please remember in your prayers Balbino Otie Snr 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 to join us. Please do come.

Church heating: there is a 'second collection' box in the church porch specifically for energy costs.

Hymns/Music for Ash Wednesday

Processional

Sheet: God of mercy and compassion (McLellan)

Offertory

327: Lord Jesus think on me (Keys)

Communion

Eucharistic Prelude

Post Communion

176: Godhead here in hiding (Keys,S)

Recessional

175: God forgave my sin in Jesus' name (McLellan,L)

Psalm Response

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

A pure heart create for me, O God,

and give me again the joy of your help.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!



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