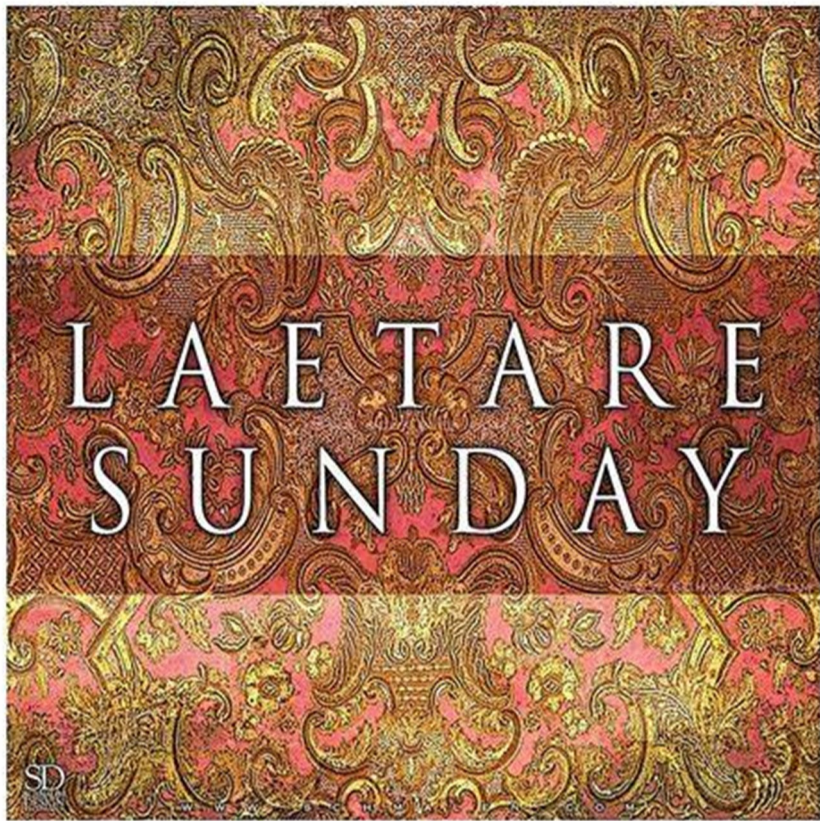


PARISH BULLETIN

St Kieran's, the Catholic Church *in*

Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain



4th Sunday of Lent

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Sunday, 10th March, *Fourth Sunday of Lent*, Holy Mass, 10.00am

Monday: Holy Mass, 6.00pm

Wednesday: **Requiem Mass, 1.00pm**

Tuesday: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Devotions:

Wednesday: -

Friday: -

Faith Course: -

Saturday, 16th March, *Vigil Mass*, 6.00pm

Sunday, 17th March, *Fifth Sunday of Lent*, Holy Mass, 10.00am

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

Sunday 17th March, Holy Mass, 4pm

***Easter Sunday, 31st March*, Holy Mass, 4pm**

Hymns/Music

Processional (Sunday only)

455 Praise to the holiest (Keys, Billing)

Offertory

243 In bread we bring you, Lord (McLennan)

Communion

Tebe nojem (We sing to You)

Post Communion

36 Amazing grace (Hamel[4])

Recessional

375 Now thank we all our God (Keys, Nun Danket)



Psalm response

O let my tongue cleave to my mouth if I remember you not!

Gospel acclamation

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

*God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son:
everyone who believes in him has eternal life.*

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

Communion Antiphon

*Jerusalem is built as a city bonded as one together.
It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,
to praise the name of the Lord.*

Take Five

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

MONDAY: LENTEN WEEKDAY

11 MARCH 2024

A thoroughly modern saviour

Worldwide empires, a vast network of international trade, high taxation, an underpaid working class, ethnic diversity, minorities on the margins ...

sound like a description of your world? It is also the world Jesus lived and preached in. Everything Jesus said and did is set against the backdrop of the Roman Empire and the vast political and social currents of the ancient world. We can take comfort from the fact that despite the differences in time and technology, Jesus' age was as complicated as our own. He spoke with a clarity that cut through the complexity. Listen well!

Today's readings: Isaiah 65:17-21; John 4:43-54. *"A royal official ... went to [Jesus] and asked him to come down and heal his son."*

TUESDAY: LENTEN WEEKDAY

12 MARCH 2024

Jesus the handy-man

We often put up with a lot of things in our lives that are broken: a cabinet door that doesn't close, a table that wobbles, a loose handle on a rake that needs tightening. In our lives, too, there are aspects of our personality that don't work and need to be fixed. There are relationships that are broken and need mending. There are thoughts, words, and deeds that are in need of adjustment. Jesus, the divine handy-man, is ready, willing, and able to make all the necessary repairs. Give him a call. He's on your daily prayer speed-dial.

Today's readings: Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16. *"When Jesus saw the man lying there, and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, 'Do you want to be well?'"*

WEDNESDAY: LENTEN WEEKDAY

13 MARCH 2024

Glad to be of help

The feeling that you are doing God's will on Earth activates a deep source of inner peace. On the other hand, the thought that you really should be doing something else creates a low-grade feeling of anxiety that you can ignore for only so long.

Eventually the unease accumulates until life becomes a heavy burden, or you get sick — or both. Your fear might be that God wants you to go to some hard place, to do some difficult task. Not so. As theologian Frederick Buechner put it, God calls you to "the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." To find that place of deep gladness you have to go within and you have to listen. Lent is the perfect time to do both.

Today's readings: Isaiah 49:8-15; John 5:17-30. *"I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me."*

THURSDAY: LENTEN WEEKDAY

14 MARCH 2024

Idol activities

There are many interpretations of the meaning of the "golden calf" the Israelites constructed during their long exodus. In one way or another, the calf probably represented an idol, or false god, that the Israelites fell into worshipping while in the desert. They wanted their long sojourn to end and had already forgotten the misery of their Egyptian captivity. Like the Israelites we sometimes prefer to worship something shiny and pretty we can see with our eyes rather than wait patiently upon the Lord. Lent is the perfect season in which to conduct an "idol check" in your life. Where are your deepest allegiances? Whom — or what — do you really worship?

Today's readings: Exodus 32:7-14; John 5:31-47. *"They have soon turned aside from the way I pointed out to them."*

FRIDAY: LENTEN WEEKDAY

15 MARCH 2024

Time is love

Each year as we pass another birthday or significant milestone, we can be thankful for all the time we've been given. Yet making it to this moment doesn't guarantee us one minute more. We could fret about how our days are numbered, but our faith shows us another way to calculate matters. Christians see time measured in love, and love is everlasting. We don't need to know the hour or the day of our death, because the love we give and receive stems from a never-ending source which is, was, and ever shall be. As we love, we are already tapping into eternity.

Today's readings: Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30. *"So they tried to arrest Jesus, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come."*

SATURDAY: LENTEN WEEKDAY

16 MARCH 2024

Compelling words

The significance of words seems cheapened in a day when text messaging mangles them so easily, but those who doubt the power of a word need only think of words they wish they'd never uttered. On the other hand, a word of hope or encouragement can change the course of a life. How much more so the Word of God, which Isaiah says is sharp enough to divide bone from marrow.

We call Jesus "the Word made flesh," and apparently when he spoke — simple as his words were — he could prompt a response even from his enemies. Christ has taken root in us when we are judicious in what we say to others (and ourselves). We, too, have the power to build up or devastate

others.

Today's readings: Jeremiah 11:18-20; John 7:40-53. *"The religious leaders asked them, 'Why did you not bring him?' The guards answered, 'Never before has anyone spoken like this man.'"*

Readings for the 4th Sunday of Lent

2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23

Ignorance will reap its reward, so give heed to the messengers of the Lord!

Psalms 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6

The children of exile lament and remember their lost homeland.

Ephesians 2:4-10

Salvation comes by grace, freely given as God's gift to us.

John 3:14-21

God loves the world enough to save it from perishing. Believe it!

Words on the Word

Symeon (Symeon the New Theologian, 949-1022) focused his reflection on the Holy Spirit's presence in the baptised and on the awareness they must have of this spiritual reality. "Christian life", he emphasized, "is intimate, personal communion with God, divine grace illumines the believer's heart and leads him to a mystical vision of the Lord". Along these lines, Symeon the New Theologian insisted that true knowledge of God does not come from books but rather from spiritual experience, from spiritual life. Knowledge of God is born from a process of inner purification that begins with conversion of heart through the power of faith and love. It passes through profound repentance and sincere sorrow for one's sins to attain union with Christ, the source of joy and peace, suffused with the light of his presence within us. For Symeon this experience of divine grace did not constitute an exceptional gift for a few mystics but rather was the fruit of Baptism in the life of every seriously committed believer. A point on which to reflect, dear brothers and sisters! This holy Eastern monk calls us all to pay attention to our spiritual life, to the hidden presence of God within us, to the sincerity of the conscience and to purification, to conversion of heart, so that the Holy Spirit may really become present in us and guide us. (Benedict XVI, Symeon the New Theologian, Audience general, September 16, 2009).

* *

Jesus Christ came into the world as the light of the world. In the Gospel of Saint John, we read that the light has come into the world to His own, but men did not receive the light, so that their deeds remained in darkness. He who performs deeds of light draws near to the light. Everyone who believes in the Son of Man will be saved, because Christ brought salvation and did not come into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

We usually have bad associations with the courts. Accusation, witnesses, verdict, punishment. Some feel satisfied, others feel wronged. Perhaps that is why God's judgment and the final judgment have aroused fear for centuries and still do today. This phrase has always been emphasised: "Christ will come to judge the living and the dead." We often forget that He came primarily as a Saviour – to save us. The biblical meaning of the word "judge" is closer to such meanings as: perfect, complete, prepare. The purpose of God's judgment is reconciliation, forgiveness, and salvation.

How can we explain the statement that no matter how we live, we will experience God's

forgiveness? Does this mean that those who harmed people and committed crimes will be made equal with those who tried to live an evangelical life? The life of Jesus Christ is our model. He stands on the side of the wronged, the victims, not the perpetrators. However, He wants to save all people. He wants the eyes of those who are evil, blind and self-satisfied to be opened.

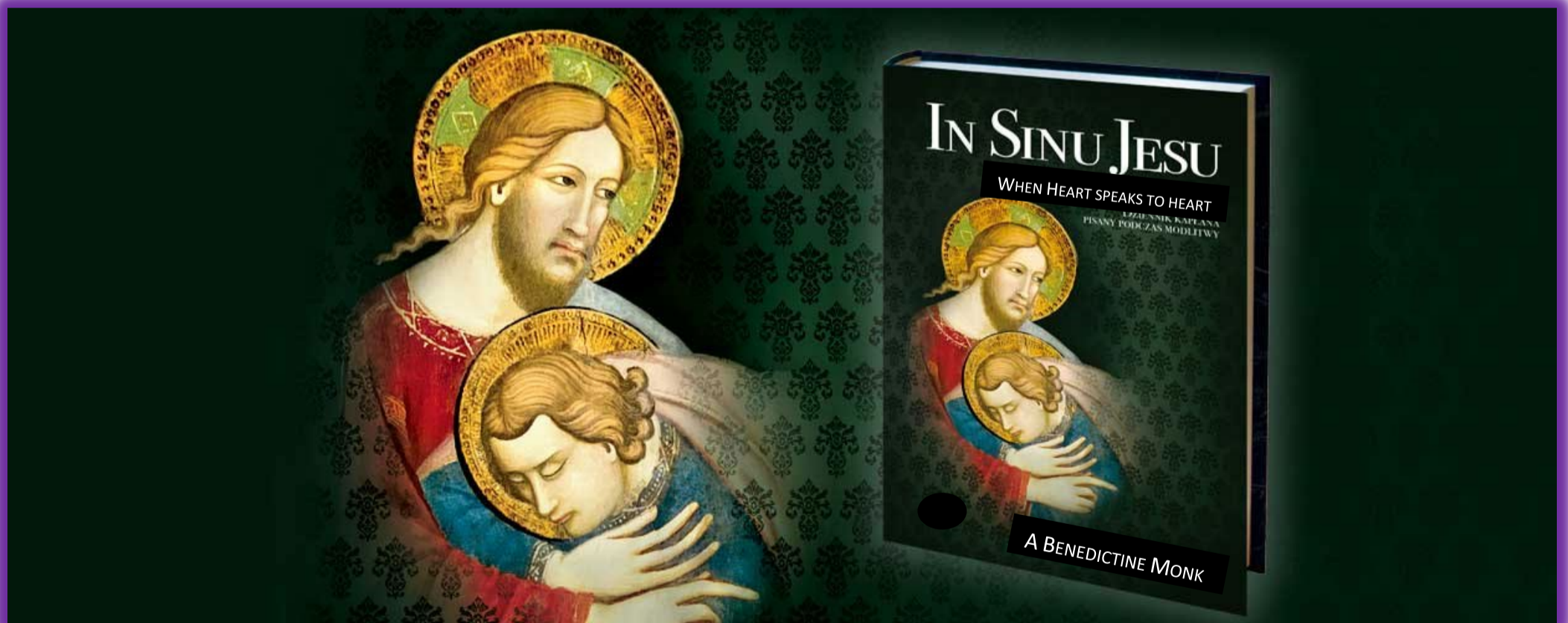
The Lord Jesus explains this to us using the image of light and darkness. Whoever chooses the light, whoever stands in the light himself, who seeks reconciliation, forgives and seeks forgiveness, ultimately finds reconciliation with God and with people – the kingdom of God. It is not the Lord Jesus who judges, it is the person who chooses light or darkness. It is not God who convicts us to heaven, hell or purgatory, it is we who, so to speak, choose. Everyone who abandons themselves to God's forgiving love will be accepted. The 'fire' in purgatory is the process of acknowledging guilt, regret and transformation, which ultimately ends in God's mercy. It's true that admitting guilt is painful. Whoever closes himself off from God's mercy, does not believe in it, laughs at it, chooses rejection.

God gives the light of knowledge, offers the grace of transformation, the grace of forgiveness, but He will not save us without us.

* * *

*Light is radiance then
as it emerges from the darkness
like a life raft
in a sea of indifference
it's a crumb of kindness
flowing from the heart of what is
no longer a block of ice.
(Jadwiga Z., The Light)*

When Jesus speaks to the heart



In 2007, Jesus Christ and His Mother Mary began to give messages to a priest, a Benedictine monk, who was in great spiritual need. This priest was asked to write down everything he heard.

Mystical conversations

The author himself, a Benedictine monk who remained anonymous, describes the creation of

the pages of the diary as follows: “There would be an inner movement to write, and I would write until the inspiration stopped. After writing, there would be a grace of quiet union with Our Lord or with Our Lady. On a few occasions, there were “words” from saints or from holy people. [...] what I experienced as an objective but intimate presence of Our Lord, immediately related to His real presence in the Most Holy Sacrament. **It was precisely in His Eucharistic presence that these conversations with Our Lord unfolded, drawing me more and more into the light of His Face and the fire of His Heart.** [...] Since the diagnosis of my serious illness, there has been a strong attraction to adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, to reparation for priests, and, in particular, to the mystery of Our Lord’s Face hidden beneath the sacramental veils. This is something already present in the tradition, notably in the *Adoro te* of Saint Thomas [Aquinas].

The texts have borne fruit in my own life and in the lives of others, especially of priests with whom I have been encouraged to share them, at the recommendation of my spiritual director. In spite of my reticence and desire for anonymity in regard to this journal, I have been repeatedly told by Our Lord Himself that His words are meant for the blessing, instruction, and comfort of many Christians today, above all, His beloved priests.”

This is how several volumes of diaries were created, which were published in the form of a book titled: *In sinu Iesu*, with the imprimatur of the Bishop of Meath, Michael Smith. The Latin title refers to the scene from the Last Supper, when the beloved disciple – Saint John – rested on Jesus' chest. The book in English version was published by Angelico Press. Below are excerpts of this work.

I will speak to your heart

“I shall speak to you, I shall speak to your heart, so that you may hear My voice for the joy of your heart. You will hear My voice especially when you will come before My Face, when you will adore My Eucharistic Face and draw near to My open Heart. I will speak to your heart as I spoke to the heart of My beloved disciple John, the friend of My Heart, the priest of My open Heart” (October 8, 2007).

“You gave joy to My Heart by remaining this time in My presence. The light of My Eucharistic Face is shining in your soul and I have drawn you close to the wound in My side. You are always welcome in My presence. I long to receive you and to keep you close to Me. This is your vocation, priest adorer. Respond to the call of My Heart. Adore Me for your brother priests who forget that I wait for them in the Sacrament of My love. Seek Me out for them and in their name and I will bless both you and them. My Eucharistic Heart overflows with love for My priests. I would give to each of them the grace I gave Saint John, My beloved disciple: that of intimacy with My Heart and with the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of My Mother. I would renew the priesthood of My Church in this way. I would make My priests resplendent with holiness. I would impart to their tongues and to their hands the very graces that I poured out upon My Apostles in the beginnings of My Church. The reticence is not Mine. It is they, My priests, who flee My company. It is they who turn away from My Eucharistic Face and leave My Eucharistic Heart without the consolation of their friendship. I look for consolers among My priests, and I find so few among them.

You, say “yes” to Me. Be the priest adorer of My Eucharistic Face and of My Sacred Heart present in the Sacrament of My love and waiting for the company of even one priest who loves Me and will offer himself with Me to the Father as a victim of reparation.

My Father, too, is grieved by the coldness and indifference with which I, who am His Beloved Son, His eternal Priest, His immaculate Victim ceaselessly offered in the sanctuary of heaven,

am treated on earth. This comes not from strangers, but from My very own, from those whom I chose, out of love, to share in My priesthood, to abide in My presence, to nourish My people with the mysteries of My Body and Blood. All heaven weeps over the sins of My priests. For every sin there is mercy in the Blood and Water that flow from My wounded side, but the sins of My priests call for reparation.

Make reparation for your brother priests by adoring Me, by remaining before My Eucharistic Face, by offering the love of your heart purified by My great mercy. I bless you now. Be My priest adorer” (Friday, December 7, 2007).

Take time to come to Me

“This is how I would have you pray for the time being. Take the time to come before Me. Seek My Face. When you pray in this way I will draw you close to My Heart. Pray using My Mother’s Rosary, even when you feel that your prayer is empty or mechanical, or when you are beset by distractions. The decision to pray pleases My Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of My Mother.

The time you offer to us, when you pray as you did tonight, becomes precious in our eyes and is of immense benefit to your soul and to the souls for whom you pray. I see all of those for whom you prayed tonight—those whom you named and those whom you did not name—and I bless each one as I bless you now, My priest, My friend, My beloved brother.

I have chosen you and My designs on your life will be fulfilled. The time is coming when you will praise and thank Me for doing for you according to the promises I have made you. Trust Me and let nothing keep you from seeking My Face and My Heart in prayer. I bless you” (Saturday, December 8, 2007).

Friendship with Me is the answer to problems

“Your prayer pleases Me. It is inspired by the Holy Spirit in you. The Holy Spirit facilitates the conversation with Me that is the expression of our friendship. Those who draw near to Me with confidence and simplicity, seeking My Face and longing for the warmth of the fire that blazes in My Heart—they are led and moved by the Holy Spirit.

Friendship with Me is not difficult. It is the gift that I offer freely and gladly to all souls, but in the first place, to the souls of My priests. If priests lived in My friendship, how different My Church would be! She would be a place of warmth, of light, of peace, and of holiness. Many of the sufferings and hardships experienced within My Church at the hands of her ministers, My priests, would not exist, were priests, My priests, living daily in the grace of friendship with Me that I offer them and long to give them.

The solution to the hardships and trials of priests, the answer to the problems that beset so many of them, causing them to fall into patterns of sin, is the friendship that I offer them. The Holy Spirit is poured out on every priest on the day of his ordination, and in that outpouring is given a marvellous capacity to live in My friendship and in the intimacy of My most holy Mother. So few of My priests accept this gift and use this capacity for holiness that I bestow upon them. This is the Johannine grace of which I have already spoken to you: friendship with Me, with My Sacred Heart, and a pure intimacy with the Heart of My Mother, like that of Saint John, and even of Saint Joseph.

The Immaculate Heart of My Mother loves all My priests. She accepts each one as her own son, and in each one she sees a friend of My Heart, a friend chosen by Me, and one in whom I want to find all the qualities of friendship that I found in Saint John. This is part of My Mother’s role in the sanctification of priests. She will lead every priest who consecrates himself to her, as you did, into the deepest joys of friendship with My Sacred Heart.

As for you, this has already begun, even though you may not always feel that you are living in My friendship and in the intimacy of My most holy Mother. Our eyes never leave you, not even for a moment, and our Hearts are united in loving affection for you, even as they were for My beloved disciple and friend, Saint John. Live in this grace. Do not refuse what we would give you in abundance. Remain confident. We bless you, My Mother's hand in Mine. We bless you, and those for whom you have asked our blessing (Sunday, December 9, 2007).

A Benedictine Monk

The Second Episode: FEAR

We observe a continuous fight for the first, most important place in every area of life – in sports arenas, on stage, in politics, and economics. Most people, asked about what is most important to them, will indicate current problems, family, children, or money. But God is the most important, although we often place Him at the end. Some have already found out after the dramas of their life stories that even the closest person can trample over us and then only He remains. Sooner or later, we will all find out about this. Even if you have the happiest marriage, it won't last forever, one of you will be the first to die. And who remains then? He remains, Jesus.

So, we have a vision – God is most important. But where is God, why is He hidden? He is most important and behaves as if He was unimportant. He doesn't show Himself, doesn't reveal Himself, and the people built an altar to Him. The most important who doesn't want to be the most important?! What light does this give to our own lives!

The text of the Gospel cited last week is addressed to those who are exposed to persecution because of their faith but also to all those who live every day in fear of others, and the fear that they are unimportant, and at any price – even at the price of the renunciation of Jesus – they are ready to be photographed, to give an interview, perform in front of the cameras, sing a blasphemous song, exhibit a dubious anti-cultural work in a museum, such as . . . a portrait of Pope Benedict XVI woven from seventeen thousand colourful condoms. This modernist work cost twenty-five thousand dollars. Why are they doing this? To exist, to escape the fear that they live unnoticed? And to be unnoticed, omitted – is like not existing!

We can be afraid of many different things – what others think about us, what they are thinking, being afraid of their opinions and reactions, someone leaving or someone's too close, or even fear of love or on the contrary, hatred. Fear accompanies us everywhere – at home, at work, on the street, even in dreams! Søren Kierkegaard claimed that fear isn't even a feeling, but the most original attitude toward the world and people, to God and self – the first result of sin, because it appeared in Adam and Eve as the first effect of sin. Anyway, after each sin, we are attacked by an internal fear and that binds us for a long time, even after confession. Jesus says that anyone who is afraid to accept Him before people should not succumb to this fear but place all their trust in Him. What we need to fear is not so much the loss of human acceptance, as the loss of God. In the book of Exodus, it says that before the sin of the golden calf, the Israelites were not afraid to approach God or look at His glory on Sinai, but after the sin they began to be afraid of Him and would rather stay far away. We are afraid that someone will leave us, die, that we will fail, that we will compromise ourselves, that everyone will find out

**That
which
is most
import
ant**

**Part one
For a hair . . .**

who we really are, we are afraid of diseases, of accidents, our own and that of our loved ones, we are afraid to do anything, leave the house or stay in it and do nothing, we fear that we'll not like others, we will fall, we are afraid of being rejected, criticism, silence and mockery, that someone important to us will like someone more than us. We are afraid that we can't cope with life, pain, loneliness, and when someone is with us, we are afraid that they will leave or disappoint us, we avoid problematic people and topics, we withdraw, insolate, back off, carry pills with us so as to feel safer, we check several times if we turned off the gas rings, we postpone decisions, occupy ourselves with surfing the Internet, bite nails, bite ourselves with anxiety, we dress up in various clothes several times, because we are still anxious, that we look awful, finally we are afraid of God, does He still love us, or at least tolerates us, endures us, or maybe He's already had enough of us, or maybe He's been disappointed and we are already irrelevant to him? It's horrifying. In my life the most terrifying thing was that I was afraid of whether God still loves me. I survived various terrors, but when there was a time when I realised: "Maybe God has expunged me?", then my life was on the edge.

Jesus said: "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!" (John 16:33).

It's an encouragement for a flourishing of fearlessness that comes from trust in God, and not from what other people say about us and how they look at us. The greater the trust, having its source in deepening closeness with Him, the less fear. The greatest suffering that can crush me is the ego. What can free me from it is a great closeness with the One who is most important. I can survive only because in my fear I am guaranteed His love. If this awareness is not there, then there is still the fear that paralyses my life. Between people such an experience is accessible: when someone really loves another person, they rid themselves of their own ego for a moment; embrace, anxiety disappears, and the person feels safe.

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 repose of soul of Irene O'Neill who passed into the merciful arms of our Lord on Thursday, and John Savage (2019) **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.

Book and puzzles sale: this Saturday, 16th March, 10am-3pm

Bishop Brian's letter about SCIAF: copies of the letter are available in the church porch. Anyone wishing to make a donation to SCIAF's work please put it in the box labelled SCIAF, use a Gift Aid envelope if you Gift Aid. The box will available next Sunday also.



campbeltown@rcdai.org.uk



www.stkieranscampbeltown.org



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A Parish of the R.C. Diocese of Argyll and the Isles; Charitable Trust, a registered Scottish Charity, SC002876
Parish Priest: Fr. A. Wood, St. Kieran's, Campbeltown; Tel. 01586 552160