

# PARISH *Divine Mercy Sunday*

## **BULLETIN** **St Kieran's, the** **Catholic Church** *in* *Campbeltown and Islay* *Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain* 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Hymns/Music for Easter Sunday

#### Processional (Sunday only)

207 He is risen, tell the story (Mayhew)

#### Offertory

359 My God loves me (McLennan)

#### Communion music

God so loved the world (Instrumental; Fasoldt)

#### Post Communion

528 The king of love my shepherd is (Hamel)

#### Recessional

547 The spirit lives to set us free (McLennan)

Voluntary: Alleluja radosne (Fundacja Dominikański)

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

*Divine Mercy Sunday*, Holy Mass, 10.00am

Monday: Holy Mass, 6pm

Tuesday and Wednesday: Holy Mass, 10am

Friday, Adoration, Mid-morning Prayer and Holy Mass, 9.30am

Saturday: Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter, Holy Mass, 10.00am

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

*Divine Mercy Sunday*, Holy Mass, 4pm

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, Holy Mass, 4pm



### *Psalm response*

*Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.*

### Sequence

#### **Victimae Paschali Laudes**

Christians, to the Paschal Victim  
offer sacrifice and praise.  
The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;  
and Christ, the undefiled,  
hath sinners to his Father reconciled.

Death with life contended:  
combat strangely ended!

Life's own Champion, slain,  
yet lives to reign.

Tell us, Mary:  
say what thou didst see  
upon the way.

The tomb the Living did enclose;  
I saw Christ's glory as he rose!



The angels there attesting;  
shroud with grave-clothes resting.

Christ, my hope, has risen:  
he goes before you into Galilee.

That Christ is truly risen  
from the dead we know.  
Victorious king, thy mercy show!

### **Gospel acclamation**

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Jesus said: 'You believe because you can see me.  
Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' Alleluia!*

### **Communion Antiphon**

*Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails,  
and do not be unbelieving but believing, alleluia.*

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## **Take Five**

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

### **SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD**

**8 April 2024**

#### **God's favour rests on you**

How do you get God's favour? Start by becoming "full of grace." It's not as unlikely as it sounds. Grace means divine help. If we rely on God and not on people and things — all of which are passing — we're as good as there. When our reliance is truly on God there won't be room for those nagging second thoughts. Imagine a life free of anxiety, fear, doubt, and moral paralysis! That was the life Mary of Nazareth knew, trusting every day that the divine promises to her would be fulfilled. Go on: Take a daily step further into grace.

**Today's readings:** Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38. *"The angel said to her, 'Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you.'"*

### **TUESDAY**

#### **EASTER WEEKDAY**

**9 APRIL 2024**

#### **Be prepared to testify**

In the Book of Acts we are told that "with great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection." In fact, says Benedictine monk Columba Stewart in a recent article in National Geographic, "the apostles were the movement's cutting edge, spreading the message across the vast trade network of the ancient world and leaving small Christian communities in their paths." This missionary

zeal is passed on to each new generation of Christians, but it takes different forms. Today although many Christians still travel to foreign lands to serve the poor and give witness to Christ, believers are also encouraged to evangelise — spread the Gospel — within their own homes, parishes, and local communities. How is your evangelization going? Hint: They should know you are Christian by your love. **Today's readings:** Acts 4:32-37; John 3:7b-15. *"We speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen."*

### **WEDNESDAY**

#### **EASTER WEEKDAY**

**10 APRIL 2024**

#### **Get out of jail free**

Imagine it's your turn to stand up in church, before God and everybody, and tell what you know about being a Christian. What would you say? In the early church the apostles were jailed for speaking about Jesus — then liberated by an angel to go out and do it again. At that time testifying to the faith was dangerous. In most places it's only a little scary now. Reflect on what your faith means to you: Is it a matter of obligation or love, fear or hope, joy or indifference? When it's your turn to testify, what will you say?

**Today's readings:** Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21. *"Go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life."*



## THURSDAY

### MEMORIAL OF SAINT STANISLAUS,

### BISHOP, MARTYR

11 APRIL 2024

#### An unimpeachable witness

One of the engaging things about saints from centuries ago like Stanislaus (b. 1030) is the legends that spring up about them — perhaps not true in a literal way but often carrying kernels of wisdom of a deeper order. Bishop Stanislaus is said to have brought a man who had been dead three years back to life in order to foil a land-grabbing plot of a nefarious king. Given three days to produce a witness to the church's claim on the land, he prayed ceaselessly before calling the seller of the land from the grave to testify on his behalf. The take-away? God hears and responds to your fervent prayers.

**Today's readings:** Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36. *"He who comes from above is above all others; he who is born of the earth is earthly himself".*

## FRIDAY

### EASTER WEEKDAY

12 APRIL 2024

#### Get well-grounded

In this post-Easter season we are invited to reflect on the intentions behind our actions. When our motives are pure, when they are truly selfless — in other words, when they come from God — then whatever we do will bear

good fruit. If on the other hand our deeds stem from vanity, arrogance, or a desire for praise, then they will not bear good fruit, no matter how altruistic we may appear to others. Take a moment today to pray that your words and actions will come from your inner being, your centre, where God resides. Then know that anything is possible! Everything is possible! **Today's readings:** Acts 5:34-42; John 6:1-15. *"Let them alone; because if this plan . . . is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them."*

## SATURDAY

### EASTER WEEKDAY

APRIL 2024

#### Leaders in service

Many Catholics are accustomed to thinking of priests as a separate species, but they are called from among us, not placed over us, and they are called to serve. There is no privileged class in the church of Christ Jesus. A year for priests reminds us that priests, like the Temple priests in the early church who came to believe in Christ, need to become more and more "obedient to the faith," as do all of us. Even as they shepherd us, our ministers need our prayer, compassion, encouragement, support, and a continuing challenge to holiness.

**Today's readings:** Acts 6:1-7; John 6:16-21. *"They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them."*

## *Readings for Divine Mercy Sunday*

### **Acts of the Apostles 4:32-35**

The unity of the early church was manifest in heart, mind, spirit—and resources.

### **Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24**

God's mercy has no bounds, and God's love is without end.

### **1 John 5:1-6**

The children of God, like Jesus himself, must pass through signs of water and blood.

### **John 20:19-31**

The marks of the nails mean more to Thomas than the memory of Jesus and his example.

## *Words on the Word*

*There is nothing more necessary for man than Divine Mercy – this gracious, compassionate love, lifting man beyond his weakness towards the infinite heights of God's holiness (St. John Paul II).*

Mercy has never been a purely theoretical term in Christianity. The Lord Jesus himself speaks about this very clearly, describing the scenes of the final judgment (cf. Mt 25). Jesus' teaching is contained in the words: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, visit the sick, free the imprisoned, bury the dead. These are good deeds performed towards the body, and towards the soul: to instruct the ignorant, to give good advice to those who doubt, to lift the spirits of the despairing, to comfort the sad, to admonish sinners, to willingly forgive insults, to bear burdens and ailments. Saint Benedict expands this "list" of good deeds by one more: never to doubt God's mercy (Rule IV, 74).

It may be surprising that the description of the final judgment does not mention the rejection of those who broke God's commandments.

Those who are rejected are those who lacked mercy, who stopped doing good. In the attitude of mercy, what is important is not so much justice, but rather sensitivity to the existing need, poverty or other human misfortune. The enumeration of works of mercy regarding body and soul can make us reflect.

- Material needs are the easiest to notice. What is immediately noticeable is the lack of housing, clothing and food.
- Cultural needs are less clear. Few realise how big a problem illiteracy is; people often have no chance for education and therefore cannot participate in cultural life.
- Nowadays, we also need to talk openly about the third type of poverty, namely the poverty of social contacts, loneliness and solitude, and the abandonment of one person by another. The loss of a partner or family, culpable or unintentional exclusion from friends, discrimination, isolation or marginalization, for example because of religious denomination or skin colour – these are real contemporary problems.
- There is also a fourth type of poverty in the modern world, namely spiritual poverty: lack of life orientation, inner emptiness, lack of comfort and hope, doubting the meaning of one's own existence, moral and spiritual chaos.

The mercy of Christ's disciples cannot be limited to material assistance alone, because this creates situations of dependence; it is supposed to provide primarily spiritual support, it is supposed to be an aid to self-help. The attitude of mercy is acting with great delicacy and sensitivity, it is the attitude of open eyes of the heart and human solidarity.

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Sister Faustina wrote so beautifully about mercy in a prayer from 1937:

*O Lord, I want to be completely transformed  
into Your mercy and to be Your living reflection.*

*May the greatest of all divine attributes,  
that of Your unfathomable mercy,  
pass through my heart and soul to my neighbour.*

*Help me, O Lord, that my eyes may be merciful,  
so that I may never suspect or judge from appearances,  
but look for what is beautiful in my neighbours' souls and come to their rescue.*

*Help me, O Lord, that my ears may be merciful,  
so that I may give heed to my neighbours' needs  
and not be indifferent to their pains and moanings.*

*Help me, O Lord, that my tongue may be merciful,  
so that I should never speak negatively of my neighbour,  
but have a word of comfort and forgiveness for all.*

*Help me, O Lord, that my hands may be merciful and filled with good deeds,  
so that I may do only good to my neighbours  
and take upon myself the most difficult and toilsome tasks.*

*Help me, O Lord, that my feet may be merciful,  
so that I may hurry to assist my neighbour,  
overcoming my own fatigue and weariness (...)*

*Help me, O Lord, that my heart may be merciful  
so that I myself may feel all the sufferings of my neighbour. (...)*

*May Your mercy, O Lord, rest upon me. Amen.*

## The Fifth Episode: BRAVELY GIVE YOUR FEAR TO GOD

We have to ask what about the life of a person who doesn't come closer to God? And doesn't seek support in His Word or in confiding in Him, in confession? Then a person resorts to pretending – to a kind of mimicry!

Someone told me his dream, which terrified him when he woke up. He was walking on a big stage with an electric guitar, there were many people on stage, also in front of the stage. His guitar, however, had no power – he just carried it about, and presented himself. At one point he had to leave the stage, and he noticed a group of photographers below the stairs, ready to take photos. He positioned himself in a position that the dreamer thought would seem attractive to them, and of course the photographers took advantage of it. However, when the dreamer struck the strings, they made no sound, and he didn't know what to play – he felt that he wasn't doing justice and was glad that they didn't wait for the piece to be played but contented themselves with the photographs. Then he ran through the city with a spoon in his hand. There were young people walking across the street – probably drunk and aggressive – so he grabbed the spoon as if it were a knife and started swinging it menacingly, the metal handle gleaming like a blade. He even tried to run faster, but he couldn't – he could only trudge into the darkness with increasing fear and difficulty. When he woke up, he realised that out of fear of people he had been trying to pretend to be someone he wasn't – someone famous and someone dangerous, but he wasn't. In fact, he was weak and had nothing to "play". He told me that this dream made him realise that he lived in the fear that someone would discover that he was simply "powerless."

The whole dream made this man understand a lot: he wanted to be someone strong and someone special at all costs, because he was afraid of people, their strength and rejection. This discovery gave him the opportunity to accept himself in his weakness and modesty. He surrounded himself with people who needed help, to make him feel special and stronger. He needed a "stage".

Similarly in the Bible. Saul needed David to make him feel strong and special. As long as he

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pursued him, he felt strong, as long as he hounded him, he could feel superior, special. This continued until David stole his spear and jar of water while Saul was sleeping. It then turned out that Saul could not defend himself against the one he was pursuing and was not as noble as the one he despised. Until we entrust our care and the secrets of conscience to God, we live in hidden panic from people, and on the other hand we are looking for someone who would provide us with safety. However, the other person is as pervaded by fear as anyone else. Besides, are we important enough to anyone in the world for them to devote themselves completely to us, creating a sense of absolute security? Fear is your most important experience of the heart until you entrust yourself to God totally with complete trust. You are faced with a choice: either live in fear or commit yourself to God's love forever.

“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.” (Mt 10:26-33; parallel).

How important are we? We have huge deficits in self-esteem. To feel important, since the beginning of time, people have dressed up in animal skins or bird feathers, adorned themselves with bull horns or decorated themselves with trophies or scalps, tattooed themselves or painted their skin. All this to feel valuable and safe, causing fear in others. Today, instead of plumes, people boast about their doctorates, and instead of getting tattoos, they give them titles. Still others, to feel strong, instead of hunting mammoths, hunt for high places. The more terrifying a person's feeling of worthlessness is, the more he or she tries to prove his or her power to himself and others. The vulgar and aggressive fans who are screaming and shouting in the street turn out to be scared boys who have no support from their father. Helene Deutsch claims that football support is a kind of projection of the source of fear onto the outside world and also a way of getting rid of it. Millions of men come to football matches only to project themselves onto their idol and experience, even for a moment, the power over the inconspicuous ball, which becomes a symbol of rule comparable to the royal sceptre. The more clearly a person emphasises himself, the more blurred his self-image becomes.

When Erich Fromm reflected on Hitler's greatness, he found many internal deformations in him that indicated that he felt like a very insecure and terrified person: extreme narcissism, lack of contact with other people, disturbances in the perception of reality, necrophilia. Moreover, the psychoanalyst saw him as someone who started the war because he did not believe in his own success. From the beginning his behaviour showed that he sensed disaster and had a desire to drag millions of other people into its vortex. It was similar with Stalin, who terrified others with his own fear. His victories were born from the horror of defeat. Fear is not just any ordinary feeling, especially the fear that concerns our existence – existential fear. Being nobody for some people does not mean ceasing to exist, just as being someone in the eyes of many does not mean existing more clearly. So, we have the deepest fear of losing our existence, but we confuse it with the fear of our existence in someone else's eyes. This is not the same. Jesus' words breathe the healthiest philosophy of life – we are much more valuable than sparrows



and even the hairs our heads are numbered. God takes us into account and everything in us is known to Him: we exist in His eyes. Anyone who is aware of this truth does not experience the fear of losing their existence in such a drastic way as to start wars or build concentration camps just to forget about their own fear when they see the terror of others. This logic of life gave birth to fascism and communism. Kierkegaard's "fear and trembling" concerns us all, but its solution lies in God, not in man. Nazirites – people dedicated to God – were forbidden to cut their hair because: hair is a symbol of trust in God without limits – trust without cuts, without moderation, in complete freedom.

One of the Nazirites – Samson – depended on a person, Delilah, and on the night he entrusted himself completely to her, she cut off his hair. However, he lost not only his hair, but also his strength of existence. You can love another person, you can go through life with him, but we must look for support only in God. “Even if your earthly parents did not want you, even if others do not pay attention to you, know that you are constantly wanted by your true father, God. Know that every day He caresses you so tenderly and with such caring attention that He even knows how many hairs you have on your head. He doesn't confuse you with anyone else” (V. Albisetti).

The Bible says that Samson was an extremely strong man because he dedicated himself to God, trusted Him with all his being, and as long as God was the only confidant of his hidden secrets of conscience, Samson feared no one. Reliance on God – no cuts, no boundaries. But he was lost by changing the person to whom he entrusted himself, and confiding in someone – that is, entrusting all the secrets of conscience and hidden thoughts – means giving someone control over yourself? He confided in Delilah, the woman he had fallen in love with. And it's not about a woman or a man, it's about the fact that he trusted a person more than God. Love is the most beautiful feeling in the world, but also the most dangerous and brings the greatest wounds. Every day, Delilah demanded that Samson confide in her with all his heart and tell her everything about himself. The text from the Book of Judges says:

“And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death. And he told her all his mind, and said to her, ‘A razor has never come upon my head; for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I be shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.’

When Delilah saw that he had told her all his mind, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, ‘Come up this once, for he has told me all his mind.’ Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. She made him sleep upon her knees; and she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him.” (Judges 16:16-19).

Notice that in this passage cutting your hair is comparable to confiding in someone with your whole heart, and the heart in the Bible is not the seat of feelings but of thoughts. This phrase simply means that you tell someone everything about yourself, your interior, your secrets, your sins and problems. Only God is someone to whom we can safely tell everything about ourselves, no one else. I shouldn't put my hope in anyone else. The prophet Jeremiah proclaims:

“Thus says the LORD: Cursed is the man who trusts in man, whose strength is in the flesh, and turns his heart away from the LORD” (Jeremiah 17:5).

To turn your heart away from the Lord and put your hope in another person is simply to lead

yourself to a situation that is not blessed, but cursed. Samson lost not only his hair and strength, but also his eyesight – his eyes were gouged out, he was put in chains. Eventually he lost his life. But you can do it differently. Without growing your hair, which is only a symbol – entrust to God without limits your secrets, your entire life path that you have already behind you, and the one that is in front of you.

“Commit your way to the Lord and trust in Him: He himself will act” (Ps 37:5).

Why? Because, as Paul says, "all have gone astray and have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one" (Rom 3:12).

When we read a book, our attention is focused on spelling errors, the lack of even one letter, spelling, style, grammatical errors or incorrect information, and we immediately react to them. Similarly, our Lord focuses on those who wander in the paths of fate, who see that their lives are a mistake, and corrects their lot when they turn to Him. First, however, the Lord thinks about what version of events to include in their future, so that it will be the best and most important possible, because He loves to improve.

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## 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 all whose anniversaries occur at this time.**



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## News and Events

**Tea and coffee** in the hall after Sunday Mass. Our visitors are most welcome to join us. Please do come.

**Gift Aid envelopes** are not fully prepared but there enough for the next six weeks. You can find them in the porch.



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[www.stkieranscampbeltown.org](http://www.stkieranscampbeltown.org)



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

### **CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY**

#### **Introductory Prayers**

Our Father, who art in heaven, . . .

Hail Mary, full of grace, . . .

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

#### **Prayed on large bead prior to each decade**

**Leader:** Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, . . .

**All:** . . . in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

#### **Prayed on 10 small beads of each decade**

**Leader:** For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, . . .

**All:** . . . have mercy on us and on the whole world.

#### **Prayed after all 4 decades of the Chaplet are complete:**

**Leader:** Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, . . .

**All:** . . . have mercy on us and on the whole world. (Repeat three times)