

PARISH BULLETIN

St Kieran's, the Catholic Church *in*

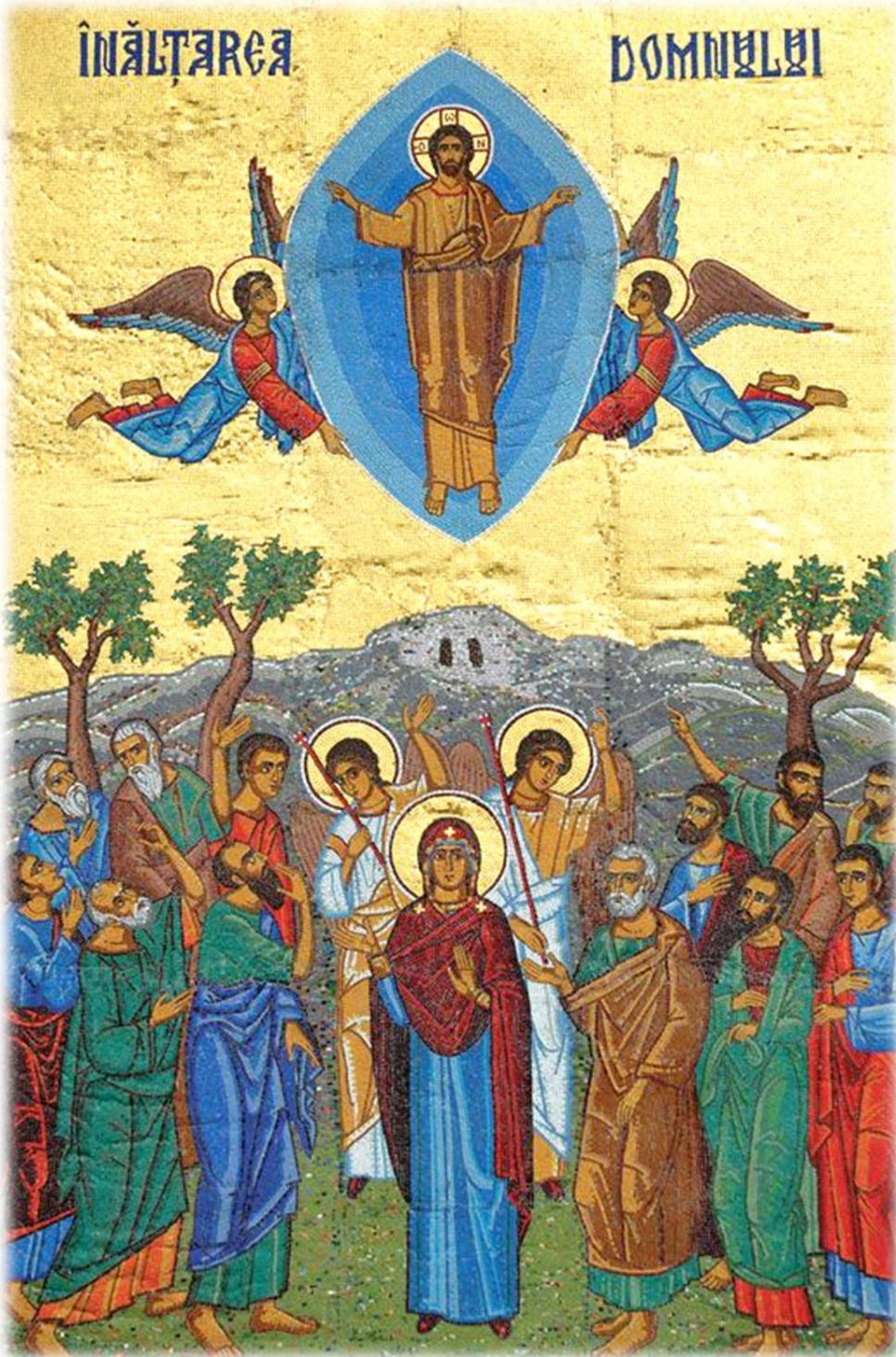
Campbeltown and Islay

Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain

5th May 2024

The Sixth Sunday

of Eastertide



Hymns/Music for Sunday

Processional (Sunday only)

96 Come down, O love divine (da Siena) [82]

Offertory

Sheet A new commandment (Mayhew)[29]

Communion music

Eucharistic Choral Prelude (Instrumental; Davor)

Bread of the World (Instrumental; Fasoldt)

Post Communion

141 Fill my house (Keys) [119]

Recessional

147 Forth in the peace of Christ we go (Mayhew)[129]

Voluntary: The King of Love My Shepherd is (Instrumental; Fasoldt)

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

6th Sunday of Easter, Holy Mass, 10am

Monday: No Mass

Tuesday: Holy Mass, **10am**

Wednesday: **Vigil Mass of the Ascension, 6.30pm**

Thursday: Holy Mass of the Ascension of the Lord, 10am

Reception of Claire Douglas' remains, 6.00pm

Friday: Adoration, Mid-morning Prayer, 9.30am and Holy Mass, **10am**

Funeral Service for Claire Douglas, **12.00pm**

Saturday: Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

7th Sunday of Easter, Holy Mass, 10am

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

6th Sunday of Easter, 5th May, Holy Mass, 4pm

Pentecost Sunday, 19th May, Holy Mass, 4pm



Psalm response

The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him.'*

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

*If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord,
and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete,
to abide with you for ever, alleluia.*

Take Five

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

MONDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

6 MAY 2024

Come stay at my house

God has bestowed so many gifts on creation. In fact, the world is here in the first place because God's love overflowed – God wanted to share the divine love. God even sent Jesus and became human so as to invite people more deeply into life in God. So, shouldn't the response to all this generosity be a generous one in which we welcome God into our lives, are open and inviting with God in prayer, and honour and care for our world and its creatures? Start opening doors today.

Today's readings: Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26-16:4a.

"If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home."

TUESDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

7 MAY 2024

A friend in high places

"The gift and presence of the Holy Spirit is the most magnificent and wonderful thing that can happen to us, the human community, all living things, and this earth," wrote German theologian Jürgen Moltmann. The disciples didn't see it that way at first. They were filled with grief when Jesus told them he would soon be departing from them. They did not understand the gift they were about to receive in the Holy Spirit, the Advocate that Jesus promised to send upon his departure. An advocate "pleads the cause of another," "supports or promotes the interests of another."

When the going gets tough, it is nice to know we have one at our side. We have Jesus to thank for the Advocate – let's do so today.

Today's readings: Acts 16:22-34; John 16:5-11. *"But if I go, I will send him to you."*

WEDNESDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

08 MAY 2024

When Christians are in the margins

Often in stories of the church, both ancient and modern, you hear in the headlines about the scoffers. The anonymous faithful are relegated to the margins and the footnotes. "Is God Dead?", the cover of Time magazine inquired funereally in bold red letters on a stark black background in 1966. It would hardly make the back page to reply: Not in the hearts and lives of believers. The pages of the New Testament are sprinkled liberally with folks who encountered Jesus or the apostles and came to faith. Good news travels quietly. Make a little noise with yours.

Today's readings: Acts 17:15, 22-18:1; John 16:12-15. *"Some began to scoff [at Paul] But some did join him, and became believers."*

THURSDAY

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

9 MAY 2024

Twice-told tales

Acts of the Apostles are two volumes of one book. Part two, Acts, picks up where part one,

the Gospel, leaves off: with Jesus' Ascension. But there seems to be a slight continuity problem. In Luke, Jesus ascends on the same day as his Resurrection. In Acts He remains on earth 40 days before ascending. This discrepancy points out how chronology is not always the most important thing in scripture; it's the substance of the stories that is crucial. In the Gospel Jesus ascends while blessing the disciples, anticipating the bestowing on them of the Holy Spirit, while in Acts His ascent looks forward to His return. Both messages prepare the disciples for their mission of continuing Christ's work. There's more than one way to tell – and hear – a true story.

Today's readings: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23 or 4:1-13 or 4:1-7, 11-13; Mark 16:15-20. *"The Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven But they went forth and preached everywhere."*

FRIDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

10 MAY 2024

Can you see God and live to tell about it?

"No one," God says in the Book of Exodus, "can see me and live" (33:20) – almost no one, that is. Moses, for example, used to speak with God "face to face, as a person speaks to a friend" (Exodus 33:11) without undergoing instant vaporisation. Christian theology calls this experience the beatific vision: the total heavenly awareness of God that would

overwhelm most mortals during their earthly lives. That doesn't mean you can't get a glimpse of the Divine every now and then. The worship and service you offer as a Christian opens a door to the holy and will carry you all the way to the fullness of complete communion with God forever.

Today's readings: Acts 18:9-18; John 16:20-23. *"I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice."*

SATURDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

11 MAY 2024

What a joy!

Joy ought to be celebrated more often for the virtue it is. The great 13th-century Catholic theologian Saint Thomas Aquinas believed humanity literally "could not live" without joy. He argued that felicity or blessed happiness is the ultimate end or purpose of human existence and leads to the vision of God's essence.

Although life's obstacles and setbacks make it difficult for us to feel joyful all the time, we can remember the words of the late opera singer Beverly Sills, who said we may not always feel happy but we can always be cheerful. In this joyful Easter season, bring some good cheer to everything you do and everyone you meet today!

Today's readings: Acts 18:23-28; John 16:23b-28. *"Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."*

Readings for the sixth Sunday of Eastertide

Acts of the Apostles 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

The Holy Spirit marks the community with gifts outpoured.

Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

Sing out with joy for the gift of our salvation!

1 John 4:7-10

God is love, and the children of God are known by their embrace of love.

John 15:9-17

The friends of Jesus are those who do as he says and does.

Words on the Word

God's love has a human form

The commandments are a code of love

When we hear about orders and prohibitions, we may feel an immediate prejudice or even aversion. Neither children nor adults like being ordered or forbidden to do something, especially when it's a frequent occurrence. And yet it is impossible to live without orders

and prohibitions. The larger the community, the more people, the greater the need to regulate mutual relations. The simplest example is road rules for cyclists and drivers. There are also air traffic regulations and a whole host of administrative regulations regulating our everyday lives, relationships at work and at school. Pupils and students have work plans and regulations that must be followed. Even entertainment is based on rules, because each game, each sport, differs from others with different rules.

The most basic code of regulations, regulating the most important human behaviour, is the Decalogue. The Lord Jesus himself accepted it as a life principle and showed us its deepest meaning.

Christ is the embodiment of love

The Lord Jesus said: “If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love” (John 15:10). Keeping the commandments is a condition for remaining in love with Jesus. As a model for us, the Lord gives us himself and His relationship to God the Father. Jesus did everything to fulfil God's plan for the salvation of the world. In a conversation with the Jews reported by Saint John, He declared: “And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him” (John 8:29). The words of the Lord Jesus were so deeply remembered by Saint John that he misattributed them in his First Letter, writing, as it were, from himself, from the depths of his own heart: “and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who keep his commandments abide in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us.” (1 J 3:22-24).

Fulfilment of the commandments, understood as fulfilling the will of the One who we know loves us very much and cares for us, is not just a hardship, but an expression of love and gratitude, and at the same time a source of satisfaction and joy. The Lord Jesus combines His appeal to keep the commandments and remain in His love with the promise of joy: “I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete.” (John 15:10-11). Another consequence of keeping the commandments and remaining in the love of Jesus is the ability to live in the Holy Spirit and testify about the Son of God “in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8; cf. 1 J 3:22- 24).

You can see for yourself. Whoever consistently keeps the commandments of the Lord Jesus experiences inner joy. They experience the power of the Holy Spirit. If we treat keeping the commandments as fulfilling the will of the Father who loves us, it does not matter whether we are in the Church or at school, at work or entertainment: in each of them, in all circumstances, we want to keep God's commandments, we want to fulfil God's will, so as to please the Creator himself.

This is what Saint Paul tried to do, becoming an example for other followers of Christ throughout the centuries. He said: “we strive to please Him, whether we are with Him or when we are away from Him” (2 Cor 5:9).

By imitating Christ, we multiply love in the world

This does not mean that keeping the commandments is easy or pleasant. We are neither angels nor people free from the tendency to sin. We find it difficult to keep the commandments. When we achieve it, we get great satisfaction. When it fails, all is not lost. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can start over and over again. The Lord Jesus knows that we are weak. He knows our weaknesses, but He is not discouraged. After all, He came to

sinner to save us. He came to show us the way; the path to heaven, the path through life, marked by the commandments summarized in the commandment of love. He came to set an example for us. He came to become our Way. By following Him and keeping His commandments, we multiply love in the world.

Saint Bishop Joseph Sebastian Pelczar encouraged in his notes: “We should love the Lord God, because He is the most worthy of our love as the Supreme Perfection, even if there is no reward for those who love Him. God – says Saint Thomas Aquinas – as the highest Truth, is the first object of knowledge for our reason; as the highest Good, the first object of love for our hearts.

Disciples in the school of Christ's love



A few years ago, a new Blessed, Marta Wiecka (1874-1904), was announced. She was born on January 12, 1874 into a Polish family in Pomerania. She was one of thirteen children of pious and loving parents. After reaching the age of majority, she joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. She worked in a hospital, helping the sick, but at the same time she was a confidante of many people in spiritual matters. She found time to teach the sick the catechism and prepare them for the holy sacraments. She placed great importance on praying with them. She celebrated services with them, for example the Stations of the Cross. Every patient was equally important to her: whatever nationality, Jewish, Catholic or Orthodox. Her departure from the world was, like her life, a testimony of love. Filling in for a young hospital employee, who was the father of a family, she disinfected the room after a woman died of typhus. She was aware of how dangerous this job was. The very next day, she showed symptoms of the disease. Shortly afterwards, on May 30, 1904, she died in Sniatyn, Ukraine, where she was buried. She drew strength from meeting Christ in prayer. She made sure to keep His commandments and remain in His love.

By receiving Holy Communion today, accepting Christ into our hearts, let us express our gratitude to Him for the commandments that contain wisdom and grace. May we have enough strength to follow them. Then our life will be not only an occasional encounter with Jesus, but also an abiding in His love, an abiding that we will know “by the Spirit whom he gave us” (1 J 3:24). Then the joy of Christ in us will be complete (cf. J 15:11). Then we will also be authentic witnesses of love – we will multiply it in the world.

The Ninth Episode: Remain in Silence

In the Book of Exodus, in the fourteenth chapter, it is mentioned how the Israelites were fleeing from the Egyptians and Pharaoh, but suddenly, as a result of a sign given by Moses with an ordinary stick, the cause of fear – the sea space covered with rushes – turned out to be a way of salvation, causing inexpressible joy in the escapees:

“When it was reported to the king of Egypt of the people's flight, the disposition of Pharaoh and his servants towards him changed, and they said, 'What have we done in letting Israel go from our service?' Then Pharaoh ordered his chariots to be harnessed and took his men with him. He took six hundred chariots of choice, and all the other chariots of Egypt, and on each of them were valiant warriors. The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the Israelites. However, they left with their hands raised. So the Egyptians pursued them and overtook them camping by the sea, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, and his horsemen, and all his army, at Pi-hahiroth, opposite Baal-zephon. And when Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and when they saw the Egyptians following them, they were greatly afraid. The Israelites cried out loudly to the Lord. They said to Moses, ““Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, ‘Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.” The Lord said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.” (Exodus 14:5-9a(9b), 10-18).

On the one hand, the Israelites saw the chariots that were chasing them, and on the other - water, the Sea of Reeds, literally in Hebrew: JAM SUF, today we say: the Red Sea, and this sea in front of them showed no signs of parting, no pontoon bridge appeared... nothing. They stood between - as they say - a rock and a hard place. They were so overcome with fear that people began to cry out to God. Moses too. And God did not give them any sign of support. Finally, the Lord called them to be silent, because - as He said - He Himself would fight for them. But was that the only reason for them to remain silent? God turned to Moses, who had a staff in his hand... just a stick, not a sword... “Moses, strike the water with this stick.” An absurd gesture, a sign seemingly without any meaning, but Moses believed - he raised his stick like a conductor raises his baton, and struck the sea waves, and the Sea of Reeds parted. I'll leave it to scientists to consider whether it was caused by a volcanic eruption in Santorini and tectonic movements caused the outflow... that doesn't interest me. What is important is that in that hour, in that minute, in that moment when Moses struck with his rod - the waters parted. God commanded, and Moses performed a sign, performing a miracle! People climbed dry to the bottom and crossed to the other side.

**That
which
is most
import
ant**

Part one

For a hair . . .

I will emphasise this name again because it is important: the Sea of Reeds. Why should they remain silent when God had performed such a miraculous sign for them? After all, we are to announce God's great works, announce His power of mercy, which does extraordinary and saving things for us...

In a concert hall, where only deaf listeners or listeners who deliberately put their fingers in their ears, will the conductor signal the musicians to play Beethoven's work? And if the musicians constantly fake the performance of the piece, won't the conductor remove them from the orchestra? A priest who begins to preach that there is no need to share with the poor and pretends to be a businessman puts a noose around his neck. A theologian who begins to preach that homosexual couples should be considered married, and that adultery is not adultery at all becomes a Marxist in a cassock. Signs are for those who can read the meaning, for whom life has meaning and sense. For postmodern civilisation, nothing matters. Starting perhaps with Schopenhauer, prophets of falsehood have multiplied for whom God is not only a corpse, but the entirety of existence has neither purpose nor meaning. For them, life is not a sign, let alone that death is a sign, which is defeated by resurrection. If existence is meaningless, and not a sign of any meaning, then why think at all? The self is then an impression and thinking a pathology. In 1666, a fire and plague broke out in London, which was seen as a sign of Heaven's anger for Thomas Hobbes' atheism; Today in London, admitting to Catholicism and wearing a cross demonstratively would be a big problem, even when trying to enter the airport. Nadia Eweida found this out a few years ago and faced a real storm of problems. Perhaps another sign for some is the storm that occurred after the US Supreme Court announced on June 26, 2015, the lifting of the ban on same-sex marriage. According to the interpretation of this court, the ban violated the principle of equal access of citizens to legal protection contained in the constitution. In doing so, it legalised gay weddings in all fifty states. The next day, terrifying signs appeared in the sky. Many people said they had never heard such storms, thunder and howling winds. What sign in this "orchestra of the atmosphere" did those who were roused from their beds from sleep, unable to fall asleep, recognise? Even if someone has become famous for promoting homosexuality and hatred of the tree of the cross, it may turn out that the tree will stand in their way. If you reject the sign of the tree of the cross, you will not avoid a confrontation with the tree, which will thwart your plans to crucify Christ again. The Catechism of our Church claims that the punishments of Heaven are an expression of mercy so that people will come to their senses (cf. CCC 1609). Christopher Globisz was reading "Golgotha Picnic" (a blasphemous play) and "by chance" had a stroke three weeks later while reading – *nomen omen* – "Dead Souls" by Gogol. Gogol's name is not the same as Golgotha, but one thing is certain, the actor today has difficulty expressing himself, and his statements are rather meaningless. A sign or a coincidence without meaning. Probably for modern man it is no sign, just a pure coincidence, because life has no meaning, so there are no signs in it. But what would God's Providence itself say? Can Providence send such tragic events if it is a manifestation of mercy? Yes, because there are people who are able to see the signs of the final warning only in great drama. For some people, nothing else appeals to them except suffering. God can use both miraculous and tragic events to save man from condemnation. But what for some is a clear sign of Providence, for others is simply the blind chance of a meaninglessness of existence. For example, death, hunger, career failure, poverty and madness, but also mockery and persecution, embarrassment and confrontations can sanctify some and make others even more perfidious. "I allow all these

things to happen among men, although I am not the cause of the perversity of the will of the one who does evil and causes outrage; The believer sees and recognises that it is I, through My providence, who arranges everything and only for the purpose of man's salvation (...). Sometimes, when I send hail or storm or lightning upon the body of My creation, people consider it cruel, thinking that I did not care about their life, while I allowed this misfortune to save this soul from eternal death. But they say the opposite. Thus, the people of the world try to defile My works for everyone and reduce them to the measure of their base thoughts," wrote Catherine of Siena in the name of Divine Providence. For Marx, Freud and Nietzsche, Christianity seemed to be a burdensome disease of civilization, a cancer for society, or a form of mental illness.

Interestingly, all three of them were suffering from humiliating diseases for many years before their deaths. Nietzsche went mad, Freud had mouth cancer, and Marx, before he died in 1883 and was buried in Highgate Cemetery in London, suffered for much of his life from a purulent skin disease that, being painful and humiliating, could have affected the quality of his views. Can our generation still hear the music of the Holy Spirit? Will God, like a conductor, signal even the preachers of the Word of God to play the symphony of the Gospel? Already two thousand years before us, there were groups that demanded signs from the "Composer of Salvation" himself – Jesus Christ, but they received only one sign. "Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nin'evah will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here." (Matthew 12:38-42).

The Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus and say to Him: "Give us a sign that You are the Messiah." They were not interested in a miracle, teaching, doctrine or theological proof. For the Jews, a sign is evidence pointing to God's action, which confirms someone's credibility and authenticity for the mission assigned to them by the Almighty. Jesus was forced to prove that He was the credible composer of history, but Jesus only showed them the "baton" of the cross. If we freely translate their request, we would get the following form: "Let God reveal himself in your life. Give us a sign. Let your friendship with God the Father be revealed." And Jesus then said: "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." After three days, Jesus will rise from the earth, just as Jonah rose from the great fish after three days. Why did He use this phrase – from the heart of the earth – and not from the grave of the earth? Because He said He would come out of the grave as out of the centre of the earth's being; born from the earth. Who is He who can make such a sign that even death can be made into something more beautiful than birth? This is the sign of Christ, which can only be a sign of divine strength, since it defeats death. This is the power of the Holy Spirit. The power of consecration, the power of the Eucharist, the power to transform the world, the entire cosmos. And that's what he left them with. This sign happens during every Eucharist – but I

don't know how many people still understand this sign.

Moses led Israel through YAM SUF, through the Sea of Reeds, waters covered with reeds, because as an infant, as soon as he was born, he was hidden by his mother in a papyrus chest and thrown into YAM SUF, into the reeds. He was found there, in the reeds, by the Pharaoh's daughter. The one rejected, is the same one who found the way out of slavery for all his people. His mother cast him, hidden in a papyrus basket, into the reeds, and in the reeds, he found a way for thousands of people whom he led out of Egypt. This is the sign of transformation. Before a concert, the conductor usually rehearses with the musicians, and Moses, as a child, tested the power of God who pulled him out of the sodden reeds. So, when there was a “concert” of divine power – Moses, like a conductor, stretched out his hand with a baton and it worked again – people passed through and were rescued from slavery and the abyss of the sea. The sign worked. God can consecrate your hurt, your rejection, your suffering, into a tool that saves others. All this happens during the Eucharist, and this is where the power of the Holy Spirit is gained. But Moses and Jonah were first hidden in containers of a sort – Jonah below deck on a ship, Moses in a papyrus basket. The image of this container, in which the figures of Moses and Jonah are hidden, is a symbol of the Holy Scripture, in which the mystery of the Saviour, Jesus Christ, is hidden. Moses was taken out of the basket by Pharaoh's daughter and “swallowed” him, so to speak, saving him from death. Jonah was swallowed by a fish, and Moses by the emotions of Pharaoh's daughter. The girl was delighted with the child, and her possessive love saved the boy's life. Isn't this a sign – that the daughter of the Pharaoh, who ordered all the Israelite boys to be killed, saved the life of the most important of them? Truly, it was not a coincidence, but a sign! Years passed and Egypt “spat out” Moses into the desert.

The large fish also swallowed Jonah and spat him out after three days. Then Jonah passed through Nineveh and turned the hearts of the Assyrians to God. In the Book of Jonah, it is written that Jonah, while he was inside the fish, prayed to God ardently. He spoke eight times more words in prayer to God than he spoke about God to the Ninevites. And he made such an impression on the Ninevites that they converted. Jesus said that there is only one sign for this perverse generation – the sign of Jonah. Suffering happened to both Jonah and Moses, and you and me, but in Jesus – if we live, feeding on His Body and Blood, everything is transformed, like the bread into Body and the wine into Blood. Suffering and persecution become happiness and the promotion of human fate.

“All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim 3:12).

Whoever is in friendship with Him – not for show, not to boast, but in inner closeness – just as He may experience rejection, may be disgraced, may be driven away, may fall into death, may find himself in the grave, may be destroyed, like Jonah devoured by the whale – and yet he will come out of every grave if born again. And so, he will get out of every hopeless situation, just as the Book of Exodus describes! This is why Moses hid his friendship with God. Therefore, Jonah spoke only one word to the Ninevites, but eight times as many words to God.

Friendship with God must be hidden, not revealed. This deepest friendship is only real when it is not for show. Don't even boast to yourself about how much you pray.

Teresa of Avila warned against boasting about friendship with God, because it either arouses envy or makes us feel contemptuous of others when we boast about it. In the

lesson from the Book of Exodus (chapter fourteen), which is given in the lectionary for the 16th Monday in Ordinary Time (II), half of verse 9 has been removed. You'll hear in the church that Israel camped by the sea, but not the part that says it was between Pi-Hahiroth and Baal-zephon. Why was this removed? Because the reading is both a test for superficial listeners and for inquisitive people who will ask why the second part of the verse was hidden? The meaning of these places explains a lot: PI-HACHIROT means "mouth of/open cavern", and BAAL-ZEPHON means "Lord of the storm" and associated with protection.

So, keep your mouth open, but hide, and protect your prayer, hide your words that you say to God. Because then your relationship with God is real.

When Peter, John and James were descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, where they saw the true face of Jesus and heard the voice of God, as Saint Luke writes, they remained silent and did not tell anyone about this vision:

"And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen" (Luke 9:36).

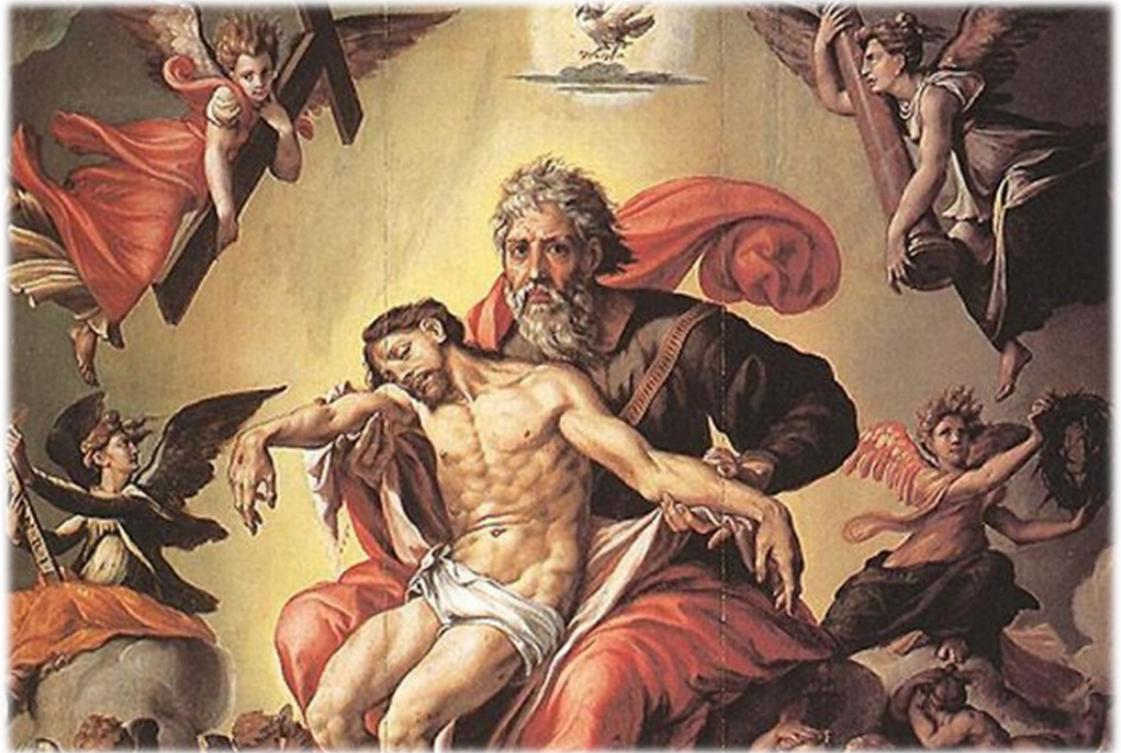
What is most important is invisible to the eye. What is Most Important is between you and God, and no one should see that. It is not intended for human eyes. It is due only to God's eye. In the eye of God, which you cannot see, you can create the truest relationship with God. This is important, above all, for you – for you to finally see that God sees you, that God hears you, that YOU ARE before Him. You are and you will exist. Our victory depends on whether we open our mouths to the hidden Lord and remain silent before our enemies. Hence, in the lesson from the Book of Exodus we can read the following words:

"The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be still" (Exodus 14:14).

Someone more insightful will notice that the word "calm", in the Hebrew language: HARASZ, means – "be silent, quiescent", or even "secret". The Lord will fight for you, and you must keep it secret. You do not have to scream or cry out of despair, nor out of vanity. You don't have to be anxious about your life. The Lord will fight for you, and you can endure in silence everything that happens to you from other people, and what happens around you. Look at Jesus. He said almost nothing on the cross. . . Almost nothing, only seven words. You no longer have to fight for yourself when you surrender your life to the Lord, when your conversation with God is deep and only He hears it. Moses and Jonah were thrown out – Moses was thrown out before Pharaoh, and Jonah was thrown out of the ship in which he was going to Tarshish. Jesus was thrown out of Jerusalem and was crucified. Egypt did not believe Moses, and Jonah was thrown overboard, and there are people today, who do not believe in the sign that Jesus gave by his resurrection. If temples are used for disco events or as cafés, what else can we expect? If the presence of God is thrown out of the temples, turning these buildings into discos, then the fate of such nations will be similar to the fate of Egypt, and these cities will share the fate of Jerusalem in the days of the siege by the Romans. There will be no more signs for our generation, for the generation that has renounced the heritage of Christianity, and I am thinking especially of countries in Europe. Why is it seemingly getting worse with more filth, sin and blasphemy? The Apocalypse says this:

"Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy" (Revelation 22:11).

The more evil and falsehood there is around us, the more sanctified those who remain faithful to Jesus Christ become. God has an exit and salvation for His faithful, but for those who have renounced the inheritance of Christ, there will no longer be even the sign of Jonah. However, we can do much by using the sign of prayer, prayer that is important for Divine Mercy, as Sister Faustina did. Seeing the Angel of God's wrath, from which lightning and thunderbolts were shooting out, she turned to God in the most humble prayer, recalling the suffering of Jesus, His blood, tortured body and the kenosis of the incarnate Divinity: "Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and those of the whole world; for the sake of His sorrow Passion, have mercy on us." And then all the anger of Heaven will be silent.



On the road again

A familiar narrative. Jesus and His friends leave the familiarity of home and hearth and set out to the world in all its fascination and misery, they give some help and get into some trouble, make a few allies and a few more enemies, and take the ultimate journey to the centre of their society, Jerusalem, where, according to the genre, they would either triumph or be vanquished.

This pattern is basic to every story from The Wizard of Oz to Homer's Odyssey and Dante's Divine Comedy. The journey story, in which fools become wise and children grow up, is also the story of Israel in the First Testament. The band of 12 disciples are not the first ignorant bunch – or even the first group in the Bible – who went on the road to meet their destiny and prepare for it in the same inadequate shoes. Abraham did it, and so did Jacob, Moses, David, Ruth and Naomi, Tobias, and all the way to Paul of Tarsus.

Here, however, is where the Christian narrative takes an original turn. The end of the journey narrative requires a finale: either win or lose, be crowned or crushed by your fate. In the case of Jesus, arrival in Jerusalem leads to the paradox of defeat and victory. What's more, rather than inscribing "The End" at this obvious conclusion, another chapter unfolds: 40 more days of teaching and learning, followed by a surprise sequel. Another story is about to unfold. Those who were learners will now be the teachers. And on it goes, through the centuries of church.

Of course, the supernatural events of Incarnation through to Ascension are the ultimate journey-story-of-journey-stories. From heaven to Earth to hell and back again. That unique journey is not ours to take, but the other is not only recommended but required for people of faith. We can't sit on our creeds in the pews but must follow the story line from observer to actor in the relationship with God. It would be a horrible misunderstanding to think that the Ascension is an event in which Jesus makes it safely home, a happy ending about which you need trouble yourself no further. The liturgical year is not a pageant of historical

episodes in the life of God, which all work out to our mutual satisfaction in the end. The next wave of this story involves you and your being “sent” to continue the story for the age to come.

Prayer



Please pray for those who are sick, in need or have asked for our prayers: Lucy Cunningham, Tommy McGrory snr, Jen McGrory, Lilian Cox, Sarah Carmichael, Doleen Durnin.

Please remember in your prayers Ailsa Stewart who passed away during the night and Claire Douglas who passed away this week **and those 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.

Led by the Spirit – the Final Collated Report for the second phase of the consultation is available in the church porch. The third phase begins in June, which will ask the question “How we can best live out our mission in our present situation?”.

Deepening our understanding of the Mass: at 10.30am on Fridays you are invited to come and listen, discuss or ask questions as we journey through the mystery of Holy Mass.

Assisted Suicide – Called to Care, Not to Kill. Please contact your MSPs today to stop assisted suicide becoming legal in Scotland. Use the QR code to access an online resource created by the Catholic Parliamentary Office, including guidance on contacting your MSPs. You can also visit [rcpolitics.org/assisted suicide](http://rcpolitics.org/assisted-suicide) or email us at office@rcpolitics.org for more information.



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