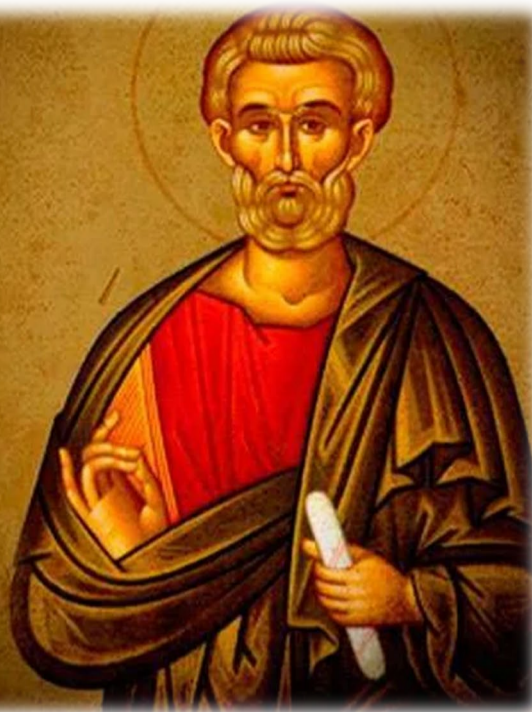


ST. MATTHIAS,
APOSTLE

May 14th



**PARISH
BULLETIN**
**St Kieran's, the
Catholic
Church** *in*
Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain

12th May 2024

The Seventh Sunday of Eastertide

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

7th Sunday of Easter, Holy Mass, 10am

Monday: Holy Mass, **6pm**

Tuesday: Holy Mass, **10am**

Wednesday: Mid-morning Prayer and Holy
Mass, **9.50am**

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

Friday: Exploring the Mass, 10.30am

Saturday: Vigil Mass of Pentecost, 6.00pm

Pentecost Sunday, Holy Mass, 10am

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

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

Solemnity of Corpus Christi, 2nd June, Holy Mass, 4pm

Psalm response

The Lord has set his sway in heaven.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;

I will come back to you,

and your hearts will be full of joy.

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

Father, I pray that they may be one

as we also are one, alleluia.

Hymns/Music for Sunday

Processional (Sunday only)

196 Hail the day that sees him rise (Keys)

Offertory

70 Breathe on me breath of God (Keys)

Communion music

Eucharistic Choral Prelude (Instrumental; Davor)

Bread of the World (Instrumental; Fasoldt)

Post Communion

498 Soul of my Saviour (McLennan)

Recessional

14 Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks (Keys)

Voluntary: Samson, HWV 57, Sinfonia: II. Allegro (Costin)



Take Five

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

MONDAY

MEMORIAL OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

13 MAY 2024

Come stay at my house

In 1917 during a time of great turmoil in Europe, three Portuguese children reported seeing an apparition of Mary in which, it was later revealed, the Blessed Mother called for people to imitate her faithfulness to Christ as a way to achieve peace. According to Carmelite Sister Lúcia dos Santos, one of the children of Fatima, Mary also promised that the consecration of Russia by the world's bishops would lead to an era of peace. Amid the devastation of Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the Catholic bishops of Ukraine requested Pope Francis to consecrate Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which he did on March 25, asking all the world's bishops to join him from their own dioceses. May we continue to follow Mary's example of discipleship as a way of achieving peace at home and abroad.

Today's readings: Acts 19:1-8; John 16:29-33.

"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."

TUESDAY

FEAST OF SAINT MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

14 MAY 2024

It's time to disciple-up

Not long after Jesus' Ascension the apostles were left in a quandary. They had to replace Judas because it was important to maintain the symbolic number of 12 apostles, which recalled the 12 tribes of Israel. Plus, the early church needed all the help it could get spreading the Good News and preserving itself in the face of persecution. Saint Matthias had been with the followers of Jesus from the beginning, prayed with them, and been part of their faith community. How awesome to be invited to serve in a new way! And Matthias stepped up. May you, too, be grounded in your faith, prayer, and community and be ready to step up when needed.

Today's readings: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; John 15:9-17.

"I . . . chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain."

WEDNESDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

15 MAY 2024

The way of the world

In the Marian prayer *Salve Regina* we call the world "this vale of tears," an image not so different from Saint Paul's when he warns us of "savage wolves" who will not spare believers. In John's Gospel Jesus, too, refers to the world as a place where believers will find the rejection that he experienced. It's easy to become cynical, to see salivating wolves lurking everywhere. But it is precisely this valley of tears that God so loved as to give us His Son. Jesus never promised, "Let me take you away from all this," like some corny movie hero. He promised to be with us so that we could continue the good fight. As a matter of fact, He prays to His Father, "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" — into the fray, not as victims but as lovers.

Today's readings: Acts 20:28-38; John 17:11b-19.

"We must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

THURSDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

16 MAY 2024

How to break gridlock

Saints often seem "above it all," standing on pedestals beyond the concerns of this passing world. Saint Paul shows his gritty, shrewd, and practical side when he incited an uproar between Pharisees and Sadducees at his trial. Knowing that Pharisees believe in an afterlife and Sadducees confine their focus to moral living in this world, Paul throws out a provocative suggestion: His trial is about his politics, not his person. Bedlam ensues. Today a saint might bait red and blue political parties and command a news cycle or two, exposing the avaricious ambitions of both. Truth isn't partisan. It blows freely where the Spirit does.

Today's readings: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; John 17:20-26. *"I am on trial for hope in the resurrection of the dead."*

FRIDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

17 MAY 2024

When redemption does not compute

The dictionary defines redemption as "the act of saving something or somebody from a

declined, dilapidated, or corrupted state and restoring it, him, or her to a better condition.” Sounds like the history of Christianity. No matter how far we stray, what sins we commit, or how often we deny God, we are continually offered forgiveness and redemption. Someone once observed that the Christian notion of redemption is incomprehensible to the computer. Sometimes it’s incomprehensible to us, as well. Redemption is not logical or predictable, and often we don’t deserve it, yet God never ceases offering it to us. All we have to do is receive it. But do we? How are you refusing the redemption that God is offering to you right now?

Today’s readings: Acts 25:13b-21; John 21:15-19.

“Jesus said to him the third time, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ . . . And he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’ ”

SATURDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

18 MAY 2024

Faith is not a competitive sport

In communities of faith, it can be hard not to compare yourself to others. Who’s holier? Who gives more time? Who has a deeper prayer life? Who does more? Who cares more? The problem with these questions is that they aren’t productive; they only lead to judgment and division. Communities grow when you care for one another. A defining value of what it means to be Catholic is a profound sense of discovering, experiencing, and responding to God in union with other believers – that is, within community. Why not ask how you can help another grow and how they can help you?

Today’s readings: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; John 21:20-25. *“There are also many other things that Jesus did. . . .”*

Readings for the seventh Sunday of Eastertide

Acts of the Apostles 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26

The community selects another to be counted with the 11 apostles.

Psalm 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20

God’s kingdom is over all, and God’s forgiveness is from east to west.

1 John 4:11-16

To remain in God, we must remain in the spirit of love.

John 17:11b-19

Jesus prays that his followers be consecrated in the truth.

Words on the Word

To be made holy

Blessed are they . . . What does it mean when we offer a blessing? What are we doing when we engage in this most religious of activities? What am I doing when I offer a blessing? Because we are part of a religious tradition that sees fit to bless people, homes, ground, water, bread and wine, oil, certain hours, feasts, and seasons – and in various ethnic traditions, rosaries and scapulas, pets and cars and tractors, and just about anything else you can haul to church – it would be good to reflect on what precisely we think what’s happening in all this blessing activity.

According to one bible scholar: “A blessing is a powerful prayer in which the purpose, power, and favour of God are invoked for our safety, well-being, and strength”. Even the most casual “Goodbye” means that we entrust our departing companion to God. In the Bible, both blessings and curses were considered efficacious; they accomplished what the speaker intended. In the famous Sermon on the Plain in Luke’s Gospel, Jesus called certain needy people blessed and other powerful people cursed (tepidly rendered as “woe to you” in our churchified translation)

because of God's judgment on them. A blessing was not simply a nice thing to say, but an invocation of divine power into a given situation.

Biblical blessings

Hebrew scripture invokes the power of blessing more than 200 times. Abraham gets a remarkable seven-fold promise of blessing at the start of his association with God, and we see in the stories of his subsequent heirs how significant the blessing ceremony becomes. The stealing of a blessing becomes central to the story of Esau and Jacob, and the later blessings of Jacob for his 12 sons act with prophetic accuracy upon their destinies.

In Deuteronomy, blessings become attached to the keeping of the Law rather than as a result of ancestral privilege. By the time of the writing of the psalms, blessing has become, surprisingly, something humans can bestow on God as well: "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" The usage here is not that of giving God anything God needs from us, but that of giving God glory: acknowledging the goodness of God that already exists. Wisdom literature sees blessing or "happiness" to be a byproduct of wise choices, rendering blessings as either earned or forfeited by the decisions we freely make.

The problem with the Wisdom approach is that it can easily be reversed. One who suffered misfortune might readily be named cursed by God, condemned by the evidence of his or her own troubles. In the same way, a prosperous person clearly must be seen as virtuous, because God had obviously showered blessings on such a life. This version of blessing theology still sells today. We poor mortals like to think that blessing power – the authority to call down divine action in a positive sense – is something we can control. We also like to think that so-called "acts of God," those negative and volatile expressions of nature, are something we can avoid by making the correct selection of choices.

Consecrated in the truth

The act of consecration, literally to make something holy, invokes the power of God in a way similar to blessing. But consecration intends the "permanent dedication of a person or thing for sacred use," according to Benedictine sister Mary Collins. When Jesus prays for His friends on the night before He died, He intercedes for their continued unity and asks for their protection from the evil one. Jesus blesses them for their mission on Earth, but He also goes further, consecrating His friends "in the truth," adding as if in a reminder to his Father, "Your word is truth."

What does it mean that Jesus consecrates His friends – that is to say, consecrates the believing assembly even today? We know, or think we know, what it means to consecrate a priest, a church, or the elements of our Eucharist. Such ritual action sets these people and things apart for holy use only. We won't play bingo in the sanctuary or use the sacred vessels at a dinner party. We don't expect to find our priest betting the collection in the bookies. Consecrated things and people stay blessed for keeps and are removed from the orbit of common interchange. That's why people's eyes pop out every time they see a priest at the supermarket or a nun in street clothes. We mentally assign them to a closet in the sacristy when they aren't in ritual use.

So what are the consequences of embracing the idea that Jesus, on the night before he died, consecrated you and me? You and I have been set apart for holy purposes – even in the midst of our lives as spouses, parents, children, friends, labourers, neighbours, and citizens. We are in the world, as the saying goes, but not of it – "strangers and sojourners" whose proper

citizenship is in a Kingdom that is not here. At least, not yet. While that Kingdom is in the act of arriving, we are dedicated by Jesus himself to live in its reality. Which is more foolish, really: to pledge our allegiance to a world that is passing or to one in the process of being born?

God is love

A consecrated people is intended for holy purposes. If we understand holiness as an attribute of God, we know that to share in God's holiness means fundamentally to be as God is. And God is love, the writer of John's letters affirms. If we remain in love, we remain in God and serve divine purposes most seamlessly. Anything we do apart from love is a kind of sacrilege to our true natures as holy vessels intended for holy things. But when we remain in love, we become a source of blessing for the whole world, revealing to all the hidden face of divine love. If we take seriously ourselves as consecrated people, we also renew our confidence in the power of blessing, which invites God to act in our world by surrendering our own will to God's purposes.

The First Episode

Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mt 20:20-28).

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. (2 Cor 4:7-15).

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

When we ask ourselves this question, which Jesus asked the mother of Zebedee's sons, we will feel perplexed, encountering an apparent emptiness inside. As if we didn't want anything. But

**That
which
is most
import
ant**

Part two

**Mother of the
sons of Zebedee**

after a while, a desire may emerge, for example, to regain those we loved but lost in death or separation. We may suddenly realise with fear that we would like to see them again. Maybe we would even say: "I want to see you again and love you, be loved by you"? Perhaps we would become aware of our desire to experience our parents' satisfaction with us, to see them take pride in us and what we have accomplished, to make them appreciate and notice us, so that shameful experiences disappear. Maybe we wish that someone would come back to us, or that we could muster the courage to tell someone that we love them. Maybe we would like our past to be different, our childhood to be different, fulfilled, happy, filled with love, not pain and shame. Maybe we would like health and beauty, wisdom, the return of youth, maybe finally for our lives to have real meaning and not just be stagnation. Maybe we would like to achieve something valuable, to be someone important, for our children to achieve what we have not been able to achieve – happiness, as professor of psychiatry, Irvin Yalom, wrote. I guess that's what the mother of Zebedee's sons wanted. Our desires, if we become aware of them at all, cause a certain dejection, not joy, because either they have not come true, or we do not believe that they will come true, or they have come true and fade away, or they have come true and persist, but we fear they will disappear. We are afraid of disappointment, loss, lack of fulfilment and we prefer not to raise our desires from the dungeons of the soul, so as not to feel sadness and not torment ourselves with anxiety.

Scientists from Emory University School of Medicine have associated the smell of cherries with anxiety. They sprayed this aroma while slightly irritating the mice with electricity. After several such experiments, as soon as they smelled cherry, the rodents reacted with panic. When they had offspring, it turned out that they also reacted with fear to this smell. The memory of fear associated with the smell of cherry survived into the third generation, as noted by Katarzyna Burda, the science correspondent for Newsweek, in an article devoted to the brain and its fears (20/2015). The smell of cherries is our desires – if we have failed to realise them several times, we would rather not have them at all, than to feel pain again. This is why it is so difficult to pinpoint them. Why do our desires most often hurt? Because most often they are lies that we took for truth. When you deceive yourself, that is, you lie to yourself about some not fully realised, ill-considered principle of life that has nothing to do with the Bible, you expose yourself to senseless pain, to the feeling of being cheated, to disappointment, to rejection, you risk being disappointed in yourself and in others.

Chris Thurman recorded the most common lies that we tell ourselves, taking them for granted, and which we consider to be the most important principles of life, unfortunately making ourselves unhappy at our own request. Here are some of them: others are to blame for my failures; it is better to avoid problems than to confront them; everyone will love me and I will be liked by everyone and accepted completely; I must necessarily be perfect and faultless in everything; I will only be happy when my dreams and plans come true; I will surely achieve everything I want; I am unique and valuable to the extent that I achieve the best results; life is easy, it's up for grabs; everyone has to treat me fairly and with respect, but I don't have to; people are naïve and good; all my family problems are to blame for other family members; If my relationship is so difficult, then we probably shouldn't be together; my wife or husband was created to be a "pillow" for me, he/she should, when I want to satisfy my needs, fulfil them as I wish and imagine; my family, my children, my husband, my wife owe what they have achieved only to me; others must change for me to be happy; I never exaggerate, I always assess the situation realistically; people usually make unfair comments against me; if I find it difficult and

suffer, it is because others have made me a victim; I am always innocent, and if I am guilty, everyone should be understanding of me; life happens through feelings, not thoughts; to be with God, you have to earn it; God not only hates sin, but also the sinner; God rejects me because I have rejected Him for years, God is vengeful; because I am a believer and religious and I pay Him a daily "tribute" of prayers, God will protect me from failures, disappointments, illnesses, and suffering; all my sufferings are punishment for my sins; my Christian love is expressed in the fact that I please everyone in every respect; a religious person cannot be angry or sad, he/she does not disappoint anyone; I have to be strong spiritually, because only then will God pay attention to me. All that's mentioned can disappoint us very painfully and throw us into the abyss of pain that is bitterness about life.

However, there are people who have either rethought their self-deception or have met God in their lives personally, through conversion. They know that this world is passing and nothing can stay here. All this is only to gain another life, and everything, literally everything in this transient, impermanent world can be used to gain another life, immortal life. Everything? And sin? God invented something like a confessional, which serves as a kind of recycling, so that even sin serves our sanctification. So, everything can be used! Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote that "the essential object of faith is that which makes us happy" (*desiderium naturae*). And happiness, if it is true happiness, must be timeless, immortal, impossible to lose. Such happiness is eternal, although it may begin here, in the transient world. Love, if it is true, never goes away – only God can have such love. If we love a person, we want to love God in this love and we want this person important to us in this life to have God's love and live in this love. Ultimately, we will see that it is about one love – the love of God, who is love.

So, there are people who want more - lasting happiness - and not even for themselves, but for those they love, for example for children; like the mother of the sons of Zebedee. Wanting happiness for the most important people means not avoiding happiness yourself. To want happiness is to want the most important thing for the people most important to us.

Please note that the Bible does not mention the mother of Zebedee's sons by name here. This is not irrelevant, but hidden information, because in the Bible even those places where something is not written still speaks. It seems that this woman wanted nothing for herself, neither attention, nor fame, nor the memory of her, she wanted everything for her children, nothing for herself. She lived for her children, and she wanted happiness and the best position for these sons. Some mothers want nothing more than holiness and closeness to God for their children. Some – but all of them – want good, if they deserve to be called a mother! There are mothers who say to their child: "I want the best for you; I sacrificed everything for you because I want you to be happy – but behind this is the desire to entangle the child in loyalty and the desire for a symbiotic relationship with him/her.

When we cannot fulfil our desires on our own, we turn to God. We have the strength to live because we have hidden desires and hopes of fulfilment that conflict with doubts about their fulfilment.

Failures in the past, little chance of fulfilling our earthly desires, our uncertainty give us sad internal pain, fear and anxiety, tearing us between faith in their fulfilment and doubt and despair. And when a wonderful, extraordinary, unique person appears naked right next to us; downright divine – as was the case with Jesus – from within, with difficulty, but also with unbridled power, a chaotic lava of words and emotions explodes from the volcano of the heart.

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 Doreen Clark, Valerie Charlotte Morton and Dolores Francisco **and all 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 still 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 this coming Friday and following 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.



Coffee Morning: the fundraiser will be on Saturday 25th May. For the raffle and bottle stall donations welcome. Home baking (always popular) needed nearer the date.

Helpers needed to set up on the Friday evening at 6.30pm, and on the Saturday morning. Thanks.



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