

PARISH BULLETIN

**St Kieran's, the Catholic
Church** in Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain
27th April 2025

Divine Mercy Sunday

Second Sunday of Easter



Divine Mercy Sunday: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Tuesday: **Mass for the Dead – the Holy Father, 6.00pm**

Wednesday: Adoration and Mid-morning Prayer for the Dead, 9.30pm; **Holy Mass. 10.00am**

Friday: Mid-morning Prayer for the Dead, 9.50am; **Holy Mass, 10.00am**

Hymns/Music for Sunday

Proclamation

207 He is risen, tell the story

Offertory

560 This is the day

Post Communion

Sheet Open our eyes, Lord

Recession

Sheet Ye watchers and ye holy ones

Next weekend:

Saturday:

Vigil Mass: 6.00pm

Third Sunday of Easter: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Sacrament of Reconciliation on request.

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

Sunday, 4th May: Holy Mass. 4pm

Psalm response

*Give praise to the Lord for he is good,
his mercy endures for ever.*

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord.

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

Alleluia.

Communion Antiphon

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

Take Five

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

MONDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

28 APRIL 2025

Are you born again?

Have you ever been asked if you are born-again by other Christians? Just what does that mean? The King James Version of the Bible, on which many fundamentalist Christians rely, uses the term "born again" to translate the phrase in the gospel passage for today. The old Catholic Douay-Rheims did, too. But the Greek word can also mean "born from above." That's why the character Nicodemus in today's story misunderstands it. To be "born again" means to experience new life "from above," a life free from the fear of sin and death, because in baptism we receive eternal life and the forgiveness of our sins. Remember that the next time you proclaim, "We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the

resurrection of the dead."

Today's readings: Acts 4:23-31; John 3:1-8. "Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.'"

FEAST OF SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

29 APRIL 2025

Meet the challenge

Catherine of Siena was a remarkable woman who transcended the narrow roles to which the laity, and women in particular, were subject in medieval Europe. She advised popes, negotiated settlements, kept a continuous correspondence with her followers all over Italy, and composed The Dialogue, an account of her conversation with God, which is widely considered a masterpiece of spiritual literature. Amazingly she accomplished all

this despite being almost completely illiterate! How? She dictated everything. Each one of us has some physical or intellectual shortcoming. Today, before you feel defeated by a particular limitation, remember Catherine and ask, "How can I work around this?"

Today's readings: 1 John 1:5-2:2; Matthew 11:25-30. *"Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

WEDNESDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

30 APRIL 2025

Released for good behaviour

Would you risk prison and possible death for the sake of your beliefs? The question was anything but abstract for early believers in the risen Christ. Even before they had to contend with Roman persecution, these early "Jewish Christians" had to face the wrath of the Sadducees, an aristocratic priestly group that did not believe in the possibility of resurrection. The Sadducees disappeared from the scene soon after the second Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., but nearly 2,000 years later the witness of the courageous early followers of Christ lives on.

Today's readings: Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21. *"Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"*

THURSDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINT

JOSEPH THE WORKER

1 MAY 2025

Labour gains

Not coincidentally we celebrate Saint Joseph the Worker on May 1, or May Day, which is internationally recognised as a day to celebrate the achievements of the labour movement. It has been just a little over a century since Pope Leo XIII's groundbreaking encyclical *Rerum novarum* advocated the rights of workers and gave labourers across Europe, Australia, and the U.S. the impetus they needed to achieve such reforms as the end of child labour and the institution of two-day weekends, eight-hour workdays, 40-hour work weeks, state-regulated working conditions, standard minimum wages, paid holidays, and the right of workers to organise. Enjoy your weekends and remember whom you have to thank for it.

Today's readings: Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36. *"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life."*

FRIDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINT

ATHANASIUS, BISHOP, DOCTOR

2 MAY 2025

Reasons to believe

The struggles of the church to define itself in its early centuries are easily forgotten, but those battles were waged with passion and conviction. Heresies such as Arianism changed the faith of individuals and even helped shape political history. Athanasius' vigorous defence of the divinity of Christ and the Trinity cost him dearly, not only in his theological thinking but also in popularity and even personal safety. Christians today easily acknowledge the divinity of Christ without realizing the full implications of such a belief. It is important we regularly ask ourselves not only what we believe but why – and avoid easy answers in the process.

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: FEAST OF SAINTS PHILIP

AND JAMES, APOSTLES

3 MAY 2025

We have seen him

There Jesus was, raised by God, and his apostles were still asking questions. First, Thomas: "Master . . . how can we know the way?" Then Philip: "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." It's said there are no stupid questions, but, guys, the answers were literally looking you in the eye – and had been the whole time. "I am the way and the truth and the life," Jesus reminded them. "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." It's also said there shouldn't be a gap between appearance and action. No different for Christ's disciples. "Whoever believes in me," Jesus said, "will do the works that I do." Want to see Jesus? He's already there, in your heart and in your love.

Today's readings: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14. *"From now on you do know him and have seen him."*

Readings for Divine Mercy Sunday

Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16

It's not "only a shadow" when cast by one who believes in the gospel.

Psalms 118: 2-4. 22-24. 25-27a

God's love is not going anywhere, as long as we're still here and in need.

Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

John tells of the distress, the kingdom, and the endurance: He writes what he sees.

John 20:19-31

The gospel is not written for history's sake—for the record. It's for our benefit.

Words on the Word

An Invitation to Embrace the Joy of Easter

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*When we realize that God's love for us does not cease in the face of our sin or recoil before our offenses, but becomes even more attentive and generous; when we realise that this love went so far as to cause the passion and death of the Word made flesh who consented to redeem us at the price of his own blood, then we exclaim in gratitude: "Yes, the Lord is rich in mercy, and even: "The Lord is mercy." (Saint John Paul II, *Reconciliatio et paenitentia*).*

* *

Dear Friends in Christ,

Today's Sunday is often called White Sunday or the Octave Sunday, a name drawn from the white liturgical vestments and the white robes worn by the catechumens newly baptised at the Easter Vigil. Clad in purity, they walked in these garments throughout the week of Easter, removing them only at the close of the Octave on the following Sunday.

On this very Sunday – also known in our tradition as Low Sunday – we celebrate the Feast of Divine Mercy. Our Lord Himself first revealed His desire for this feast in an apparition to Saint Faustina in Płock in 1931, saying, "I desire that the Feast of Mercy be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter... This Sunday shall be called the Feast of Mercy" (Diary, 49). Years later, Saint John Paul II confirmed and inserted it into the universal liturgical calendar.

We live, too, in the fifty-day season from Easter Sunday to Pentecost – a time of profound joy in the Resurrection and confident hope in eternal life. Yet, what of those who, during this season, have lost a loved one? They may ask, "Resurrection is a beautiful idea, but will it truly happen?" In today's Gospel, the Apostle Thomas bluntly demands "Show us the proof!" Doubt, it seems, is part of the journey to truth – even a method of arriving at belief. We understand Thomas well: we, too, long to touch, to see, to be certain. We question for many reasons – curiosity, fear, surprise, a lack of understanding.

As the poet E. Bryll puts it:

*And then there's me, Lord God, with a filthy little finger,
With which again I'll probe Your wound for a long time. . .
And staring into Your stunned eyes,
I'll ask – does God hurt? . . . Forgive me, I didn't mean to.*

The Gospel does not tell us whether Thomas actually placed his fingers in Christ's side, but it records his crowning act of faith: "My Lord and my God!" Having encountered the Risen Lord, his doubts fell away. This moment is the pinnacle of Saint John's Gospel, where the doubting disciple meets the living Christ.

Each of us must walk our own path to that personal encounter with the Risen Lord – just as Nathanael or Mary Magdalene did. In the Sunday Mass, on the eighth day of the week, we, like Thomas, reach out to touch the Lord Himself. The number eight speaks of eternity, a symbol of God’s transcendent life breaking into our world (A. Grun). In the Eucharist, our wounds meet Christ’s wounds – our hurts and sorrows, broken relationships and lost hopes. There, doubt can be transformed into hope, and tears of pain into pearls of love.

May today’s Feast of Divine Mercy remind us that our sufferings echo those of our neighbour. Let’s walk together, carrying our crosses side by side, and rejoice that in all our struggles the Risen Lord is close – and that our wounds are so like His.

* * *

Help me, that my feet may be merciful, so that I may hurry to assist my neighbour, overcoming my own fatigue and weariness. My true rest is in the service of my neighbour.

Help me, O Lord, that my heart may be merciful so that I myself may feel all the sufferings of my neighbour. I will refuse my heart to no one. I will be sincere even with those who, I know, will abuse my kindness. And I will lock myself up in the most merciful Heart of Jesus. I will bear my own suffering in silence. May Your mercy, O Lord, rest upon me.

You yourself command me to exercise the three degrees of mercy. The first: the act of mercy, of whatever kind. The second: the word of mercy-if I cannot carry out a work of mercy, I will assist by my words. The third: prayer-if I cannot show mercy by deeds or words, I can always do so by prayer. My prayer reaches out even there where I cannot reach out physically.

O my Jesus, transform me into Yourself, for you can do all things. Amen.

(Saint Faustyna).

In Christ’s love,

Fr Anthony

Waves of Grace

Comments of the Gospel according to Luke

Year C in three-year cycle of Gospel readings focuses on the Gospel according to Luke. So, here we consider some of the main events in Luke’s narrative.

Chapter 8
The Touch of Jesus

Luke 24:35-48

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When the risen Christ invites His friends, “Touch me,” He offers more than proof of His new life: He restores our very capacity to live beyond death. In Michelangelo’s *Creation of Adam* (Sistine Chapel), God’s outstretched finger breathes life into Adam. Opposite that scene, in the panel of Eve’s fall, the serpent’s hand reaches for the fruit with an inverted gesture – symbolising a cruel distortion of God’s loving touch. Humanity’s great need was for a fresh, divine gesture: one that does not merely restore life but raises us above death itself.

Christ's Life-Giving Touch

Jesus draws us into His divine life through His resurrected body. In every celebration of the Eucharist we “touch” Him, and in Holy Communion He touches us. By consuming His Body, we share in the triumph of the One who is “the firstborn from the dead” (Colossians 1:18).

When He appears in the Upper Room, He even asks for a fish to eat: “Have you anything here to eat?” They give Him a piece of broiled fish, and He eats it in their presence. That simple act of eating shows that death has been overcome. He turns the symbol of the tomb – the fish that had swallowed Jonah – into a reminder that He alone holds power over life and death.

Participation in Divine Life

Saint Paul describes Christ's resurrection as a “breach” by which the life-giving power of God enters our world. By touching the risen Lord, we begin our own transformation into His likeness. Death may still reach us, but it cannot destroy us. Even a single reception of Communion is enough to break the power of death, for “through him all will live again” (cf. John 11:25).

The Apostles' Astonishment

The first disciples were stunned. They had found the tomb empty, saw the grave-clothes neatly folded, and knew that no one could have unrolled them from the inside. Roman guards fled in terror; the sealed tomb had been inviolably secured by a two-ton stone and a military seal. Yet Jesus simply appeared among them – speaking, eating, and encouraging them to believe Scripture.

Although the four Gospel writers tell different details, they all agree on the single, astonishing verdict: He lives. And He continues to appear in our world – whether to saints like Faustina Kowalska or Catherine of Siena, or in any place where people speak of Him with faith and love.

Preparedness for Divine Encounter

To see the risen Lord, we must prepare our hearts. An encounter with the living God can be overwhelming, for His light exposes the darkness in which death and falsehood have tried to hide us. Yet Jesus comes not to terrify but to bring peace, to open Scripture, and to send us out as witnesses to the truth that life is stronger than death.

The Touch of Love

Jesus' love is physical and personal. He invites us not only to look at Him but to touch Him: “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side” (John 20:27). He wants us to experience His warmth, to know that He dwells in our flesh and that His love is unlosable.

We see this throughout the Gospels:

- The leper healed by a touch (Matthew 8:3)
- The blind restored when Jesus lays hands on their eyes (Matthew 9:28–29)
- The disciples freed from fear at Tabor by his gentle touch (Matthew 17:7)
- The woman healed of haemorrhage when she grasps his cloak (Mark 5:28–30)
- Children drawn into his arms and blessed (Mark 10:13–16)

These gestures are never random. They teach us that true love needs physical expression. In our own age, we have seen how deprivation of loving touch can have tragic consequences – infants in well-kept orphanages died when never held or spoken to. By contrast, the small act of holding, talking to and touching a child can restore life itself.

Eucharist: Our Daily Touch

What wonder, then, that Christ chose the simplest gestures – breaking bread, sharing a meal, offering his flesh and blood – so that we might touch Him every day. In every Mass we receive His body and blood, and He transforms us more fully into himself. Without that encounter, ours too would be a life starving for divine love.

Conclusion

The risen Jesus is not a distant spirit but the living Son of God, full of kindness, openness and affection. He breaks through our fear and isolation with a touch that heals unbelief, loneliness and even physical pain. As he told Thomas, “Do not disbelieve, but believe” (John 20:27).

May we learn from those first disciples: to gather courageously in His name, to speak of Him with openness, to invite the touch of His hands in the Sacraments, and to let His love transform us into heralds of the life that never ends. In every receiving of Communion, may His resurrected touch renew us and send us out to share the Good News: He is risen – death has been conquered, and through Him we have eternal life.

With every Easter blessing in Christ,

Fr Anthony

Historical Sources of the Fact of the Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ is one of the most well-documented events in history. Our salvation hinges on faith in His rising. As Jesus Himself proclaimed, “Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16). That faith rests not only on objective, verifiable facts but also on a personal encounter with the Risen Lord, who remains with us “to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

1. The Credibility of the Historical Sources

Modern scholarship confirms that the Gospel writers faithfully recorded a real event. We rely on two primary sources:

- The New Testament Scriptures
- The living Tradition of the Church

When we apply the same criteria used for any ancient text, the New Testament stands out:

- Over 24,000 Greek manuscripts survive today – far more than for any other ancient work.
- More than 5,600 of these were copied within a century of the events they describe.
- The earliest known fragment of Mark’s Gospel, discovered in Egypt, dates to the first century AD – within the lifetime of many eyewitnesses.

By contrast, works such as Thucydides, Herodotus and Aristotle survive in far fewer and much later manuscripts, yet no one questions their authenticity. Archaeology has repeatedly confirmed the historical and cultural details found in the Bible. The unanimous verdict of historians is that the Gospels reliably record Jesus’s life, death and resurrection.

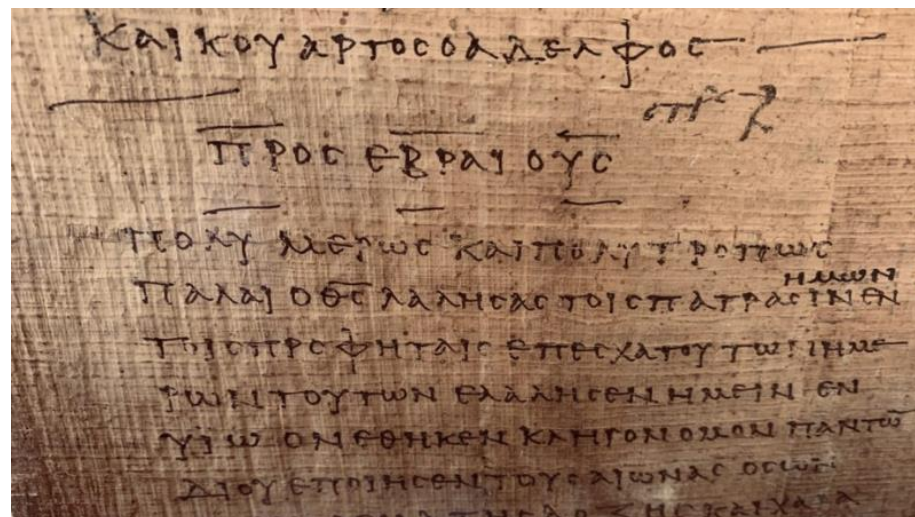
2. The Earliest Creed of Faith in the Resurrection

Saint Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 15:3–8) preserves the earliest creed in Christianity:

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received:

- that Christ died for our sins,
- that he was buried,
- that he was raised on the third day,
- that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve,
- to more than five hundred brothers at one time,
- to James, then to all the apostles,
- Last of all he appeared also to me."

Early Christians memorised this creed because it formed the very foundations of their faith. Paul stresses that many of these witnesses were still alive and could verify their testimony. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains, "Peter and the Twelve are the primary 'witnesses to his Resurrection', but they are not the only ones" (CCC 642).



to around
the 3rd
Century AD

3. Living the Resurrection Today

From the apostolic age to the present, the truth of Christ's resurrection has been confidently proclaimed and faithfully handed on. When we believe in the resurrection, are baptised, and receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, we share in the joy of new life. Through prayer and the sacraments, we already participate in Christ's victory over sin, the devil and death.

Prayer



Please remember to pray for those who are unwell, in need, or have requested our prayers: Claire Wiggins, Russell Carroll, Lucy Cunningham, Tommy McGrory Senior, Lilian Cox, Sarah Carmichael, and Doleen Durnin.

Please keep in your prayers His Holiness Pope Francis, Grizel Williams (2009) and all those whose anniversaries fall around this time.

News and Events

Join us for tea and coffee in the hall after Sunday Mass. We warmly welcome visitors and would be delighted to share our hospitality with you. We hope to see you there!

Book Sale on Saturday the 17th of May.

Confirmations: Bishop Brian will be here to administer the sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday 25th of May.

Liturgy Works begins again this September. See information in the church porch.

In just a few weeks, the Scottish Parliament will hold its Stage One vote on Liam McArthur's assisted suicide Bill. The vote is expected to take place in mid-May. This Bill is even more extreme than the Bill in Westminster. For example, there is no requirement that the person seeking the assisted suicide is expected to die within six months (someone could qualify even if they are expected to live for a further two years or even two decades) and it would legalise assisted suicide for teenagers aged as young as 16. Please take action to [contact your MSPs now](https://righttolife.org.uk/scotlandvote). It only takes 30 seconds. Go to <https://righttolife.org.uk/scotlandvote>.



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