

*He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.*



# PARISH BULLETIN

**St Kieran's, the Catholic Church** in  
*Campbeltown and Islay*  
**Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain**  
5<sup>th</sup> April 2026

## *Easter Sunday of the Lord's Resurrection*

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

### *First Week in Eastertide:*

Monday – *Second Day of Easter: Holy Mass, 10am*

Tuesday: **Holy Mass, 6pm**

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

*Discussion Group: the scriptures during Easter, 10.30am in the Chapel House*

Friday: Mid-morning Prayer, 9.50am; **Holy Mass, 10am**

#### **Hymns/Music for Sunday**

##### **Processional**

Alleluia, sing to Jesus

##### **Asperges**

Spirit of God, come dwell within me.

##### **Offertory**

This is the day

##### **Communion music**

*Praise the name of the Lord*

##### **Post Communion**

Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us

##### **Recessional**

Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Alleluia!

#### **Next weekend:**

**Saturday: Vigil Mass of Divine Mercy Sunday, 6pm**

**Divine Mercy Sunday: Holy Mass, 10am**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:** anytime on request.

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

19<sup>th</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

#### **Psalm response**

*This day was made by the Lord,  
we rejoice and are glad.*

#### **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.*

*Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed;  
let us therefore celebrate the festival in the Lord.*

*Alleluia.*

### **Communion Antiphon**

*Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia;  
therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread  
of purity and truth, alleluia, 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.*

### **EASTER MONDAY**

**21 APRIL 2025**

#### **All in a day**

A young monk chided his novice master for having prayed at the Easter Monday Mass, "On this Easter day . . ." "Certainly, you should have sung 'in this Easter season,'" the novice explained. "After all, Easter is over." The wise older priest pointed out – much more gently than deserved – that Easter Day itself lasts eight days, a full week, and only then do we move into the Easter season. Like the obliteration of the reign of death that Easter is, time itself is set on its head. Like the wedding day that, in many cultures, is simply too

overflowing with joy to be contained in a single 24 hours, the spirit of hope that is Easter will not be confined. May it rise in your heart *this Easter Day!*

**Today's readings:** Acts 2:14, 22-33; Matthew 28:8-15. "*This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.*"

### **EASTER TUESDAY**

**22 APRIL 2025**

#### **A place in the heart**

Sometimes, in the least suspecting places, we can find miracles. For Mary Magdalene it was a tomb where she had gone to weep and grieve the death of Jesus. But instead she found life! She experienced the risen Jesus and became

the first person to proclaim that to the world. Somehow in the midst of her grief and sense of loss, Mary left a tiny space for hope that allowed her to recognize the voice of Jesus as he called her name. The possibility for miracles great and small is with us every day. Leave open a space within your heart – you just may hear your name being called.

**Today's readings:** Acts 2:36-41; John 20:11-18. *"Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord.'"*

## **EASTER WEDNESDAY**

**23 APRIL 2025**

### **What do you expect?**

The disciples walking the road to Emmaus after Jesus' death were disappointed – they had expected from him something other than what they saw, and they assumed his mission had failed with his death. There is a lesson in that, taught by Jesus later in the same story when he breaks the bread and opens their eyes: Our expectations can blind us to the blessings right in front of us. Keep your expectations in check and you might find all you could ever hope for, and much more, right in front of your eyes.

**Today's readings:** Acts 3:1-10; Luke 24:13-35. *"We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel."*

## **EASTER THURSDAY**

**24 APRIL 2025**

### **Be brave**

The Acts of the Apostles, which we read throughout the season of Easter, is a riveting account of faith, courage, healings, conversions, and a miraculous escape from prison. It is the story of how God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, intervened in the lives of Jesus' disciples to ensure the spread of his word throughout the world. The courage of the first followers of Jesus is truly inspirational. Take some time to read Acts this month. Then consider: "In what ways is God inviting me to live more courageously? What is keeping me from responding to that invitation?"

**Today's readings:** Acts 3:11-26; Luke 24:35-38. *"To this we are witnesses."*

## **EASTER FRIDAY**

**25 APRIL 2025**

### **Breakfast anyone?**

Meeting friends for breakfast is such a delight. There's something about the morning meal together that makes life feel good. The story of the risen Jesus inviting his friends to breakfast strikes that familiar note of unity and peace. Yet the disciples named in the story were all characters that had crossed Jesus in one way or another: Peter the denier, Thomas the doubter, Nathanael the cynic, and the Zebedee brothers who persisted in their childish sibling rivalry. The morning repast was a reconciliation service – and a nice way to start the day. Let that same spirit of unity and reconciliation begin your day today.

**Today's readings:** Acts 4:1-12; John 21:1-14. *"When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread."*

## **EASTER SATURDAY**

**26 APRIL 2025**

### **Nothing but the truth**

Sometimes you have to do what's right even in the face of opposition. Whether it's no reward at best or open hostility at worst, the world around you doesn't always approve of what you know to be the best thing. The apostles ran into the same problem – in fact, they were on both sides of it. When the religious authorities ordered them not to speak or teach in Jesus' name, they refused to obey. On the other hand, when Mary Magdalene came to some of these same disciples with news of the risen Jesus, they did not believe her. Of course, it's unwise to always reject what others think of you. But when faced with a difficult situation, ask God for the wisdom and the strength to do what is right and good.

**Today's readings:** Acts 4:13-21; Mark 16:9-15. *"Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge."*

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## *Readings for Easter Sunday*

### **Acts of the Apostles 10:34a, 37-43**

You know the story, Peter says. But do you get the message?

### **Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23**

For the wonders of today, we give thanks and praise.

## Colossians 3:1-4

On this day we celebrate the feast of sincerity and truth.

## Matthew 28:1-10

He has risen and he is going before you to Galilee.

# Words on the Word

## ***An Invitation to Embrace the Joy of Easter***

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*If someone has endured the hardships of fasting, let them receive their due reward today. If they bore the toils of the first hour, let them receive their fair payment. If anyone came after the third hour, let them celebrate with gratitude. If someone joined only after the sixth hour, let them have no doubt, for they do not lose anything; if someone was delayed even until the ninth hour, let them come without hesitation. If anyone did not arrive until the eleventh hour, let them not fear the delay at all. For the Master of the house is generous: He welcomes the last as He does the first; He satisfies those who have worked since the eleventh hour just as He rewards those who worked from the first. He is compassionate towards the last and rewards the first; He gives to one and assists the other; He accepts the deeds and rejoices in the intention; He honours the efforts and commends the purpose. (St. John Chrysostom; † 470).*

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Dear Friends in Christ,

The well-known psychiatrist, theologian, and author of many books, Manfred Lutz, provocatively wrote in "Herder Korrespondenz" (3/2016): *The Church is not a moral institution: The problem with the Churches is that people do not believe in God; if God does not exist, then the whole Church is a childish theatre. Furthermore, let us add: if Christ did not rise from the dead, then more than two thousand years of celebrating the Day of Resurrection is a meaningless festivity. It remains only a pleasant spring holiday, a day off work, with a good breakfast, ham and eggs.*

Persecuted and killed for centuries, Christians lived with faith in the Risen Lord, who leads through death to life – imperishable life in Him, who is the giver of all life. Early Christian art is imbued with simple symbols that speak of Christ's victory. For example, the cross adorned with a laurel wreath signifies victory on the cross; it is an expression of Christian hope that death has been conquered, for:

*He who was held by death destroyed it.*

*He who descended into hell rendered it powerless.*

*The body was seized, but it encountered God; (...)*

*Christ is risen – and the demons have perished.*

*Christ is risen – and the angels rejoice.*

*Christ is risen – and Life has regained its rights.*

*Christ is risen – and no one remains dead in the grave.*

*For Christ has risen as the first among those who have died.*

*To Him be glory and the kingdom forever and ever. (St. John Chrysostom; † 470)*

Millions of people around the world celebrate the mystery of the Lord's Resurrection. This Good News of the Resurrection is the foundation of a life of love for millions on earth. What is

the measure of this love? It is love without measure, as demonstrated by Jesus Christ.

"Whoever endures to the end will receive the crown of victory."

In the beginning, the Lord Jesus did not wish to establish a special people, a particular linguistic group, or a pious multitude. The Risen Jesus, who endured all that pains, took upon Himself all the frailties of human nature: its tendency towards sin and even disbelief. He desired to lift us to God, portraying us as those who, through the merits of the Son of God, are worthy of the Father's love.

How empty and cold is the world without God.

The theatre critic Krystyna Meissner writes: *In the contemporary world, we are deprived of points of reference; we have lost direction and signs, we wander blindly, plunging into chaos, with no hierarchical morality in sight. This is indeed a world without God.*

How different is the world of Christian hope, which we do not always appreciate. So much life and joy emanates from the Risen Lord. Eternal life is a gift from God, who wishes to share with us His life and love. This gift is given to all who need it and believe in Christ.

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*(...) Beloved, let us reflect on the Resurrection of Christ, for just as His Passion represented our former life, so His Resurrection is the mystery of new life. That is why the Apostle says: "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).*

*You have believed, you have been baptised; the old life has died, killed on the cross, buried in baptism. The old life, in which you lived poorly, has been buried, and a new one arises. Live well, so that you may truly live; live in such a way that when you die, you do not perish. (St. Augustine; † 430; Latin writer, Doctor of the Church)*

Wishing you a blessed and joyful Easter season!

In Christ's love,

Fr Anthony



The Master from Yaroslavl: *The Great Panagia*; Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow

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## THE MOTHER OF GOD IN ICONS: 24. IMAGES OF THE MOTHER OF GOD WITHOUT THE CHILD

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Images of the Mother of God without the Child are usually shown either in half-length or full-length form. Among the most important types are the Mother of God Orant and the Mother of God with Emmanuel, which appear in several variants, including the Platytera Blacherniotissa, the Theotokos of the Sign and the Great Panagia.

The image of the Orant comes from Hellenistic art, where it later entered early Christian iconography. Here, the Mother of God stands as a figure of the Church, with her hands raised in prayer in the classic orant pose. This gesture is especially common in monumental painting.

The Mother of God with Emmanuel shows Mary in the orant pose, with a medallion of Christ Emmanuel placed on her chest. According to tradition, the oldest icon of this type – now lost – was the Blacherniotissa, known today through a faithful copy, the Platytera. In Rus', the Theotokos of the Sign became especially revered as a local variant of the Platytera Blacherniotissa.

The Great Panagia is a distinctive version of the Theotokos of the Sign. Its key feature is the presentation of Christ Emmanuel in a gesture of blessing. The Mother of God's hands echo that same gesture, creating a striking visual symmetry.

In the icon shown alongside this text, the composition is enriched by archangels holding orbs of the world, which are understood as symbols of divine authority.

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## Wounded Light

Commentaries on the Gospel of St John

Saint John's Gospel is used in the lectionary for Sundays on particular occasions, feasts, and solemnities, and in certain seasons, e.g. Easter, Christmas.

### Chapter 17

### The Narrow Gate

John 10:1-10

*“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves”* (Mt 7:13–15).

What is this narrow gate? Jesus, of course, is the gate – the very gate. But what does it mean for Him to be the narrow gate for us? It means a passage through which we must squeeze with real effort. It is the way out of the prison we build for ourselves when we fear the truth.

And what is the hardest thing for any person? To face the truth about oneself and admit it. We work hard to seem like someone we are not, and in doing so we shut ourselves off. On the outside, we build an image – but that image is often nothing more than a carefully protected lie. The more deeply we come to know Jesus, the more He brings us to that painful reckoning with ourselves. Yet only that truth can set us free from self-deception.

“Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven’” (Mt 16:17–19).

Anyone entrusted with such authority must first be tested, so that mercy might be part of that authority. Spiritual power without mercy is a grave danger – Satan himself is the clearest example. To be merciful, one must first have known mercy personally. There is nothing quite like the experience of being lost and, instead of receiving punishment, being forgiven. Peter's journey with Jesus had to lead him, sooner or later, through the narrowest of places: the truth of his own unfaithfulness and the shock of God's undeserved mercy.

“Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the

high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside at the door..." (Jn 18:15–16).

"Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, 'I don't know the man!' Immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: 'Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly" (Mt 26:74–75).

He went in – and then he went out.

Peter entered what was, in a very real sense, the narrow gate into Caiaphas' courtyard. There, when the truth about himself finally broke in on him – and he heard it from his own lips – he went outside. At last, he knew himself. Three years with Jesus had not given him as much light as those three crowing calls in the darkness.

So, what will we see when we come to our own gate? I can already see how many times I have pulled back from admitting what links me to Jesus. I have been ashamed of Him. I have denied Him. I have stood at a distance. I have wanted to keep myself out of sight.

The gate Jesus speaks of is the gate of truth about ourselves – and it is a narrow one indeed. It is the place where we are forced to face our denial of Jesus. We fool ourselves into thinking we are faithful, but when the test comes, the words come out through clenched teeth: I do not know Him.

Peter began to call down curses and swear: "I don't know this man you're talking about..."

So, what are our grand declarations and good intentions worth? Peter did not know himself. Only a few hours earlier he had told Jesus he would never deny Him. Now he is swearing he does not know Him at all.

We would like to think of ourselves as people of conviction: steady, faithful, morally strong, nobly consistent. But often that is just a passing dream. Peter is not worse or weaker than we are; he is simply at the point we all reach sooner or later – the point where we discover what we are really capable of.

I do not even know the man I see in the mirror. So what can I say about the One who is the mirror of the Father?

Jesus calls Himself the gate: "I am the gate for the sheep" (Jn 10:7). He also says: "I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved – they will come in and go out..." (Jn 10:9).

At its most basic, a gate is both an exit and an entrance. It can mean a way out of trouble, or a way into something new. We even use that language in ordinary speech: someone "went into themselves" or "came out of themselves".

So, Jesus is the gate of entry for those living in alienation, for people who have become strangers to themselves. And He is the gate of exit for those who have shut themselves in, living in fear – fear of themselves, fear of life, fear of truth.

In the ancient world, the city gate was more than just an entrance. It was the place where business was done, where public decisions were made, and where legal cases were heard. It was also a fortified boundary, marking the line between the safe city and the exposed world outside.

That matters. Because if judgments were made at the gate, then Jesus, by urging us to enter into ourselves in His footsteps, is inviting us to judge ourselves. At first glance, that does not sound like freedom. But in fact, to judge oneself properly means to know the truth about

oneself without fear – and to confess it to Jesus.

The hardest thing is guilt. We struggle to bear it, and in the struggle we often lie to ourselves in the most dangerous way. Running from guilt is not only running from Jesus; it is running from ourselves. And that leads to the deepest alienation of all: we stop being ourselves and become hypocrites.

Personally, I know this well. Guilt has often led me into twisted forms of self-justification. In the confessional, one rarely meets people who accuse themselves too much. Far more often, people explain themselves away. Both are serious failures of truth.

You are only who you truly are when you accept the whole truth about yourself, instead of deceiving yourself like Peter did when he confidently promised fidelity. I keep saying that to myself, and yet I can feel how little it seems to sink in. The gates of the heart are shut.

Another passage in Peter's story comes to mind. I do not know whether the olive garden had a gate, but in Gethsemane the real passages began – the ones Peter had to force his way through. The other gates he had passed through with Jesus were manageable enough. Here, though, the struggle began.

Gethsemane is like the dark reverse image of Eden – the garden that also had its entrance and its exit. In the garden of Paradise, the “happy fault” began. And so the garden beyond the Kidron Valley, dark even in name, becomes the place where the new Adam – Christ – begins to lead us back to what we lost.

“There was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it (...) and Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place.” But Judas did not enter with Jesus. Knowing the place was enough for him. And that is the danger of mere knowledge.

It has been said that knowledge is “the temptation above all temptations”. The fruit of the tree of knowledge may have been dangerous because it gave man the knowledge of something he did not possess. Judas knew the place, but he did not truly enter it until he came with the temple guards.

That still sounds uncomfortably familiar. Many people know where the church is. They know when Mass is on. But they do not go in. I know where the chapel is in my monastery – but outside the set hours of the Liturgy of the Hours, do I actually step inside, especially in the dark hours?

As Jesus leads His disciples into the garden, everything in our fallen condition begins to be reversed. The curse of sin has to be unwound along the same twisted paths by which it entered human life, like a serpent.

Peter hears: **“Put your sword back in its place!”** (Mt 26:52). After Adam and Eve were driven from Eden, God placed **“a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life”** (Gen 3:24).

This is the second, more demanding gate Peter has to squeeze through: **the gate of renouncing retaliation, the gate of giving up victory on his own terms.** And this one he does pass through. To accept loss – that was Peter's path, and, in time, it became the path of the first priest of the New Covenant.

If Peter had to go that way, what should I expect?

The truth is, my understanding of the path of following Christ has changed. At the beginning of my priesthood, I imagined things would unfold my way. Now I see that they do not unfold according to my thinking, but according to God's.

And that means I will often know shame more than pride. When I crossed the monastery gates, I thought full life was beginning. In reality, what began was dying, renouncing, losing, and letting go of my ambitions. I put away the sword. I gave up fighting for my own way. What remained was surrender – and being led all the way to the knowledge of my own unfaithfulness, beyond which, as beyond Caiaphas' gate, bitter tears finally begin to flow.

But perhaps that is no bad thing.

“In my opinion, Jesus is saying that our virtues can cut us off from God more finally than our sins” (Michael Ball).

That may sound startling. But sins – especially something like denying God – can at least show me what I really am. Virtues, on the other hand, can become a trap, as the Pharisees discovered to their cost.

I am not writing this to encourage sin. I am writing it to discourage self-deception – especially the dangerous illusion that we have no sin at all.

*Fr Anthony*

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## *We Read Pope Leo*

**Let us pray to the Lord that He may send to His Church ordained ministers: burning with evangelical love, devoted to the good of all the baptised, and courageous missionaries in every part of the world.**



The Catholic Church finds its foundation in the Apostles, chosen by Christ as the living pillars of His Mystical Body, and it possesses a hierarchical dimension that serves the unity, mission, and sanctification of all its members. This sacrament of Holy Orders is permanently grounded in the Apostles as authoritative witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus and as those sent by the Lord Himself on a mission to the world. Since the Apostles are called to faithfully guard the saving teaching of the

Master, they hand on their ministry to men who – until the return of Christ – unceasingly sanctify, lead, and teach the Church "through those who are their successors in the pastoral mission" (CCC 857).

This apostolic succession, rooted in the Gospel and Tradition, is discussed in Chapter III of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* (...). The Council teaches that the hierarchical structure is not a human construction serving the internal organisation of the Church as a social body, but is established by God, with the aim of extending the mission entrusted by Christ to the Apostles until the end of time.

(...) The Council Fathers did not wish to present the institutional elements of the Church, as the word "constitution" understood in its modern sense might suggest. The document focuses instead on the "ministerial or hierarchical priesthood," which differs from the common priesthood of the faithful "in essence and not only in degree," recalling that the two "are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ." The Council thus speaks of a ministry that is handed on to men endowed with *sacra potestas* [sacred power] for service in the Church: it focuses in particular on the episcopate, and then on the presbyterate and the diaconate as degrees of the one sacrament

of Holy Orders. By using the adjective "hierarchical," the Council therefore wishes to point to the sacred origin of the apostolic ministry in the action of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, as well as to its internal relationships. Bishops above all, and through them presbyters and deacons, have received tasks (Latin: *munera*) that lead them to serve "all who belong to the people of God," so that, "freely and in an orderly manner pursuing the same goal, they may attain salvation." (...) Let us pray to the Lord that He may send to His Church ordained ministers: burning with evangelical love, devoted to the good of all the baptised, and courageous missionaries in every part of the world.

### ***General Audience, 25 March 2026***

Dear young people, (...) listen to the voice of the Lord, who invites you to a full life, realised by multiplying your own talents and nailing your limitations and weaknesses to the glorious Cross of Christ. Pause for Eucharistic adoration; meditate perseveringly on the Word of God so as to live by it each day; participate actively and fully in the sacramental and ecclesial life. In this way you will come to know the Lord, and in the intimacy proper to friendship you will discover how to offer yourself along the path of marriage, priesthood, permanent diaconate, or consecrated, religious, or secular life: every vocation is an immense gift for the Church and for those who receive it with joy. A vocation is not a static goal but a dynamic process of maturation, sustained by intimacy with the Lord: dwelling with Jesus, allowing the Holy Spirit to act in one's heart and in the circumstances of life, and re-reading everything in the light of the gift received – this is what it means to grow in one's vocation. (...)

A vocation, therefore, is not something acquired all at once, something "given" once and for all: it is rather a path that unfolds in a manner analogous to human life, in which the gift received – besides needing to be guarded – must be nourished by a daily relationship with God, so that it may grow and bear fruit.

### ***Message for the 63<sup>rd</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 16 March 2026***

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## *In my opinion*

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### **And I Would Follow Such a Jesus**

Many years ago, when I was able to spend Easter in Poland, it looked rather odd. After the Holy Saturday liturgy – with its triumphant "Alleluia!" – the Blessed Sacrament was carried back to the altar of repose, only to be taken out again the next morning for the Resurrection procession at 6am.

It is a striking memory, and perhaps a symbolic one too. Do we not often experience the Resurrection in much the same way: in fragments, in instalments, and far too weakly?

So, what is Easter, really? Nature coming back to life? The Easter Bunny? Water-splashing customs, blessed food baskets, a festive breakfast, and the obligatory egg? Fine – all of that may have its place as tradition, but none of it gets to the heart of the matter. Easter means something far greater.

Perhaps we should start again. Easter as an earnest Lent, confession, the liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, followed by a Sunday Mass that feels a little more solemn than usual? Better – but still not enough. Is that Christianity? Not quite.

Christianity begins with an encounter with Jesus Christ – not a sentimental, sugary "little Jesus" from devotional cards, however beautiful they may be, but the real Christ. The One who entered history two thousand years ago, lived among us, worked miracles, inspired faith and

hostility in equal measure, suffered the scandal of the Cross, died, and then rose from the tomb by His own power – the only person in human history ever to do so.

But even that is not the whole story. Christianity really begins when we recognise that this same Jesus is alive and active today, and when we allow Him to act in us. That means conversion. It means changing direction. It means following Him and trying to imitate Him. In plain terms, it means putting everything on one card – leaving everything else for the sake of one pearl of great price.

I'm reminded of a radio programme from 2005, when the world was arguing about Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. Radio 4 aired a discussion with a priest who was then something of a favourite of *The Guardian*. He spent a long time criticising the film, until the journalist finally asked the obvious question: "All right then – would you follow a Jesus like the one shown in *The Passion*, or not?"

"No. I would not follow such a Jesus," came the answer.

"But I would!" the journalist replied.

There was a long silence on air after that. And really, it said a great deal.

Because Christianity is about recognising that nothing matters more in the history of the world than the Resurrection of Jesus. It is about believing that we will not simply vanish into nothingness. The choice is not between life and death, but between life with Him – Heaven – and life without Him – Hell. It is the stubborn, sometimes desperate, hope that whatever happens to us, however long the list of setbacks, losses and sorrows may be, we can still be happy in the end – if we remain with Him.

Faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in His ongoing action in the world, is what sets Christianity apart from every other offer on the table. And it outshines them all.

We celebrate Easter once a year. But there are still 51 Sundays left, and each one is a chance to remind ourselves that He is risen – and, if we choose, to draw strength from that victory. In our parishes, we should do everything we can so that every Sunday nourishes us with the Resurrection of Jesus, and so that for the rest of the week we can carry that faith into ordinary life.

And let's be clear about one more thing: we must never, out of false politeness or a desire to please the world – or, worse, to benefit ourselves – mislead anyone by suggesting there is some other path to salvation outside Jesus Christ. Salt that has lost its taste is only fit to be thrown out.

A person may never have known Jesus. They may even have failed to recognise Him. But we cannot honestly speak of another road to salvation for someone who openly rejects and slanders Him.

In the end, Easter is not just a feast to be observed. It is a reality to be lived.

*Fr Anthony*

# Prayer



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

**Please keep in your prayers** Krystyna Wood (2005) **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!

**Joy and peace to everyone at this time of the Resurrection of Christ.**

**Lord, bless all those who have contributed to make this sacred time prayerful, beautiful and holy for us all. And most of all, thanks You, Lord, for all you have for us.**

**Jesus Christ is risen, alleluia! Truly, He is risen, alleluia!**



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



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