

PARISH BULLETIN

St Kieran's, the Catholic Church in Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain
26th April 2026

The Fourth Sunday of Easter

Good Shepherd Sunday

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Fourth Week in Eastertide

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 (1 Peter 2:4-9)*

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

Next weekend:

Saturday, 2nd May, *Vigil Mass*, 6.00pm

**Sunday, 3rd May, *5th Sunday of Eastertide*, Holy
Mass, 10.00am**

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday 17.30-17.50 or anytime on request.

St. Columba Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Isle of Islay

3rd May, 5th Sunday of Easter: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

Psalm response

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord.

I know my sheep and my own know me.

Alleluia.

Communion Antiphon

*The Good Shepherd has risen,
who laid down his life for his sheep
and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.*



Hymns/Music for Sunday

Processional

54 Battle is o'er

Offertory

473 Seek ye first the Kingdom of God
(Vv 1,2,1)

Communion music

Тебе поjem (We hymn thee)

Post Communion

300 Let all mortal flesh keep silence

Recessional

196 Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise

Take Five

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

MONDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

27 APRIL 2025

Feeling sheepish?

There is nothing cuter than a fluffy baby lamb. But what about when they get older and are bona-fide sheep? Not so much. Sheep aren't the smartest or cuddliest of creatures. When left to their own devices they'll wander, get lost or maimed, destroy their own pasture, and panic over just about anything. Unfortunately for us it is sheep, not lambs, to which Jesus compares his followers. Smelly, erratic, hapless sheep. While we may have our cute, fuzzy moments, we also have many not-so-cuddly occasions where we are difficult to love, difficult to be around, and just plain difficult. In Jesus' words we find not condemnation but assurance that even in these times he is there for us, calling our name. In what sheeplike moments do you hear his voice?

Today's readings: Acts 11:1-18; John 10:1-10.

"He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."

TUESDAY: EASTER WEEKDAY

28 APRIL 2025

What are we waiting for?

Scepticism is a way of life for a lot of folks. The people of Jerusalem in the time of Jesus were no exception. Even after miraculous healings, amazing teachings, and works of wonder, they still waited for Jesus to reveal himself as the saviour they were hoping for. What would it take to get them on board? A better question is: What will it take for us to get on board? A lifetime exposed to the gospels, sacraments, saints, and moral teaching is often not enough to get us to the tipping point of committed discipleship. If you need more, ask for it. God will supply!

Today's readings: Acts 11:19-26; John 10:22-30. *"How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."*

WEDNESDAY: THE FEAST OF SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA, VIRGIN, DOCTOR

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. *"All things have been handed over to me by my Father."*

THURSDAY: OTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINT PIUS V, POPE

30 APRIL 2025

Let's clean up our act

You may not have heard of Pope Saint Pius V (1504-1572) but your Catholicism certainly has been shaped by him. With the church in disarray and the Protestant Reformation gaining steam with its critique of corrupt clergy, Pius saw the need to restore discipline and morality. This no-nonsense pope brought qualities of his native Dominican order to bear on the problem – more austere living, no "perks," and high moral standards. Influential at the Council of Trent, Pius V updated the church's catechism and standardized the liturgy in a form that stood for nearly 400 years. Given his zeal he didn't win many popularity contests, but he may well have saved the church from spiralling into dissolution. Is there an area of your own life that could use of bit of pious reform?

Today's readings: Acts 13:13-25; John 13:16-20. *"If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."*

FRIDAY: OPTIONAL 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 recognized 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 organize. Enjoy your weekend and remember whom you have to thank for it.

Today's readings: Acts 13:26-33; John 14:1-6.

"You know the way to the place where I am going."

SATURDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINT ATHANASIUS, BISHOP, DOCTOR

2 MAY 2025

Help for conflict junkies

"You cannot put straight in others what is

warped in yourself." That may sound like a tip from a contemporary self-help program, but the advice actually comes from a much older source: a fourth-century doctor of the church. Saint Athanasius studied under the famous desert father Anthony of Egypt. Such wisdom may have led to his rise in authority, but it couldn't keep him there: He was exiled no fewer than five times, spending 17 years in disfavour. At least his hermit years gave him plenty of time to write – and to work on "unwarping" himself. Invest in self-improvement, both for yourself and everyone else!

Today's readings: Acts 13:44-52; John 14:7-14. *"If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it."*

Readings for the fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts of the Apostles 2:14a, 36-41

The summons to repentance draws 3,000 seekers from Jerusalem.

Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

God is the shepherd for those who choose to follow the right paths.

1 Peter 2:20b-25

The suffering servant is transformed by personal sacrifice into the good shepherd.

John 10:1-10

Abundant life is the gift offered to those who hear and recognize the shepherd's voice.

Words on the Word

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How beautiful is this parable!

The mystery of the voice is evocative: from our mother's womb we learn to recognize her voice and the voice of our father. Consider how from the tone of a voice we can discern love or contempt, affection or coldness. The voice of Jesus is unique! If we learn to distinguish it, it will lead us along the path of life, the path that crosses the abyss of death (Pope Francis, Vatican, 25.04.2013).

* *

On a Sunday morning, while many are still resting, the first people already set out in one direction: towards the nearest church. **"My sheep hear my voice"** (Jn 10:27).

In life, we hear so many voices, and some are louder than the rest. The most basic voice is the one within our own nature, calling us to meet our needs. To live, we must eat, rest, feel safe, and be valued and recognised. Then there are the voices of the world around us. We are expected to keep up, to work, to achieve, to succeed. And if we do not? Questions begin to trouble us: Am I falling behind? Am I powerless? What place do my children have among others? Are they being pushed aside?

Then there is the constant, insistent voice of advertising, always telling us: “Buy this, and your life will be better; simpler; happier.” The things being sold seem to cry out: “You need me. You cannot manage without me.”

And so we rush about, all of us heading somewhere. Yet only some make time to step into church, to remember the one truth that steadies everything else: there is a God. **“My sheep hear my voice”** (Jn 10:27).

The voice of our Lord is different. It is quiet, but clear. It does not shout to be noticed. It speaks to the heart.

We learn to recognise that voice in many ways: in the peace and stillness of prayer; in that gentle warmth that settles within us; in the example of our parents, when we watched father and mother pray with reverence and beauty; in the joy of First Holy Communion; in the relief and peace that follow a good Confession; in those sudden moments when light seems to break in from above and fill us with good thoughts and firm resolutions; in the help of God that we have felt so clearly; and in the deep joy of a clear conscience, when we know we are trying to live well.

The very fact that we are here is proof that we have heard Him. Christ is near, and we want to be with Him: to sing, to listen to His word, to come to the Table of the Lord, and to gather strength for the week ahead. His voice may be gentle, but it is strong enough to bring us here.

But pride, arrogance, hatred, and indifference can deaden the soul. They make it harder and harder to hear God at all. And how many people do we know who can no longer turn to Him, who no longer think to thank Him for anything, and who no longer even believe that He exists?

Yet Christ remains our Shepherd. He leads us to the Father, and He is also the Gate to the kingdom of heaven. This is the will of our Heavenly Father, and it is always fulfilled.

From heaven came the voice that said: **“This is my beloved Son”** (Mt 3:17).

* * *

*Our roads still lead, each day, to Emmaus –
and still it is too hard to know You,
too hard to believe that You are ever
the lame man, the aged one,
the beggar at the gate –
insistent, troubling, and grievously poor.*

*Our roads still lead, each day, to Emmaus –
we speak of You with learning and with tenderness;
You hear us, and then – unless we take up
the cross-borne hope of Your own Cross –
You ask but for the kindness of Simon
and fall into silence.*

*Our roads still lead, each day, to Emmaus –
we enter the temple to adore You in the Host,
and yet we fail to recognise You
in the neighbour who passes by,
so that we may purchase release
from love’s hard sacrifice.*

In Christ’s love,
Fr Anthony

ANGELS IN ICONS: 25 THE HEAVENLY HIERARCHY

According to the vision set out by Pseudo-Dionysius in *On the Heavenly Hierarchy*, Christ stands at the summit of the heavenly order, with the angels beneath him. He divides the angels into three triads, each made up of three choirs. The first triad includes the beings nearest to God: seraphim, cherubim and thrones. The second consists of dominions, virtues and powers, while the third, the lowest, is made up of principalities, archangels and angels.

The beings of the two higher triads do not enter the earthly realm. By contrast, the angels of the lowest triad, being closest to human beings, act as messengers of divine will, carrying God's purposes to the world below.



Rus: *Council of the Heavenly Powers*
19th century. tempera on wood

Pseudo-Dionysius does not describe the appearance of the individual orders in detail. Artistic inspiration for the highest triad is often drawn from the visions of Isaiah (Is 6:1–2) and Ezekiel (Ezek 1:4–11). In Christian iconography, seraphim are commonly shown as six-winged figures with human faces, cherubim as winged beings, and thrones as fiery spheres.

The icon on the left presents a distinctive type known as the Council of the Heavenly Powers. At its centre is a medallion showing Christ in the Emmanuel type, set out as the supreme head of the heavenly hierarchy. Surrounding him are the seraphim, cherubim and the archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Jehudiel, Sealtiel, Uriel and Barachiel. The icon speaks powerfully of victory over death.

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 18

The Love of God

John 10:27–30

Whenever I read the words that no force, event, person or even sin can snatch me from Christ's hand, I feel a deep sense of security. A truth rises to the surface of my mind, fresh every time, and yet somehow still astonishing: God loves me, and He does not want to lose me for anything. No one has ever cared for me so completely, and no one ever will. That much is obvious.

Human love, even at its very best, can become overwhelming. What begins as life-giving can slowly turn exhausting, even destructive. Its heat can consume everything in a moment. And yet we are assured that no one will snatch us from Christ's hand. Still, we must hold on to the

other side of the truth: “It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31).

In Exodus, Moses longs to see God, but is told, “You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live” (Exodus 33:20). If Moses could not bear such an encounter, it becomes clear why we do not live each day in the full brilliance of God’s presence: we would not survive it.

God is love, but His love is not small, safe, or manageable. It is infinite, purifying, and all-consuming. Only the Son, in the fullness of the Holy Spirit, can receive the Father’s love completely and answer it with infinite love in return. So what happens when that same burning love is offered to us ordinary creatures – sinners, frail and limited, marked by failures, old wounds, pride, and shame? Can spotless, infinite love become a fire that overwhelms us? Can the love of God, drawing near to us in communion and filling us with His presence, leave us changed beyond recognition? Could this ocean of love burn through the fragile clay of the human heart?

Isaiah saw the seraphim veil their faces before God’s glory. Even they could not bear the brightness. So what of us? Is it possible to journey towards the sun? Of course not. We would be consumed before we ever reached it. And yet even the sun is nothing beside the fire of God’s love.

John caught a glimpse of the risen Christ on Patmos and fell at His feet in fear. Jesus’ eyes were like blazing fire, His feet like bronze glowing in a furnace. And that is the real answer: the Incarnation. In Christ, God draws near without destroying us. And on the other side of the Incarnation is our divinisation – our being drawn into His own life.

The more we enter into communion with Christ – gazing upon His face in icons, adoring Him in the Blessed Sacrament, receiving Him in the Eucharist, listening to Scripture and meditating on it – the more that union deepens. It does not wipe us out. It prepares us for the day when His glory is finally revealed. And that moment will not be one of cold self-condemnation, but of wonder, awe, and joy beyond words.

So the Christian life cannot be about pretending. It is not about looking devout for the sake of others. That will count for nothing in heaven. What matters is the real thing: being united to Christ in the hidden places, behind closed doors, where no one else can see. In time, God will bring everything into the light. He will reveal what has been hidden, because that is what truly matters. It is not the shop windows that decide the story, but the vaults and safes.

Fr Anthony



Around the World

The sometimes missed news

RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

ANOTHER BATTLEFIELD

Ukraine’s army has reached a major military milestone, taking Russian positions using only ground robots and drones. President Volodymyr Zelensky said proudly that, for the first time in

this war, an enemy position was captured entirely by unmanned systems, with the occupiers surrendering and no losses on the Ukrainian side.

This is not just a one-off event. It points to a major shift in modern warfare, one that should make people of faith pause and reflect. Drones are no longer just used for watching and gathering information. They are now being used for attacks, for delivering supplies, and for evacuating the wounded under fire.

From a Catholic point of view, this raises serious moral concerns. The Church's just war teaching, based on Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas, says war must protect human dignity, use force proportionately, and shield innocent life. When killing is done from far away, by someone safely removed from danger, it can be easier to lose sight of the human cost. Does that distance make it too easy to forget the dignity of every person, soldier or civilian, who is made in God's image?

War is becoming more remote, more technical, and harder to predict. For Catholics, this is a moment to pray and speak out, making sure technology does not run ahead of moral responsibility. The goal must always be peace, not military power.

A STEP TOWARD THE EU

WITHOUT MOLDOVA

Moldova has formally left the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), marking the end of a long and largely symbolic relationship with the post-Soviet bloc.

President Maia Sandu signed decrees rejecting Moldova's membership agreements with the CIS and sent them to the group's secretariat in Minsk. On 2 April, Moldova's parliament also voted to denounce the CIS founding agreement, with 60 of the 101 deputies backing the move. The official gazette later published Sandu's decree alongside the law that completed the withdrawal.

Although Moldova has taken little part in CIS affairs since 2022, this formal break brings it into line with countries such as Ukraine and Georgia, which have already left the organisation. The CIS still includes Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as Russia.

From a Christian point of view, Moldova's decision can be seen as a reminder of some basic values: truth, freedom and the common good. Catholic teaching stresses the proper role of political communities and the duty of governments to work for peace and justice. In that light, stepping away from an organisation that no longer seemed to serve the country's welfare could be viewed as an act of conscience.

At the same time, Christian charity calls for solidarity with others, but not at the expense of moral integrity. If CIS membership had become little more than a formality, with no real benefit or clear sense of purpose, then leaving it may also be read as a sign of courage and consistency.

In the end, Moldova's exit is a reminder that political alliances are tools, not goals in themselves. For Christians, any major public decision should be judged by whether it supports human dignity, justice and peace grounded in truth. Seen that way, Moldova is not just drawing a political line; it is also trying to keep its national direction in step with its values.

IMF FORECAST

ON THE BRINK OF RECESSION

The International Monetary Fund has warned that if the war continues, global growth could fall

to its lowest level since the pandemic. For Christians, this is a reminder that peace matters – not only for its own sake, but because people and communities thrive when conflict ends. This war must stop now.

Even if the fighting is limited in time, the IMF says the economic damage would still be serious. Global growth is expected to slow to about 3.1% this year and next. In the worst case, it could drop to 2%, which would raise fears of a worldwide recession. When economies weaken, it is often the poorest people who suffer most – especially widows, orphans and those already struggling.

The outlook could worsen if energy infrastructure is hit again. That could push oil prices higher and increase costs around the world. When homes are left without power, heat or basic services, the need for compassion becomes even greater. Repair and recovery should be a priority.

The IMF also says the effects of any new energy shock would vary from country to country. The United States may be less affected, but Europe could face more serious pressure. Still, all countries would feel the impact of higher energy and gas prices, especially if the Strait of Hormuz were closed.

In the end, no nation is untouched when suffering spreads. Christians are called to bear one another's burdens, and that means caring about the economic and human cost of war. Peace, justice and good stewardship of creation all go together.

DE-NAZIFICATION

A GRANDFATHER IN THE NSDAP

A new project in Germany is mixing historical responsibility with Christian values of truth and reconciliation.

Die Zeit, a well-known weekly newspaper, has launched a searchable database that lets people check whether their ancestors were members of the NSDAP, the Nazi Party. Until now, finding this kind of information usually meant doing complicated research and making formal requests to the German Federal Archives.

The project became possible after the United States National Archives allowed access to microfilm copies of Nazi-era documents. What was once difficult to trace is now much easier to search.

At first, the tool gave access to around 4.5 million index cards. It has now been expanded with another 8.2 million records. To help identify the right person, users need to enter details such as date and place of birth. It is clearly proving popular, with millions of page views already recorded.

From a Christian point of view, dealing honestly with the past is an act of humility. Seeking the truth respects God, supports reconciliation, and honours both victims and their families. By opening up these records, the search tool gives families a chance to find clarity, face the truth, and, where needed, remember, repent, and heal.

It is a reminder that Christians are called to tell the truth, even when that truth is painful.

The Pope Visits Africa

“I consider this journey a special gift from Divine Providence, a gift which the Lord willed to offer to the entire Church through the Augustinian Pope.” With these words, Leo XIV most succinctly summed up the first leg of his pilgrimage, which led the successor of Saint Peter to Africa.



The Holy Father began his journey in Algeria, a country with a predominantly Muslim population and a small Christian community, under the patronage — and ever timely witness — of one of Algeria's greatest sons, St Augustine of Hippo. The significance of the pilgrimage was deepened by the fact that this saint is also the spiritual master of the present Pope.

“It seems to me,” the Pope said in one of his reflections, “that this gift of Providence may be summed up thus: God is Love, He is

Father of all men and women. Let us approach Him with humility, and confess that the present state of the world — like a spiral of evil — is caused by our pride.” The phrase “it seems to me” is rarely heard from a Pope. Here, it does not suggest uncertainty, but humility — the very antidote to pride, from which all evil springs, including the great evils of our time.

Leo XIV concluded his visit to Algeria with those words. It is worth recalling how he began it. En route to Algiers on 13 April, he told the journalists travelling with him: “This journey is truly an exceptionally precious opportunity to continue with the same voice, with the same message that we wish to proclaim: promoting peace, reconciliation, respect, and care for all nations.” He also spoke of St Augustine, who had already set out that programme centuries ago. Addressing the Algerian authorities, the Holy Father said that Augustine “also wished to teach the world so much, especially through the search for truth, the search for God, recognising the dignity of every human being, and the importance of building peace.”

The Image of God in Every Person

In Algeria, of course, the Pope was not speaking only to the small Christian community — one could argue that, more than in any of his other pilgrimages, he was speaking chiefly to the country's overwhelming Muslim majority. His words, like every papal message, were important to Catholics. But just as important, if not more so, for peace and unity in the world were the words addressed to Muslims.

Peace cannot be built alone. It needs the commitment of all people of goodwill, from every side. The foundation for this is God, and the human person — endowed with inalienable dignity, the crown of creation. From this truth came statements such as: “Seeking God also means recognising the image of God that is in every creature, in every child of God, in every man and woman created in the image and likeness of God. That means for us that it is very important to learn to live together, with respect for the dignity of every human person.”

And again: “We are brothers and sisters because we have the same Father in heaven: the profound sense of religiosity of the Algerian nation is a mystery of the culture of encounter and reconciliation, a sign of which I have seen in you during my visit. In a world full of conflicts and misunderstandings, let us meet and strive to understand one another, recognising that we are all one family. Today, the simplicity of this realisation is the key to opening many closed doors.”

Secularisation and Fundamentalism

These words could easily be dismissed as naïve wishful thinking. But the Pope was not pretending the problems did not exist — neither in the Muslim world nor on the Catholic side.

“Here,” he said, referring to Algeria as elsewhere in the world, “there appear opposed dynamics: fundamentalism or secularisation, through which many lose an authentic sense of

God and of the dignity of all His creatures. Then religious symbols and words may become, on the one hand, a blasphemous language of violence and oppression, and on the other — signs already stripped of meaning on the great market of consumption, which does not satisfy.”

To everyone he also said: “Religion without mercy and social life without solidarity are a scandal in the eyes of God. Yet many societies that consider themselves developed are sinking ever deeper into inequality and exclusion.”

In interreligious dialogue, especially with the Muslim world, Pope Leo XIV — like Pope Francis, whose close ties with the Arab world were one of the defining features of his pontificate — sees one of the keys to peace in the world. It is a thoroughly sound approach, not least because Islam is the world’s second-largest religious community.

In the Heart of Africa

From Algeria, on 15 April, the Pope travelled to Cameroon, often described as “Africa in miniature” because of its wealth of territories, cultures, languages and traditions. That diversity is undoubtedly a treasure, provided it is properly embraced. But in Cameroon too, serious difficulties often come with it.

For that reason, much of his address to the authorities, the diplomatic corps and civil society focused on the philosophy of good governance. “To govern means to love your country, and also neighbouring countries”; “to govern means truly to listen to citizens”; “to restore trust, transparency in public resource management and respect for the rule of law are indispensable”; and, most forcefully of all, “the time has come to take stock of one’s conscience and to make a bold qualitative leap.”

Cameroon is also sometimes called the heart of Africa. Here, the continent’s strengths and its troubles seem to come into focus all at once. One of the most urgent issues is peace in the western and north-western regions of the country.

The Pope in a Conflict Zone

The rebellion, sparked by a sense of injustice and the grievances of parts of Cameroonian society, has been going on for some time. The Pope made those regions the focus of his first steps. In Bamenda, he warned, urged and encouraged: “Blessed are those who bring peace! Woe, however, to those who distort religions and even the very name of God for their own military, economic and political ends, dragging what is holy into what is most ugly and dark.”

He rebuked the world’s elites: “The world is destroyed by a handful who hold power, while supported in their existence by countless throngs of brothers and sisters!” He also challenged the widely favoured so-called “path to peace”, calling it a road to nowhere. Instead, he spoke of “peace that is unarmed, that is not based on fear, threats or armaments; and peace that disarms, because it is capable of resolving conflicts, opening hearts and building trust, empathy and hope.” He was clearly referring to the huge global arms race.

Hope Does Not Die

At Japoma Stadium in Douala on 17 April, the Pope poured hope into the hearts of Cameroonians, urging them: “Do not succumb to doubt and discouragement; reject all forms of abuse and violence that tempt you with promises of easy gains, but harden the heart and make it insensitive. Do not forget that your nation is richer than this land, because its treasure is its values: faith, family, hospitality and work.”

He concluded his visit with Holy Mass in Yaoundé, the country’s capital, and, mindful of the youthful energy of African society — one of its greatest assets — he pointed to the way forward: “Sometimes the life of family and society requires precisely this: the courage to change

habits and structures, so that the dignity of the person always remains at the centre and to overcome inequalities and marginalisation.”

The Pope Speaks to the Whole World

On 18 April, the Pope landed in Angola. On the flight, he addressed attempts to instrumentalise and politicise his words, especially on peace, in the context of a well-known attack by the US President. Commentators had tried to read his remarks as a response to that attack. Leo XIV denied this, saying he was speaking about all global conflicts. For that clarification, he was thanked by US Vice-President J D Vance.

In his first speech on Angolan soil, Leo XIV spoke at length about the hope Africa can offer the world, thanks above all to its greatest wealth: its people, and the diversity among them. Speaking to those in power, he said on 18 April: “Angola can develop greatly if first and foremost you, those who hold power in this country, believe in the diversity of its wealth. Do not fear dissent, do not extinguish the visions of the young nor the dreams of the elderly, be able to manage conflicts, transforming them into paths of renewal.”

In my opinion

The Epstein Case

If the hell of modern times were to have a face, it would most likely be the face of the criminal Jeffrey Epstein. Not because there are no people with a greater "track record" in the field of murdering and tormenting their fellow human beings. Yet it is precisely Epstein who has become a symbol of something far worse than "ordinary" crimes. Together with Mossad agent Ghislaine Maxwell, he participated in building a villainous system that drew people from the elite of the modern West into the darkest of activities.

When reporters first raised the alarm about the enormous consequences of this man's actions, they were denounced and discredited by an entire flock of journalists fashionable at the time (and therefore very far removed from the truth), and called purveyors of "conspiracy theories." Today, those same slanderers are scrambling to bask in the glow of this topic and "reveal" to an unsuspecting public old, reheated information they dig up from earlier texts and statements. It is now permissible... it is now kosher. The point, however, is not to note the servility of the media, but to direct your attention to what the controlled journalists do not even dare to think about.

In light of recently disclosed documents revealing the scale of this affair and its social connections, one can today speak of matters that until recently were difficult to believe even for authors who had long been observing the nightmarish realities in which today's Western elites operate. Epstein created an entire corporation engaged in the wholesale destruction of the consciences and ethics of "well-known and beloved" stars of cinema, sport, politics, and science. He reduced public ethics to the level of skilful deception. The things he did deserve to be described only as demonic, evil, and devoid of humanity. He was not only an agent, a traitor, a servant of the basest impulses, but also the executor of a demonic plan to destroy public morality and draw into the circle of evil people who were idols – and in the case of scientists, even authorities – for the masses. The documents now being disclosed, gathered in connection with the investigation into his crimes, provide irrefutable evidence of the involvement in his paedophilic network of the current President of the United States, Donald Trump, and those in his closest circle. Other U.S. presidents were also implicated, as was Kevin Spacey, who so convincingly played the role of president in the famous series House of Cards. Today, the "Epstein affair" already commands the attention of the largest media outlets; yet one searches

in vain for any thread concerning his undeniable connections to Israeli intelligence services. Writing about that is simply not permitted – except, perhaps, here, where I am guided by a pursuit of the truth. Finally, a few remarks on the sudden renaissance of the Epstein topic in the media. What we are witnessing here is a consciously directed process of the "banalization of evil." Hannah Arendt once drew attention to this, describing the Israeli trial of Adolf Eichmann. She wrote then of her surprise at the banality of the figure and personality of the Nazi functionary himself. She pointed to the danger of this situation. Eichmann could simply have been any one of us – he was, after all, only following orders. There was nothing demonic or terrifying about him, and so the evil associated with him seemed so ordinary, so commonplace. The banalization of evil allows one to pass by it indifferently. And it is precisely this effect that the major media are achieving today, inundating audiences with an avalanche of seemingly neutral information about Epstein's crimes. This leads to fatigue with the subject and to a shrug of the shoulders: "that's just the way the world is, and there's nothing we can do about it." This will be the desired effect for those who own the media. The boundary of indifference will shift. More and more will be permitted. Paedophilia – it's nothing special anymore; torturing people – well, it happens; human trafficking, organ harvesting – well, everything has happened before, there's nothing we can do. The banalization of absolute evil leads to indifference and to the impunity of those who commit it. In the end, world opinion will conclude that demonic evil is merely a harmless eccentricity belonging to the global elites and to the state whose services provoke it. Let me only recall that over 73,000 people have been murdered in Gaza, and that the massacre of Christians in southern Lebanon continues.

The fact that one "closes the doors and windows" certainly does not weaken the devil, of whom Jeffrey Epstein and his circle were undoubtedly servants. *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 Thomas Carlin (1986), Grizel Williams (2009) **and all those whose anniversaries fall around this time.**

Pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life from within our parish and our diocese, especially on this Good Shepherd Sunday.

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!

Fr. Tony is pleading for people to come forward to enquire about the ministry of Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist. There is especially a need for bringing Holy Communion to the few housebound Catholics we have. Please do not think it is not something you cannot do or that you feel unworthy. Please help.



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