



PARISH BULLETIN

St Kieran's, the Catholic Church in Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain
 31st May 2026

Solemnity of the Holy Trinity

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Week 9 in Ordinary Time

Tuesday: Holy Mass, 6pm

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

Discussion Group: none this week

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

Hymns/Music for Sunday

Processional

215 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty

Offertory

143 Firmly I believe and truly

Communion music

Тебе поём (We hymn thee)

Post Communion

300 Let all mortal flesh keep silence

Recessional

194 Hail, Queen of heaven

Next weekend:

Saturday, 6th of June, Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 7th of June, Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Mass, 10.00am,
 after Mass, procession and Eucharistic blessing.

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

St. Columba Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Isle of Islay

7th June, **Corpus Christi: Holy Mass, 4pm**

21st June: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

Psalm response

To be praised and highly exalted for ever!

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
 the God who is and who was and who is to come.*

Alleluia.

Communion Antiphon

*Since you are children of God,
 God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of his Son,
 the Spirit who cries out: Abba, Father.*

Take Five

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

MONDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINT JUSTIN, MARTYR

1 JUNE 2026

Light the flame of faith

Though the martyr Saint Justin lived in the first century after Jesus' death, he is in some ways a very modern saint. Seeking his way in life, he explored many religious and philosophical traditions, but it was a simple, elderly Christian who inspired him to convert to what at the time was a new and risky faith (indeed, it would cost Justin his life), and it was hearing about the Hebrew prophets that inspired him to his outspoken defence of the faith. When he heard their stories, he wrote, "Straightway a flame was kindled in my soul; and a love of the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ, possessed me." Give thanks today to be part of a great tradition that has inspired people to give their all for thousands of years.

Today's readings: 2 Peter 1:2-7; Mark 12:1-12. *"They were seeking to arrest him . . . for they realized that he had addressed the parable to them."*

TUESDAY: OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINTS MARCELLINUS AND PETER, MARTYRS

2 JUNE 2026

Serve a living faith

We know little of third-century martyrs Marcellinus and Peter, but they are included in the Roman Martyrology, a listing that represents the collective history of witness and sacrifice of some 7,000 martyrs over the centuries. First published in 1583 and revised extensively in recent decades to make it more historically accurate, the Martyrology accompanies us through the weekdays of the church year to remind you of the countless women and men who died so that faith might live into

your own age. Honour their sacrifice in the way you live your own life.

Today's readings: 2 Peter 3:12-15a, 17-18; Mark 12:13-17. *"Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ."*

WEDNESDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINTS CHARLES LWANGA AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

3 JUNE 2026

The secret to growing Christians

"The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians," wrote early church father Tertullian. Certainly that truism is borne out in the history of the church in Africa. Speaking of Saint Charles Lwanga and the martyrs of Uganda in his "Word on Fire" video series, Father Robert Barron wonders if those first Christians of 19th-century Uganda could have imagined that one day Africa would have nearly 400 million Christians and that Uganda itself would have the largest percentage of professed Christians of any nation in Africa. In weakness, strength; in defeat, victory: These are the unexpected lessons of Christianity that spur the growth of new disciples. Give witness to those truths in your own life by not letting your shortcomings and failures have the last word.

Today's readings: 2 Timothy 1:1-3, 6-12; Mark 12:18-27. *"Are you not misled because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God?"*

THURSDAY OF WEEK 9 IN ORDINARY TIME

4 JUNE 2026

Work on your sainthood

Lots of saints are and were walking around who haven't yet claimed a date on the church calendar. Even if they never do, that doesn't take away from their brilliant

witness. Consider Anna Dengal, who graduated from medical school in England in 1919. Convinced that her skills could be better used in India, she became the only doctor serving 10,000 sick and dying women and children. Realizing she could “love her neighbour” better with a little help, she established the Medical Mission Sisters. Their goal remains “to be a healing presence at the heart of a wounded world.” Share the mission: Visit the sick.

Today’s readings: 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Mark 12:28b-34. “*To love your neighbour as yourself’ is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.*”

FRIDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINT BONIFACE, BISHOP, MARTYR
5 JUNE 2026

Be a uniter, not a divider

What we now call Europe began to take its earliest form nearly 1,500 years ago, and Winfrid of Wessex, an Anglo-Saxon missionary known to us as Saint Boniface, was one of those to help shape it. Bringing Christianity to what today is Germany, he helped form alliances and reform dioceses, laying the groundwork for church-state relations that would shape western

Christianity for centuries. He gave his life for this important work. To what will you give yours?

Today’s readings: 2 Timothy 3:10-17; Mark 12:35-37. “*How do the scribes claim that the Christ is the son of David?*”

SATURDAY OF WEEK 9 IN ORDINARY TIME

6 JUNE 2026

How to turn a penny to gold

Alchemy was an ancient practice, part science and part philosophy, which aimed to create gold from lesser metals, discover a universal cure for disease, and, while they were at it, indefinitely prolong life. The fact that it never worked didn’t seem to stop anyone from trying. But there is a spiritual alchemy that actually does turn the small into the immeasurable. Look at the poor widow who received an eternal Kingdom for the price of two pennies. Mary of Nazareth gained the same Kingdom for a simple “yes.” Do you assess small gestures of love as your greatest asset?

Today’s readings: 2 Timothy 4:1-8; Mark 12:38-44. “*A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few pennies.*”

Readings for Trinity Sunday

Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9

The presence of God compels Moses to bow to the ground and ask for pardon.

Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56

From the temple on Earth to the divine throne of heaven, God is to be praised.

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

The grace, love, and fellowship of God are with the church now and forever.

John 3:16-18

God’s judgment is not for condemnation but with the hope of salvation for all.

Words on the Word

One God, Three Persons: Diving into the Mystery

Most of the time, our Church calendar is a “greatest hits” reel of what God has done. We celebrate Jesus being born, Mary being assumed into heaven, or the lives of the saints. But on Trinity Sunday, we stop looking at the actions and start looking at the Actor. We’re diving deep

into the mystery of who God actually is.

It's Not a Maths Problem

Let's be honest: the Trinity is confusing. We aren't confessing three gods; we're confessing one God in three Persons. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 253) puts it, "The Trinity is One."

You might wonder why we can't just "figure it out." The truth is, we can't. God is infinite; we aren't. We only know as much as He's chosen to show us. But here's the cool part: God isn't a lonely, static being. He is a "dynamism of love." He is a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit constantly giving themselves to one another. And the best news? He's invited us into that circle.

The Trinity in Your Daily Routine

You probably talk to the Trinity more than you realize. Think about how we start every prayer:

- ❖ The Sign of the Cross: "In the name [singular!] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
- ❖ The Greeting at Mass: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you" (2 Cor 13:13).
- ❖ The Glory Be: Our go-to prayer of praise.

Every time we do this, we acknowledge that God is "one but not solitary" (CCC 254). The Persons are distinct because of how they relate to each other, but they are totally one in what they are.

Analogies: Helpful or Heretical?

We love a good analogy to explain the unexplainable. You've probably heard these:

<i>Analogy</i>	<i>The Logic</i>	<i>The Flaw</i>
The Sun	The star, the light, and the heat.	Light and heat are effects, not persons.
Water	Ice, liquid, and vapor (H ₂ O).	This is "Modalism" (God changing masks).
The Eye	The white, the iris, and the pupil.	These are just parts of a whole.

Even art struggles! While Rublev's famous icon of three angels at a table is a masterpiece of symbolism, other attempts – like a head with three faces – were actually banned by the Church because they missed the mark.

Why It Matters for You

This isn't just high-level theology; it's personal. At your Baptism, you weren't baptized in the "names" (plural) of three gods, but in the Name (singular) of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

By that one act, you were grafted into God's family. You became a child of the Father, a sibling of Christ, and a temple of the Holy Spirit. When we gaze at this mystery, we aren't just looking at a mirror of who God is – we're seeing who we are becoming.

In Christ's love,
Fr Anthony

ICONS OF EVANGELISTS, APOSTLES, AND SAINTS: 29 SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

The New Testament states that Saint John the Baptist was born in Ain Karim, half a year before the birth of Jesus. Shortly after the death of his parents, he left his former life behind and

settled in the Judean Desert. There God called him to be a prophet: his task was to prepare humanity for the coming of Christ. In the desert, John taught and called people to conversion, and to those converted to a life of holiness he administered baptism in the Jordan. It was in these circumstances that he met and baptized Jesus. John's teachings brought upon him the anger of Herod Antipas and led to the saint's imprisonment. It is accepted that around the year



32, as a result of the intrigues of Herod's wife Herodias, he was beheaded.

In the Orthodox Church he is known as John Prodromos; he also bears the titles Forerunner of the Lord and Angel of the Desert. In Eastern iconography he was often depicted with large angelic wings, a Eucharistic chalice, and a *rotulus*, that is, a papyrus scroll. Images were also popular that showed the saint as a bearded, curly-haired man dressed in hermit's rags. Such a representation appears, for example, in Deesis icons, where Saint John appears in the role of intercessor.

A characteristic feature of such images is the particular emphasis placed on the spiritual expression of the saint's face. Narrow, tightly closed lips, eyes narrowed and closed to the temptations of the temporal world, an unnaturally elongated nose, and small ears refer to the teachings of the Church Fathers, who called for inner silence through mastery of the senses: for in these they saw the cause of concupiscence and every sin.

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 25

The Vine

John 15:1-8

Remaining on the Vine: What It Really Means

The image of the vine in the Gospel opens up several layers of meaning. The phrase "to bear fruit" can suggest two things at once: a call to become like the blessed fruit of Mary's womb – Jesus Himself – and, by contrast, an invitation to acknowledge our own sin, recalling the stolen fruit in Eden. In the end, what matters is not how clever our interpretation sounds, but whether we bear fruit or not.

If I "bear fruit" by confessing my sin, I allow myself to be cleansed. If I refuse and hide my sin, I risk being cut off from Christ. Still, the more direct meaning in this passage is that bearing fruit means becoming like Jesus. He says clearly: "Whoever remains in Me bears much fruit."

The Greek verb MENO – "to remain" – also means "to dwell" or "to stay." That points to

something stable and lasting: a real, enduring grafting onto Christ and His Cross, the true Tree of Life. This permanence is what allows real growth.

Remaining in Jesus, then, is not a spiritual “seasonal sale” – not a holiday mood after a pilgrimage, not a once- or twice-a-year confession, not an occasional appearance at Mass, or a hurried prayer now and then. To remain is to live in sanctifying grace, to love “in deed and in truth,” by actually keeping the commandments.

This kind of fidelity is hard. We trip over our own inner lies faster than we can name them. To remain means staying with Christ through pressure, temptation, doubt, and fatigue. The clearest sign that we are really remaining in Him is the concrete presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

A vine does not grow on its own. It needs a skilled gardener, the right climate, careful pruning, and plenty of light. The same is true of the spiritual life. The Father is the Gardener; we are the branches. Our task is to stay exposed to the Light – Christ’s wisdom in the Gospel – and to stop hiding in the shadows.

Think of spiritual “photosynthesis”: our soul taking in God’s light as its daily food. The flavour of our faith and the “aroma” of holiness depend on how much of our life we actually allow to be illuminated: our decisions, our relationships, our money, our wounds, our habits.

Even vineyards in Bordeaux, Burgundy, or Chianti are planted with space between the vines. That spacing is deliberate: it protects the plants and allows them to flourish. Spiritually, that “space” is interior freedom – the freedom Christ gives when He says not “**You must,**” but “**If you wish.**” God’s care is not suffocating pity; it is a light that coaxes out the hidden goodness He has already placed within us.

Remaining in the vine of Christ’s life means letting ourselves be pruned, lit, and patiently cultivated – so that, in the end, our lives really do taste of the Gospel.

Fr Anthony

Faith, forgiveness and resentment

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic



In an age when every slight can be screenshotted, shared, and stored forever, the Christian call to forgive can feel almost counter-cultural. Yet the Gospel does not present forgiveness as a luxury for saints; it presents it as the daily path by which wounded people become free. For Catholics living in the modern West – where personal grievance is often treated as a

moral credential – faith offers both the motive and the grace to release resentment before it hardens into hatred.

The Modern Temptation to Keep Score

Social media rewards outrage. A single comment can ignite a digital mob; a political disagreement can end friendships. In such an environment, resentment begins to masquerade as justice. The Catechism reminds us that “every offense committed against justice and truth entails the duty to make reparation” (CCC 2487). Yet reparation is not the same as perpetual anger. When anger is cultivated rather than resolved, it mutates into the capital sin of wrath – one of the seven vices the Church has long warned will “darken the mind” and “stir up discord” (CCC 1866).

The result is a subtle but real spiritual exhaustion. People who refuse to forgive often discover that the injury they suffered has become the lens through which they interpret every new relationship. Faith invites a different starting point: the recognition that we ourselves stand in daily need of mercy. The Lord’s Prayer is uncompromising on this point: “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” To pray these words while nursing grudges is, in the words of Saint John Chrysostom, to “ask God to imitate our hardness of heart.”

Forgiveness Is Not Denial

A common misunderstanding in contemporary culture is that forgiving means pretending the wound never happened. Catholic tradition rejects this caricature. Forgiveness, properly understood, is a deliberate act of the will by which we release the offender from the debt he or she owes us – even when that debt remains objectively real. The Church distinguishes between forgiveness and reconciliation: the first is unilateral and can be given at once; the second often requires conversion, restitution, and time.

Pope Francis has repeatedly stressed that “forgiveness is not a sign of weakness but of strength.” In his 2016 Message for the World Day of Peace, he noted that societies that refuse paths of reconciliation remain trapped in cycles of retaliation. The same principle applies to individuals. When we forgive, we do not erase memory; we refuse to let memory become a prison. This distinction is crucial in a therapeutic culture that sometimes equates healing with the permanent severance of every painful relationship. Faith offers a more nuanced horizon: we may need prudent distance, yet we are still called to pray for our enemies and to wish their genuine good.

The Grace That Makes Forgiveness Possible

Left to our own resources, forgiveness can feel impossible – especially when the wound is deep or ongoing. Here the sacramental life of the Church becomes not merely helpful but indispensable. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation we experience firsthand that mercy is never cheap; it cost Christ his life. Receiving that mercy equips us, in turn, to extend it. The Catechism teaches that “the confession of sins is...a necessary precondition for reconciliation with God and with the Church” (CCC 1456). Regular confession trains the heart to name its resentments honestly and then to surrender them.

Equally important is the Eucharist, where we receive the very Body and Blood offered on the Cross for the forgiveness of sins. Each Mass re-presents the moment when Christ, “while we were still sinners,” died for us (Rom 5:8). The logic of the liturgy is therefore the opposite of resentment: instead of demanding payment, Christ absorbs the debt. When we leave Mass still clutching our grudges, we have, in a real sense, missed the point of the sacrifice we have just celebrated.

Resentment as a Form of Self-Imprisonment

Psychologists have documented the physical and emotional toll of sustained anger: elevated cortisol, weakened immune response, fractured relationships. Catholic moral theology reaches the same conclusion from a different angle. Resentment is ultimately a refusal to trust that God can bring good out of evil. It keeps the wound open so that we, rather than divine providence, remain in control of the narrative. Saint Augustine observed that “resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.” The image is vivid because it is accurate: the person destroyed is usually the one who refuses to let go.

Faith does not promise that every offender will be brought to justice in this life. It does promise that no offense is outside the scope of God’s redemptive love. The saints who forgave their persecutors – Saint Maria Goretti, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, the martyrs of Nagasaki – did not minimize the evil done to them. They simply refused to let evil have the last word. Their witness remains startlingly relevant in a culture that often measures moral seriousness by the intensity of one’s indignation.

Practical Steps for the Journey

1. *Name the wound honestly in prayer.* Suppressed anger tends to leak out sideways. Bringing the specific injury before God – without euphemism – allows grace to address the real offense rather than a sanitized version of it.
2. *Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.* The habit of confessing our own sins softens the heart toward the sins of others.
3. *Offer a concrete act of mercy.* A small kindness toward the person who hurt us, or toward someone else in need, interrupts the cycle of rumination.
4. *Limit the fuel.* In a digital age, endless scrolling through grievance content keeps wounds raw. Periodic fasts from social media can create the interior silence necessary for forgiveness to take root.
5. *Ask for the intercession of Mary.* The Mother of Mercy stood at the foot of the Cross and received the forgiveness Christ won for the world. Her fiat remains the model for every believer who chooses to echo, “Be it done unto me according to your word,” even when the word includes the command to forgive seventy times seven.

A Hope That Does Not Disappoint

The modern West is not the first culture to wrestle with resentment; it is simply the first to weaponize it at scale through technology. Yet the Christian message has never been that the world will suddenly become fair. The message is that Christ has already absorbed every unfairness into his own Body and thereby opened a path to freedom. When we forgive, we are not surrendering justice; we are participating in the justice of the Cross, which triumphs not by retaliation but by redemption.

For Catholics tempted to nurse old injuries as a badge of identity, the invitation is clear: lay them down at the foot of the Cross. The Lord who said, “Father, forgive them,” still speaks those words over every wound we bring to him. In choosing forgiveness, we discover that resentment loses its power, faith regains its joy, and the mercy we have received becomes the mercy we are finally free to give.

A fellow traveller



Around the World

The sometimes missed news

GAZA STRIP

THIS IS HOW THEY WELCOME PEOPLE IN ISRAEL

A deeply troubling video, shared by Israeli Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, has ignited international concern. The footage depicts detained activists from the “Sumud Flotilla,” who were attempting to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza, kneeling with their hands bound. Minister Ben-Gvir is seen taunting the captives, declaring, “Welcome to Israel, we are in charge here.”

This is not merely a political dispute; it is a profound moral issue. Our faith is built on the foundational principle of the inviolable dignity of every human person, created in the image of God. To mock and humiliate anyone, especially those who are captive and powerless, is a grave offense against this dignity.

This public display of pride stands in stark contrast to the Christian call to humility and to see the face of Christ in the vulnerable. While nations have a right to secure their borders, the means must always be just and humane. This incident is a sad reminder of how easily our shared humanity can be forgotten, calling us to pray for leaders who will choose compassion over contempt.

ARMENIA

IN THE KREMLIN’S CROSSHAIRS

It's a tough spot for Armenia. As this ancient Christian nation seeks to build stronger ties with the West, it faces immense pressure from Moscow. Ahead of upcoming elections, Russia is reportedly using a playbook of threats and disinformation to frighten voters and install a more favourable government.

This isn't just geopolitics; it's a profound moral issue. The use of economic coercion – banning Armenian flowers, fruit, and cheese under questionable pretexts – is a form of unjust punishment. It weaponizes the livelihoods of ordinary families to achieve a political end, which violates the principles of economic justice.

Furthermore, disinformation campaigns aimed at destabilizing a nation are an assault on truth itself. Catholic teaching champions the right of nations to self-determination, free from the coercive interference of more powerful neighbours. This is a struggle for national dignity and the freedom to choose one's own path.

As people of faith, we should pray for the Armenian people. We pray for their leaders to have

wisdom, for their people to have courage, and for the triumph of justice and truth over intimidation.

HAVANA

LIBERATING CUBA

President Trump's recent declaration to "liberate Cuba" presents a profound moral dilemma. While the desire to see any people freed from an oppressive regime is a just and noble goal, we must always scrutinize the means used to achieve it.

The indictment of Raúl Castro for the 1996 downing of two aircraft rightly seeks accountability for a grave injustice. However, the accompanying strategy of "paralyzing sanctions" raises serious ethical questions. When a nation's fuel reserves are depleted and its economy is strangled, who suffers most? It is not the powerful, but ordinary families, the elderly, and the sick.

As people of faith, our primary concern must be for the human dignity of the Cuban people. Catholic social teaching calls us to solidarity and to prioritize the common good. We must ask: Does true liberation arise from external pressure that deepens the suffering of the innocent?

We pray for a just and peaceful future for Cuba, one that is built by its own people and respects the life and dignity of every person, rather than one achieved at the cost of immense human suffering.

We Read Pope Leo

The Holy Spirit opens the doors of our hearts, helping us to overcome resistance, selfishness, mistrust and prejudice, and enabling us to live as children of God and as brothers and sisters among ourselves.

The liturgy (...) is at once the space, the time and the context in which the Church receives her life from Christ. For in the liturgy "the work of our Redemption is accomplished" (Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 2), making us a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people whom God has made His own. (...) If the liturgy serves the mystery of Christ, one can understand why it has been defined as "the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows" (SC, 10). It is true that the Church's action is not limited solely to the liturgy; nevertheless, all her activity (preaching, service to the poor, accompaniment in human affairs) is directed toward this "summit." On the other hand, the liturgy sustains the faithful by immersing them continually and ever anew in the Lord's Passover; thus, through the proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the sacraments and common prayer, they are refreshed, strengthened and renewed in their commitment to faith and in their mission. In other words, the participation of the faithful in the liturgical action is both "internal" and "external." This also means that such participation must concretely permeate the whole of daily life in an ethical and spiritual dynamic, so that the liturgy celebrated is translated into life and calls for a fidelity capable of bringing to fulfilment what was experienced during the celebration (...).

General Audience, May 20, 2026.



The holy law of God is written in hearts, engraved by the Spirit with signs of love on the Body of Christ and in His Body, which is the Church. This law is the code of peace: it is the twofold commandment of love, which the Holy Spirit recalls to us with every heartbeat. With our heart, then, we can cry out: Veni, Sancte Spiritus [“Come, Holy Spirit”], because He has already been given to us. We can desire Him because He has already been promised to us. We can receive Him because He Himself is the sweet Guest of the soul. (...)

The first work of the Holy Spirit in us is faith, by which we profess: “Jesus is Lord” (1 Cor 12:3). This faith lives and is expressed in every good work, in every act of mercy and virtue. We, then, are the work of God: we who come here today from every part of the world, invited to the table of the Lord, gathered to listen to His word, and sent forth to bear witness to that word everywhere.

Homily on the Solemnity of Pentecost, Saint Peter’s Basilica, May 24, 2026.

The Holy Spirit opens the doors of our hearts, helping us to overcome resistance, selfishness, mistrust and prejudice, and enabling us to live as children of God and as brothers and sisters among ourselves. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, fraternity is born among people, groups and the peoples of the earth, and all speak one language: the language of love, which unites and harmonizes diversity. (...) In our own time too, and especially on this day of Pentecost, we must invoke the Holy Spirit so that He may open all the doors that still remain closed. We need to rediscover God as the Father who loves us, to build a Church in which everyone feels at home, and to create a fraternal world in which peace reigns among all nations.

Regina Caeli, May 24, 2026.

In my opinion

Two Emperors and a Prayer for Peace: What the US-China Meeting Means for Us

Have you ever watched two big kids on a playground try to decide who gets to be in charge of the sandbox? That’s essentially what just happened in Beijing, but with much higher stakes.

President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping recently sat down for a summit that people are calling the “G2.” Instead of a trade war or threats of real war, it looks like they’ve decided to stop shouting and start splitting up the “global chessboard.”

As people of faith, we know that “blessed are the peacemakers,” but what does this power-sharing deal actually mean for the world? Let’s break it down.

AVOIDING THE “TRAP”

There’s a fancy political term being tossed around called the Thucydides Trap. It sounds complicated, but it’s pretty simple: historically, whenever a new power (like China) tries to overtake an old power (like the U.S.), they almost always end up at war.

Xi Jinping told the American delegation that he wants to avoid this trap. His message was basically: “Look, China is rising, and America’s time as the only boss is fading. Let’s just accept it so we don’t end up destroying the planet.”

While it’s a bit jarring to hear someone say the U.S. is “declining,” the fact that they are talking instead of launching missiles is something we can all be thankful for.

THE “TWO-WAR” NIGHTMARE

Why is this cooling of tensions such a big deal? Because the U.S. military has a bit of a problem:

they've admitted they can't realistically fight two major wars at the same time.

The Conflict

The Risk

The Taiwan Strait

If China moves on Taiwan, the U.S. gets pulled into a massive Pacific war.

Eastern Europe

If the U.S. is busy with China, Russia might feel bold enough to move against NATO.

If the U.S. and China can stay on speaking terms, it keeps the world a lot safer. When the “emperors” get along, the risk of a global wildfire goes down. However, this leaves places like Taiwan feeling a bit nervous, wondering if the U.S. will still have their back if things get dicey.

THE “MIDDLE KINGDOM” AND THE ONLY KING

China has long called itself the “Middle Kingdom” – the centre of the world. With Trump visiting and even Vladimir Putin stopping by to make sure he wasn't being left out of the new world order, it's clear that China is holding a lot of the cards right now.

As Catholics, we watch these “imperial” meetings with a bit of a reality check. We know that while presidents and chairmen might divide the world into “spheres of influence,” there is only one true King who holds the universe in His hands.

What should we take away from this?

1. Peace is a win: Even if the diplomacy feels a bit like a business deal, “jaw-jaw is better than war-war,” as the old saying goes.
2. Pray for our leaders: Whether you like their politics or not, these men are making decisions that affect billions of lives. They need the Holy Spirit's gift of counsel.
3. Stay humble: Earthly empires rise and fall – it's the story of history. Our job is to build the Kingdom of God, which is the only one that actually lasts.

It's a complicated world, but for now, the “Two Emperors” are talking. Let's pray they keep talking.

Tony Wood

Prayer



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

Please keep in your prayers Mary Veronica McMillan (2014) **and all 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!

We welcome Alex and Olga and their three boys, Alex, Eugene and Mykola to Campbeltown this Sunday afternoon. May their stay here provide them with peace, friendship and the opportunity for development.



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