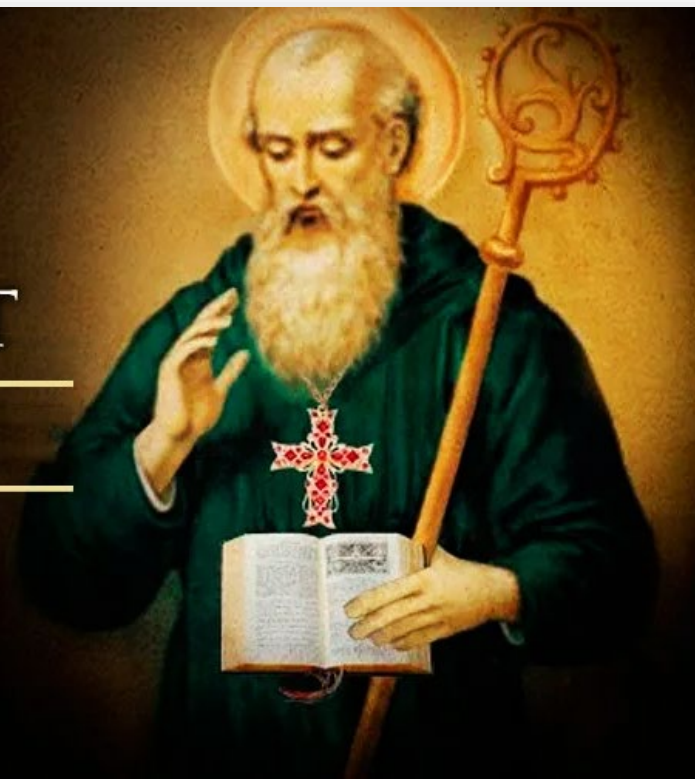


PARISH BULLETIN

**St. Kieran's, the
Catholic
Church** in
*Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille
Chiarain*
5th July 2026

FEAST OF ST. BENEDICT

July 11th



The 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Week 14 of Ordinary Time

Tuesday: Holy Mass, 6pm

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

Discussion Group: scripture discussion group, 10.30am

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

Hymns/Music for Sunday

Proclamation

25 All you who seek

Offertory

57 Blest are you Lord

Communion music

Възвеличай, о, душа моя – Magnify, oh my Soul

Post Communion

*Sheet The Lord's my shepherd
(Townsend)*

Recessional

502 The Spirit lives

Next weekend:

Saturday, 11th of July, Requiem Mass, 11.00am;

Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 12th of July, 15th Sunday in Ordinary

Time, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

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

St. Columba Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Isle of Islay

5th July: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

19th July: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

Psalm response

I will bless your name for ever, my God and king.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

*I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
you have revealed the secrets of the kingdom to little children.*

Alleluia.

Communion Antiphon

*Taste and see that the Lord is good;
blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.*

Take Five

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

MONDAY: OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINT MARIA GORETTI, VIRGIN, MARTYR

6 JULY 2026

Tears turned to dancing

Each July 6 for 48 years, Maria Goretti's mother, Assunta, had to relive the horrors of the brutal murder of her sweet, faith-filled little girl. Maria Goretti was not yet 12 when a neighbouring farmhand attempted to rape her and then stabbed her to death in her home while her family was working the fields. Then on July 6, 1950, Maria Goretti was recognized for her defence of the faith and deathbed forgiveness of her attacker by being named a saint by Pope Pius XII, and for Assunta Goretti, the first mother to witness the canonization of her own child, the day was redeemed from dread to celebration. Maria's heroic love is what we are asked to call to mind this day.

Today's readings: Hosea 2:16, 17b-18, 21-22; Matthew 9:18-26. *"Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you."*

TUESDAY OF WEEK 14

7 JULY 2026

Mirror, mirror on the wall

Many of us associate the prophet Hosea with the sweet-sounding song "Come Back to Me," beloved of penance services. His life, however, was anything but sugar-coated. He challenged the people of Israel, seduced by false gods, by allowing his own life to become the medium of his message. By God's instruction Hosea married a prostitute, and, though she abandoned him for other men, he kept loving her, sought her out, forgave her, and brought her back. He warned the leaders of his day to stop prostituting themselves and assured them of God's enduring mercy. He allowed his very life to mirror the mercy of God. In some real way the life of every Christian must reflect the one who commanded, "Love one another."

Today's readings: Hosea 8:4-7, 11-13; Matthew 9:32-38. *"The harvest is abundant but the labourers are few."*

WEDNESDAY OF WEEK 14

8 JULY 2026

The cure for what ails us

Anointing of the Sick is one of the seven sacraments of the church. In its pre-Vatican II life, this sacrament was called Extreme Unction and was reserved for the time of death. Now the church invites all who are seriously sick or experiencing the challenges of advanced age to receive the grace of this sacrament. Celebrated at home, in a church, or in a healthcare facility, often in the presence of loved ones, this sacrament offers those who are sick the peace, strength, and courage of the Lord who himself knew the pain of human suffering. Draw on God's healing powers and encourage others to do so as well.

Today's readings: Hosea 10:1-3, 7-8, 12; Matthew 10:1-7. *"Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority . . . to cure sickness and disease of every kind."*

THURSDAY: FEAST OF OUR LADY OF ABERDEEN

9 JULY 2026

Now hear this!

Jesus does not forget those who are with Him in his passion. When He recognizes his mother standing at the foot of the cross he immediately takes concern for her welfare and instructs John to take her as his own mother. And He asks Mary to accept John as her own son. Mary was completely united with her son in his divine mission. She is the first Christian because she accepted the gospel and gave her "yes" to God's plan of redemption. She followed her son to the cross and she prayed for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all the disciples at Pentecost. She is a model for us of faith and obedience, hope and perseverance, and love and fidelity.

Today's readings: Genesis 3:9-15, 20; John 19:25-27. *And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.*

FRIDAY OF WEEK 14

10 JULY 2026

Love is patient, not abstract

Sonnets of love describe with passionate detail the merits of the beloved that draw such devotion: eyes, hair, lips, hips. Who would declare a burning love in vague or abstract terms? Would such a theoretical declaration ever be convincing? In the same way, our love

must never be less than concrete if it is to be believable. Our love must be shaped first by our intentions, then revealed in our attitudes, and finally demonstrated in our behaviours. Intentions, attitudes, behaviours—the three-fold way to ensure our love is the real and tangible thing.

Today's readings: Hosea 14:2-10; Matthew 10:16-23. *"Let [the one] who is wise understand these things; let [the one] who is prudent know them."*

SATURDAY: FEAST OF SAINT BENEDICT, ABBOT, CO-PATRON OF EUROPE

11 JULY 2026

A guide to holy living

The main elements of Saint Benedict's famous monastic rule are sleep, prayer, and manual labour. Chapter 48 of the Rule states: "Idleness is the enemy of the soul. Therefore, the brothers should have specified periods for manual labour as well as for prayerful reading. . . . They must not become distressed if local conditions or their poverty should force them to do the harvesting themselves. When they live by the labour of their hands, as our fathers and the apostles did, then they are really monks. Yet, all things are to be done with moderation on account of the fainthearted." Remember Benedict's concern for moderation. It is the key to all aspects of Christian piety.

Today's readings: Proverbs 2:1-9; Matthew 19:27-29. *"For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."*

Readings for the 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Zechariah 9:9-10

When the just king comes, his arrival will be humble – but his authority immense.

Psalms 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14

Gracious, merciful, kind, and good: These are the attributes of God.

Romans 8:9, 11-13

Life in the Spirit or life in the world: We can excel at either but not at both.

Matthew 11:25-30

The just judge of the universe is also the rest of burdened souls.

Words on the Word

*

In 1844, a group of Jesuit seminarians in Vals, France, discovered a profound truth about the work of salvation. Their spiritual director, Father François Xavier Gautrelet, reminded them that every moment – prayer, study, work, and even rest – could be offered to God with love. He urged them to become "apostles of prayer," offering each day in union with the Heart of Our Lord for the spreading of the Kingdom and the salvation of souls.

* *

Finding Meaning in Life's Challenges

Many of us, especially in the midst of life's trials, may feel weary or wonder if we have the strength to go on. Young people often confess, "I no longer have anything to live for." Yet, faith in the meaning of our actions – faith in overcoming obstacles, in a brighter tomorrow, and in God's boundless love – can renew our spirits. Acceptance, the feeling of being needed, and trust in God's great love are essential for the effort of conversion and a better life.

The Invitation of the Almighty

God, through Jesus Christ, beckons those hungry for love and for Him, embracing them close to

His Heart, much like the good father of the prodigal son. This invitation is extended to those who are mocked by the proud and self-assured. Only those with open, loving hearts can perceive God’s mysteries. As St. Augustine wisely said, “God opens His mysteries to loving hearts.”

A Consoling Call from Jesus

In today’s Gospel, Jesus invites those who labour and are burdened: “Come to Me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). This call is a balm for those paralyzed by suffering or absorbed in their own pain. It is a promise of refreshment and a call to rise above our struggles.

Embrace Your Role as an Apostle of Prayer

You are an important apostle of God’s love, whether your actions are grand or seemingly insignificant. Invite Christ to walk beside you, and notice His presence in every step. Through the morning offering and a heart open to prayer, you can transform your daily life into a powerful act of faith and love. Let us rise to the call, offering ourselves fully to God, and find rest and purpose in His embrace.

* * *

The Morning Offering: A Daily Commitment

The practice of the morning offering allows us to consecrate every part of our day – joys and sufferings, the known and the unknown – to God. Here is a simple yet powerful formula:

“O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in all the intentions of Your Most Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all my loved ones, and especially for the intentions of the Holy Father. Amen.”

In Christ’s love,
Fr Anthony

34 FESTIVE ICONS: A WINDOW INTO ORTHODOX DEVOTION

Festive icons, also known as calendar icons, hold a significant place in the private devotion of Catholics adhering to Catholic orthodoxy, doctrines, and tradition. These artistic representations, intended for personal reflection, offer a unique glimpse into the rich tapestry of Orthodox liturgical life.

Origins in Byzantine Tradition

The origins of festive icons can be traced back to the Byzantine tradition. The oldest surviving examples date from the 9th century and are housed in the Monastery of Saint Catherine on Sinai. However, the first Ruthenian calendar icons began to emerge in the 16th century, marking



Calendar icon for February. 19th century. The Icon Museum and Study Centre.

a distinct cultural adaptation of this venerable tradition.

Feasts and the Orthodox Liturgical Calendar

The subject matter of these icons is intricately linked to the feasts found in the Orthodox liturgical calendar. This calendar, which commences on September 1st with the feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God, culminates on August 31st. Each feast is accorded a small space within the composition, allowing for a detailed depiction of the event.

Composition and Detail

The composition of festive icons follows a band arrangement, with a small space allocated to each feast. Despite their modest dimensions, these small scenes are rich in detail, captivating viewers with their beauty and intricate craftsmanship. The figures of saints, depicted individually or in groups, are often accompanied by explanatory inscriptions, providing a deeper understanding of the icon’s symbolism.

Year-Round Devotion

A unique variation of festive icons caters to the entire year’s devotion. In these compositions, images of the Mother of God or Christ are centrally placed, surrounded by three rows of cyclical scenes. These scenes illustrate the Passion of the Lord and the Resurrection, Marian feasts, and the figures of all saints. This annual cycle serves as a year-round reminder of the central tenets of Orthodox faith.

In conclusion, festive icons serve as a powerful medium for private devotion, encapsulating the essence of Orthodox liturgical life. Through their detailed compositions and rich symbolism, they offer a window into the spiritual world of Orthodox Christians, inviting viewers to engage in a deeper understanding of their faith.

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 30
Glowing Coals
John 21:1-19

In the heart of John’s Gospel lies a poignant narrative that speaks volumes about the human condition and the boundless mercy of Christ. The story of Peter, who denied his Lord three times, is followed by a miraculous scene where Jesus calls him back to service, igniting a profound reflection on redemption and the power of divine love.

A Call to Renewal

After the Resurrection, Jesus appears to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, where Peter, still grappling with shame and uncertainty, is summoned once more. This call is not merely a repetition of the past but a new beginning. It underscores the idea that no sin is beyond the reach of God’s grace. The Gospel subtly hints that this post-Resurrection encounter should be seen as an epilogue, a testament to the enduring nature of Christ’s mission.

The Symbolism of the Glowing Coals

The mention of glowing coals in two pivotal moments – when Peter denies Jesus and when he is restored – adds layers of meaning to the narrative. In the Gospel, these coals symbolize both

judgment and transformation. Peter's denial occurs in the dim light of shame, yet his restoration is marked by the warmth of divine love. This duality mirrors the human experience of guilt and forgiveness, highlighting the transformative power of Christ's mercy.

The Challenge of Returning to Old Habits

Peter's return to fishing after his denial illustrates a common struggle: the temptation to revert to familiar, albeit flawed, patterns of behaviour. The Gospel reminds us that such lapses are not final verdicts but opportunities for growth. Jesus' patience and love provide the necessary catalyst for Peter's renewal, encouraging believers to embrace second chances.

The Year for Priests: A Personal Reflection

For many, the Year for Priests serves as a spiritual awakening, akin to the fire that glows within Peter's heart. It is a call to rekindle one's devotion and to confront the shadows of past failures with renewed vigour. The Letter to the Hebrews describes God as a consuming fire, a reminder that divine love, though fierce, is ultimately restorative and life-giving.

Peter's Bold Act: Clothing Himself

An intriguing detail in this narrative is Peter's decision to dress himself before leaping into the sea. This act, seemingly irrational, is rich with symbolism. Psychologically, it represents Peter's attempt to confront his shame head-on, emerging from the depths of denial into the light of reconciliation. Mystically, it mirrors the divine act of clothing Adam in skins, symbolizing the covering of shame and the restoration of dignity before God.

The Power of Repentance and Love

Jesus' threefold question to Peter about his love serves as a powerful counterpoint to his threefold denial. It is a call to introspection and a reaffirmation of faith. This exchange underscores the importance of confronting our past mistakes with honesty and humility, allowing the love of Christ to heal and renew our spirits.

A Testament to Unwavering Mercy

Though Peter never explicitly asks for forgiveness, his certainty of it speaks volumes about the depth of Christ's mercy. The presence of such profound love in Jesus makes any doubt about forgiveness seem incongruous. It is a reminder that in the embrace of Christ, we are met with an overwhelming assurance of redemption, even when words of contrition seem insufficient.

Conclusion

Peter's journey from denial to restoration is a timeless testament to the power of faith and the limitless compassion of God. It encourages believers to face their shortcomings with courage, knowing that the divine call to service is always accompanied by grace. As we navigate our own paths, let us draw inspiration from Peter's story, embracing the optimism that comes with the promise of renewal and the unyielding love of our Saviour.

Fr Anthony



Around the World

The sometimes-missed news

VENEZUELA AWAITS HELP

LET US HELP!

In Venezuela, the death toll from the June 24 earthquake is rising. The chances of finding people alive are fading, while thousands are still buried. On June 29, the number of dead exceeded 1,400, the injured numbered over 3,200, and the missing – 50,000. The double earthquake that struck Venezuela was the most destructive disaster in the country since 1900. The city of La Guaira on the Caribbean Sea, located only a few kilometres from the capital, Caracas, was almost completely destroyed. This region suffered the most. The tragedy is compounded by the fact that the disaster struck a country already weakened by a serious economic crisis and political instability. It is estimated that more than 6.7 million people need immediate assistance: access to drinking water, medicine, shelter, and medical care. Help has been provided, among others, by Aid to the Church in Need; to help through it, make a donation [HERE](https://acnuk.org/). <https://acnuk.org/>

CONSCRIPTS FOR CONSCRIPTION

DENMARK – UKRAINE

Denmark has announced tougher residency rules for certain Ukrainian refugees, reflecting the hard moral choices war forces upon nations and individuals alike. Under the new policy, Ukrainian men aged 23 to 60 who are not exempt from military service will no longer automatically qualify for residence if their situation is tied to avoiding conscription. As Immigration and Integration Minister Morten Bødskov put it, evading military duty weakens Ukraine's capacity to resist Russian aggression.

In a country of just 6 million people, Denmark has granted nearly 48,000 Ukrainians temporary protection under a special 2022 law, allowing access to work, education, and health care. The new restrictions will not be applied retroactively, though Ukrainians must still renew their status at regular intervals.

The decision touches a sensitive ethical point. Every state has a right to defend itself, and citizens may carry grave responsibilities in times of war. At the same time, the human cost of conflict cannot be ignored, nor should conscience be dismissed lightly. A just response must balance solidarity with Ukraine, respect for legitimate civic duty, and compassion for those caught in fear, displacement, and moral turmoil.

We Read Pope Leo

Love bears fruit only in the giving of oneself – when we are willing to lose a little of our ego in order to make room for another.

When we participate in the Eucharist, we are invited to listen to the word of God and to be nourished at the table of the Lord, where He Himself offers Himself to the Father. These two parts of the Holy Mass – the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist – “are so closely connected with each other that they form one single act of worship” (SC, 56). With regard to the Word, we must remember that it is not merely a matter of acquiring intellectual knowledge of Scripture, but of receiving the Word that is “living and active” (Heb 4:12), addressed by God to all and at the same time to each person individually; the Word which, together with the Eucharistic Bread, nourishes and sustains us and leads us from the fall of sin into new life in Christ. (...) The Second Vatican Council directed that “the treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly,” so that “a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word” (SC, 51). The liturgical reform translated this call into the treasure that is the Lectionary, the book gathering all the biblical readings intended for liturgical celebrations. This richness was drawn from the purest source of living Tradition, which combines “sound tradition” with openness to “legitimate progress” (SC, 23).

General Audience, June 24, 2026

How can we help our Churches today to proclaim the Gospel with greater fidelity, freedom, and credibility? Mission is not one task among many in the Church. It is the reason for her existence, and precisely for this reason it also becomes the criterion that guides our discernment. When we learn to listen to one another, to bear responsibility together, to recognize the action of the Holy Spirit in the various Churches, we do not merely improve our way of working: we become a Church more capable of encountering the men and women of our time and of bearing witness to them to the joy of the Gospel. Therefore, I wish to ask you for particular help. The ministry that the Lord has entrusted to me cannot be lived in isolation. It needs your experience, your pastoral wisdom, your knowledge of the Churches and peoples entrusted to you. I count on you to help me discern what the Spirit is saying to the Church today. I need your support: strong, clear, and public. I need to feel that you support me as brothers.

Extraordinary Consistory of Cardinals, inaugural address, June 26, 2026

When the Lord begins to send His Apostles on mission, He wants them to be free from every bond. And it is true for everyone that even the dearest affections find their fullness through the love with which Christ loves us. Let us think, for example, of married life – it can be lived fully only if one “leaves” the home of one’s parents (cf. Mt 19:5) in order to commit oneself to the marital relationship. Let us also think of the growth of children – we help them to fulfil themselves and to be happy if we teach them to “stand on their own two feet” and make their own choices. (...) In this sense, love is also a loss. It is difficult for us to understand this, especially in a world where loss seems like weakness and where people yield to an obsession with possession. Yet love bears fruit only in the giving of oneself – when we are willing to lose a little of our ego in order to make room for another, to lose a little time in order to listen to a friend, to give up a bit of comfort in order to share someone’s difficult situation.

Angelus, June 28, 2026

Where will I find you at the hour of death?



The Forgotten Doctrine: A Modern Reflection on Hell and the Final Choice

In a world that often trivializes death and dismisses sin, the Catholic Church's teaching on Hell can seem like a relic of a bygone era. Yet, the reality of a final, definitive judgment and the possibility of eternal separation from God remain central tenets of our faith. These are not doctrines meant to inspire mere terror, but to awaken us to the profound seriousness of our lives, the gift of our free will, and the infinite mercy of God, which must be freely accepted. A sobering account, drawn from traditional pious literature, illustrates these truths in a stark and personal way. It serves as a powerful catalyst for reflecting on the Church's perennial wisdom concerning life, death, and eternity.

A Sobering Testimony

The story concerns Klara, a devout young woman, who in 1937 learned of the sudden death of her former colleague, Anita. Though recently married in the Church, Anita had deliberately abandoned her faith. Klara, moved by charity, offered her Mass and Communion for the repose of Anita's soul.

That evening, according to the account, Klara had a vision of Anita in a state of torment. The message conveyed was chilling. Anita claimed to be damned, not by a capricious act of God, but by her own definitive choice made at the moment of death. Her testimony, forced by divine power, outlined the spiritual logic of her eternal state:

The Permanence of Choice: She explained that Hell is eternal because her will, fixed at the moment of death, remains in a state of stubborn hatred and rejection of God. "Do you now understand why hell is eternal?" she asked. "It is so because my stubbornness and hatred towards God will never cease!"

The Deception of Sin: Anita recounted how she had gradually constructed a "religion" for herself, one that prioritized personal pleasure and convenience. She made an idol of her human love and rebelled against the Church. "It's easy enough believing what pleases oneself," she lamented.

The Role of Prayer: She stressed the critical importance of prayer, which she had neglected. “Prayer is the first step towards God – especially prayer to Her who is Christ’s Mother... Devotion snatches countless souls from the demon.”

The Particular Judgment: Her experience of death was an instantaneous moment of clarity. She saw her life and her soul as if in a mirror, recognizing all the graces she had scorned. Faced with the loving gaze of the God she had rejected, her only impulse was to flee. This flight, this self-exclusion, was her judgment.

While such private revelations are not articles of faith, they can serve to illustrate the doctrines the Church has always taught. This account forces us to move beyond abstract theology and consider the concrete reality of the soul’s final decision.

The Theology of the Final Choice

The testimony of “Anita,” however dramatic, aligns perfectly with the Church’s understanding of sin, judgment, and Hell. At the heart of this teaching is the reality that God created us to be free, and our eternal destiny is the result of how we use that freedom.

The Irreversible Decision

At the moment of death, our life’s trajectory becomes fixed. The person we have formed ourselves to be – through countless daily choices for or against love – makes a final, irreversible decision. Saint Catherine of Genoa (1447–1510), a great teacher on the afterlife, explains this principle:

“At life’s end each soul remains fixed forever either in good or in evil chosen according to these words: ‘Wherever I find thee’ – meaning at the hour of death, with the will set in sin or in repentance – ‘there shall I judge thee.’” – *Treatise on Purgatory, IV*

This is not God condemning a soul against its will; it is the soul ratifying the fundamental orientation it has chosen throughout its life.

The Nature of Mortal Sin

How does a soul arrive at such a state of definitive rejection? It begins with sin, which is always a search for happiness apart from God. The tempter presents evil as a desirable good, promising satisfaction while leading us away from our true end. When we choose our own will over God’s in a grave matter, with full knowledge and deliberate consent, we commit mortal sin.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains the consequences with sobering clarity:

We cannot be united with God unless we freely choose to love him. But we cannot love God if we sin gravely against him, against our neighbour or against ourselves... To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God’s merciful love means remaining separated from him for ever by our own free choice. This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed is called “hell.” (CCC 1033)

Anita’s story is a narrative of this very process: a life of unrepented sin hardened her heart to the point where, even when faced with the ultimate reality of God, she was unable to love.

A Call to Vigilance and Mercy

Understanding this doctrine should not lead to despair, but to a profound sense of spiritual urgency and a deeper reliance on God’s mercy.

- 1. Reclaiming the Seriousness of Death:** Modern culture often treats death as a mere spectacle or a medical event, stripping it of its spiritual significance. As Christians, we must see death for what it is: the threshold to eternity, the moment when our earthly probation ends. To

live with a mindful awareness of our death (*memento mori*) is a classical spiritual practice that helps us order our lives rightly.

2. **The Battle for the Heart:** The devil's primary strategy is to make us comfortable with our sin. He encourages us to justify our faults, ignore our conscience, and presume upon God's mercy without any intention to amend our lives. The true battle is for the heart – to keep it soft, penitent, and open to God's love.

3. **The Path to Heaven:** The path to avoiding eternal loss is the path of love, walked daily. It is paved with:

- **Prayer:** A consistent relationship with God.
- **Sacraments:** Especially frequent and sincere Confession, where we acknowledge our resistance to God and receive His healing mercy.
- **Charity:** Actively loving God and our neighbour, fulfilling the great commandment.

Saint Catherine of Genoa offers a final, stark warning to those who would take God's mercy for granted:

"You seek refuge hoping endlessly upon God's infinite mercy – you praise His goodness ceaselessly yet fail to see that your resistance toward this Highest Goodness will become your accuser." – *Treatise on Purgatory*, XV

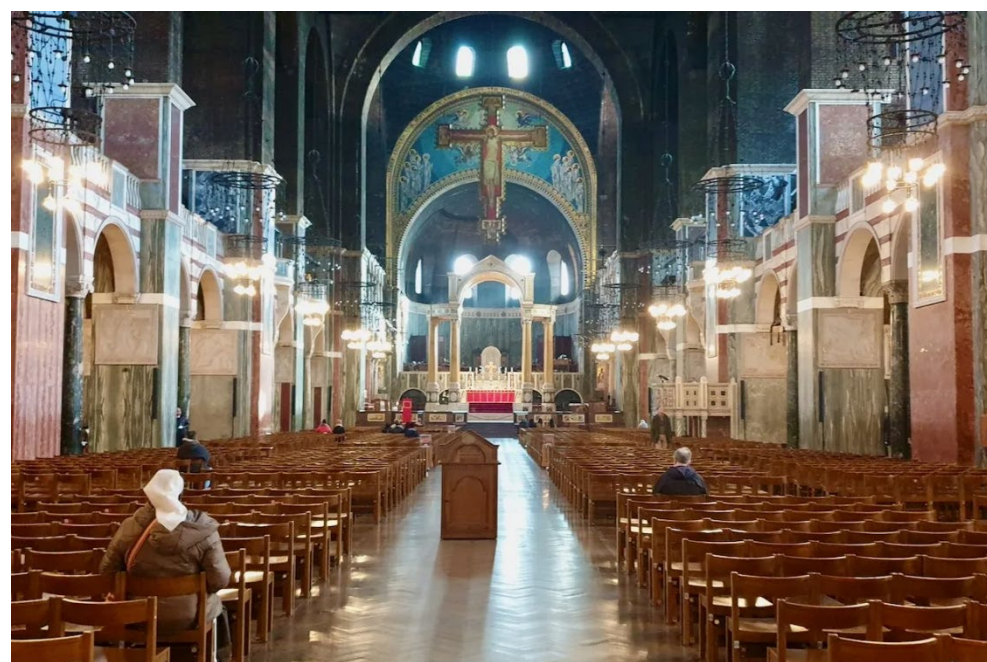
Let us not be accusers of ourselves. By acknowledging our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we allow Christ's mercy to heal us today. By choosing to love God and neighbour, even in the smallest of things, we exercise the freedom of our hearts, so that at the hour of our death, they may fly, unimpeded, to the embrace of the Beloved for all eternity.

In my opinion

The British Course Toward Christianity

Are Christians in Great Britain truly awakening? Is a national movement being born on the Islands? That is a question worthy of Hamlet himself.

A mass of waving flags and banners amid crosses and images of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary in an enormous, slowly moving crowd chanting slogans of unity and sovereignty. This could have taken place on the 3rd of May or the 11th of November in Warsaw, but it occurred in London on the 18th of May, during the most recent protest rally against mass immigration and the gradual erosion of national identity. Such scenes are something entirely new in Great Britain, and some believe that the inspiration for them may well come from similar actions undertaken in some European countries.



Interior of Westminster Cathedral

"Unite the Kingdom" rallies were led by Tommy Robinson, founder of the English Defence League in 2009, who claims to have converted to Christianity during his imprisonment for contempt of court. The march in September of last year drew 150,000 people, but this time the number was half as large. Hundreds of thousands of people watched the live broadcast, however, and the protests were every bit as vocal as before. Their participants raised the cry: "Christ is King!", and prayed in defence of God, faith, family, and fatherland.

The "Unite the Kingdom" phenomenon is, however, far from being a united movement; it

gathers rather many ordinary people from various ethnic groups and faiths, who come simply to express their feelings. Does secularised Great Britain, then, truly experience a rise of “Christian nationalism”? A recent study conducted by the think tank Theos suggests that the answer is: not quite. Barely fewer than one in six citizens believes that being a “true Briton” means being a Christian, or that non-Christians do not really belong here. However, over 40% agree that the country’s law should be based on Christian values, and that religious education should place Christianity above other religions. Claims of a general indifference towards British Christian culture are, in short, unwarranted. So too is the assumption that British society has set an irreversibly liberal, post-Christian course. The situation appears to be far more complex – and far more interesting.

A widespread sense that the country is being forced to change in ways to which no one has consented is a source of great frustration. As is the feeling that those who object are being ignored by today’s elites. It should come as no surprise, then, that many are turning to Christianity as an expression of threatened values.

Church leaders in Great Britain have so far responded with caution. In 2025, they warned against the “misuse of Christianity” by protesters and claimed that “the Cross and the Gospel of Christ” should never be used to legitimise “rejection, hatred, or superiority towards people of other cultures.” Perhaps they could learn something here from the Polish Church, which has faced similar challenges.

The Christian faith finds varied political and social expression. Pelting those who do not share our interpretation with cheap epithets – “far right,” “racism,” “xenophobia” – only deepens polarisation. Instead, we ought to be realistic in our assessments, just in our judgements, and precise in our use of language, guarding ourselves against what the philosopher Jacob Bronowski called the “monstrous certainty” of our own rightness and righteousness. This is a contemporary challenge to which the Church should help us find an answer.

Prayer

Please remember to pray for those who are unwell, in need, or have requested our prayers:



Cecil Finn, Andrew McLaughlin, Claire Wiggins, Russell Carroll, Lucy Cunningham, Tommy McGrory Senior, Lilian Cox, Sarah Carmichael, and Doleen Durnin.

Please keep in your prayers Please keep in your prayers Elizabeth Finn who passed away recently and also Isabelle Lafferty, Anthony Cunningham (Billy), Basil Wood, Edward Maguire **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!

Second Collection on the 11th and 12th of July for Stella Maris.

COFFEE MORNING: is being planned for SATURDAY 15TH AUGUST. Anyone able to help in any way contact Cathy or Fiona Fox, or Fr Tony.



campbeltown@rcdai.org.uk



www.stkieranscampbeltown.org



<https://www.facebook.com/campbeltownrcchurch/>

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Parish Priest: Fr. A. Wood, St. Kieran's, Campbeltown; Tel. 01586 552160