



## THE LONGEST JOURNEY

And so Holy Week dawns. It may have been called “An Seachtain Mór” (the Great Week) in our tradition, but nowadays there’s a sense of sameness to this week – apart from anticipation of Easter. People, I’m afraid, tend to drop out the Holy Week. I still struggle with the reality that increasingly more fundraisers are planned for Good Friday night... on the sound reasoning that as pubs are closed – more will be likely to come. Apart from that, you realise things have got a little forgotten in our faith when a person asks, as they did a colleague, “I thought you were supposed to use the branches of your Christmas tree during Palm Sunday?” Not exactly! It’s the fresh cut “Palm” branches of today that will be used as ashy fragments on Ash Wednesday,

February 14th 2018. I’m looking forward to seeing loved-in couples next year sporting ash crosses on their foreheads at dinner... not sure how Valentine feasting will co-exist in 2018 with the Ash Wednesday fast.

### **Fast and abstinence**

Along with Good Friday these are the only days where Catholics aged 14-60 are asked to “Fast and Abstain”. Fasting consists of only eating one full meal, with two small snack/collations. Abstinence means to refrain from meat. Today people probably remember Palm Sunday with standing (if possible) for the “Long Gospel”. I remember one speaker saying about this, that Jesus promises to stand up for us in heaven – but will you stand up for Him here on earth?

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It's a good question and this is a week to face such hard topics, the foot-washing acts of love and betrayals of the "Holy Thursdays" in our life, the sense of "Good Friday" abandonment we all experience and the helpless waiting by the tombs of our lives on "Holy Saturday".

Today, the Christian Church the world over is commemorating this time in different ways, in some places with

### Reflection

Jesus promises to stand up for us in heaven – but will you stand up for Him here on earth?

### Lesson

Go with Peter as he leaves the courtyard and begins to weep bitterly, and share his sorrow for unfaithfulness.

### Prayer

Eternal Father, we thank you for the gift of your Son Jesus Christ to us.

splendid processions. But whatever way we do it, we try to capture the essence of what all four Gospel writers recorded.

### Holy Week not really understood

I have very strong memories of Holy Week as a child. It stood out. Less so now. I don't think it is something we really understood at the time and I suspect that there were many in the original Palm Sunday crowd who were like that. Present to a certain extent, but not really understanding what was happening.

Of course there were others who stood back. They watched without saying anything. "Let's wait and see" – I suppose a man riding on a donkey wasn't that impressive, even when they heard what the people shouted and sang. There will always be some who wait and see, and think a little more before committing themselves. Fully understandable. But if we don't stand up for Him (Jesus) this Holy Week – what does it say about us? For our technologies may have changed from the time of Christ, but the human heart does not. ■

– Tom Cox

### This Week (10–16 April)

- 10 Mon** Monday of Holy Week
- 11 Tue** Tuesday of Holy Week
- 12 Wed** Wednesday of Holy Week
- 13 Thur** HOLY THURSDAY
- 14 Fri** GOOD FRIDAY
- 15 Sat** HOLY SATURDAY: THE EASTER VIGIL
- 16 Sun** EASTER SUNDAY

### Today's Readings



Isaiah 50:4-7  
Psalm 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24  
Philippians 2:6-11  
Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

### Next Sunday's Readings



Acts 10:34, 37-43  
Psalm 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23  
Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8  
John 20:1-9



# St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast

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**MASS TIMES & SERVICES** (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

Saturday Evening at 6.30pm. (English Parish Mass)

Sunday Morning (in Polish): 9.30am, 1pm & 7pm. (English Parish Mass): 11.30am

Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday at 9.30am. Friday at 7.00pm.

Wednesday: Communion Service discontinued until further notice (Day off)

Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil Mass at 7.00pm & Morning of Feast Day 09.30am

Confessions: Before each Mass and By Arrangement. Baptisms: Saturdays at 4pm (3 weeks notice required)



## PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS  
Matthew 26:14-27:66

The account of the Passion is a vivid story with a variety of characters and much action. To enter into the passage we can read the story slowly and see if we can identify with different characters in the story. Also any one scene within the story can provide us with much food for reflection and prayer. Keep in mind that one of the aims in reflecting on the passage is to discover the good news the story has for us.

John Byrne OSA. Email jpb Byrneosa@gmail.com

### WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Recently Deceased: John McCann, Fr Finbar Glavin

Anniversaries: Bridget Curran, Fred McGreevy, Susan Gallagher, Fr Pat Gallagher, Máire Smyth, Fr Kevin O'Leary, Winnie McPhillips & Evelyn Mills (Sat 15th at 9pm), John Riordan (Sun 16th at 11:30am), John Mahony (Mon 17th at 11am), May Riordan (Tues 18th at 9:30am), Olive McCormick (Thurs 20th April at 9:30am), Joseph White (Sun 23rd at 11:30am), Daniel Doherty (Sun 30th at 11:30am)

### READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 9th April  
READERS:

Vigil Mass: Shauna Mullen & Anthony Clifford  
Morning Mass: Tracey Mallon & Kay Dunn

#### EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Sean Rafferty  
Morning Mass: Louis Corscadden

Sun 16th April  
READERS:

Vigil Mass: Maria Murphy & Anthony Clifford  
Morning Mass: Martina McClory & Eileen Dunn

#### EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Ann Wright  
Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard



**COLLECTIONS:** Many thanks for your contribution to last week's collection: Stipend £901.94, Weekly £85, Needy Parishes £19, Shrines £102.51. **NEW BOXES OF ENVELOPES ARE NOW AVAILABLE** (arranged by surname, alphabetically). Please note to reduce waste numbers have been re-attributed. If your details have changed, or if you would like to register for a box, please give your details to Fr McCann as soon as possible. Please consider signing a Gift Aid form so that the parish can claim back the Tax from the HMRC on your contributions. Your own Tax is not affected.

**Trócaire Lenten Collection Boxes.** Trócaire thanks the parishes of Down and Connor for the donations received towards their 2016 Lenten Campaign: a magnificent total of £620,451 and €250 was raised. It was always envisaged that as part of the Holy Thursday liturgy, as well as the offertory, the Trócaire collections should be taken up. With this in mind, you are asked to open your boxes, change any coins into notes and place your donation into the envelope supplied and fill in our name and address, and if possible tick the gift aid box (if you are a tax payer). In accordance with the government gift match, where the treasury will match the amount given to charities, the donations should all be collected within 90 days of the beginning of the funding project. If you cannot give the donations in on Holy Thursday, we would highly encourage you to return your donations AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

**World Meeting of Families Second Collection:** Pope Francis has personally chosen Dublin to be the host diocese for the World Meeting of Families from 21-26 August 2018. Planning for this great national and international celebration of faith is well underway. Hosting this important event requires an enormous amount of planning and funding. **The first national collection last year came to almost €800,000.** In this regard a

second national collection will be held this weekend. Your support for this collection would be greatly appreciated. Leaflets about the Meeting are available in porch.

**Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land.** On Good Friday Catholics throughout the world take up a collection to support Christians living in the Holy Land. We are all aware of the horrific suffering of Christian communities in the region and throughout the Middle East. I ask your cooperation in arranging for this collection to be taken up on Good Friday.

**Good Friday Falls/Shankill Inter-Church Prayer Walk - 14th April** beginning at 4.45pm outside Clonard Church and finishing there by 6.00pm. The walk encircles the Falls/Shankill peace line wall, stopping briefly for a short prayer in Shankill Methodist Church. Everyone is welcome!

**Cantiunculae Concerts—Dates for your diary.** Fr McCann's choir will be staging the following concerts:

**Cantiunculae Music through the generations:** /Friday 21st March, in 1st Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast, presenting religious and secular, popular music, by Cantiunculae choir and their family members. 7pm. Proceeds in aid of Glebe House.

**Cantiunculae Faure's Requiem with the McDonnell Trio,** Friday 19th May [NB CHANGE OF DATE!] in St Anthony's Church, Willowfield at 7pm. Proceeds in aid of Renovation of the Willowfield COI Parish Hall. More details posted later in subsequent bulletins.

**Cake Sale.** Mary's Meals, St Anthony's Willowfield Support Group are holding a Cake sale after Mass on Palm Sunday, in the front porch of the Church. Please give your support to this worthy cause.

**The Hospice Walks:** The Hospice Walk is one of the biggest fundraising events which take place across Northern Ireland and we would encourage as many people as possible to take part to help raise vital funds in support of Hospice care services for children and adults living with life-limiting conditions. Please see poster in porch.

**Fatima Centenary Celebrations.** Tom McCormack, co-producer of the film, "the Call to Fatima", will speak on the importance of Our Lady's apparitions at Fatima for our time. His work is based entirely on the writings by Sister Lucia of Fatima. The presentation will take place in St. Teresa of Avila Parish Centre, Glen Road on Monday 24th April at 7.15 p.m. Enrolment in the brown scapular will follow the presentation. All welcome.

**Me and My Girl.** St. Agnes' Choral Society continue their 60th Anniversary celebrations with their production of the hilarious family comedy musical, Me and My Girl in The Grand Opera House, Belfast from 9th - 13th May. Tickets can be purchased online at www.goh.co.uk or via the Box Office on 028 9024 1919

### Penitential Services in Preparation for Easter:

Sun 9 April (Palm Sunday) St Colmcille's, Ballyhackamore @ 3pm;

St Brigid's, Derryvolgie @ 4pm

Holy Rosary @ 7:30pm

Drumbo & Carryduff @ 7:30pm

Wed 12 April St Bernadette's, Rosetta @ 7:30pm

An examination of conscience sheet (pink) is available in the porch to help prepare for the sacrament.

### Triduum Services for Holy Week

**Holy Thursday** Mass of the Lord's Supper 7pm, followed by procession to Altar of Repose, Adoration until 10.00pm Night Prayer.

**Good Friday** Passion of the Lord: in English 3pm, in Polish 7:30pm

**Holy Saturday** Blessing of Food in Polish, begins at 9am. Easter Vigil at 9pm.

**Volunteers** needed for Washing of Feet on Holy Thursday.

**Eucharistic Ministers & Readers** also needed for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil services. Table in Sacristy for names, please fill in slot where you would be available.

**Feast of Divine Mercy.** The Feast of Divine Mercy will be celebrated in Belfast on 23 April in:

St. Peter's Cathedral, Falls Road - starts at 2:30 with Holy Rosary and Sacrament of Reconciliation; Divine Mercy Chaplet; and Mass.

Sacred Heart Church, Oldpark Road - starts at 2:30 with Holy Rosary and Sacrament of Reconciliation; Divine Mercy Chaplet; and Mass.

St. Paul's Church, Falls Road - starts at 1:30 with Exposition and Sacrament of Reconciliation; Holy Rosary; Divine Mercy Chaplet; and Mass. See poster in the Porch.

**Parish Safeguarding.** Can you please ensure that all Children and Vulnerable Adults are accompanied at all times when entering the Sacristy / Toilet facilities. If you have any queries regarding the Safeguarding Policy please contact a member of the Parish Safeguarding Committee. Many Thanks, Fr Henry PP.