

Parish Newsletter

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD (World Communications Day) | 13 May 2018
Cycle B | Issue 24

WITNESSES

St Luke's account of the Ascension in the Acts of the Apostles gives some interesting hints about the significance of the event for the Apostles, for the early Church and for us. The focus of the contacts of the risen Jesus with the apostles was "to tell them about the kingdom of God". This had been the focus of his ministry during his life on earth and it continued to be central in the mission he was giving to the apostles who were to continue his work on earth.

The evils Jesus saw in the world of his day have a familiar ring for us today: a great divide between rich and poor; many people unable to live with dignity; the abuse of power; the use of force and violence against the defenceless. Jesus came and proclaimed that there is another way to live, a way that is not governed by force and selfishness, but governed by mutual respect. This way he called the Reign of God. The ruling force in this reign is the law of love. In the

Today's Readings



Acts 1:1-11
Psalm 46:2-3, 6-9
Ephesians 4:1-13
Mark 16:15-20

Next Sunday's Readings



Acts 2:1-11
Psalm 103:1, 24, 29-31, 34
Galatians 5:16-25
John 15:26-27, 16:12-15

forty days before the ascension Jesus prepared his apostles to continue his mission.

Central in this preparation was reminding them that they would not be on their own. The Holy Spirit would be with them to empower them to be

"God does not love us because there is some reason that causes love. God loves us because He Himself is love, and love tends to spread and give by its nature. God does not even tie his benevolence to our conversion: if anything this is a consequence of God's love."

– Pope Francis

effective witnesses. Their success in bringing the gospel message from the confines of Palestine to the ends of the known world is testimony to the power of God at work through them.

The social ills that Jesus saw around

Reflection

Have you ever been pleasantly surprised by the positive response you got to an initiative in your local community?

Lesson

Each one of us has been given our own share of grace.

Prayer

Lord, may your kingdom come.

him are still with us. What has changed is that the rich and the powerful have even more sophisticated and destructive weapons at their disposal to exploit and oppress others. Never has the world been in such need of a wake-up call to another way of living – not the way of greed, selfishness and violence, but the way of mutual respect, compassion for the weak, and generous cooperation to make the world a better place for all. As the apostles were witnesses to the reign of God in their day, we are called to be witnesses in our own time.

It is not that we can change the course of history on our own. Yet the writer of the letter to the Ephesians reminds us "each one of us has been given our own share of grace". Together we can make life more worthwhile and happy for others. This is the gift that the Church has to offer to the world today, and it begins with us. ■

– John (Peter) Byrne

This Week (14–20 May)

- 14 **Mon** ST MATTHIAS, Apostle
- 15 **Tue** St Isidore the Farmer; St Carthage, bishop
- 16 **Wed** St Brendan, abbot
- 17 **Thur** St Paschal Baylon, priest
- 18 **Fri** St John I, pope and martyr
- 19 **Sat** St Celestine V, pope
- 20 **Sun** PENTECOST SUNDAY





St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Henry McCann (and Chaplain to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald)

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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)



THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

Mark 16:15-20

1. In the preceding verse Jesus had rebuked the apostles for their lack of faith. Despite this, he commissioned them to bring the good news to the whole world. Witnesses to the good news do not have to be perfect. There is encouragement for us in this. To whom have you brought good news? Who has been a messenger of good news to you?

2. Jesus then tells them that their witness will have quite dramatic effects, helping people to overcome demons, bring them peace and healing. Things happen when we have belief in ourselves and in God. Strong faith can enable us to meet and overcome difficulties, in ways that waverers cannot do. Perhaps you have had experience of this?

3. The Ascension marked the end of the visible presence of Jesus with the disciples, but he would be with them in other ways: 'The Lord worked with them'. Sometimes we can experience that death is not the end of the presence of someone significant to us. We can experience the unseen presence and influence of a parent, a friend, or an inspiring leader, after they have died. Has this happened for you? Have you also experienced the hidden presence of the Lord working with you?

John Byrne OSA. Email lpbyrneosa@gmail.com

WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Recently Deceased: Dympna Kelso (aunt and godmother of Fr McCann), Veronica Black, Margaret Gwyne

Anniversaries: John Mahoney, May Riordan, Olive McCormick, Mairead Hughes, Daniel Doherty, Robert Dunn, Emily Shields, Hugh Crilly (Sat 19th May at 6:30pm), Margaret Murray (1st Anniv. Sat 26th May at 6:30pm), Elizabeth & Paul Spiers (Sat 2nd June at 6:30pm), Isobel & Thomas McGiffin (Mon 4th June at 9:30am).

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 13th May

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Eamon Blaney & Carmel Blaney

Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard & Eileen Dunn

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Ann Wright

Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard

Sun 20th May

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Anthony Clifford & Shauna Mullen

Morning Mass: Sarah Corscadden & Kay Dunn

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Stephen Murphy

Morning Mass: James Henderson

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your contribution to last week's collections: Monthly Stipend £509.73, Weekly Collection £26, Shrines £105.56.

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. New boxes of envelopes are available in sacristy. If you would like a box please speak to Fr McCann.

St Anthony's 80th Anniversary: This year we celebrate 80 years since the first mass was celebrated in St Anthony's Church. The first meeting looked at various aspects of the celebration. Many thanks to all who attended. An update to the 50th Anniversary Booklet is being sought. If you have any photographs/personal stories of your time in St Anthony's, contact Fr McCann. The cut off time for contributions is end of May/June. Your photographs/personal stories will be included with your permission. Please stay tuned for other initiatives for the 80th Anniversary celebrations. Next meeting: 22nd May 2018 at 7:30pm in Pope John Paul II Room/SVP Room behind the church.

World Meeting of Families - Tickets and Registration. • Everyone who registers online to attend one or three days of the Pastoral Congress (22-24 August), is guaranteed to receive tickets for the Festival of Families (Croke Park, Saturday 25th August) and the Final Mass (Phoenix Park, Sunday 26th August). • Those who only wish to register for the Festival of Families or the Final Mass need to be aware

that tickets will be limited subject to venue capacity and availability. • To register online please go to www.worldmeeting.ie/en/Tickets/Tickets-Registration. • To enquire about accommodation please go to www.worldmeeting.ie/en/Ireland/Accommodation. • Alternatively call the national office - 0035316909409. • If you have any other queries contact the Diocesan Office - family@downandconnor.org. In order for the pastoral areas to organise buses/transport please advise the Parishes if you have a ticket and would like to attend ASAP.

South and East Belfast Pastoral Area Family Fun Day, Carryduff Parish on Sat 16th June from 10am Mass until 4pm. Admission free. Among events (subject to weather), include Petting Farm, Climbing Wall, Assault Course, Bouncy Castles, Food stalls, face painting, Disco and Fire Engine from 2-4pm. A minimum of 5 volunteers from each parish is required. If you can help on behalf of St Anthony's Parish, please give names to Fr McCann ASAP.

Living Church Down & Connor Lough Derg Pilgrimage. The sixth Living Church Lough Derg 3 day Pilgrimage will take place this year from Friday 29th June to Sunday 1st July 2018. Cost is £65. Two departure points Belfast and Ballycastle. For details and to book a place please call the Living Church Office on 02890690920 or email livingchurch@downandconnor.org by Friday 15th June. Registration forms on request from Living Church Office or your Parish Office.

Festival of Choral Music in May. The events take place in Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Newcastle. The remaining events are:

2. Cappella Caecilian Concert, (Organist Stephen Hamill), Sunday, 13th May at 5.00pm. Ticket cost £10, available at Parish office/shop/sacristy or Ruffles Boutique or at the door on the evening.

3. South Down Choral Society, Friday, 18th May at 7.30pm. Bob Chilcott's Little Jazz Mass & Fauré's Requiem. Tickets cost £10, available at Ruffles Boutique or at the door on the evening.

4. Visiting Indian Choir, Monday, 28th May at 7.00pm. No ticket required, retiring collection only & The Ulster Society of Organists' Recital, Saturday, 9th June at 3.00pm (Presbyterian Church) and from 4.00pm Our Lady of the Assumption Church.

St Mary's Star of the Sea Church, Whitehouse, Loughshore Parishes 40 Hours Eucharistic Adoration Leading Up To The Feast of Pentecost. Join us for Prayer for the Renewal of Faith in Family Life to Preserve the Sanctity of Life. Beginning with Mass on Friday, 18 May 2018 at 7.30pm, running continuously through to Solemn Mass on Sunday, 20 May 2018 at 10.30am. All individuals and groups are welcome to claim a particular hour. Further details contact Sister Kathleen on 028 9086 3128 or E-mail: Kathleen_gill@hotmail.co.uk

Marion Jordan Concert. To promote her new album, "The Prayer", in Saint Malachy's Church, Alfred Street Belfast, on Friday, 1 June 2018 @ 7.30pm. Special guests include Arco String Quartet and Karl McGuckin. Ticket price £12, available online from www.marionjordan.com. Signed copies of the CD available post-concert.

Clonard Solemn Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Belfast: 13th - 21st June 2018. We invite applications to volunteer as Eucharistic Ministers, stewards, car park attendants, & church cleaners. Volunteer application forms are available from Clonard reception. Tel 02890 445950 or email reception@clonard.com. Applications need to be returned by no later than 1 June to allow for processing. See poster in porch.

Sacred Heart Novena for Protection of Human Life in Ireland 16th to 24th May: A National novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the protection of human life in Ireland starts on Wednesday, 16th May and runs to Thursday 24th May. Beginning in the Diocese of Down and Connor and visiting parishes across Ireland. Mass and Holy Hour on Wednesday, 16th May in St. Mary's Church, Chapel Lane, Belfast at 1 p.m. and in St. Patrick's Church, Downpatrick at 7.30 p.m. with Rosary and the Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus prayed daily by St. Padre Pio. All welcome. Further information at www.anteaghlachnaofa.ie

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 10.30am until 10pm will take place in the Good Shepherd Church on Friday 18th May. This is an opportunity to pray for the retention of the Eighth Amendment. (At the moment, abortion in the Republic is available when a mother's life is at risk.) Abolition of the Amendment may eventually allow abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

St. Agnes' Choral Society will host a Ceili in The Balmoral Hotel on Friday 18th May from 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10 which includes your supper also. Tickets can be obtained by contacting Maeve on 07753 222003. This promises to be a great night with a live ceili band and led by caller Deirdre McLoughlin. All welcome.

Sacred Presence Retreat Day, Drumalis, Larne - Saturday, 26 May 2018. "Sacred Presence" is the second in "Meeting God Mindfully" - four themed retreat days with Maria Garvey at Drumalis in 2018, bringing together the practices of Christian Contemplative Prayer and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction. 9:30 am to 5:00 pm on Saturday, 26 May. For further information, 028 28276455/28272196 during office hours (Mon-Fri, 9am - 5pm). More details www.drumalis.co.uk

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.