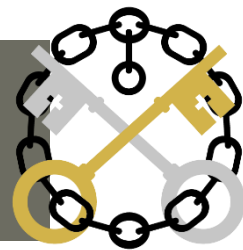


ST PETER IN CHAINS



3rd Sunday of Easter

26th April 2020

Parish Liturgy

SUNDAY MASS

Suspended until further notice.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

By request.

Public Mass, Public Liturgy, Sacraments and Parish gatherings in the Diocese of Galloway have been suspended until further notice.



The Readings for 3rd Sunday of Easter (A)

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 22-33.

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd in a loud voice: Men of Israel, listen to what I am going to say: Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God by the miracles and portents and signs that God worked through him when he was among you, as you all know. This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention and foreknowledge of God, you took and had crucified by men outside the Law. You killed him, but God raised him to life, freeing him from the pangs of Hades; for it was impossible for him to be held in its power since, as David says of him: I saw the Lord before me always, for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me. So my heart was glad and my tongue cried out with joy; my body, too, will rest in the hope that you will not abandon my soul to Hades nor allow your holy one to experience corruption. You have made known the way of life to me, you will fill me with gladness through your presence. Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself is dead and buried: his tomb is still with us. But since he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn him an oath to make one of his descendants succeed him on the throne, what he foresaw and spoke about was the resurrection of the Christ: he is the one who was not abandoned to Hades, and whose body did not experience corruption. God raised this man Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses to that. Now raised to the heights by God's right hand, he has received from the Father the Holy Spirit, who was promised, and what you see and hear is the outpouring of that Spirit.

A Reading from the First Letter of St Peter 1:17-21

If you are acknowledging as your Father one who has no favourites and judges everyone according to what he has done, you must be scrupulously careful as long as you are living away from your home. Remember, the ransom that was paid to free you from the useless way of life your ancestors handed down was not paid in anything corruptible, neither in silver nor gold, but in the precious blood of a lamb without spot or stain, namely Christ; who, though known since before the world was made, has been revealed only in our time, the end of the ages, for your sake. Through him you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for that very reason - so that you would have faith and hope in God.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke 24:13-35

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast. Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.' Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself. When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?' They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

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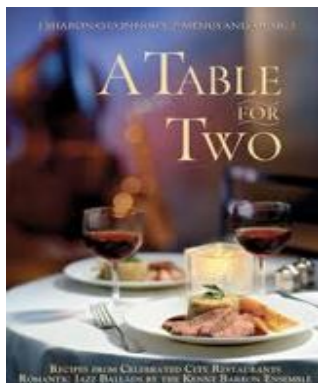
Third Sunday of Easter (A) 2020

April/May 2020	St Peter-in-Chains, Ardrossan <i>Father Duncan McVicar</i>	Thought for the Day <i>[Taken from "A Quiet Place: How Daily Prayer Can Change Your Life" by Father John Bartunek]</i>
Sunday 26 th April	3rd Sunday of Easter - Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass privately for the Parish. "Prayer is so much more than just "saying your prayers." Prayer is a spiritual adventure. It brings interior depth and meaning that can come from nowhere else" absolutely no where else... Imagine you have an acorn in the palm of your left hand and a stone the same size and shape as an acorn in your right hand. Look at these items: They look similar, feel similar, and weigh almost the same. What's the difference between them? If you plant one of them in the right conditions, it will begin to put out shoots and roots and start to grow. And, once again given the right conditions, that growth will continue unabated for perhaps two centuries. A gorgeous oak tree will emerge from the acorn, giving beauty and fruitfulness to the world for hundreds of years. But if you plant the stone in the same soil, under the same conditions, nothing will happen. The stone will just stay a stone. It will not sprout, or grow, or beautify the landscape, or give food and shelter and shade to people and animals and birds for centuries. The acorn bears within itself the mysterious force of life. It is a seed - small, vulnerable, but full of magnificent potential. All it needs in order to fulfil this potential are the right conditions: good soil, water, sunlight, and a healthy climate. The stone, on the other hand, is inanimate. It is dead matter. It has no life, no potential to grow and organically develop into something magnificent and wonderful." <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
Monday 27 th April	Third Week in Eastertide - Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass privately for the Parish and John Mullen (RD) "This is what is so attractive, so mysteriously inspiring, about the lives of the saints. They are our older brothers and sisters in Christ, in whose lives grace truly flourished. They found and fulfilled their most genuine identity by living in communion with God, by living a real, unique, and dynamic relationship with him. They are the spiritual oak trees that fully show forth the magnificence of authentic human greatness and beautify the landscape of human history. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Francis of Assisi, Mary Magdalene, Augustine, Catherine of Siena, John Paul II - none of them started out as saints. But God's grace entered their lives, purified them of their brokenness and sin, and allowed them to flourish. The same grace that worked wonders in them is at work, like a seed waiting to grow and flourish, in every baptised soul - including yours." <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
Tuesday 28 th April	Third Week in Eastertide - Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass privately for the Parish and John McLaughlin (RD) "If the right conditions for an acorn to become an oak tree are good soil, water, sunlight, and a healthy climate, what are the right conditions for the seed of grace to produce spiritual maturity? What makes it possible for this seed to grow, flourish, and yield its marvellous fruit? One essential element is a life of prayer. In a sense, prayer is the soil in which grace can grow. The other sacraments (the Eucharist, confession, marriage, and so on) are like the water and the sunlight. Moral integrity and virtue are like the good climate. But the soil, the very ground that enables our spiritual potential to quicken, unfold, mature, and thrive, from the beginning of our spiritual journey until its very end, is prayer. If we want to experience in our own lives, ever more abundantly, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, and if we want to contribute through them to our loved ones and to the world around us, we simply must develop a life of prayer." <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
Wednesday 29 th April	Feast of St. Catherine of Siena Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass for the Parish and Louis Ferguson 3TFM Radio Station Manager (RD) "A life of prayer is the soil in which the seed of grace can quicken, grow, and flourish, bearing the spiritual fruit that we all yearn for, because it's what we were made for. And every single one of us can develop a life of prayer. All we have to do is decide. Understanding what prayer really is can help make the decision a lot easier." <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
Thursday 30 th April	Third Week in Eastertide - Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass privately for the parish and Andy Dougan (A) "For us, prayer is never just a dry and sometimes fearful duty, or a complex and somewhat self-absorbed technique, as it is and has been for so many other religions throughout the expanse of human history. For us, the essence of prayer is relationship. It's not primarily about doing something, but about getting to know someone." <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
Friday 1 st May	Memorial of St. Joseph the Worker - Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass privately for the Parish, Theresa McLaren (RD) and Hilda O'Toole (RD) "God is a Trinity, and through the Incarnation God did become man and has taken human nature to himself for all eternity. Therefore, when we communicate with God, we mustn't simply communicate through ritual and reverence. An additional dimension is essential. Christian prayer, at its very core, is the kind of communication that happens between two persons who know and love each other; it is a conversation that happens in relationship." <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
Saturday 2 nd May	Memorial of St. Athanasius - Father Duncan will celebrate the Mass privately for the parish, James Terence McHugh (RD) and Moira Gowrie (RD) One of the most concise and moving expressions of this essence of Christian prayer is found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the entire fourth part of which is dedicated to explaining and describing the rich mystery of Christian praying. Here is how it defines Christian prayer: "Great is the mystery of the faith! This mystery, then, requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer. (CCC, 2558) <i>Please be assured of my daily prayers for you and your family. Father Duncan</i>	
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A Table for Two

He sits by himself at a table for two. The uniformed waiter returns to his side and asks, "Would you like to go ahead and order, sir?" The man has, after all, been waiting since seven o'clock--almost half an hour. "No, thank you," the man smiles. "I'll wait for her a while longer. How about some more coffee?" "Certainly, sir." The man sits, his clear blue eyes gazing straight through the flowered centrepiece. He fingers his napkin, allowing the sounds of light chatter, tinkling silverware, and mellow music to fill his mind. He is dressed in sport coat and tie. His dark brown hair is neatly combed, but one stray lock insists on dropping to his forehead. He is dressed up enough to make a companion feel important, respected, loved. Yet he is not so formal as to make one uncomfortable. It seems that he has taken every precaution to make others feel at ease with him. Still, he sits alone. The waiter returns to fill the man's coffee cup. "Is there anything else I can get for you, sir?" "No, thank you." The waiter remains standing at the table. Something tugs at his curiosity. "I don't mean to pry, but..." His voice trails off. This line of conversation could jeopardize his tip. "Go ahead," the man encourages. His is strong, yet sensitive, inviting conversation. "Why do you bother waiting for her?" the waiter finally blurts out. This man has been at the restaurant other evenings, always patiently alone. Says the man quietly, "Because she needs me." "Are you sure?" "Yes." "Well, sir, no offense, but assuming that she needs you, she sure isn't acting much like it. She's stood you up three times just this week." The man winces, and looks down at the table. "Yes, I know." "Then why do you still come here and wait?" "Cassie said that she would be here." "She's said that before," the waiter protests. "I wouldn't put up with it. Why do you?" Now the man looks up, smiles at the waiter, and says simply, "Because I love her." The clock says nine-thirty when the waiter returns to the man's table. "Is there anything I can get for you?" The still empty chair stabs at the man. "No, I think that will be all for tonight. May I pay please?" "Yes, sir." When the waiter leaves, the man picks up the check. He pulls out his wallet and sighs. He has enough money to have given Cassie a feast. But he takes out only enough to pay for his five cups of coffee and the tip. Why do you do this, Cassie, his mind cries as he gets up from the table. He stops at the front and makes reservations for tomorrow. Maybe Cassie will be able to make it, he thinks. "Seven o'clock tomorrow for party of two?" the hostess confirms. "That's right," the man replies. "Do you think she'll come?" asks the hostess. She doesn't mean to be rude, but she has watched the man many times alone at his table for two. "Someday, yes. And I will be waiting for her." The man buttons his overcoat and walks out of the restaurant, alone. His shoulders are hunched, but through the windows the hostess can only guess whether they are hunched against the wind or against the man's hurt. As the man turns toward home, Cassie turns into bed. She is tired after an evening out with friends. As she reaches toward her night stand to set the alarm, she sees the note that she scribbled to herself last night. '7:00,' it says.

'Spend some time in prayer.'
Oh no, she thinks.
She forgot again.
She feels a twinge of guilt,
but quickly pushes it aside.
She needed that time
with her friends.
And now she needs her sleep.
She can pray tomorrow night.
Jesus will forgive her.
And she's sure he doesn't mind.



Just for a Laugh

One Easter Sunday Father Duncan announced to his congregation, 'My good people, I have here in my hands three sermons... A £500 sermon that lasts five minutes. A £250 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes. And a £100 sermon that lasts a full hour. Now, we'll take the collection and see which one I'll deliver.'

Mustard Seeds

✠ Padre Pio - helping us get through Coronavirus

In 1917, Padre Pio wrote a letter to one of his spiritual daughters, Antonietta Vona. In that letter, he writes the following: Have no fear at all about any future harm that could happen to you in this world, because perhaps it might not happen to you at all, but in any event if it were to come upon you, God would give you the strength to bear it... If God lets you walk on the stormy waters of adversity, do not doubt... do not be afraid. God is with you. Have courage and you will be delivered". (Letters 111, p. 833)

This passage offers much by way of consolation. We are told not to "fear... any future harm" since it may never come to pass. We are also told to "have courage." In the same letter, Padre Pio also provides to Antonietta certain words to imprint on her soul: "This is what I feel I must tell you today in the Lord: In order to live a devout life constantly, there is no need to do anything except imprint some excellent and generous maxims in your soul." (Letters 111, p. 830) The five special phrases he gives her in this letter are the following:

"We know in everything God works for good, with those who love Him" (Romans 8:28)

"God is our Father"

"Did you lack anything?" (Luke 22:35)

"Eternity"

"I glory myself only in the cross of my Jesus." (Galatians 6:14)

These maxims are good for any occasion, but one can also see their value in living through a pandemic situation. For instance, the truth that "God is our Father" brings the consolation that we are under the care of his loving providence and protection, and that, even if we are to pass through difficult situations, he is with us. Another that is good to be reminded of is Padre Pio's oft-repeated phrase: "Pray, hope, and don't worry." These words can serve as a motto of sorts, for this time, and truly for any time in our lives, for we are always called to pray, to trust in the Lord, and to surrender our worries. In our "lockdown lives" we may hear his words in a new light - "My past, O Lord, to Your mercy; my present, to Your love; my future to Your providence" - and make them our own, and entrust ourselves to the protection of Our Heavenly Father, and to the prayers of the Mother of God.



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