

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



It is no coincidence that Mary of Magdala was first to the tomb. After all, she had been there at the foot of the cross, and she had had a deep personal relationship with Jesus, despite the fact that she had been a great sinner. She tells Peter and the other disciple (John) that “They have

taken the Lord out of the tomb,” but none of them thinks about the resurrection after three days in the tomb, that Jesus had told them about. Eventually the penny drops and they remember what Jesus had said to them. It is quite consoling that so often the disciples fail to understand what Jesus says to them. They don’t hear with the “ears of the spirit”, and they try to interpret it from a human perspective. If those who were closest to Jesus when he was on this earth had difficulty, then small wonder that we too either don’t hear or don’t understand what he is saying to us today. What we need to pray for is the

capacity to listen to that “inner voice”, the voice of the Holy Spirit and then for a further grace to be able put into practice what that voice seems to be telling us. The more we are able to do this, the closer we will become to Jesus, so that we can live our lives “in tandem” with him.

VOCATION

PRAYER FOR MARRIAGE:

Lord God you call many of us to be husbands and wives, parents, and children, in youth and old age, in sickness and in health. You call us to love and holiness. Help us be a living image of you, and bring life to the world.
Amen.

EVANGELII GAUDIUM (JOY OF THE GOSPEL)



III. THE COMMON GOOD AND PEACE IN SOCIETY

REALITIES ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN IDEAS

232. Ideas – conceptual elaborations – are at the service of communication, understanding, and praxis. Ideas disconnected from realities give rise to ineffectual forms of idealism and nominalism, capable at most of classifying and defining, but certainly not calling to action. What calls us to action are realities illuminated by reason. Formal nominalism has to give way to harmonious objectivity. Otherwise, the truth is manipulated, cosmetics take the place of real care for our bodies.¹⁸⁵ We have politicians – and even religious leaders – who wonder why people do not understand and follow them, since their proposals are so clear and logical. Perhaps it is because they are stuck in the realm of pure ideas and end up reducing politics or faith to rhetoric. Others have left simplicity behind and have imported a rationality foreign to most people.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Platato, Gorgias, 465.

The Sacrament of the Present Moment*

THE WAYS IN WHICH GOD USES US

God uses us in two ways:

- 1) When we act on our own initiative.
- 2) When we let God act through us.

To act on our own initiative is to seek to do what God wants. To act on God’s initiative means being open to God’s inspirations. Surrender makes both forms of action possible. It entails a complete commitment to doing God’s will in the present moment.

God wants us NOW.

God will show us the Divine Will NOW.

Our part is to live in life’s NOW so that God can take complete possession of our hearts, not at some time in the distant future but right NOW in the present moment.

The present is a present from God where God is found.

Open that present and find God in the simplicity of a pure heart that wants only what God wants.

*Jean Pierre de Causade’s Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence for everyone by Elizabeth Ruth Obbard and published by New City ISBN: 978-1-905039-11-1



TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL

The Presbytery, Hillside Lane, Neath, SA11 1TG. Phone – 01639 643323

(Please note that Father Neil's phone is experiencing intermittent problems)

Parish Website – www.catholicchurchneath.org.uk

The Mass is being live-streamed on www.churchservices.tv www.mcnmedia.tv www.ewtn.com www.youtube/stdavidandstpatrickhaverfordwest www.walsingham.org and from St Joseph's Cathedral on their facepage.

The St. Joseph's Community Support Group. If you are willing to be a member of this group please send your mobile phone number to Siobhan Fitchett on [07811 931971](tel:07811931971). If you need help with shopping, collecting prescriptions etc please contact Fr. Neil or Siobhan. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** We hope to keep in contact with all parishioners over seventy by post every two weeks – provided that stamps (and envelopes) are still available and the postal service continues to function. Otherwise, the Newsletter will continue to appear (God willing and health permitting) on the Parish Website each week. If you are aware of other parishioners who may not otherwise be aware of the help being offered by the St. Joseph's Support Group, please pass this information on to them.

Those on the Frontline – Please remember in your prayers those in our congregation working in our local Surgeries and Hospitals, including Arnel & Bridget Zambrano, Maria Beesley, Maureen McAteer, Joan Grabczewski, Stacey Palmer, Tomy & Deepa Joseph, Mary, and all those working (and living) in our local nursing and residential homes. We pray for God's special blessing and protection for them.

A Coronavirus Prayer. “ Lord Jesus Christ, You travelled through towns and villages ‘ curing every disease and illness’. At Your command, the sick were made well. Come now to our aid, in the midst of this global pandemic, and send down Your blessing and healing upon us and protect our healthcare workers. Bring us through to Resurrection and a New Pentecos. For Thy Name's sake. Amen.

Congratulations to Angela DiMaio on celebrating her 90th Birthday this Easter Sunday. Celebrations to follow at a later date!

Benitia Whittington (RIP) Please remember the family and Benita in your prayers, who died peacefully on Good Friday morning. *Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, And let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace.*

Parish Collections. For those who have asked – for donations and Standing Orders – the details of our (St. Joseph's) bank account are – Branch Code 54-10-19 – Account Number 01520296 – (Diocese of Menevia Neath Parish) Nat West, 35 Green Street, Neath, SA11 1DB.

Happy Easter! At this very difficult and challenging time, Deacon Jim and I wish you all a time of blessing and renewal over this Easter period- a time for deeper prayer and reflection, and a deepening of our commitment to Christ through the joys and sorrows and challenges of life. Happy Easter!

Easter Day – Resurrection Day!

On this glorious Easter morning we celebrate with great joy that Christ is risen from the dead!

Regina caeli, laetare! Queen of Heaven, rejoice!

One can scarcely imagine the rapture of Our Blessed Lady to see her God and her Son – Whom she bore in the womb, to Whom she gave flesh, which Body and Blood He offered on the Cross when Mary's heart was pierced as the spear pierced the Side of Jesus – now standing before her, that same Body (and Divine Person) – from her womb – now raised, transformed by resurrection power and glorified! Regina caeli, laetare! "I am He Who died! – and behold! I am alive for evermore!"

In this time of pestilence, the Risen Jesus stands in our midst and invites us to open the door to Him, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if anyone open that door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me". Let us not keep the Risen Saviour locked out of our lives by stubborn disobedience and hardened hearts but throw open the door and invite Him to be seated on the throne of our hearts and to reign as Lord in our lives. Come Lord Jesus!

If we are permitted to be amongst those who survive this present pestilence then we must promise and commit ourselves to living differently. To live more simply. To live more kindly. To live more generously. To live more worshipfully and prayerfully – because there are other plagues with us, the plague of famine in the world, the mass killing of the unborn, the changing climate, the degradation and destruction of the environment. We cannot return to "normal" if (God willing) we come through this crisis – closing our ears to the poor, to the cries of the unborn, to the dying of creation. If we are permitted to survive this plague we must become different people – recovering the faith we have lost, re-centring ourselves in those values and truths which are deeper than ephemeral culture, changing tastes and passing fashions.

Many Catholics, many Christians, many people have found that, in the face of death, their faith has not been strong enough – the prospect of immediate and sudden death has found us unprepared – sins to be confessed, relationships to be restored, faith in need of repair.

Easter Sunday to Divine Mercy Sunday offers us an Octave of Prayer for Divine Mercy. How much we need, how conscious we are of our need of, Divine Mercy. Above all, the spiritual mercies of an authentic and deep repentance, the grace to make an act of true contrition, the gift of a heart-to-heart consecration to Jesus.

" For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world"

I invite you to a new consecration (in this Octave of Prayer between Easter Sunday and Divine Mercy Sunday) to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, through the prayers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We implore the maternal prayers and intercession of Our Blessed Lady to petition her Divine Son, seated at the right hand of the Father, to send down the Holy Spirit in a New Pentecost – convicting our consciences, warming our hearts, illumining our minds, forgiving our sins –

" Come Holy Spirit! And fill the hearts of the faithful

Enkindle in us the fire of Your love

And renew the face of the earth!"

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Ps 138: 18, 5-6

I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia.
You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia.
Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.

THE COLLECT

O God, who on this day,
 through your Only Begotten Son,
 have conquered death
 and unlocked for us the path to eternity,
 grant, we pray, that we who keep
 the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection
 may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,
 rise up in the light of life.
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 10:34. 37-43

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: 'You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses - we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead - and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.**PSALM**

Ps 117:1-2.16-17.22-23. Rv.24

R) This day was made by the Lord;
we rejoice and are glad.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
 for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say:
 'His love has no end.' **(R)**

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
 his right hand raised me up.
 I shall not die, I shall live
 and recount his deeds. **(R)**

The stone which the builders rejected
 has become the corner stone.
 This is the work of the Lord,
 a marvel in our eyes. **(R)**

SECOND READING*(an alternative may be read)*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians 3:1-4

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed - and he is your life - you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.**Sequence**

Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer sacrifice and praise.
 The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;
 and Christ, the undefiled,
 hath sinners to his Father reconciled.
 Death with life contended: combat strangely ended!
 Life's own Champion, slain, yet lives to reign.
 Tell us, Mary: say what thou didst see upon the way.
 The tomb the Living did enclose;
 I saw Christ's glory as he rose!
 The angels there attesting;
 shroud with grave-clothes resting.
 Christ, my hope, has risen: he goes before you into Galilee.
 That Christ is truly risen from the dead we know.
 Victorious king, thy mercy show!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**Alleluia, alleluia!** I Cor 5:7-8

Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed;
let us celebrate the feast then, in the Lord.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 20:1-9

(an alternative may be read)

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Exultant with the paschal gladness, O Lord,
 we offer the sacrifice
 by which your church
 is wondrously reborn and nourished.
 Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

1 Cor 5:7-8

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia;
therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread
of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Look upon your Church, O God,
 with unfailing love and favour,
 so that, renewed by the paschal mysteries,
 she may come to the glory of the resurrection.
 Through Christ our Lord.