

PARISH OF INISHMAGRATH

The Ascension of the Lord

World Communications Day

24th May 2020

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Communications Sunday: On this Sunday, Pope Francis highlights the importance of communication between the different generations. He has in mind the benefit of a strong relationship between children and grandparents. We see during this time of social distancing how important this bond is between these generations and how much each generation misses out on not being able to visit and talk in the normal way. But look at the efforts that each generation is making to keep in touch and show their love and support. This is a blessing we took so much for granted before this present crisis? The local paper, The Leitrim Observer, gave the opportunity for these generations to send greetings to each other in the local, national and international levels.

Tune in to Church services at - www.churchservices.tv or <https://www.mcnmedia.tv> and search for your local or favourite church for Mass.

St. Clare's Manorhamilton has joined those who broadcast Masses online. Masses on Sunday 11.30am and on weekdays at 9.30am can be accessed at <http://churchtv.ie/st-claire-manorhamilton.html>.

Mass Leaflets: Newsletters will be left in Church each Saturday morning.

Envelopes: Parishioners are asked to keep the envelopes until the churches are open again for Masses. If you want to pay by cheque, then the offertory contributions that go to the individual Churches can be paid to; Drumkeeran Church Account, Creevelea Church Account or Tarmon Church Account. The Dues can be paid to, Priest's Revenue Account. Thanks for your support and stay safe.

Spiritual Communion Prayer:

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my Soul.

Since I cannot, at this moment, receive you sacramentally, please come spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you now as if you were already there and I unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen.

Thought for the week:

And where is Jesus, this strange Easter day? Not lost in our locked churches, any more than he was sealed in that dark sepulchre. The locks are loosed; the stone is rolled away, and he is up and risen, long before, Alive, at large, and making his strong way into the world he gave his life to save, No need to seek him in his empty grave.

He might have been a wafer in the hands of priests this day, or music from the lips of red-robed choristers, instead he slips away from church, shakes off our linen bands to don his apron with a nurse: he grips and lifts a stretcher, soothes with gentle hands the frail flesh of the dying, gives them hope, breathes with the breathless, lends them strength to cope.

On Thursday we applauded, for he came and served us in a thousand names and faces mopping our sickroom floors and catching traces of that corona which was death to him: Good Friday happened in a thousand places where Jesus held the helpless, died with them that they might share his Easter in their need, now they are risen with him, risen indeed.

(by Malcolm Guite)

Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Reading:

Acts 1:1-11

Throughout the Gospels, the disciples struggle through their fear, confusion and doubt. Even after the Resurrection and the presence of Jesus among them, they still do not see the big picture. As Jesus is about to ascend to the Father, they are still asking Him about the political state of Israel, missing the whole point. Being witnesses to the Resurrection doesn't mean that the message of Jesus is entirely clear to us.

Second Reading:

Ephesians 1:17-23

Like the disciples, we may find ourselves staring into the sky after Jesus rather than fulfilling the mission He gave us. Saint Paul speaks about enlightenment, about knowing the hope of God's call and knowing the power of God in our lives. He urges us to stop looking for the shadow of Christ who has gone into the sky and start looking for Christ in the faces of those around us.

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 28:16-20

The Ascension must have been one of the most difficult moments in the disciples' journey with Jesus. Their Master and Teacher, the One they had followed and given their lives to, the One who had opened their eyes and then been taken away from them in the most horrific way had returned from the dead and walked among them once more. They were still rejoicing in His new presence when the time came for Him to leave once more. It must have been like losing Him twice. Our faith may often be an experience of finding Jesus and losing Him again. In these moments, the words of Jesus ring out; "I am with you always, even to the end of time."

Reflection 1:

The Ascension of Jesus raises many issues for our faith, just as it did for the disciples. Even after everything they had been through with Jesus, the disciples' last words to Him were about restoring the Kingdom to Israel. After three years of seeing the Kingdom of God come to fruition, they were still concerned about the Kingdom of Israel. In our own lives, we may often find our faith and our Church becoming political rather than spiritual. In these moments of misdirection and short-sightedness, the words of Jesus are particularly true; it is not for us to know the times or seasons set by God. Our mission is to be the witnesses of Jesus, His hands on Earth and His face in the lives of others, not to try to second-guess the will of God for the things that are beyond us. The Ascension, while it reveals many truths about the person of God and the Divine Plan, also indicates an uncomfortable fact about the nature of

faith. Saint Matthew tells us that, of the eleven disciples standing on the mountain witnessing the Risen Jesus in person, 'some doubted'. In a sense, we can understand doubt in our own context. The earthly life of Jesus was over two thousand years ago and we have not seen Him in the flesh, before or after His Resurrection. Yet how can some of these men, who spent three years physically with Jesus, endured His earthly death and then witnessed His resurrected body, doubt Him? It seems to suggest that doubt is not the result of lack of proof. It's the result of lack of faith. It's not about finding cold, hard evidence. Even some of the disciples weren't convinced by that. Faith in Jesus is about taking a leap in our own lives, finding the courage to be vulnerable to what is beyond us, to be open to the voice of God and to be 'childlike' before Him.

The Deep End - Glimpses of Heaven.

At various points in the Gospels, we are treated to a brief glimpse of heaven - the baptism of Jesus by John, when the heavens open and God's voice is heard; the Transfiguration where Jesus is transformed in the presence of Peter, James and John; and the Ascension, when Jesus is lifted up into heaven before the disciples' very eyes.

There are times when we get the sense that we have been treated to a glimpse of heaven - like when we are moved by a 'heavenly' experience, piece of music, sunset or breath-taking scenery. But today's feast of the Ascension reminds us that where Jesus has gone, we hope to follow. Elsewhere He tells us that He is going to prepare a place for us. We cannot imagine what lies in store in the life everlasting, the life beyond this life, which we hope to share with God. We can only see a reflection in this world of the splendour and beauty that awaits: 'The world is charged with the grandeur of God' (Gerard Manley Hopkins).

'Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed,
And joined the tumbling mirth of sun-split clouds
....and done a hundred things you have not dreamed of...
Wheeled and soared and swung high in the sunlit silence...
And while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space...
...put out my hand, and touched the face of God.'
'High Flight' by John Gillespie Magee Jr.

Triona Doherty