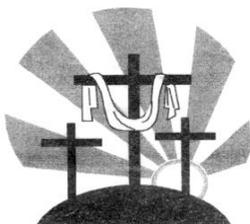


REST IN PEACE



Your prayers are requested this weekend for Nuala O'Brien, who died this week.

For the souls of the following whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Helen McDonagh; Damian Pilkington; Helen & Catherine Cowley; Sandy & Frank Smith; Peter Clancy; Carol Wright; Fr. Jim Duffy;

And for Carmel Sharkey & Christy O'Connell whose Month's Minds occur.

MAY THEIR SOULS AND THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD REST IN PEACE. AMEN.

CHURCH COLLECTIONS

The amounts collected last weekend are:

DATE	GREEN BASKET	Share
10 th January 2021	€	€

The green basket is the collection for the support of the priests of the Diocese.

The white basket is the collection for Share, which meets the needs both of poorer parishes and of central agencies of the Diocese.

We thank you for your contributions to the Church collections and for your continuing support of all the collections.

WEEKLY BULLETIN



St. Mary's, Star of the Sea, Sandymount

Parish Office 6683894 / 6683316 – Monday to Friday 9.30 – 12.30
Fr. John McDonagh, Tel: 6684265 – Fr. Cormac McIlraith, Tel: 6686845
www.stmarysstaroftheseasandymount.com

Sunday 17th January 2021

The Church Unity Octave.

The week of prayer for Christian Unity begins tomorrow January 18th and ends on January 25th. In this year of Covid it isn't possible for us to meet and pray. Instead in our necessary isolation we are asked to pray from the heart in spiritual ecumenism. This year's Week of Prayer was prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland, a group of religious sisters from different church traditions brought together by a common vocation of prayer, community life and hospitality and by their commitment to Christian Unity.

The theme they have chosen is from St John's Gospel (Jn 15:5-9):

Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit.

It is a call to prayer and work for reconciliation and unity in the church, with our human family and with creation. Drawing on the Gospel image of vine and branches, it invites us to nurture unity with God and with one another through contemplative silence, prayer, and common action. Grafted into Christ the vine - as many diverse branches may we bear rich fruit and create new ways of living, with respect for and communion with all of creation.

While it isn't possible to meet across traditions in ecumenical prayer at this time, we will pray at Masses this week for our greater unity with Christ and with one another. We encourage you to enter into this special week of entry into Christ's prayer- 'Father, may they be one in us'.

This year's inaugural service, hosted by Christ Church Rathgar Presbyterian and organised by the Dublin Council of Churches, will be available as a pre-

recorded You Tube from 14 Christian denominations in the Dublin area. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin is the preacher. A link with that Inaugural Prayer is promised to be shared when it becomes available. We hope to post it on our website when it arrives. We are leaving copies of a short version of this year's prayer service, suitable for home or for private use, at the back of the church. You're welcome to take a copy home.

Another story of Shame

The publication this week of the Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes has understandably brought shock and upset to people everywhere and particularly to those whose lives were caught up in what the Bishops' Conference described as 'the appalling story of life, death and adoption related to Mother and Baby Homes.'

In their statement this week to mark the publication of the Commission's work, the Bishop's Conference repeated what they stated in 2014, when the Commission of Investigation was announced.

'This culture of isolation and social distancing was harsh and unforgiving. The Gospel calls us to treat everyone, particularly children and the most vulnerable, with dignity, love, compassion and mercy. We must ensure that all children and their mothers always feel wanted, welcomed and loved. Mindful of the words of Jesus, 'Let the little children come to me, because it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs', we apologise for hurt caused by the church as part of this system'.

They went on then to say:

The way forward is to seek the truth, to reveal and address the damage of the past, and to the best of our ability, ensure that mothers and children are cherished and respected and never stigmatised again.

It is also critical for Ireland, as a society, to thoroughly examine this dimension of our social history and to consider the legacy it has left us as a people.

We ask all to support the Commission in every way they can. We encourage the Government to progress the Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill 2016 to assist those who are searching for their parents or children.

It is also important at parish level that we ensure that burial sites are appropriately marked so that the deceased and their families will be recognised with dignity and never be forgotten.

This Sunday's Gospel and upcoming Sundays.

The Second Sunday of the Year, today, always has a touch of epiphany about it although Epiphany ended last Sunday with the Baptism of our Lord. Next year, in year C of the three year cycle, A, B and C, we read the story of the Marriage Feast of Cana, which was traditionally read in Epiphany. This year, Year B, sees John the Baptist tell two of his own disciples that Jesus was the one that all were waiting for. It's taken from the Gospel of John. 'He must increase, I must decrease'. This powerful witness is in itself a moment of epiphany for the two disciples, opening a door to Jesus for them.

Jesus' invitation to them is 'come and see', an invitation you might hear afresh in your own heart as an invitation to begin next Sunday the serial reading of St Mark's Gospel from one Sunday to the next. In Year B we read St Mark's Gospel just as we read St Mathew's Gospel last year in Year A and will read St Luke's Gospel in Year C next year. Set your mind and heart this year on coming to know Jesus as St Mark's Gospel presents him.

Fittingly too, as we begin reading St Mark's Gospel next Sunday, the Third Sunday of the Sunday, it is also the Sunday set aside by Pope Francis to be celebrated as 'Bible Sunday'.

The Sunday after that again, the Fourth Sunday of the Year marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week.

Parish Office; closed to the public for the time being

Because of the current seriousness of concern for public health, we have decided to close the parish office to the public for the time being. However, parishioners are invited to leave a message on the phone (01 6683316 or 01 6683894) or to contact Fr John (01 6684265/0876294325) or Fr Cormac (01 6686845) for any services required. Phone messages to the parish office will be checked daily and responded to.

We are happy to facilitate the booking of Masses, the provision of Baptism application forms and Statement of Freedom Forms for those planning a marriage in the coming months, the procurement of Certificates, or of items from the shop such as Mass cards, or the weekly editions of the Tablet or the monthly magazines such as Reality and Messenger. We can arrange the safe collection of items as needed and should a payment be involved it can be made appropriately by dropping an envelope through the parish office letter box. Newspapers like the Irish Catholic are at the back of the Church but should not be handled unless purchased and taken home.

For those in preparation for marriage it is best that they contact Fr John or Fr Cormac directly to arrange appropriate meetings.