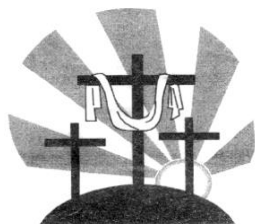


REST IN PEACE



Your prayers are requested this weekend for Brendan Neilan and Michael Timoney who died this week.

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

Carmel & Tom Mangan; Terry & Denis Brazil; Frankie Rigley; Joe Sadlier; Michael Herity; Annie & John Kane and their son, Jimmy; Don Curtin; Kathleen McLoughlin; Joe King.

And for Lucy Gannon whose Month's Mind occurs.

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
17 th January 2021	€185	€60

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.

Next Sunday, Jan 31st, marks the beginning of Catholic Schools' Week. It is also the final Sunday before Archbishop Martin steps down and the Archbishop elect Dermot Farrell assumes responsibility for leadership of our Diocese. We pray for them.

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 McLraith, Tel: 6686845
www.stmarysstaroftheseasandymount.com

Sunday 24th January 2021

Sunday of the Word of God

Pope Francis, in September 2019, nominated this Third Sunday of the Year as the 'Sunday of the Word of God.' His aim in doing so was to place the practice of listening to Sacred Scripture at the centre of our lives, alongside the Eucharist. Indeed the Liturgy of the Word during Mass invites us to enter deeply into the Word of God.

One of the final acts of the risen Lord before his Ascension is recorded by St. Luke as "he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Lk24:45). Jesus appeared to the assembled disciples, broke bread with them and opened their minds to the understanding of the sacred Scriptures. To them, amid their fear and bewilderment, he unveiled the meaning of his death and resurrection – what we call the Paschal Mystery – that in keeping with the Father's plan he had to suffer and rise from the dead, to bring us repentance and forgiveness of sins (Luke 24:26 46-47). He then promised them the Holy Spirit who would help give them strength to be witnesses of this saving mystery (Lk 24:49).

The relationship between the Risen Lord, the community of believers and Sacred Scripture is essential to our identity as Christians. Without the Lord, who opens our minds to them, it is impossible to understand the Scriptures in depth. But the opposite is also true – that without the Scriptures, the events of the mission of Jesus and of his Church in this world would remain incomprehensible. So, St. Jerome could write: 'ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ' (from Jerome's Commentary on the prophet Isaiah).

Today is a good day to check on whether or not there's a copy of the Bible at home. A good day, too, to ask if it might be treated with more respect than another typical book. Perhaps too we might ask if we might be able to read, study, and pray the Scriptures more earnestly and more often. Listening to and cherishing God's word is at the heart of prayer.

Sunday Readings this Year

Each year the Gospel of one of the evangelists dominates the Sunday readings and this year it is the turn of St Mark. You'll notice that we begin our readings from St Mark's Gospel today at chapter 1: verse 14, having read the earlier verses on the 2nd Sunday of Advent, back on Dec 6th. We'll continue reading from this chapter of St Mark for a further three weeks until Feb 14th. Then Ash Wednesday on Feb 17th this year will begin the seasons of Lent, Easter and Pentecost during which there is a break from our continuous reading of St Mark's Gospel to follow a more thematic choice of readings from across the four Gospels in these important seasons. But after Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi celebrations we'll return to continuous reading of St Mark again on June 13th when we read from chapter 4 to chapter 6 over 6 weeks bringing us to July 18th. Between July 25th and Aug 22nd there is a four week break when we read from St John's Gospel, chapter 6-a beautiful reflection on the Eucharist. We then resume the reading of St Mark's Gospel on August 29th and over 12 successive weeks we read from chapter 7 to the end of chapter 13. That brings us to the last Sunday of the Year on Nov 21st, the Feast of Christ the King, when an appropriate Gospel from St John is read before a new year and Advent starts on Nov 28th. The remaining three chapters in St Mark's Gospel, chapters 14 to 16 are read over three days in the Easter season, on Palm Sunday (ch 14 and 15) . at the Easter Vigil (ch 16: vv1-7) and on Ascension Day (ch 16:15-20). So you can see that through the year almost all the Gospel of Mark is read this year.

Besides the continuous reading from St Mark's Gospel, you will notice also in this year the continuous reading of five particular letters from one Sunday to the next in the second reading at Mass: Paul's First letter to the Corinthians from Jan 17th to Feb 14th; Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians from June 13th until July 4th, Paul's Letter to the Ephesians from July 11th until August 22nd, the Letter of James from August 29th to September 26th and the Letter to the Hebrews from October 3rd until Nov 14th. While these are the letters for this particular year, the plan of the church is that over a three year cycle we cover a wide variety of all that constitutes the New Testament.

What about the first reading at Mass on Sunday, which as you know is drawn almost always from the Old Testament.? The Old Testament Reading each Sunday is chosen because it is seen to have a link in its message or theme with the message of the Gospel of the day. It explains why we don't have sequential reading of Old Testament books at Mass as we have with the Gospel and 2nd reading through much of the year. So this week it is Jonah, next week Deuteronomy, then Job and Leviticus. It can be an interesting exercise to ask why a particular 1st Reading was chosen as a link with the Gospel, often offering insight into the significance of the message for us.

The Parish Office is 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. We encourage your support of the Catholic Press at a very difficult time for it.

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

Church Unity Octave

The Church Unity Octave closes tomorrow on the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. Unable to meet this year because of the Covid-19 virus, we extend our prayerful regards to Rev John Marchant, Rev Katherine Priode Meyer and Rev Paul Barlow and their respective faith communities in Sandymount. We have missed the monthly Scripture Study gatherings under the stewardship of Katherine Meyer and Anngret Simms and hope that in the not too distant future we may be able to meet again as the Explorers group. If we're converted to Christ and his ways, all our Christian traditions can't but grow in unity with the Lord and with one another.

The first Church Unity Octave dates back to 1908, initiated by Fr Paul Watson in America and Rev. Spencer Jones in England. Then in 1926, the 'Faith and Order' movement began publishing 'suggestions for an Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity'. In 1936, through the efforts of Fr Paul Couturier in France, a 'universal week of prayer for Christian Unity' on the basis of prayer for the 'unity Christ wills and by the means he wills' was held from Jan 18th to Jan 25th. In 1958 the World Council of Churches and a French Catholic Group based in Lyons began to jointly prepare materials for this Week of Prayer. The movement received a great boost through the Second Vatican Council and in 1966 the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity assumed responsibility for official joint preparation of the Week of Prayer text. Each year the initial text is prepared in an ecumenical setting of a chosen country before being submitted to Geneva and Rome and then refined further in communities world-wide. This year's text began in an ecumenical convent in Switzerland. Prayer is the heart of ecumenism and we keep in mind, too, that ecumenism is an essential and not an option for the Christian today.