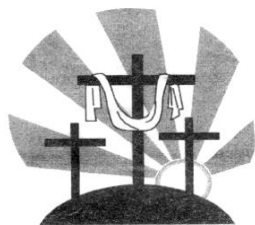


REST IN PEACE



Your prayers are requested this weekend for Michael Timoney who died recently,

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

Eugene Connolly, Kathleen Ashe; Sheila Conneely; Bee Bee Whearity; Brid Gormley;

and for Frances Fitzgerald & Douglas Slattery 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
24 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 31st January 2021

St Mark's Gospel

Last week, you'll recall, we celebrated Bible Sunday, a day on which to cherish and appreciate the wonderful gift that is the Bible. Pope Francis inaugurated this Feast Day to confirm the importance of the Sacred Scriptures for the Christian Community.

This year we read from St Mark's Gospel, the shortest but also the first of the Gospels to be written. Mark in effect created a new literary form when he wrote the Gospel, expressly to enhance the faith of the Christian community. It isn't a biography of Jesus but a call to discipleship that rests in the revelation of Jesus' life. The first sentence of the Gospel is in effect its title. 'The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God'.

Back in the early 1970s, an actor stole the show at the Dublin Theatre Festival when in a 'one Act Drama' he stood on the stage and recounted the text of St. Mark's Gospel. He brought it to life. For many of us our knowledge of the Gospels rests on what we know of separate bits of the four Gospels. It's a great idea to take the tour yourself. To read Mark's Gospel takes little more than an hour. If you have time, read it simply for pleasure, as if reading it for the first time, and at the end ask yourself what impression it made on you. What delighted you? What astonished you? If something in particular caught your eye, say, for example, the different ways people looked at Jesus or the various titles used in his regard or how frequently certain words or phrases are used, then you might read it again with a particular focus on what you noticed. You'll be surprised how the Gospel message can engage you when you bring your life to its reading and bring its word to your life.

It's best that you DIY on this but if you're busy and short on time here's a few pointers, features of Mark's style.

Mark is written in a popular style; he deliberately substitutes 'and' or 'immediately' for other conjunctions, and some of his phrases aren't quite right. I can picture some of the teachers I had in school putting red mark corrections over several passages. He uses words that were considered vulgar at the time and he's not afraid of repetitions.

Mark is a great story teller. He doesn't have many speeches. He's dramatic. His narratives are always lively and specific, full of touches from real life. His verbs are often in the present tense, which adds to the vitality of his accounts but he can, at will, mix tenses as well. He makes an emotional impact, not so much by his appeal to our feelings but by his blunt account of the facts. You can see this especially in his account of the Passion.

His Gospel has been called 'the Gospel of before Easter' in that it shows Jesus through the eyes of Peter as he follows his master on the roads of Palestine. The first half of the Gospel is in the province of Galilee, in healing and preaching ministry with an underlying question running through it all-what do people make of Jesus?, including also in that question the response of the faithful reader. When, half-way through the text, Peter makes his confession of faith 'You are the Christ', the second half begins in the journey up to Jerusalem, a journey on which Jesus teaches them what's involved in discipleship of him. Of course he's teaching us also in the process.

Compared to the other Gospels, Mark's picture of the apostles seems to highlight their lack of understanding and indeed we see Jesus facing the prospect of the Cross very much alone. They don't realise until after the Resurrection what is going on and it adds to the perceived suffering isolation of Jesus. If it's the story seen through Peter's eyes, as many claim, we can perhaps read in it the disappointment of Peter and the apostles at their failure of Jesus on the road up to Calvary. But Mark is also a profound theologian who relates the life of Jesus in the light of the resurrection. 'He is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you', the words of the young man in a white robe asking that the first witnesses at the tomb, three women-Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Salome, should carry that message to Peter and his other disciples.

It's a great year to come to know St Mark's Gospel.

Catholic Schools Week 2021

No one could have foreseen during Catholic Schools Week 2020 how different life would be for us all twelve months later. Life for all of us has changed so much that it is not recognisable, comfortable or easy. Nevertheless, in this past week schools in their virtual reality have been invited to celebrate their place in our lives with a focus on

faith and resilience. The theme of Catholic Schools Week this year has been

'Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith and Resilience'

This focus on faith and resilience is to remind us of the powerful role our Catholic Schools have in the lives of so many young people. It is a source of comfort, care, belonging and strength. It is the hope of our country that our students may soon again be enabled to return to school, not simply to resume academic life in face-to-face meetings with teachers and fellow students but to experience community in that same reconnection with their friends and teachers. The need to experience and feel a sense of belonging in our community again while respecting the very real dangers the pandemic presents is not lost on any of us. A focus on faith, hope and love in our present levels of isolation and concern prompts our prayer for all our students and school communities:

When evil darkens our world, give us light

When despair numbs our souls, give us hope.

When we stumble and fall, lift us up.

When doubts assail us, give us faith.

When nothing seems sure, give us trust,

When ideals fade, give us vision.

When we lose our way, be our guide,

that we may find serenity in your presence,

and purpose in doing your will. (John D.Raynor)

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.