

THE REAL PRESENCE

(JOHN 10:27-30)



Today's gospel extract comes from a discussion between Jesus and his opponents during the winter festival of the Feast of Dedication, and is set within the Temple in Jerusalem.

The others have demanded that Jesus tell them plainly whether he is the Messiah or not. Jesus replies by giving them a description of the true believer, the kind of person who can accept Jesus' message because, unlike the people he is talking to, that individual will accept Jesus on his own terms. The others cannot receive him because their understanding is limited to their own ideas.

The true believer, one of the "sheep" Jesus is talking about, hears (and listens), follows (becomes a disciple) and thus receives eternal life, which means never being lost.

The Feast of Dedication celebrates the reconsecration of the Temple and its altar after it had been desecrated by pagan soldiers, and the building represented the presence of God among the people. Jesus, however, says, "The Father and I are one." We remember that elsewhere Jesus tells his disciple Philip that to see Jesus is to see the Father. There is now a different way to understand how God is present, not in a building, no matter how sacred, but rather in the person of Jesus. To believe in Jesus will then bring the disciple close not only to Jesus, but also to God. In this way, Jesus is, in himself, replacing the Temple as the focus of God's presence. ■

REFLECT

We are accustomed to talking and hearing about the 'Real Presence': this expression normally refers to the reserved Eucharistic sacrament, which is kept in the tabernacle in the church. This phrase states our belief that Jesus is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine. However, it may give the impression that this is the only way in which Jesus is here among us.

One of the reforms of the liturgy at Vatican II was to recommend the removal of the tabernacle from the high altar to a side chapel. Some people took this as a lack of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, but the directive was making an important point. When the community assembles to celebrate the Eucharist together, Christ is present in the congregation in as valid a way as in the consecrated bread and wine. Hence there should be no genuflection to the tabernacle, as Christ is present among his disciples in just as real, though different, a way. Jesus tells us that where two or three gather in his name, he is "in their midst".

Christ is present in other ways, for instance, when we pray, when we read the Scriptures, when we minister to our brothers and sisters. Jesus tells us that he and the Father are one, and so God's presence is mediated to the disciple through him. In this way, Jesus himself is the Real Presence, and he and God are not confined to any building or ritual. ■

SAY

The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice.

(John 10:27)

DO

Light a candle and spend some time thinking about how God is present to you in the person of the risen Jesus.



LEARN

The Feast of Dedication celebrated the reconsecration of the Temple and its altar after it had been desecrated in the century before Jesus.

It is commemorated today in the Jewish festival of Hannukah.

The Temple was regarded as the place of privileged access to the presence of God.

In John's Gospel, Jesus replaces in himself the principal feasts and institutions of Israel.



NEWSLETTER 8TH MAY 2022

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Sunday 8th, 11.30am. Eddie Deihy & family members.
Saturday 14th, 6pm. Paddy & Margaret Hill. Jim, Annie & Tom O'Callaghan.
Sunday 15th, 11.30am. Barry Keogh MM. Ollie & Emma Eyres.

ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Sunday 8th, 10am. Teresa Nea MM. James, Catherine & Jimmy Egan.
Sunday 15th, 10am. Tommy McKeogh.

Weekday Masses; Thurs Raharney. Fri Rahtwire.

<p>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament</p> 	<p>In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm. & St. Brigid's Wed. 6pm-10pm: <i>Special Diocesan intention of prayer for vocations and the family.</i> Take one Hour with the Lord</p>
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<p>MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €585 PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €635</p>	
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Cemetery Sunday: in Rathwire cemetery on Sunday June 19th at 3pm. There will be no 11.30am Mass in Rathwire on that day.

The Rosary will be recited at 6.45 pm each Friday evening for the month of May, at the grotto in Raharney.

Our Hope and Strength

The risen Christ is our shepherd. "We are his people: the sheep of his flock." He gives us eternal life, and we shall never perish.

The risen Christ is "a light to the nations," so that all people everywhere are renewed by the Easter event. The poor, the hungry and the homeless stand in the presence of the risen Christ: "he will lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

Abused children and the neglected elderly stand before the risen Christ: "he will lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe every tear from. their eyes."

The victims of war and torture, the masses of uprooted refugees, and the despised people of the world stand before the risen Christ: "he will lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

We walk in the valley of darkness, but we fear no evil, for we follow in faith the call of the shepherd, who was "sent for our hope and strength."

Jesus has entered our history as God's anointed son who announces the coming of God's kingdom, a kingdom of justice and peace and freedom.

And, what Jesus proclaims, he embodies in his actions. His ministry reveals that the reign of God is something more powerful than evil, injustice, and the hardness of hearts.

Through his crucifixion and resurrection, he reveals that God's love is ultimately victorious over all suffering, all horror, all meaninglessness, and even over the mystery of death.

Thus, we proclaim words of hope and assurance to all who suffer and are in need.

U.S. Bishops, Economic Justice for All