



NEWSLETTER

2ND APRIL. PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION.

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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The Community of St. Camillus 044 9374115.

ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Sunday 9th, 11.30am. Paddy Cooney & family. Faye Campion. May McGrath.

ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Saturday 1st, 6pm. John, Jenny & Stephen McManus. George & Ethel Eagles.

Sunday 2nd, 10am. Nancy McKeogh MM. Patsy Flanagan. MM.

Weekday Masses; Tuesday, Raharney. Wednesday Rathwire 9am.

MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €479
PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €510

RIP: Vincent Smyth, Raharney. Funeral Mon 11am.

Holy Week Ceremonies.

Mass of Chrism: in the Cathedral on Wed at 7pm. All welcome.

Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper in Rathwire at 7.30pm.

Good Friday: Passion of the Lord in Rathwire at 3pm. Stations of the Cross in Raharney at 8.30pm
Walking Stations from Raharney to Rathwire at 1.30pm. Transport available back to Raharney.

Holy Saturday: Vigil of Easter in Raharney at 9.30pm.

Confessions in Rathwire 2 -2.30pm.

Easter Sunday: Dawn Mass at 6am in Kilcolumb Cemetery. 10am, Raharney. 11.30am, Rathwire.

First Friday calls: as usual this Friday morning.

Suffering

Today we celebrate Jesus, the suffering Messiah. He is the one of whom Isaiah foretold: "My face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. He is the Christ who took the form of a slave, ... obediently accepting even death, death on a cross." He is the saviour who "suffered willingly for sinners" and whose suffering makes us pleasing to God.

We all suffer in our own way. We experience physical pain and hardship. We suffer watching our friends and relatives suffer. We are often offended or abandoned by others, and we add to our suffering by our own sinfulness.

The world around us is filled with suffering: the victims of war and poverty; people living in streets or in shantytowns; starving children; lonely elderly; people dying of AIDS, cancer, or some other disease. Today's liturgy teaches us "to welcome our suffering," to bear witness to God by following Christ's example of suffering. We pray that the world "united with him in his suffering on the cross may share his resurrection and new life. "Had Jesus merely said that his mission was to set people free from sin and all forms of oppression, his words would have fallen on deaf ears. He had to work at this task of liberation. He not only talked about freeing the poor and oppressed but, undeterred by criticism, actually welcomed the poor and sinners to share at his table. Like Jesus, we must be able to accompany others in their suffering and be willing to suffer with them.

U.S. Bishops, *To the Ends of the Earth*

Adoration
of the
Blessed Sacrament



**In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm.
& St. Brigid's Wed. 5pm-10pm:**
*Special Diocesan intention of prayer
for vocations and the family.*
Take one Hour with the Lord

Sunday Message

PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY

THE WORD

Year A • 2 April 2023 • Colour: Violet • Psalter Week 2

A LIGHT NO DARKNESS COULD OVERCOME

Matthew 26:14-27:66



The account of the passion and death of Jesus can seem like an extra-long Gospel we have to listen to during every holy week. An ordeal to endure. But this is a profound story, rich in detail and meaning. An excellent way to listen to it is to make it personal, to imagine ourselves caught up in the events of those dramatic days.

We can do this in two ways this year.

First, to connect what happened to Jesus in his time and what is happening today. In his book *Let Us Dream*, Pope Francis writes about good and bad spirits. The battle between the voices of good and evil is real, he says. The sophisticated may be inclined to sneer at these old-fashioned concepts, but the forces of darkness are genuine and very powerful. We need only look at the human rights abuses during the war in Ukraine for proof of evil at work. Evil is a thing. Evil exists. You could say that with the world still reeling from war in Europe, darkness has fallen over the earth, just like the darkness that fell over Jerusalem the day Jesus hung on the cross.

The story of Holy Week is a cosmic drama - a life and death confrontation between good and evil, darkness and light, despair and hope. Evil exists but so also does good. And so much good is being done; a superabundance of goodness is being poured out in response to the suffering in Ukraine. Think of how so many people opened their hearts, homes, and wallets—a wonderful overflowing of compassion and love.

We Christians journey through this week knowing that good and light and hope have triumphed over evil and darkness and despair, and we are people of goodness and light and hope. As you listen to the passion story, pray that your life will always reflect these Godly values.

Second, the Gospel writers tell the story of Holy Week as if it's a magnificent drama you might see on stage. The story unfolds with a colourful cast of characters - heroes and antiheroes. The gospel writers invite us to apply the drama to each of us individually. Imagine you are present in Jerusalem as the week's events play out. What do you think you would have done? What role might you have played? What character might you have been?

Do you identify with the women, the faithful few, who stuck with Jesus right to the end? Do you identify with weak Peter, the awestruck centurion, or the dutiful Simon of Cyrene? Or with the mob, people easily led and manipulated?

We want to think we would have been among the tiny few who followed Jesus to the foot of the cross. But would we?

The journey to Jerusalem is all about discipleship. Enter into the story as you listen to it now and on Good Friday. Take your place. Who are you this seismic week? ■

REFLECT

Matthew describes how Pilate publicly washed his hands to disassociate himself from the execution of an innocent man.

Another form of washing also plays a major role in the drama of Holy Week. The washing of the feet is reenacted every Holy Thursday during the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

Ten years ago, just a few days after his election to the papacy, Pope Francis made headlines when he washed the feet of twelve young people at a juvenile detention centre outside Rome. They included women and non-Christians – something new for a pope to do.

Pope Francis wanted to make a very clear point: As Christians, we are called to wash feet, and we cannot be selective in whose feet we wash. Foot-washing is about service; it is about bending low before another as a servant. That's what Jesus did at the Last Supper and on the cross of Calvary.

It's what we are called to do, too. ■

SAY

"Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set me free. You are the saviour of the world."

LEARN

The passion and death of Christ is proof of God's love for us

Jesus ended up on a cross because of the kind of life he lived. It is the kind of life we also are called to live

Jesus did not die for a misty mass called humanity. He suffered and died for each one of us individually

DO

Don't treat this as if it were any ordinary week. Make a conscious effort to journey with Jesus through these days.

PRAY

Think of those who have suffered because of their commitment to justice, truth, and love. Thank God for them.