

Parish of Bangor, Member of Ards Pastoral Community

Parish Priest: Very Rev Joseph Gunn St Comgall's Presbytery, 27 Brunswick Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT20 3DS
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5th Sunday in Lent – 29th March 2020

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

ALL BANGOR PARISH PUBLIC MASSES

**Are cancelled
until further notice.**

The weekend Sunday Mass will be said for all parishioners living and deceased.

PLEASE ACCESS THE ONLINE MASS LOCALLY

NEWTOWNARDS Times:
Daily Mon-Friday 9.30am
Weekend: Sat 6.30pm
Sunday 10.15am

This week only due to broadcast
BBC RADIO ULSTER SUNDAY
BROADCAST

on Sunday 29th March at 10.15am
(remember go forward 1hr,
clocks change)

www.newtownardsandcomberparish.com

HOLYWOOD

Times:

Daily: Tuesday - Thursday 9.30am,
Mon & Fri 7.00pm

Weekend: Sunday 12noon

www.stcolmcilleshollywood.org



St Gallen and Brussels, 12 March 2020

Dear brothers and sisters of Europe,

As Presidents of the two bodies representing the Bishops' Conferences of European countries, we turn to you so that, at this difficult time when we are sorely tested by the pandemic caused by COVID-19, together we can raise our common prayer to God for help, comfort and salvation.

God our Father, Creator of the world, almighty and merciful, out of love for us, You sent your Son into the world as the doctor of our souls and our bodies, look upon your children who, in this difficult time of confusion and dismay in many regions of Europe and the world, turn to you seeking strength, salvation and relief, deliver us from illness and fear, heal our sick, comfort their families, give wisdom to our rulers, energy and reward to our doctors, nurses and volunteers, eternal life to the dead. Do not abandon us in the moment of trial but deliver us from all evil. We ask this of Thee, who with the Son and the Holy Spirit, live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Mary, mother of health and hope, pray for us!

May our blessing be with you,

Jean-Claude Card. Hollerich SJ
Archbishop of Luxembourg
President of COMECE

Angelo Card. Bagnasco
Archbishop of Genoa

Your prayers are requested for: Recently Deceased:

William Burns

Anniversaries:

M  Josie Kelly, Martina Maria Smyth,
Anna Gordon, Marie Jenkins,
Pauline & David McCausland,
Kathleen McLoughlin, Margaret Hall.

**St Vincent de Paul
Helpline 077 0367 9384**

**Bethany Bereavement
Support Group**
we are here to support
and listen. Confidential.
075 1085 2157

4 page bulletin this
weekend includes the
Mass Readings
5th Sunday of Lent & a
Homily from Fr Gunn.

Excerpt of letter sent to the priests of the Diocese from Bishop Noel Treanor on Confession / Reconciliation.

'...as highlighted in the abovementioned Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary and stated by the Holy Father in his Homily of 20th March 2020, it is vitally important that the faithful know that if they cannot access confession, then, by making an act of sorrow, by being truly contrite for all their sins with the intention not to sin anymore, and with the intention of going to confession as soon as it is possible, they are reconciled with God and obtain the forgiveness of their sins, even mortal sins. *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption. Psalm 130.*'

Fifth Sunday of Lent – Reflect... [INTERCOM - Catholic Pastoral Resource]

Don't give up. As we journey into the penultimate week of Lent there might be a tendency to let things slide. We might be tempted to relax in our commitment. Long distance athletes speak about 'hitting a wall', a reference to the moment in a race of event where they feel they want to stop or have nothing left to give. Somehow, they dig deep and find the reserves of energy they need to continue. We need to know that, as we journey toward Holy Week and dig deeper into our faith, somewhere in that despair or unknowing we can find the grace to continue. There is a finish line and even if you think you cannot reach it, God is with you every step of the way. God's mercy is deep. It is only when we go deeper into our relationship with God that we experience the grace and strength to further our relationship with him.

Respond... *Nothing is impossible to God. Has something 'died' in your life, something that Jesus could restore? When did you last use the words: 'Yes Lord I believe' Today, try to repeat those words and believe. 'Return to Me with all your Heart' Gerard Gallagher (Veritas, 2020) pp.88*

HOMILY – Fr J Gunn, 5th Sunday of Lent

In the Readings of today's Mass we read the famous vision of Ezekiel of the bones restored to life. This was a message of hope to the people of Israel exiled in Babylon.

In the psalm we have one of the most memorable lines in scripture 'Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord.' It speaks of human isolation and desperation but gives the antidote 'but with you is found forgiveness. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.'

Saint Paul tells us that 'the Spirit of God has made His home in you.' The Spirit is not a passive or lifeless entity, the Spirit enlivens us by giving us the gifts of our confirmation: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. May we use them to come through these difficult times.

We need solidarity at this time. Jesus shows that in the story of Lazarus. Faced with the death of His friend Jesus wept. Jesus understands loss. He restores life to Lazarus but it is human life. Lazarus will die again. Saint John is pointing towards the reality, made possible by the death and resurrection of Christ, of a new and eternal life.

Jesus has solidarity with us and it is made visible in that most wonderful reality which always surprises and edifies us, namely the Kindness of Strangers. We see all around us an outpouring of hidden depths of generosity as people look out for one another in countless imaginative ways.

People are going above and beyond their duty, in the health services, in shops and factories, in postal, delivery and waste disposal services, to mention but a few of those whose efforts make civilised life possible.

I wish to thank most sincerely the staffs of all our parish schools who have prepared work for pupils forced to stay at home and those who have drawn up rotas to come in to school to teach the children of essential workers.

I would like to turn particularly to the energetic young confined at home. The novelty of being off school soon fades and rows can flare easily. Please be quick to forgive and to understand that small acts of self-sacrifice like letting someone else have the first slice of toast or politely accepting marmalade because there is no Nutella lead to a peaceful home and make life tolerable for all.

In these days of no public Mass the family home is more than ever a Domestic Church. Please take time to come off line to gather for family prayer, read the Readings of the Mass, say a decade of the Rosary or a whole one and pray together the Our Father which is the greatest prayer we have. In it the pattern of our lives is outlined and we see the reason for our solidarity namely that we are all children of the one God.

The family that prays together stays together. Let us pray for one another.

Readings at Mass–Sunday 29th March 2020

First reading -

Ezekiel 37:12-14 - *I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.*

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

The Word of the Lord

R: **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 129(130)

Response: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading.

Response:

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you.

Response:

My soul is waiting for the Lord.
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than watchman for daybreak.
(Let the watchman count on daybreak
and Israel on the Lord.)

Response:

Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity.

Response:

Second reading - Romans 8:8-11 - *The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you.*

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

The Word of the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation - Jn11:25, 26

Glory and praise to you, O Christ!
I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me will never die.
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

A read from the Holy Gospel according to Saint John

John 11:1-45 - *I am the resurrection and the life.*

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in the village of Bethany with the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and he was ill. It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.' The disciples said, 'Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?' Jesus replied:

'Are there not twelve hours in the day?
A man can walk in the daytime without stumbling
because he has the light of this world to see by;
but if he walks at night he stumbles,
because there is no light to guide him.'

He said that and then added, 'Our friend Lazarus is resting, I am going to wake him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he is able to rest he is sure to get better.' The phrase Jesus used referred to the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by 'rest' he meant 'sleep', so Jesus put it plainly, 'Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.' Then Thomas – known as the Twin – said to the other disciples, 'Let us go too, and die with him.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house.

Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.
If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.
Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, 'The Master is here and wants to see you.' Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were in the house sympathising with Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.
I knew indeed that you always hear me,
but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me,
so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

EXTRA NOTICES FOR YOUR INFORMATION

COVID-19 Support Line for Older People

ALONE has launched a national support line and additional supports for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Professional staff are available to answer queries and give advice and reassurance where necessary. The support line is open seven days a week, 8am - 8pm, by calling 0818 222 024.

Storehouse North Down

In these difficult times we are aware that many families will have to rely on food banks, will continue as long as we have groceries to give out.

Groceries can be left at any of the following:

- Storehouse ND premises ([12 Balloo Avenue](#))
Monday to Friday 9 am - 4 pm,
- The Co-Op, Groomsport Road,
- The Haven Hairdressers, 121a High Street,
- Sainsbury's Hollywood Exchange.

We are unable to buy in bulk and are short of the following, Tins of meatham, corned beef etc
Tins of meals... minced steak, chunky chicken etc
Rice, Tins of rice mealscurry, chilli con carne, etc
Rice sauces, Tins of custard and rice, Tinned tomatoes
Fruit juices, Diluting juices, Cooking Oil, Toiletries,
Toilet rolls, Kitchen roll, Kitchen sprays

Thank you for all your support and we would ask you to pray for protection for our volunteers, many of whom are in the vulnerable age group.