

NEWSLETTER

Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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7th Sunday of Easter, 12th May 2024

World Communications Day

(Page 273 in Mass book)

(Year B for Sundays) (Cycle 2 for weekdays)

Dear Parishioners,

This last Thursday we celebrated the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord. The following piece by Baclaran Phenomenon reflects on the significance of the feast in our daily lives:

One of the most painful experiences in our lives is the pain of separation. We experience this in the departure of somebody we deeply love whether he/she is going away for a long time or for good. We experience this after school when we have to separate ways with our classmates. We experience this when somebody very close to our heart is dying and trying to console and letting him/her go.

The pain of separation, however, makes us realise in life that the people we love are not gone forever. They reside in our hearts; we are near although we are far from each other. And we try to be the best of what and who we are, enriched by the people we loved who are always with us in our hearts.....

One of the things I love most about this life is that there's no final goodbye. You know, I've met hundreds of people out here and I don't ever say a final goodbye. I always just say, "I'll see you down the road." And I do. And whether it's a month, or a year, or sometimes years, I see them again.

Instead of saying goodbye to his disciples on the day of the Ascension, Jesus sent them on a mission assuring them that he will be with them until the end of time. Jesus sent his disciples to participate in God's mission which he inaugurated.

Luke describes the moment of the Lord's ascension in the Acts of the Apostles where Jesus "was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight." The Ascension is one of the most misinterpreted events in Jesus' life and belief of our faith. The Ascension has often been portrayed in a somewhat mythological way as a gravity-defying form of levitation or the retreat of Jesus from this world to a place up, up and away.

*It is significant that Jesus rested in the cloud in the Ascension. In the bible a cloud often depicts **the abiding presence of God** amongst the people. In the Old Testament, the pillar of cloud was the glory-cloud which indicated God's presence leading the ransomed people of Israel out of Egypt through the wilderness (Exodus 13:22; 33:9, 10). This pillar preceded the people as they marched, resting on the ark (Exodus 13:21; 40:36). By night it became a pillar of fire (Numbers 9:17-23). By resting on the cloud as Jesus ascended, signifies not Jesus' departure but his constant accompaniment of his disciples and the community gathered in his name—the church—as they face the challenges and troubles of this world. As Australian Redemptorist Fr. Anthony Kelly states:*

***The ascended Jesus has not disappeared** or been dissolved in a celestial ether but is ever present to the faith of the church in the here-and-now of the community's life. The ending of his particular kind of terrestrial presence has yielded to a new kind of universal presence, reaching to all places, times, and peoples.*

*Belief in Christ's ascension opens for us the experience of faith and the life of the Church as limitless. Kelly adds that the Ascension reminds us that the mission of evangelization is unconfined, always moving beyond, upward, outward, in the vitality of the risen Christ who already occupies every dimension of time and space. Properly understood, the Ascension is a fundamental aspect of the catholicity of faith and enables us to breathe more deeply in the experience of "the boundless riches of Christ." As Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr said: **'We are already in the presence of God, what is absent is awareness'**.*

Jesus' Ascension is not a departure from his disciples and for all the disciples which forms the church in every generation. Jesus' Ascension was an expression of a new relationship with him, the risen One, that transcends physical barriers. Now, instead of accompanying us here on earth in his ministry, we are "clothed with power from on high" to be his presence and continue his mission. Jesus empowered us to be "witnesses of these things," the wonderful things that Jesus did and said about the boundless blessings of God's kingdom.

Work is underway to treat damp on the rear wall of the church. Similar repairs are ongoing at the front of the house. Several months of rain have hampered progress. Work should be complete by the end of June. *Fr John*

- **First Holy Communion:** This weekend at the 5pm Mass we have another group of children making their First Holy Communion. Congratulations to them and to their families. Thank you to the Catechists who give freely of their time to lead the preparation course and to office staff and helpers for the considerable work in arranging these sacramental events for our children. Congratulations to the children of St Mary's school who made their First Communion last week and to their teachers and parents.
- **Columba Club:** After many months of hard work and negotiations, the **Columba Catholic Club will open its doors to old and new members on Friday 17th May at 8pm.** The Columba Catholic Club is a licensed venue which aims to provide a cordial atmosphere where members can meet and enjoy participating in a variety of social events such as Quiz Nights, Film Nights, Coffee Mornings, Educational Talks and other functions. Annual membership is £15 per person or £25 per couple. Application forms are available from the Club which is open every Friday from 8pm. If you would like to discuss holding an event such as a Christening, Anniversary, Retirement, Birthday Party or Wake, please contact Richard Coase or Brian Murphy for more information or call into the Club on a Friday evening. We would love to see you on Friday 17th!
- **Tallis Consort Concert:** On **Tuesday 21st May at 7.30pm** in **St Mary's**, the **Tallis Consort** will perform "Byrdsong", a programme of nature-inspired Spring choral music including the première of 'Hymsee Mee Speyr', a new setting of words by Annie Kissack. Entry is free. All welcome.
- **Red Mission Boxes: A Big Thank you** to parishioners who have a Red Mission Box. Last year **St Anthony's raised £676.60** and **St Mary's £1173.83** including individuals donating directly. Your generosity is much appreciated by 'Missio' especially during a difficult period with high costs of living. Thank you.
- **Praying the Keeills Week** will take place from 18 – 25 May. An opportunity to visit some of the island's keeills. The theme this year is 'The Sea'. For more information on the daily events go to www.prayingthekeeills.org.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Mary and St Joseph £1,144. St Anthony's £550. This does not include standing orders or the tap and pay machine at the back of St Mary's church. Sincere thanks for your generosity.

Masses and Services for the coming week

All Masses and Services from St Mary's are live-streamed

Saturday 11th May 7 th Sunday of Easter	5.00pm	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Sunday 12th May 7 th Sunday of Easter World Communications Day	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Cesare Leonetti, anniversary Margaret Thomas, 7 th anniversary
Monday 13th May Dedication of Liverpool Cathedral of Christ the King	12.10pm	St Mary's	Private Intention
Tuesday 14th May St Matthias, Apostle	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Sheila O'Brien, recently died
Wednesday 15th May Our Lady of Fatima	12.10pm	St Mary's	John & Helen Wood, anniversary
Thursday 16th May	10.00am 10.45am 12.10pm	St Anthony's Crematorium St Mary's	Peter & Mary Clarke & family Funeral Service: Paul Chapman Frank & Selina Hunter, anniversary
Friday 17th May	12.10pm	St Mary's	John Byrne, deceased
Saturday 18th May Pentecost Sunday	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions Brenda McCabe, sick
Sunday 19th May Pentecost Sunday	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	People of our Parishes Jane Harrison, 1 st anniversary

We keep in our prayers this week the families and friends of **Anne-Marie Graham** and **Paul Chapman** who died recently. May our Lord grant them eternal rest.