

ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE WITH PARISH NEWS

24TH MAY 2020

At the parish of St. Francis Xavier's,
we are a joyful, inclusive community on fire with the love of God, each growing in our personal relationship with Christ.
As His missionary disciples,
inspired by His Holy Spirit and nourished by our worship, we use our talents freely to serve others
and take the life-changing message of the Gospel into the world.

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View from the Sanctuary



Firstly, a huge thank you for all the cards and messages of support which I received on the occasion of my 50th Birthday on Friday. I had hoped to have a party for the parish to celebrate with me but that will need to wait. As I mentioned in my homily on Ascension Thursday, I invite everyone to pray in a particular way for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Church, the Parish, and in all our lives. In these days more than ever, we need to help of the Holy Spirit to discern the most effective ways in which we can live out our parish vision, so that, "filled with the Holy Spirit" we can "take the life changing message of the Gospel into the world. Throughout this week we will be offering opportunities for prayer and reflection so that we can be open to where the Holy Spirit is leading us.

In the coming weeks I would like us to consider working with a program called 'The Gift' - a resource produced by Catholic Adult Faith Exploration (CaFE). My hope would be that we can use this resource to help us see where the Holy Spirit is already at work in the parish and in our lives, and help us to do even more. We are already acutely aware of the great changes in so many peoples lives as we experience the ongoing effects of the current pandemic. As a church, we will need to be ready and prepared to be a source of practical and spiritual help to those in need.

What has been happening?



Over the past number of weeks we have slowly been coming to terms with the current situation and people are adjusting to what has become the "New normal". Many of us miss seeing our families, friends and fellow parishioners. Lots of people are concerned about getting back to work and school as soon as possible, but in as safe a way as possible. Of course many will also be facing the sad consequences of the pandemic and will now fear for their jobs and livelihoods. As a parish we keep everyone in our prayers. We ask that we will be able to support one another by "using our talents and strengths freely in the service of others".

Laudato Si



Speaking about the 5th anniversary of Laudato Si, Pope Francis said "In these times of the pandemic, in which we are more aware of the importance of care for our common home, I hope that all the common reflection and commitment may help to create and strengthen constructive attitudes for the care of creation." He invites to say the Laudato Si prayer at 12 Noon on Sunday 24th May.

All powerful God, you are present in the universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with your peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle, for justice, love and peace.

A homily by Pope Francis on the Holy Spirit.



Without the Holy Spirit a person risks being just an "armchair Christian" who recites "a cold morality" without actually living out the Gospel. Do not keep the Holy Spirit a prisoner, locked inside your heart; rather let him "push" and "move" you to boldly bring Jesus to others and to be able to be patient under pressure. There are still many Christians today who are unaware of how the Holy Spirit "moves the church" "He's the one who works in the Church, in our hearts, he is the one who makes each Christian" unique, but united together as one family of God. It's the Holy Spirit who "opens the doors and invites us to bear witness to Jesus", as well as inspiring people to pray and to see God as father, liberating individuals from feeling

like an "orphan", which is what the devil would like to see. However, Christians risk reducing the faith to a code of ethics when they do not live out the mission of the Holy Spirit. Christians, can't limit themselves just to following the Ten Commandments "and nothing more", which leads to "casuistry and a cold morality". The Christian life "isn't" ethics. It is an encounter with Jesus Christ, ". And it's the Holy Spirit who "brings me to this encounter with Jesus Christ". The above is taken from a homily by Pope Francis he looked at the reading from the Acts of the Apostles (19:1-8), in which St Paul meets a group of disciples who were baptised by St John the Baptist and had never heard of the Holy Spirit. After Paul baptises them in Jesus' name and lays his hands on them, they are filled with the Holy Spirit and receive his gifts. The Pope asked people to reflect on whether they are keeping the Holy Spirit, which they received at baptism, locked inside their hearts -- like in a "luxury" prison -- where he is not free to incite, inspire and explain Jesus' word to the outside world. "The Holy Spirit cannot make us 'virtual' Christians who are not virtuous. The Holy Spirit makes real Christians. The Spirit takes life as it is and prophetically reads the signs of the times pushing us forward," he added. The Pope asked people reflect on how the Holy Spirit dwells in them and to pray for the grace to submit to him. (Pope Francis - Domus Sanctae Marthae May 2016)

Reopening our churches



On Thursday the First Minister set out a "Road map" for coming out of lock down. However, there is no change to the current situation regarding places of worship. Churches and places of worship will be able to open for private prayer in phase 2. We do not know when we will move to phase 2. I know this is so frustrating when we see the shops and other places so busy. It remains for us as a church to be patient and comply with what the Government is asking of us. Obviously, this will be a continued source of anguish for many and especially the bereaved. Please continue to pray that we will soon be able to open the doors.

The bishops of Scotland have commissioned two working groups to help plan and prepare for when our churches can open. There is an infection control group who will deal with making sure we have clear guidelines for keeping our churches free of the virus. The second group will look at the longer term pastoral and liturgical life of the church. In the coming weeks I will be setting up a team of volunteers to make sure we can do all that will be required to safely open our churches.

Finance



The archdiocese has set up an online giving platform to allow those who are able to continue to give financial support to their parish and also other causes. The link below will take you to the diocesan donations page where you can donate to a specific parish or a cause such as Communication, SCIAF or the Aged & Infirm clergy fund.

https://donor.secure-operations.com/detailed/donate?charity_id=1086319&type=2

MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 54th WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY



"That you may tell your children and grandchildren" (Ex 10:2) I would like to devote this year's Message to the theme of storytelling, because I believe that, so as not to lose our bearings, we need to make our own the truth contained in good stories. Stories that build up, not tear down; stories that help us rediscover our roots and the strength needed to move forward together. Amid the cacophony of voices and messages that surround us, we need a human story that can speak of ourselves and of the beauty all around us. A narrative that can regard our world and its happenings with a tender gaze. A narrative that can tell us that we are part of a living and interconnected tapestry. A narrative that can reveal the interweaving of the threads which connect us to one another. You can contribute to the special collection using the link above.

Funerals



One of the most difficult situations of the current pandemic is the ongoing restrictions to the way we celebrate funeral rites for our deceased loved ones. At present we are still not able to have a reception or funeral Mass as we would usually do. Even at the graveside the number of mourners is restricted to immediate family. Let us pray that we will soon be able to have funeral liturgies in the church so that the bereaved may draw the strength and comfort they need as they come to terms with the death of their loved ones.

Please remember in your prayers those who have died recently:

John Docherty R.I.P. Anne Welsh R.I.P. Margaret (Pearl) Swords R.I.P. Fr Tommy Greenan R.I.P.

Anniversaries



Please pray for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Michael J Coughlan, Fred Murray, Janet Heggarty, Annie Docherty, Baby Seamus Fitzpatrick, Kunjamma Verghese, Caroline Moen, Ruth Forsyth, Adam MacKintosh, Allan Beattie, Anabella Carr, Peter Hughes Snr, John Corrigan, James Looker, Zdzislan Lewandowski, Fr Gerry Prior, Thomas McIvory, Peter Visocchi, Hgh McVey. Anne Nicholson, Joseph Robinson, Hugh Lindsay. May they rest in peace.

Weekly Schedule



Mass will be celebrated every day at 10:00 am
Novena to the Holy Spirit every evening at 7:00pm
Divine Mercy will be recited on Tuesdays after Mass
Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help & Benediction on Thursdays at 7:00pm
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays after Mass until 11:00am

Parish Leadership Team



At our meeting on Monday, the Leadership team discussed the progress of our new Phone Ministry, which I am delighted to say is proving to be very fruitful and worthwhile. We also discussed how best we can celebrate Pentecost as a parish. There were lots of great ideas, which we are trying to incorporate into the life of the parish this week. The Novena to the Holy Spirit reminds us of the nine days the Apostles spent in prayer between The Ascension and Pentecost. It is a powerful way for us to call upon the Holy Spirit in our lives. We also discussed ways in which the whole parish can share our experience of the Holy Spirit. Another fruit of our discussion was to invite Sr Kathleen to help us reflect on the role of the Holy Spirit and how it ties into our parish vision.

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