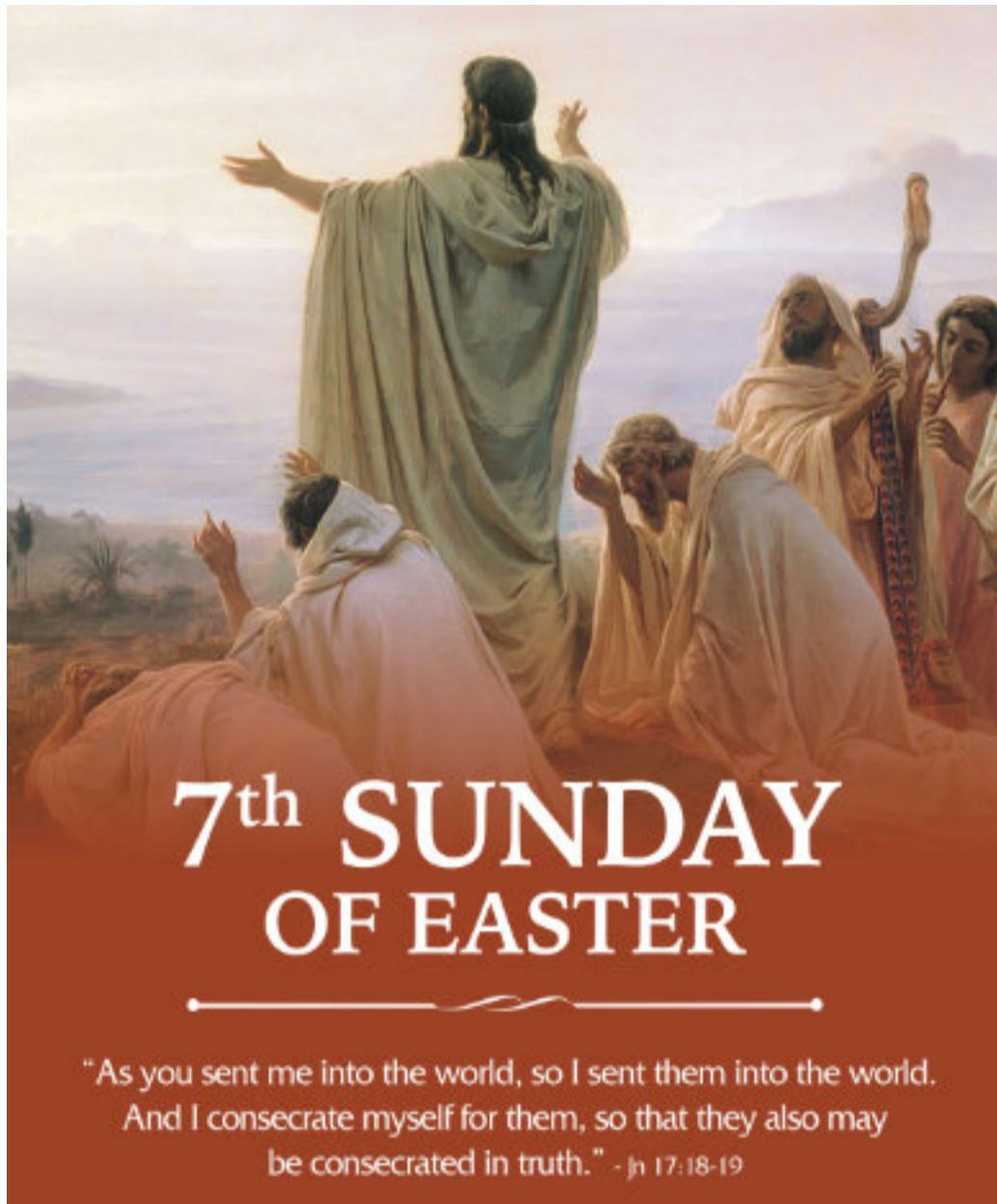




parish newsletter

Seventh Sunday of Easter (Year B) | 16 May 2021

Reflecting on the Gospel



God remains where love remains. When a believer realises without doubt that God is love, it is a powerful moment. Being able to place our resurrection trust in this fundamental truth allows us to experience God's presence in all of our experiences: the good and the bad, positive and negative, life enriching and destructive events we encounter. It is no wonder that St. Paul so accurately tells us that it is love that endures all things and lasts. How can God not endure or ever fade away? Because he is God, Jesus also guarded and protected his disciples as the endearing shepherd who always had their best interest at heart.

If we become too immersed in the world, we lose touch with these deeper realities. We can become so preoccupied with preserving what we have created or think that we need, forgetting that it is not building our city that really matters, but God's. Jesus clearly did not belong to the world and, by virtue of his resurrection, he tries to get us to

understand that we do not either. The truth brings us to other worldly, more divine places and takes our eyes off of the concerns that often captivate our fears and storm our senses.

Life can easily erode our faith. Think of your life over the last couple of weeks. What challenged your faith and distracted your divine glance? Even being overly stimulated with technology and social media can erode our sense of confidence and cause us to forget who we really are. We need to distance ourselves from the world in order to experience the joy that Christ offers. The world will never like the word of God. It is too challenging and too perplexing. The world mistakenly believes that it can survive on its own. It is a mistaken judgement that may cost people a lot in the end. It is all so very simple: God remains when we love one another. If in all the business of our lives and all that each day brings, the good and the bad, we follow the call and path of love, we will walk with God. There is nothing to fear and anxiety finds no home.

*Come, Holy Spirit,
send forth the heavenly
ray of your light.*

*Come, father of the poor,
come, giver of gifts,
come, light of hearts.*

*Greatest comforter,
sweet guest of the soul,
sweet consolation.*

*In labour, rest,
in heat, temperateness,
in tears, solace.*

*O most blessed light,
fill the inmost heart
of your faithful.*

*Without the nod of your head,
there is nothing in man,
nothing that is harmless.*

*Cleanse that which is unclean,
water that which is dry,
heal that which is wounded.*

*Bend that which is inflexible,
warm that which is chilled,
correct that which has gone
astray.*

*Give to your faithful,
those who trust in you,
the sevenfold gifts.*

*Give the reward of virtue,
give a death of salvation,
give joy constantly.*

Everyday Stewardship



a relaxation that kicks in, a peace that falls over us. I think that's what Heaven will be like. It won't be pleasure or happiness — those words aren't enough to describe what it feels like to be at home, are they? It's more than that.

If you ever wonder why there is pain in this world, it's because we're not at home.

That's not to say we don't belong here. Through God's mercy, this beautiful world is where we live out our earthly existence, and those existences can be filled with amazing relationships and profound experiences. In fact, we might enjoy our time here so much that we don't want to leave.

But there's a reason this life has so many things that don't make sense: loss, fear, anger, sickness, hatred. It's because we weren't made for this place. For our souls, it's like a never-ending night in a hotel bed.

Tracey Earl Welliver, MTS

Where do you get the best night's sleep? For me, it's in my own bed. I don't even really know why. There's something about the texture of the sheets, the groove I've worn in the pillow. The mattress seems to recognise my shape. I've got a job that sees me travelling often and I've stayed in plenty of nice places. But there's just no sleep like the sleep you get at home.

There's a feeling that we have when we're at home. Our bodies seem to recognise it when we walk in the door. There's



Live the Liturgy

When Jesus was physically with his disciples, he guarded and protected them. One of his greatest desires was that they share his joy completely. God's love is the source of all things and their sustenance. As we conduct the normal routines of our lives it is easy to get caught up in the immediacies of this world and lose focus. We become very self and worldly dependent, forgetting that God wishes to guard and protect us. The joy the resurrected Christ can offer cannot be found in this world. It takes a bit of faith to realise that God's will is a constant in our lives and that God desires only the sustenance and goodness of both our bodies and our souls. We need to trust in God's constant and rejuvenating love. This radical resurrection trust allows us to experience the joy of God's presence in all of the good and the bad, positive and negative, life building and life destructive events that we encounter. God remains where love remains.

*Consecrate us in the
truth!*



First Reading

Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven apostles. (Acts 1:26)

Psalm

The Lord has set his sway in heaven. (Ps 102)

Second Reading

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. (1 Jn 4:11)

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord; I will come back to you, and your hearts will be full of joy.
Alleluia!

Gospel

"Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one." (Jn 17:11b)

Masses this Week

16	SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26/Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20 [19a]/1 Jn 4:11-16/Jn 17:11b-19 10.30 Mass St Mary's Bogunol Hazubski (RIP) 17.00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish
17	Monday	Acts 19:1-8/Ps 68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab [33a]/Jn 16:29-33 12.05 Mass St Mary's Paul & Angela Bruce (RIP)
18	Tuesday St John I	Acts 20:17-27/Ps 68:10-11, 20-21 [33a]/Jn 17:1-11a 12.05 Mass St Mary's Lodwidge Mass Fund
19	Wednesday St Dunstan	Acts 20:28-38/Ps 68: 29-30, 33-35a, 35bc-36ab [33a]/Jn 17:11b-19 12.05 Mass St Mary's Jim & Maisie Mason (RIP)
20	Thursday St Bernadine of Sienna	Acts 22:30; 23:6-11/Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11 [1]/Jn 17:20-26 12.05 Mass St Mary's Angela Hardy & Terrence Groody (RIP)
21	Friday St Godric of Finchale	Acts 25:13b-21/Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20ab [19a]/Jn 21:15-19 12.05 Mass St Mary's Molly & Jim Meekins (RIP)
22	Saturday St Rita of Cascia	Acts 28:16-20, 30-31/Ps 11:4, 5 and 7 [7b]/Jn 21:20-25 11.00 Mass St Mary's Dr Oliver O'Grady (RIP) & Family 18:00 Vigil Mass St Cecilia's Jimmy Boxer (RIP).
23	PENTECOST SUNDAY	Acts 2:1-11/Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34 [cf. 30]/1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13/Jn 20:19-23 10.30 Mass St Mary's Private Intention 17.00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish



Christopher, Paula, Liz, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa, Cath and Norman, the sick sisters at Oaklea.



Bernard Conlin
John McKenzie

If you would like a name added to our prayer list, please email or call the parish office.



Questions for the Week

First Reading: In the immediate aftermath of Jesus' ascension, and as a means for healing within the group, Peter and the apostles discerned Matthias as the replacement for Judas. What are some areas in your faith life that need healing in order to feel whole?

Second Reading: John testifies that his community has "come to know and to believe in the love God has for us." Do you think your faith community shares a similar conviction of faith in the love of God?

Gospel: We hear Jesus' prayer to his Father for the protection of the disciples, especially against "the evil one" in the world. Where do you personally experience evil in the world today?



News & Announcements

40 Hours' Devotion



The timetable for the 40 Hours' Devotion is beginning to take shape. Bishop Robert confirmed that he will join us for the closing Mass on Saturday, 3 July, Bishop Séamus has agreed to celebrate the opening Mass on Thursday 1 July and various other groups are confirming their avail-

ability for different parts of the devotion.

The 40 hours will be broken up into periods of silent and guided prayer on a variety of themes. Above all, however, it is a chance for each one of us to come to the Lord exactly as we are, with whatever joys and hopes, fears and sadness we carry in our hearts: be they our own or other people's. That's why we've chosen 'Come to me.' as our theme. Jesus wants to welcome us to experience his love, mercy and healing in the Eucharist and calls us all to come to him just as we are. We'll also make sure that priests are available for confession at set times. This is going to be a moment of grace in the life of our parish, partnership and diocese!

One of the rules about Eucharistic Adoration is that

the Blessed Sacrament can never be left exposed where there is no one there for adoration. This means we will have to organise a rota of parishioners so that Jesus will not be left alone for any of the 40 hours. How much time can you give to Jesus in those days? Are you going to give up a night's sleep to keep watch with Jesus? Are you going to give him a morning or afternoon? Who are you going to invite to come with you? What other ways might you be able to help: cleaning, stewarding, hospitality? This is going to be a big parish effort, and even though the other parishes in Sunderland are willing to help, it is up to us to take the lead.

Welcome and the Next Steps

If you're visiting us today you are especially welcome. If you've been away from the practice of your Catholic faith for a while, welcome home! We missed you!

You might also be joining us from another Christian denomination, faith background, or none at all—we hope you feel welcome too.

If you would like to learn more about the Catholic faith or are interested in becoming Catholic please speak to one of the priests or to Deacon Eddy. We'll be starting a course in September, but before then we'd love to help you get to know us a little better and perhaps answer any questions you might have. Jesus is calling you home to his Catholic Church!

Why do we do that?



Question: How many times a day can a person receive communion?

Answer: To find an answer to this question, we need to turn to the Church's Code of Canon Law. Here we read, "One who has received the blessed Eucharist may receive it again on the same day only within a Eucharistic celebration in which that person participates ..." (no. 917). This tells us that the standard answer would be that we can receive communion twice in a day.

Having said that, we also want to be sure that we pay attention to the entire instruction. The phrase "within a Eucharistic celebration in which that person participates" is important. It means a) that we always have to think of receiving communion as being within a celebration of the Mass and b) we have to be participants in that celebration – we can't simply show up "in time" for communion.

So, when would this rule apply? For example, if you attend Mass on a Saturday morning and then take part in the Sunday Vigil Mass on Saturday evening, you could licitly receive communion at both celebrations. Or, another example, if you receive communion at a wedding or funeral Mass, you could also receive communion at a daily Mass or Sunday Vigil celebrated on the same day. We always want to be sure that we observe the rules for fasting from food and drink before receiving the Eucharist (see Code of Canon Law, no. 919).

We should also remember that the Code of Canon Law instructs that anyone who is in danger of death or seriously ill may also receive communion a second time (no. 91, §2).

Flock Notes

There's a lovely detail in last Thursday's readings about the Ascension. After Jesus ascended into heaven, the apostles stand there, looking up into the sky, waiting. They're frozen with indecision: 'What are we supposed to do now?' they silently ponder, hoping that someone else will make a move so that they can follow. It takes an angel to tell them to stop staring at the clouds and get on with the work Jesus has given them to do.

I think we can all feel like those apostles sometimes: uncertain about that should come next and what we ought to be doing; frozen until someone else makes a move that we can follow. In moments like that we might not be sent an angel, but we do have the word of God and the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts. We know exactly what we are supposed to be doing: proclaiming the gospel to the ends of the earth, starting in Sunderland. That's the mission Jesus has given us, personally and as a community.

As we move out of lock down and the restrictions are eased it can seem a little overwhelming. 'What am I

supposed to do now?' isn't a question just for the apostles on Ascension day. It's a question we too can find ourselves pondering. However, in the same way the angel gave them a little nudge or kick, so does the Holy Spirit for us. 'Stop staring at the sky; get on with your work!' is the angel's message to them and the Spirit's message to us!

Jesus promised that he is with us until the end of time and the presence of the Holy Spirit is proof that his promise is true. He will come back, but until then he's given us work to do and we need to get on with it. Right now in Sunderland there are people who do not know the gospel; people who are homeless and hungry; people who are lonely and isolated; people who are grieving; people who have lost their way; people seeking but not finding; people in need.

There's so much work to be done right on our doorstep. If you feel a nudge on your heart today, know that it is the Holy Spirit reminding you to stop hanging around, staring at the sky, and to get on with the work Jesus has given us to do.



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Confession: Saturday 10.15am and after Mass until 12:30pm.