

Culmore Parish Newsletter

SUNDAY 11 APRIL 2021 – SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe' (John 20:29)

In the Gospel of the Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday (also known as Low Sunday), we listen to St John's account of the Apostle Thomas' struggle with faith. It is the story that gives him the name "Doubting Thomas." Of course Jesus did not dismiss or abandon Thomas for doubting.

Just as Jesus understood Thomas' doubts, and gave Him another chance, He understands our doubts and fears too and does not abandon or give up on us. It is often in times of despair, fear or uncertainty that we turn to Jesus in faith and experience His enduring presence in our lives. These moments of grace bring the peace and reassurance that only faith can bring. We thank God today for the gift of faith and the joy of knowing that, wherever we are on our faith journey, He never abandons us. In the words of Thomas, we pray, "My Lord and my God".

Derry Diocesan Vocations Week 17th - 25th April.

The annual celebration of Derry Diocesan Vocations Week begins Saturday 17th April through to Good Shepherd Sunday, 25th April. The theme for this year's Vocations Week is based on "*Patris Corde*" ('With a Father's Heart'), Pope Francis' recent publication for the year of Saint Joseph.

Parishioners are encouraged to participate in the schedule of daily prayer and Mass, as well as devotional reflections based on the Angelus, Daily Examen and the Mysteries of the Rosary. These resources will be available online at derrydiocese.org and derryvocations.org

On the evenings of Monday, 19th April - Friday, 23rd April, Bishop Donal will host a series of interviews with guests from throughout the diocese discussing how they have answered God's call to vocation. These twenty-minute interviews will be broadcast live online at 7pm, followed by a broadcast of the celebration of the Daily Examen. At 8pm, after evening Mass, Bishop Donal will lead the Rosary before concluding with night prayer. The live broadcasts can be viewed at derrydiocese.org and derryvocations.org

TROCAIRE BOXES Please return your box as soon as possible.

As you know, all public donations received in NI until 16th May, up to £2m, will be matched by the UK government.

Divine Mercy Novena: Prayed for the nine days from Good Friday (2 April) until the first Saturday of Easter (10 April), leading into Divine Mercy Sunday (11 April). For those who would like to join in the Novena but do not have a copy of it, it can be accessed on: <https://divinemercury.life/the-divine-mercy-novena/>

Sacraments of Initiation: MyFaith.ie is a parish-based programme of preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. It releases new modules every two weeks or so as the children and their families prepare for the Sacraments. Each module begins with a short lesson - for parents - on the content of that module before the next item, a taught lesson for the children. The programme is highly interactive, and learning is reinforced through challenges, quizzes and interactive games which are scored but can be repeated indefinitely. This is offered to parents/guardians as a format of instruction during the pandemic.

Preparing for Marriage? - Accord Derry: Virtual Interactive Marriage Preparation Programme - (limited to 15 couples per course). Booking now online at www.accordni.com. Course Dates July 6th/7th August 10th/11th Sept 14th/15th Oct 12th/13th Nov 9th/10th Dec 7th/8th.

Year of St. Joseph: In this year dedicated to St. Joseph, Pope Francis recalls the 150th Anniversary of St Joseph as Patron Saint of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, Pope Francis has proclaimed a “**Year of St Joseph**” and asks us to recite the following prayer:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted His only Son; In you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man

Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father, and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us Grace, Mercy and Courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.

Easter Prayer (from the Family Prayer Book)

Heavenly Father and God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead,
For He is alive and has become the Lord of life. From the waters of death You raise us with Him
and renew Your gift of life within us.

Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ
And help us to grow as Your people towards the fullness of eternal life with You.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

INVITATION TO PEACE

Stand in our midst
again, today.

Enter the circle of our fears.
Penetrate the darkness of our doubts,
meet us where we are.

May we listen to your spoken 'Shalom'
'Peace be with you...Peace be with you'.

May we see your hands and your side.

May we feel the warmth
of your holy breath,
softening the hardened clay
from whence we come.

Invited, curious like a little child,
we place our trembling hands,
not only on your wounds
but on ours too, and on the lovely
brokenness of others, breathing in forgiveness,
breathing out forgiveness.

Wounds becoming the sacred place of mutual compassion,
and the springboard to an intimate song,
of communion and new possibility,
crafted in the heart, by you,
'Our Lord and our God'

Church Safeguarding: If you have any concerns with regard to Safeguarding children or adults in need of protection within the Church please contact: Noel O'Donnell, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, 71362475, mobile 07596500793 or Celine McKenna, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, 71362475, mobile 07707311358 or PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland) 101 or Social Services.