

Our Spiritual Life.

Pope Francis at Audience: Take time to reflect [in St. Brendan's Muirhouse] on how we live our faith. Put Jesus' love for us at the centre of our lives.

At the General Audience this week Pope Francis continued his teaching on the apostle Paul's Letter to the Galatians when he warns them about straying from their new faith in Jesus Christ. The pope reminds us that we too are invited to reflect on how we live our faith in St. Brendan's and to ensure that our love of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen again, remains at the centre of our daily lives.

The Pope described how St. Paul uses strong terms, like foolishness, to describe the behaviour of the newly baptised community in Galatia, [part of modern-day Turkey] because they risked losing their faith in Jesus Christ, which they had initially received with great enthusiasm. St. Paul appealed to their memory of when he first had offered them the possibility of attaining a new, until then unhopd-for freedom in faith. [Let us think back to the founding of this parish and how the community has developed in the years that have followed up to and including the re-opening for worship as the people will determine.]

St. Paul wanted to shake up their consciences. He reminded the Galatians [and his letter to them reminds us in St. Brendan's] how the word he preached to them focused on God's love, fully revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the grace they received from that. His intention is for the Galatians to avoid falling into the trap of religion based solely on a scrupulous observance of laws, overlooking "the love of Christ, crucified and risen again," which should "remain at the centre of our daily life as the wellspring of salvation".

The Galatians understood what St. Paul was saying. They had like the early community in St. Brendan's experienced the action of the Holy Spirit in their lives, through charity and other charisms [virtues] that were obvious among them, "the fruit of the newness of the Spirit." God was bringing them to faith, the Holy Spirit had been the agent of their experience, but they were putting that all in the background, which Paul described as foolishness.

In conclusion, the Pope said we also need to reflect on where our faith is, and how we live it; and to make sure that Christ's love does remain at the centre of our lives. This is the way to our salvation. We must continually keep to this "precious treasure, to the beauty of the newness of Jesus," rather than to externals, rather than "something that attracts us momentarily but then leaves us empty inside." He said we can be encouraged by the fact that, "even when we are tempted to turn away, God still continues to bestow His gifts... God does not abandon us but rather abides with us in His merciful love"

We are using the book, *Making Time for Prayer, Jesus and God*, by Fr. Gerald O'Collins, to provide help for parishioners who wish to nourish and deepen their spiritual life. **We continue this week with: Prayer as being questioned.**

The first significant words we hear someone say to us can determine our relationship with them for good or ill. In the Gospel of John, many first words spoken by Jesus to an individual are recorded and these become very significant in determining the outcome of the encounter - the steward at the marriage feast at Cana, Nicodemus the Pharisee who comes to see Jesus in the darkness, the Samaritan woman at the well, Bartimaeus, the man who is blind from his birth, and Martha and Mary after the death of Lazarus. Above all, the two disciples of John the Baptist who follow Jesus and are confronted by him asking them "What do you want?" Their answer "where do you live?" becomes the introduction into a complete change in their way of living. You will hear questions like that put to you by Jesus if you spend time in prayer using the models for praying which the book offers you. "What are you looking for? What do you want to do with your life?"

Two weeks ago, at the end of chapter 6 of John's Gospel, we learned that many of the followers of Jesus drifted away because they found the language of the Eucharist - unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you will not have live within you - to be intolerable. They could not accept what he had said. Jesus asks his closest disciples, "What about you, will you go too?" There is more than one way of going away from Jesus - you can become half-hearted in following him - you remain near him but not with him. We should all take time over this question and answer it honestly through the time we give willingly to prayer. All the questions which are put by Jesus are summed up in the final conversation between Peter and Jesus, where Peter is asked three times "do you love me?" Fr. O'Collins begs his readers to let Jesus put that question to them in their times of personal prayer using the several means of praying which he offers his readers.

Prayer is indispensable: From the very first letter of the New Testament, St. Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians, we learn that Christians were encouraged to pray continually. We will pick up next week the vertical [prayer] and horizontal [activity] signs which characterised the Christians to the extent that the lack of either detracted from their discipleship.

St. Brendan's Church – the place of worship and Sacraments for families.

The parish gathering together fully once again for Sunday worship in the church will be re-established by the Holy Spirit in God's own time and by his grace. Members of a parish community who fulfil their desire to come together [assemble] consistently for the celebration of Mass on the Sabbath Day [Sunday], make known and nourish the spiritual health of that community in Jesus Christ.

Let us pray that as we seek to deepen our spiritual health as individuals and as a community, **our hearts will be close to God** and that the words of Jesus recorded in last Sunday's Gospel reading will not apply to our acts of worship:

Jesus answered [the scribes and the Pharisees], 'It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture:

This people honours me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me.

The worship they offer me is worthless, the doctrines they teach are only human regulations.

We have an opportunity to keep our hearts close to God by the way we engage with parents in the preparation of their children for the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion and linked to these Sacraments, also the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We also link to the families of the parish through the chaplaincy to their children and young people who attend OLHS.

1. Next Sunday, three children will be baptised, Nathan James Doyle, son of Mark and Hazel and two children from the family of Peter Mai, another of the Vietnamese families who have settled here.
2. The First Friday Mass for the Primary School will be celebrated here on Friday, at 9.30AM. This was deferred until Fr. Ness had returned to the parish. Only the Primary 7 children will come to Mass in the church with their teachers, but the Mass will be relayed to the other children by video link to the school.
3. The Patronal Feast Day Mass at OLHS, normally celebrated on the Feast of the Birthday of Our Lady which is on Wednesday, will be celebrated there by Fr. Ness on Friday at 11.30AM. The current protocols mean that the pupils and students can't all attend and so the Caritas students from 6th year will come for Mass to the Oratory and represent the whole school.
4. Mass will be said this week for each of the six First Year classes, two each day on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Mass in the parish will not be affected by the timings for the six Masses in the High School.

"First Holy Communion Mass" on Saturday Second October at 11 AM will be marked by the emphasis placed on the spirituality of the preparation at home, in the church and in the school. The parish will make a gift to each of the twenty-eight children at the Mass which will follow on 3rd October when all the children will be invited to return to meet and be greeted by the community with whom they are now in full Communion. A poster is on display at the Entrance and in the Parish Hall to record the names of all the children participating. **The Faith Friends programme for this Sacrament continues this week and next week. For any child who cannot manage to attend on Sunday, they have the one option: to come after school on Thursday at 3.pm to the Liturgy Room**

Confirmation on 25th November. Our preparation with the children of P7 will begin on Sunday 19th September.

The Church has shown her concern for all children through the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. Pope Francis has called to mind this week the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and the beginning of the **Season of Creation**, which will conclude on October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. He said this year's theme is, "**A Home for All? Renewing God's Oikos [Greek: home]**", and that a message for the occasion will be released soon together with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, [Greek Orthodox Church] and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby [Anglican Communion]. He concluded inviting everyone to "pray and work for our common home in these times of grave planetary crisis," together with our brothers and sisters of different Christian denominations. **It is an opportunity also to invite our young people in P7 in St. Brendan's and their families to be active participants in the Church's worship and mission.**

PRAYER INTENTION REQUESTS FROM PARISHIONERS:

Those who have died recently: Tracey Cairns [St. Patrick's].

those whose Month Mind or Anniversary occurs about now: Betty Ford [4th]; Margaret Rose Kane [4th]; Therese Welsh [1st].

THE YEAR OF THE FAMILY 2021: COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

Music ministry at the Saturday Vigil Mass: Jamie and Cat Bulloch with their daughter Lucy [P5] now provide this at 5pm. Young musicians or singers from Primary and Secondary schools are invited to join them to form a Group who would work together to develop music at this Mass and others by introducing other instruments and harmonies. Families with children interested in giving of their musical talent to the community - please come along to this Mass.

Confirmation Mass for P7 children on 25th November at 7PM. Bishop Toal emphasises the need to prepare the Confirmandi very well for the celebration of this Sacrament. **For our part we will use the three letters P - E - W as an easy way to remember the basis of fruitful and positive preparation. PRAYER, ENCOUNTER, WITNESS.** The names of the children who have requested this Sacrament will be displayed next Sunday on a poster in the entrance to the church. The preparation ENCOUNTER will begin on Sunday 19th September at the 10.30 Mass and all children who have requested the Sacrament should attend at this Mass.

Primary 1 pupils in St. Brendan's: we would love to invite all families with children in this class to come to Mass on 3rd October at 10.30AM and join with the families of the P5 children who will have celebrated First Holy Communion on the previous day. The Covid precautions make that unwise for the safety of all and so we will postpone that invitation to the following Sunday, 10th October at 10.30AM.

On Wednesday using table service, the Coffee Morning ladies to try to re-establish the social life of the parish will re-start the catering in the hall for the Morning Mass community, **after Mass at 9.30 is celebrated in the church.**

Family matters: last week the Spiritan Fathers replaced Fr. Ness to celebrate daily Mass for the community. We thank both Richard and Terry for their service to the priests and the community in providing transport on four of the five days. Fr. Nees has now experienced the full effect of registration and testing for return flights outwith the UK. The system is very efficient, but it is also meticulous, is very time consuming and involves considerable expense.

Next Sunday Collection for the cost of formation of Diocesan priests at colleges in Rome and in Birmingham.

The Piety Stall is located at the main entrance of the church: and will be opened at the end of each Mass. Please re-enter the church after Mass from the main entrance to browse or buy there. **My Day-by-Day booklets and the Magnificat for September** are available there to parishioners.

Keeping things safe for all who come to St. Brendan's is our priority.

This week revised Guidelines were issued to us by the Bishops of Scotland. The parish priest is to regularly assess if it is appropriate to re-introduce social distancing of one metre throughout the church, and not only in part(s) of it [Telephone Kathleen on 07585-225837](mailto:Kathleen@stbrendanrcdom.com) or [Lynne on 07803-314555](mailto:Lynne@stbrendanrcdom.com) for any information about the updated Guidelines you feel you need to resume your participation at Mass.

We now use two machines which spray a water-based cleaning agent [almost like dew settling], to sanitise the church and the hall. This moisture dries within minutes when sprayed from a distance and is not hazardous.

The work on the concrete platform and ramp will continue this week. Taylor Construction has asked that the car park be closed during its working hours other than for supervised use of it by those attending the Monday Club. In the absence of Fr. Ness last week, we await the decision of the Diocesan Property Committee on the car park's renovation.

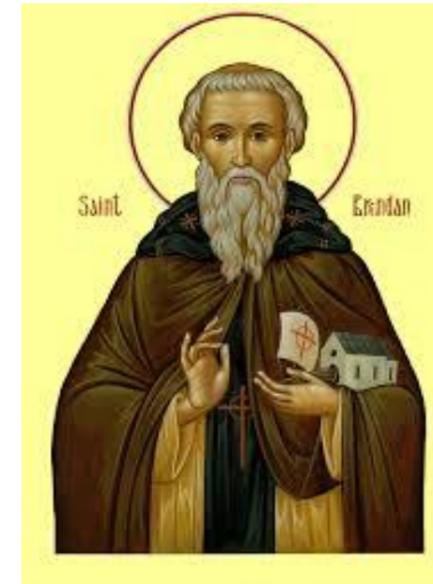
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Twenty-third week in Ordinary Time.

Fifth day of September 2021.

Liturgies for this week: [The National Pilgrimage to Carfin is today at 3pm.](#)

Monday, Tuesday, WEDNESDAY, Thursday and Friday: Mass at 9.30 AM

[streamed live on our Facebook page.]

Note: Mass on Friday at 9.30 will be celebrated with P7 pupils as the "First Friday," and live streamed to the school on its system as well as to the parish on our system.

Saturday: [Mass at 9.30 celebrated when appropriate as a Votive Mass of Our Lady as Mother of the Church for the intention of the building up of the worshipping community in our parish]; the Vigil Mass is now at 5pm.

Sunday: Mass at 10.30AM [celebrated and presented for children with their families - please see the Note on page 3 of the bulletin about this Mass] and at 4.30pm.

[Mass on Saturday at 5pm and Mass on Sunday at both 10.30AM and 4.30PM is streamed live on our Facebook page.]