

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Right Sizing by Sarah de Nordwall

Life is changing size
And we have new rulers
With which to measure the dimensions of the age.
Priests are broadcasters now
Proclaiming the Word of God to all the earth
And the faithful are hermits
Alone in their homes and meditating on death
And the value of the lives they have been given.
Nurses are the new heroines
Doctors the new heroes
Those who collect the rubbish
Are hailed from the highest balconies
And those stacking shelves are the protagonists of the survival of civilisation.
Celebrities are only noticed when they are sick and in need of prayer
The politicians have become servants
Devoted to saving lives as they struggle with sickness we share
Those dying alone are accompanied by the Loving Graces
of the Church so freely given.
A deluge of Invisible Love
At the gates of eternity.
And human tragedy breaks the hearts of every person
The world has just turned upside down
The right way up at last.

A letter of appreciation for our virtual services from the UK contained this poem which was composed by Sarah de Nordwell, having watched Mass on her laptop.

The Parish Centre 057 8621142

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Parish and Diocesan Websites: www.portlaoiseparish.ie www.kandle.ie

Living In A Virtual World

This week think about people who are living in isolation, but are doubly affected because they do not understand the technology of Zoom or the internet, or are hard of hearing. Writing good old fashioned letters is an often forgotten way to keep in touch.

Cemetery Masses in St. Peter & Paul's Portlaoise and Ratheniska are postponed until restrictions are lifted.



Bitesize

Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake.

Victor Hugo

French dramatist, novelist, & poet (1802 - 1885)

ON LINE DONATIONS

Thank you

There has been a very generous response to our on-line donation facility. We are very grateful for your support at this time.

If you wish to contribute in this way you may do so by visiting our website www.portlaoiseparish.ie and follow the directions to donate. It is a fully secure payment system. We fully appreciate how difficult a time financially this is for so many whose jobs and businesses are effectively locked down.

We are grateful for the support we receive.

Thank You.

Priests of the Parish



Msgr. John Byrne P.P.V.G.
Tel: 057 8621142



Fr. Ciprian Matei C.C.
Tel: 057 8509998



Fr. David Vard C.C.
Tel: 057 8661139



Fr. Eddie Lalor C.C.
Tel: 057 8661605



Fr. Tom O'Connor P.E.
(Parish Chaplain)

To contact the Priest on Duty:
Parish Centre during office hours
Tel: 057 8621142
**Outside office hours
in emergency only
Tel: 057 8621364**

Safeguarding

All safeguarding statements and policies can be viewed on our website and our Church Porches.

Diocesan Designated Liaison Person
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Sr. Sybil and Sr. Julie

(Sacristy phone attended prior to Mass times)

**All Masses and services from the Parish Church
are live streamed www.portlaoiseparish.ie**



Secretary: Julie Conroy

Monday to Thursday

11am to 1pm & 2.15pm to 5pm

057-8692154

Advertising deadline: 12 noon Wednesday

Subject to availability of space

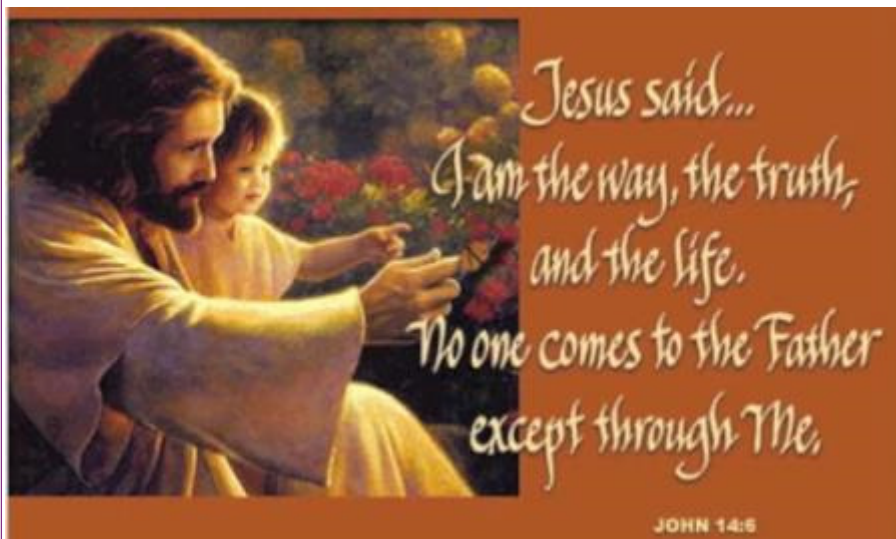
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PARISH SHOP

057 8621142



A PLACE FOR US



Maybe we feel that if we only had the perfect job in the perfect community, then finally we wouldn't feel so restless. Maybe we feel that if we could meet that perfect partner, then finally we could be ready to settle down. Maybe we feel as though if we could

just get the children through to school and into a good university we could take a well-earned break from life's treadmill. If only we could achieve a certain goal, or settle some old score we could finally obtain peace. It never seems to happen ... it seems to be part of our human condition to be forever restless. Perhaps we are at our closet to feeling at peace when the day is done and we close our own front door on the world, though even then there's the dog to be fed and the children to be bathed and put to bed. In the gospel reading today, Jesus directly addresses our yearning for peace. "Do not let your hearts be troubled I go to prepare a place for you...." What a very comforting thought. God has prepared a little corner of heaven especially for us. What will our little corner of heaven be like, and more importantly, how must we find our way there?

In today's gospel, Jesus is preparing his disciples for the time when he will no longer be with them in the flesh. Jesus assures them that although their relationship is changing, it's not ending. The assurance for us all is that through our belief in Jesus, we will find our home with God. "I am the way, and the truth and the life..." Jesus leaves us with the promise that following his teachings is the way to ultimate peace.

Pope Francis writes new prayers, asks Catholics to pray Rosary in May for end to coronavirus pandemic.

Pope Francis asked Catholics to make a special effort in May to pray the rosary, knowing that by doing so they will be united with believers around the world asking for Mary's intercession in stopping the coronavirus pandemic.



"Contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary, our mother, will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial," the pope said in a letter addressed to all Catholics and released by the Vatican April 25.

The month of May is traditionally devoted to Mary and many Catholics already are in the habit of praying the rosary at home during the month, he noted. "The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this 'family' aspect, also from a spiritual point of view."

"You can decide according to your own situations" whether to pray individually or in groups, he said, noting that "it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow." Pope Francis wrote two prayers to Mary that can be recited at the end of the rosary, prayers he said he would be reciting "in spiritual union with all of you."

Both prayers acknowledge Mary's closeness to her son's followers and ask for her protection and for her intercession just as she interceded with Jesus on behalf of the newlyweds at Cana who had run out of wine for their wedding feast.

"We know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial," one of the prayers read.

"Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future," one of the prayers said.

"Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need," it continued. "Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer."

Here are the texts of two prayers, written by Pope Francis, for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. He is asking people to recite the rosary and pray these prayers afterward.

"We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God."

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes toward us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

O Mary,

You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you,

Health of the Sick, who, at the foot of the cross, were united with Jesus' suffering, and persevered in your faith.

"Protectress of the Roman people," you know our needs, and we know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves

to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us.

For he took upon himself our suffering, and burdened himself with our sorrows to bring us, through the cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.



The beautiful images of the 20 Mysteries of the Rosary at Our Lady's Shrine in the Parish Church are the work of Artist Anne Murphy, Eala Enamels. Anne is also responsible for the colourful enamelling adorning our Altar and Ambo and Cross. The Shrine consists of Our Lady's Altar with an image of St. Dominic receiving the Rosary from Mary, the statue of Mary Queen of the World, and the 20 enamels depicting the mysteries of the Rosary, each one a work of art in its own right. They are illustrated on the next page. You might use them during the praying of the Rosary in this month of May.



The Joyful Mysteries



The Annunciation



The Visitation



The Birth of Our Lord



The Presentation in
the Temple



The finding in the Temple

The Mysteries of Light



The Baptism in the
Jordan



The Wedding feast of
Cana



The Proclamation of
the Kingdom



The Transfiguration



The Institution of the
Eucharist

The Sorrowful Mysteries



The Agony in the Garden



The Scouring at the Pillar



The Crowning with thorns



The carrying of the Cross



The Crucifixion

The Glorious Mysteries



The Resurrection



The Ascension



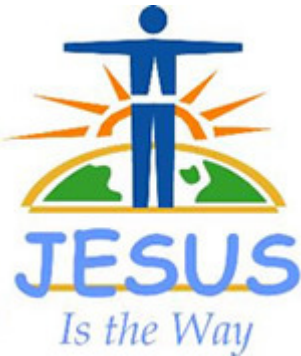
The Descent of
the Holy Spirit



The Assumption



The Coronation



I Am the Way

There was a time when a person going on a trip wouldn't think of beginning their journey without a road map. A map was very helpful to the traveller in finding the way to where they were going. Today we seldom ever use a road map. Do you know why? Most of us who own a car also have a sat nav (satellite navigation) in our car. How does a sat nav work? When you are ready to go somewhere, you type in the address where you want to go and the sat nav connects to a satellite up above the earth and computes the path to your destination. As soon as you start driving, a map appears on the screen and a voice from the Sat. Nav. gives you turn by turn directions. "Turn right on Main Street in one mile, turn right in one half mile, turn right in 150 feet, turn right." What happens if you miss your turn? The GPS says, "Recalculating" and immediately computes a new route to get you back on the right path to your destination.

When we are trying to follow Jesus in our daily life, it would be nice to have a sat nav to lead us in the right direction, wouldn't it? It would be nice to have something to keep us on the right path and keep us from getting lost...something that would help us get back on the right track when we made a wrong decision.

That is the way Jesus' disciples must have felt when Jesus told them that he was going to leave them. Jesus said to them, "I am going to prepare a place for you and when everything is ready, I will come and get you so that you will always be with me. You know the way to where I am going."

One of the disciples whose name was Thomas answered Jesus, "No, we don't, Lord. We don't even know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

Another disciple named Philip joined in, "Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied."

"Philip," Jesus answered, "Have you been with me all this time and you still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show you the Father? Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Anyone who believes in me will do the same things I have done."

That was all the disciples needed to know to get them on the right path to the Father. So, how do you and I find our way to the place where Jesus has gone to be with the Father? We have not seen Jesus as Thomas and Philip had, but we can follow the teachings that he has given to us in the Bible -- God's Holy Word. That is our sat nav and it will keep us on the right path!

Dear Jesus

Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending your Son to provide the way to eternal life.
Thank you for your Holy Word which will keep us on the right path in our journey
through life. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Finding the Way



Complete the paragraph by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the story.

'Do not let your _____ be troubled. _____ in God still, and trust in me. There are many _____ in my Father's _____; if there were not, I should have told you.

I am going now to _____ a _____ for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too.

You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'

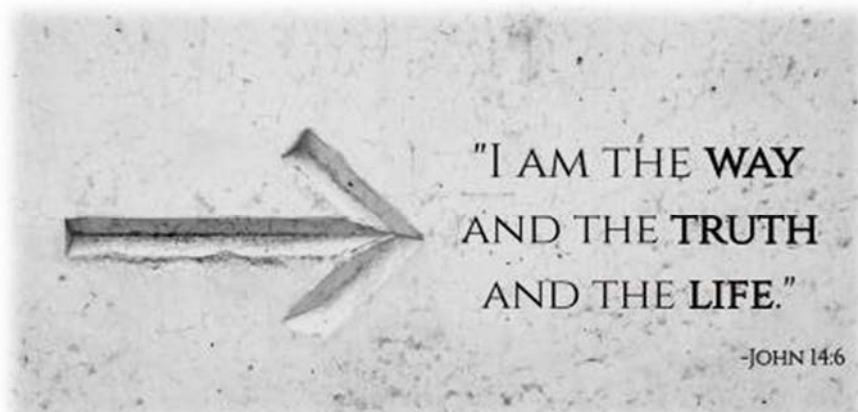
Jesus answered, 'I am the _____, the _____ and the _



_____. No one can come to the _____ except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too.

From this moment you know him and have seen him.'

Father	house	place	rooms	truth
hearts	life	prepare	Trust	way



OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY

Pat Lillis, Kilminchy



Michael (Mick) Cullen
Kilteale

Sr. Madeleine Maher,
Mountmellick
Presentation Sisters,
and formerly Rathleague



MAY THEY REST IN PEACE
Our sympathy to their families

*Come to me, all of you who are tired
from carrying your heavy loads,
and I will give you rest...*



Let us pray for the many people
who are dying alone,
without being able to say goodbye
to their loved ones.
Let us pray also for the families who
cannot accompany their loved ones
on that journey.

Pope Francis - March 2020



In Loving Memory of MARY (Moira) DOWLING

Borris Rd., Portlaoise.

3rd Anniversary occurs 11th May 2020.



You are near even if we don't see you,
You are with us even if you are far away,
You are in our thoughts and
in our lives always.

*Sadly missed and always remembered by
her sons and daughter and their families.*

Rest in Peace Mary



In Loving Memory of KEVIN O'ROURKE

Cherrygarth, Portlaoise.

3rd Anniversary occurs 15th May 2020.



Anniversary Mass will be
celebrated in Sts. Peter & Paul's
Parish Church on Sunday
17th May at 10am.

*Sadly missed by his loving wife
Jane and family.*

Rest in Peace Kevin



Praying for those who mourn

during this time of the Coronavirus COVID-19

Lord of all gentleness,
You are close to the broken-hearted.
We entrust into your care
those who mourn the loss of a loved one this day.
Surround them with your love
and comfort them in their sorrow.
Grant that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss.
May they know the consolation and support
of the Christian community.
Give them confidence in your goodness
and strength to meet the days ahead.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.





TIME TO THINK!

Holding on to faith, hope and love

Living through this pandemic, coping with isolation whilst managing our mental health is undoubtedly a challenge. It is completely normal to be feeling overwhelmed and worried during this time. We may also experience feelings of anxiety, powerlessness, fear, irritability and depression. However there are steps you can take to care for and manage your well-being.

1. Take a break from news and social media.

If the media coverage is overwhelming and heightening your anxiety, it may be useful to allocate set times throughout the day to catch up on news and updates. Too much time on social media, googling things and excessive exposure to media coverage may increase your anxiety. This is an unsettling time for us, therefore it's important to remember the facts and only listen to or follow reliable news sources.

2. Pray look after yourself

Our basic self-care needs include, taking deep breaths, exercising, eating healthily, staying hydrated and getting enough sleep. However we can further care for our well-being by creating an evening unwind session. Take 20 -40 minutes in the evening to reflect and relax.

This can include reading, taking a bath, listening to music or practicing a guided breathing exercise on YouTube. Praying at this time is food for the soul, know that there is no social distancing when it comes to the healing presence of God in our lives. God's healing presence is available for us all.

3. Maintain connections

Even though we are further apart physically through social distancing, this does not mean we need to lose our connections with family and friends. It is so important to keep in touch. Call, Skype, video call, message, text or email. It will help you and help them. We all need to check in with each other, to talk about our fears and worries, to reassure and offer each other support.

4. Routine

Routine is key in helping us to care for our mental health and well-being. The lack of it can have a huge impact on thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Create a new routine, get up every morning at the same time, get washed and dressed. Even though you are at home and staying in a lot, it is important for your wellness. Sleep and diet are both also so important for your immune system, so stick to a good routine and make sure that you are getting enough sleep and eating well.

5. Lower your expectations

It is okay if you're not on top of home schooling, or if you haven't learned a new skill or spring cleaned your home. Experiencing difficulty in concentrating and low motivation are to be expected. Adaptation will take time. So please go easy on yourself. Try not to compare to others on social media or in WhatsApp groups. What is important right now, is to go easy on yourself and to lower your expectations.

6. Stay in the present

Take each day as it comes and focus on the things you can control. Mindfulness and meditation are great tools to help you do this.

Remind yourself this is temporary and focus on what you can control.

7. Reach out

If you have a pre-existing mental health condition and you have an appointment with your therapist or doctor, please keep them. If you need help or support right now, it is available.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis has been offering encouragement to the world.

From praying the Our Father with Christians of every denomination, to imparting an extraordinary Urbi et Orbi blessing, he has accompanied each action with powerful words about keeping hope and courage alive.

HOPE

Pope Francis reminds Christians of their identity and that God is never-changing, even during this time.

Palm Sunday Mass - April 5, 2020

So that when we have our back to the wall, when we find ourselves at a dead end, with no light and no way of escape, when it seems that God Himself is not responding, we should remember that we are not alone. Jesus experienced total abandonment in a situation he had never before experienced in order to be one with us in everything. He did it for me, for you, to say to us: "Do not be afraid, you are not alone."

Santa Marta - April 2, 2020

We are Christians because we were chosen. In this election, there is a promise. There is a promise of hope. The sign is fruitfulness.

He recalls that going from the season of Lent to Easter, and Jesus' death to resurrection, Christ remains the hope for Christians.

Urbi et Orbi Blessing – March 27, 2020

The Lord asks us from His cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look toward those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled.

Urbi et Orbi – April 12, 2020

This is a different type of "contagion." It's a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is the contagion of hope, "Christ, my hope, is risen!" This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not "by-pass" suffering and death, but passes through them.

He doesn't play down the difficulties and suffering, but says in order to face them, courage is also needed.

COURAGE Pope Francis asks people not to give up in this time. He says to remember that God is bigger than any problem that could arise.

Prayer to Discover Your Vocation

Almighty God,
You have made me to know you,
To love you, and to serve you,
And thereby to find and fulfil myself.
I know that you are in all things
And that every path can lead me to you,
But, of them all, there is one path especially
By which you want me to come to you.
Since I will do what you want of me,
I pray you; send your Holy Spirit to me;
Into my mind to show me what you want of me;
Into my heart to give me the
determination to do it,
And to do it with all my love, with all my mind,
And with all my strength, right to the end.
Amen.

Coronavirus COVID-19

A PARISH INITIATIVE

DURING THIS CRISIS

For the Elderly and Vulnerable in our Parish

If you need any assistance during this time, to pick up prescriptions or to do some shopping, or would like to talk to someone we have a team of volunteers ready to help. Please call

085 2125978.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT DURING COVID 19

THE PORTLAOISE PARISH BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT TEAM WOULD LIKE TO OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES TO ALL FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE ESPECIALLY DURING COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS. WE ARE CONSCIOUS THAT THIS IS A VERY DIFFICULT TIME FOR THE BEREAVED AND HAVE INCLUDED SOME INFORMATION FOR YOU TO ACCESS SHOULD YOU REQUIRE SUPPORT.

**IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION
SUPPORT DURING CARONAVIRUS**
www.bereaved.ie

**HSE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT
DURING CARONAVIRIS** www.hse.ie

**PORTLAOISE PARISH BEREAVEMENT
SUPPORT 087 9878300**

PRAYER AT TIME OF BEREAVEMENT

Lord, you are close
to the broken hearted
Be with me now in
my grief and loneliness.
Give me courage to face loss
and not grieve in silence
Be with me as I struggle with the many
different and painful feelings.
Ease the hurt in my heart
Encircle me in your love.
Help me to believe that one day I will
no longer have this deep sorrow.
May I find comfort in sharing my grief
with those who understand
the strong bonds of love
Stay with me, Lord support me
Help me to know your power is at work
within me as I deal with my grief.