

PORTLAOISE
PARISH
**link
up**
19th April 2020

Second Sunday of Easter

Christ is Risen Alleluia!

As we celebrate the Easter Vigil

the body of our Parish Church resembles the Empty Tomb!

But we do know that 1000's joined us via our webcam, Radio and ShalomWorld.tv to celebrate Jesus victory over sin and death. A victory that fills us with hope as we look beyond these difficult days to a more normal and happier time.

The Parish Centre 057 8621142

E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie

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

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& Like Us  fb.com/portlaoiseparishlaois
fb.com/portlaoiselinkup

Living in a Virtual World A Visit to the Vatican

Being stuck at home doesn't mean that we can't get our 'cultural fix'. Thanks to 'virtual tours' there are many museums that we can visit virtually.

Unless your computer happens to be an antique, the Vatican museums are a great place to begin. Start with a 360° view of Michelangelo's masterpiece, the Sistine Chapel. While the painted ceiling is a showstopper, each chapel wall explores a different aspect of the Christian faith journey: the stories of Moses, Christ, and the Popes throughout history. Then work your way through the remaining Vatican museums: Pio Clementino Museum, Chiaramonti Museum, New Wing, Raphael's Rooms, Niccoline Chapel, and Room of the Chiaroscuro.

To begin your virtual tour, visit
www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/tour-virtuali-elenco.html

ON LINE DONATIONS

Like so many in our community and country the Parish has been severely affected financially by the Coronavirus. Many have been asking how they can make a payment, hand in their envelopes, or contribute to the Easter Collection for the support of the Priests. We have set up an 'on-line donation' facility on our parish website — www.portlaoiseparish.ie and follow the directions to donate. It is a fully secure payment system.

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
Mick Daly dlp@kandle.ie



Parish Centre

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MANAGER Declan Kelly

Parish Secretaries Michelle Bartley
Agnieszka Kaczmarek

Accounts Michelle Conroy

Sacristans Parish Church

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

E-mail: linkup@portlaoiseparish.ie

PARISH SHOP

057 8621142



Finding Faith

What would it be like to have an unerring and unshakeable faith? What would it be like to have a faith driven not by proof but by an inner voice? Most likely it would be life changing. When we truly believe something in our hearts, we begin to act it out in our lives. An unerring faith would enable us to enjoy peace in the darkest corners of our lives, but is there a real danger that our thirst for that life changing faith could lead us to 'leave our brains at the church door'?



Faith and doubt are the flipside of the same coin. In our hurry for faith we can quietly bury any doubts leaving them to fester. On the other hand, we can give so much weight to our doubts that faith eludes us altogether. Doubt isn't necessarily a bad thing, after all, the disciples needed signs, and Thomas in particular needed concrete evidence. Doubt can be a good thing even, if it leads us to answer the questions that will eventually help us to develop a mature faith. Doubt becomes a bad thing when it builds an insurmountable barrier. Thomas believed that it was foolish to believe something without proof, but if we are so afraid of being foolish or fear to believe without scientific evidence, our doubts will never lead us to ask the right questions. Our doubts will only spur us to pick holes.

So how can we use doubt as a positive tool rather than a negative force? Perhaps there's been a time when you've followed a court case where nearly all the evidence has been circumstantial. The jury have the uncomfortable task of reaching a certain belief without all the evidence they would like. Significantly, barristers don't confront jurors with the hardest parts of the case first. Barristers begin by building a picture based on certainties. Only when the case seems overwhelmingly watertight do they introduce points that are more circumstantial. Perhaps this is the way to approach our religious doubts,



Checking the Roll

What is the first thing a teacher does at the beginning of the school day? I don't know about your teacher, but the very first thing many teachers do each day is to check the roll. The teacher opens the roll book and begins to call out the names... Johnny, Susie, Aoife, Mary, James. As the student's names are called, they raise their hand and answer, "Here!" If the teacher calls Ciara's name and she is not there, the teacher marks in the roll book that she was absent. Why is it important for the teacher to know that Ciara is absent? It is important because she needs to be told what she missed when was absent.



That's similar to something that happened in the gospel today. It was the Sunday after Jesus was crucified and his disciples had gathered together in a locked room. They were together in that locked room because they were afraid. They were afraid of what Jesus' enemies might do to them. The Gospel tells us that, even though the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood there with his disciples. When the disciples saw Jesus, they were very happy.

One of the disciples, whose name was Thomas, was not there with the others in that room when Jesus appeared to them. I don't know why Thomas wasn't there. Perhaps he was sick, or maybe he just decided to stay at home that day. The next time the other disciples saw Thomas, they told him what he had missed when he was absent. They said, "We have seen Jesus. He is alive!" Thomas didn't believe them. He said, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it,"

The next week the disciples were in the house again, and this time Thomas was with them. The very same thing happened again. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among his disciples. He turned to Thomas and said, "See my hands; put your fingers here. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas didn't need to touch the wounds where the nails had been or put his hand into his side. He fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "My Lord and my God!"

One of the great promises Jesus made was when he said, "Where two or three gather in my name, I am there with them." Each week we come together in the name of Jesus to worship and to praise him. So, what do we miss out on if we are absent? We miss out on the same thing that Thomas missed out on when he was absent -- the chance to be with Jesus!



Father, we have come into this house and gathered in your name today because we want to be with you. We have come to worship and praise your name. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

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

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for the fear of the Jews, _____ came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his _____ and _____. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Now _____, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have _____ the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see _____ marks in his hands and put my where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not _____ it."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were _____, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side.

Stop _____ and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"



Believe	finger	Jesus	Nail
side	doubting	hands	
locked	seen	Thomas	

First Holy Communion in our Parish

The First Holy Communions are still undecided. We do not know when the Government will lift the restrictions on Churches being able to gather our people. If the schools reopen we will probably be allowed to celebrate First Communions. We apologise that we can't be more definite but the decision is not in our hands.



Statement by Bishop Denis Nulty on the deaths of eight residents at Saint Fintan's Hospital, Portlaoise

"Every life matters. Every life counts. Every life is precious irrespective of age or potential productivity." – Bishop Nulty

News broke last evening of the coronavirus related deaths of eight residents in the Maryborough Centre at Saint Fintan's Hospital in Portlaoise. This news brings home to us in a very dramatic way the huge need for special care for those who are grouped together in similar centres or in homes for vulnerable or older people.

We pray for those who have passed away in such distressing circumstances. We offer our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the deceased. We give them and all who have worked to care for their loved ones the assurance of our prayers.

A very special word of thanks to all who work in any capacity in caring for those who have contracted or are threatened with this terrible virus – management, medical and nursing staff, carers, general workers in those centres and hospitals, suppliers and those who deliver those supplies to meet the many varied needs at this time of crisis. The hearts and hands of the staff are the hearts and hands of family to many many patients at this time. It is imperative that the best possible treatment is made available to those who are most vulnerable to Covid-19 and that staff working in these homes and facilities are equipped with a sufficient and proper supply of PPE. Every life matters. Every life counts. Every life is precious irrespective of age or potential productivity.

In the nightly news reports, we hear many statistics that may confuse us. I am conscious that we might lose the person that is behind every statistic – this is someone's mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, son, daughter or friend. I am reminded of the very evocative poem composed and recited by a listener in memory of her recently deceased sister, on Joe Duffy's Liveline, broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1, earlier this week My sister is not a statistic. And neither is she or anyone who dies because of Covid-19 or who has tested positive. During this Easter week, we must all turn in confidence to the Risen Christ and pray that he will soon bring these threat-filled times to an end, knowing that he walks with all of us and always calms our fears.

The hearts and hands of the staff are the hearts and hands of family to many many patients at this time. It is imperative that the best possible treatment is made available to those who are most vulnerable to Covid-19 and that staff working in these homes and facilities are equipped with a sufficient and proper supply of PPE.
- Bishop Denis Nulty



**OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR
THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY**



Eileen Booth
Hawthorn Drive

Una Tynan
Ballydavis



Mary (Mai) Burns
Ashborne &
formerly Block Road

Tony Carroll
Lambeth, London
& formerly O'Moore Place



**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
EAMON & CARMEL SMYTH**



*Late of 11 Cois na Habhainn, Green Mill Lane, Portlaoise.
Mass for both will be celebrated on 23rd April at 10am
in St. Peter and Paul's Church.
It's the 1st Anniversary for Carmel.*



*Memories are like
leaves of gold,
They never tarnish or grow old,
No more tomorrows
for us to share,
But yesterdays memories
will always be there.*

*Sadly missed and always remembered by your loving
sons, daughters, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, sisters,
brothers, grandchildren, great-grandchildren
and extended family xxx*

May Eamon & Carmel Rest in Peace



**In Loving Memory of
ELIZABETH MARY
McEVOY**



*64 Beladd, Summerhill Lane, Portlaoise.
5th Anniversary will be celebrated in St. Peter &
Paul's Church on Sat. 25th April at 10am Mass.*



A brief moment of darkness was all that I knew
before Heaven's gate came into my view.
Loved ones and friends I had missed for years
welcomed me with arms open
and many happy tears.

All the hurt, fear and pain that I have ever known
is gone from my life now that I'm finally home.
I know that you miss me but please dry your eyes.
I will always be watching you from my home in the
sky. A cool breeze on your face a touch of light rain
I will send as a reminder that we will be reunited
again. Life on earth is but one brief moment in time
I am finally home, eternity is mine.

Life goes on without you but nothing is the same.
It is hard to hide the heartache when someone
speaks your name. Sad are the hearts
that love you, silent are the tears that fall,
living without you is the hardest part of all;
you did so many things for us, your heart was
so kind and true and when we needed someone,
we could always count on you.

Those special years we had together will not return,
when some day we are all together
but with the love in our hearts
you walk with us forever.

From sunrise to sunset every moment would have
been more wonderful if you were with us today.
Your memories will live forever and
will never be forgotten.



Missing you always Mother,
God bless you Mother,
Forever in my heart,
Love James x





TIME TO THINK!

No Social distancing from Christ

Who says that Christ is not Risen this year?

When in fact he is dressed in a blue gown in green and white in our hospitals.

Who says that the Nazarene cannot do penance when all do penance by attending to the sick in our emergency rooms and wards.

Who says that the crucified Jesus is not coming out on Good Friday?

Look at him in our Doctors and Nurses who fall tired and exhausted with humble Simon of Cyrenes helping at each step.

Nurses, carers, porters, doctors, cleaners side by side at each step without rest like Jesus who passed through the earth on a donkey.

So do our heroic pilots, truck drivers travel through the night to supply hospitals, supermarkets, neighbourhoods, pharmacies and shops.

The police patrol deserted streets and they are not with their families because they are taking care of ours.

And far from the cities Jesus still works and furrows, He goes to sea in a boat, digs wells, lays cables and grazes the cattle.

Let no one say that the Lord is not present in our streets, when in empty Churches priests celebrate daily Mass.

Let no one say that the condemned one is not coming out this year as long as there is a kindly voice invoking the one locked up.

Let no one say that the all powerful one will not walk among us, when so many are praying and offering their lives in love with tiredness and good humour and without fail.

Christ is also present in supermarkets replenishing shelves or looking after the desk.

Jesus comes in the truck collects our rubbish and goes away unnoticed.

When I see so many people throughout the world who have had to bury their loved ones, I feel that the Virgin of Sorrows, Mary, has come out with her son in her lap, just like the Pieta.

And if passing through death, frightens us all ~ our strength lies in the one who has conquered the world.

Now you see Christ meeting you in the midst of life all around, hidden in a thousand faces without candles or bells but we will continue to smell the incense of the faith of our people.

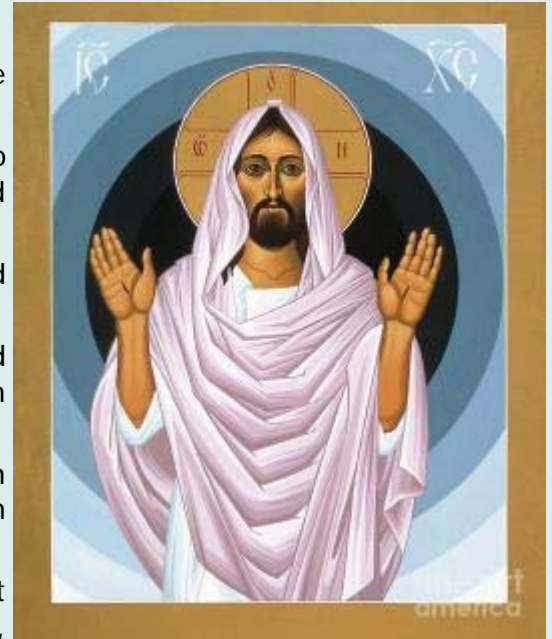
Love leaps over the walls, the heart does not lock up.

This is not a time to be full of fear or anxious but rather to unite ourselves with the Risen Jesus.

There is no social distancing when it comes to his loving and warm embrace.

Christ light is brighter than any darkness.

I pray in the challenge of now we receive the grace of Peace, the protection of health and resilience and courage that flows from the tender heart of Christ.



Easter Vigil Mass 2020



We are so grateful to all who helped us celebrate the ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter and to transmit them via our various media streams. And indeed to all who continue to bring worthy Liturgies on a daily basis from our Parish Church to many homes, not only in our Parish but throughout the World.

To our Music Ministry, to ShalomWorld.tv to our Sisters who serve as Sacristans and to those who prepare the texts and powerpoints and work our cameras - Thank You.



Divine Mercy 3 O'Clock Prayer

St Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938)

You expired, O Jesus
but the source of life
gushed forth for souls
and an ocean of mercy
opened up for
the whole world.

O Fount of Life,
unfathomable

Divine Mercy,
envelop the whole world
and empty

Yourself out upon us.

O Blood and Water,
which gushed forth

from the
Heart of Jesus
as a fount
of mercy for us,
I trust in You.

Amen.

Divine Mercy Sunday
April 19 | 2020



LIVE Telecast
from Ireland

Saints Peter and Paul's Church
Portlaoise, Ireland.

Presided over by
Most Reverend Denis Nulty
Patron, Shalom Media Ireland

3 P BST | 10 A ET



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