

**PORTLAOISE  
PARISH**  
**link  
up**  
**11th April 2021**

  
**DIVINE MERCY**  
*Sunday*



## Easter Vigil

In spite of restrictions a joyful and worthy ceremony.  
Thanks to all who made it so and the many of you who joined via webcam, radio etc.



Responsorial Psalm  
7:1-2,16-17,22-23  
*Response: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*  
Give thanks to the Lord for he  
for his love has no end. Let the  
Israel say: 'His love has no end.  
*Response: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*  
The Lord's right hand has triumphed  
his right hand raised me up.  
I shall not die, I shall live and  
his deeds.  
*Response: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*

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## The Way Forward

For those who find belief elusive, there is an uncomfortable beatitude in today's gospel. "Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe." This can feel like a reproach to those of us who harbour doubts, but the important thing to remember is that doubt can be a good thing. Doubt means that we are still questioning something that we care about. Doubt means that we are still looking for answers ..... that we are still learning and growing. Doubt is a tool that we can use to carve a mature faith. Belief isn't something we either have or haven't got ... belief is a process, and the end product of that process, is one's own spiritual self.

The story of 'Doubting Thomas' is aimed at all those generations of people who will not see the risen Lord, yet are asked to believe. So are we really being asked to believe in what we cannot see or hear or touch, when even those closest to Jesus had problems in accepting what was happening?

In today's gospel we see Thomas struggling with a problem that many of us still struggle with today. Thomas desperately wanted to believe in the risen Jesus, but he wasn't the sort of person to pretend he understood something when he didn't. He wasn't the sort of person that could pretend that he didn't have doubts when he did. There are many of us today who desperately want deeper meaning in our lives. There are those amongst us who have become disillusioned with the Church and wish they could embrace what it once meant. There are many of us who would like to find a deeper faith but have found only stumbling blocks. Like Thomas, we find that the gap between faith and doubt too big a leap. The good news is that just as Jesus showed Thomas patience so he will be patient with us too. The good news is that just as Jesus gave Thomas a way to forward his faith so too will we be shown a way forward if we want it enough.

## Divine Mercy Sunday

This Sunday is popularly known as 'Mercy of God Sunday.' Between 1930 and 1938 Christ appeared to Sister Faustina, a Sister of Mercy in Poland who initiated the Divine Mercy devotion. She was canonized on April 30th, 2000, the Sunday after Easter, the Feast of Divine Mercy. The second Sunday of Easter is also known as 'Low Sunday' or 'Thomas Sunday'.

Join Fr. David on our webcam, Facebook or Shalom World at 3pm on Sunday as he celebrates Divine Mercy Mass.

### SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 4:32-35

Ps 117:2-4, 15-18, 22-243

1Jn 5:1-6

John 20:19-31

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*'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and  
can put my hand into his side,*

*I refuse to believe.'*

*Jesus said: 'Put your finger here;*

*look, here are my hands.*

*Give me your hand; put it into my side.*

*Doubt no longer but believe.'*







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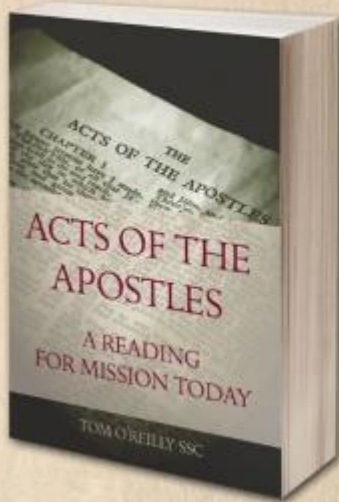
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(Native of Portlaoise)



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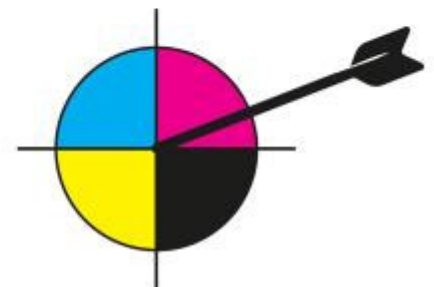


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of Fatima and for  
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# TIME TO THINK!

## EASTER IS A WAY OF LIFE

"He is not here, he is risen", is the signal message which the women receive as they make their way to anoint the dead body of Jesus. That the Lord is truly risen is a fundamental element of the Christian faith.

The Old Testament readings at the Easter Vigil liturgical celebration are all about how God created every dimension of the cosmos as good and that when humankind drifted away from God's original plan, God remained faithful. Throughout the centuries God guided those with faith away from the path of oppression and persecution and domination towards that new liberty which would then be fully achieved in Jesus death and Resurrection. Jesus came to save us, to liberate us for new life. Christianity is a faith of new life and of liberation. Saint Paul, tells us, "In baptism we are joined with Christ's death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life".

"Christianity is a faith of new life and of liberation". What does that mean? For many Christianity has been experienced in precisely the opposite sense. For many Christianity had been turned into a faith of prohibitions. Certain theologies spoke about freeing people from sin, but had developed a concept of sin and sinner which made it almost impossible for a sinner ever to feel himself or herself truly liberated. There were so many rules that many were left with a sense of scrupulosity which left them trapped and oppressed by guilt and doubts. We had created a religion of fear, so much that even when we tried to live the good life we were never left with a sensation of being free.

Certainly Christianity is not a religion of anything can go. The good life is a life lived in goodness rather than in libertinism. We had overlooked that sin in its essence is not a failure to observe rules and norms: is it a failure to love. We could find people who observed all the norms and yet were the deepest of sinners because of the way they lived. We could find poor sinners who failed and failed again but their struggle was a struggle to be loving persons and they realised that the Lord's hand was always there to pick them up again, so that they could stand up once more and with their head hung high. Jesus had a special love for sinners. He reached out to sinners: he spoke to prostitutes and adulterers; he touched lepers and the unclean; he released people from the bonds of possession which weighed them down. Jesus has come to liberate.

The Lord is truly risen. It is not an easy thing to believe. It defies rationality. We note in the various Gospel accounts how the disciples who head out to visit the tomb, head out to anoint a dead body and that when told they find it hard to understand that Jesus is truly risen. Despite what they had heard from Jesus, after his death they found the idea of his rising from the dead almost impossible to believe. Rising from the dead seems impossible. But if Jesus has risen from the dead his message to us is that with faith in him even what seems impossible in our lives can be attained. Rather than a faith that imprisons us in our weakness, Christianity is a faith which opens horizons of possibility. The mercy of God is a sign that the Lord wants us to rise with him to great things. Saint Paul wrote: "As Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory we too might live a new life". We are not called to reflect or discuss the new life. We are called to live the new life. The Christian cannot live at peace in word where people are oppressed. If Christianity is a faith of liberation, then the Christian and the Church of Jesus Christ must be a place of real witness to the reality of the powers of darkness which still today trap people in oppression. None of us can claim to be free if we live immune to the fact of so much oppression and need for liberation. Freedom is not the privilege



of the few: it is a call to take responsibility for all. Too often however we acquiesce in watching oppression.

Too often the Church has fallen into the logic not of new life but of siding with power and conformity and safety. A Christian theology is always a theology of liberation. But it is not an Ideology of liberation. Not every ideology of liberation is really one which will enable people to be free. A true theology of liberation is not purely political. True liberation theology is one which will never leave any politics happy. Liberation is present in the Church through the presence of the Risen Lord who enables us, and challenges us to live the dangerous and perplexing path of freedom. We should not be fearful of the fact that freedom may sometimes lead us in the wrong direction; it is oppression which always leads in the wrong direction.

The Lord is truly risen. Our belief is in the resurrection of the body. The risen body of Christ is the light and the hope for our bodies. How then can we be insensitive to the needs and the suffering of the bodies of children who are victims of violence and abuse; how can we not be angry with those who support an industry which fosters a drug trade which holds people trapped in addiction; how can we hide away from the fact of the sexual exploitation especially of women; how can we be insensitive to hunger and yet spend millions on a false culture of the body; how can we be unconcerned by political and economic cultures which leave men, women and children unable to realise their full abilities.

Jesus is raised to new life. As Christians we are called to live newness of life, a life which is founded on integrity and truth, on honesty and love. The Christian life is a calling for all Christians. There is legitimate separation between Church and State; but the Christian cannot avoid working to ensure that the new life of Christ reaches out into every corner of a society. The Christian cannot remain insensitive to a politics which becomes sterile through tiredness and negativity. The Christian cannot remain insensitive to a Church which becomes trapped in its own self-interest. There is legitimate separation between Church and State, but both can benefit from the contribution of authentic believers.

We celebrate the mystery of Christ who died and Christ who is risen to bring us new life. We thank God for the gift of the new life of the Risen Lord. We open our hearts to the Risen Lord so that we can become heralds of new life to all who lives are troubled, beleaguered and oppressed in mind or body. Easter is a powerful gift of Hope!!! This Easter Season, may we be anointed with great hope and peace.

*O God and Heavenly Father, grant to us the serenity of mind to accept that which cannot be changed; courage to change that which can be changed, and wisdom to know the one from the other, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*







## 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."

**believe          finger          Jesus          nail          side**  
**doubting          hands          locked          seen**  
**Thomas**

**Angel of God,  
my guardian dear,  
to whom God's love commits me here,  
ever this day be at my side,  
to light and guard,  
to rule and guide.  
Amen.**





# Easter 2021 in our Parish







Photos courtesy of Pat Ahern & Agnieszka Kaczmarek

More photos on our website [www.portlaoiseparish.ie](http://www.portlaoiseparish.ie)



OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR  
THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY ;



*Mary Kealey*  
Capoley Lane



*Kathleen Humphries*  
Formerly Grattan Street



*Paddy Carrigan*  
Capoley

*Come to me, all you who are weary and  
burdened, and I will give you rest.*

**MAY THEY REST IN PEACE**  
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1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary occurs 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021.



*As each day dawns and starts anew,  
As each day ends we think of you,  
And in between no matter where,  
Deep in our hearts you're always there.  
We do not need a special day to bring  
you back to mind,  
For days without a thought of you,  
are very hard to find.*

*Will those who think of Una today,  
A little prayer to Jesus say.*

*Sadly missed and loved by her husband John Joe and  
all her loving family and friends.*

*May Una's gentle soul Rest in Peace*



**In Loving Memory of**  
**JOE DOYLE**

Maryborough Village, Portlaoise.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary occurs 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021.



2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Mass will be  
celebrated in Sts. Peter &  
Paul's Parish Church, on  
**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April at 10am.**

*You're Forever in my Heart*  
For all you were to me in life,  
And all the joy you brought,

Your memory is with me, in every single thought.  
The pain I felt at losing you, will never go away,  
But knowing that you're in my heart, helps me  
through each day.

When you were here I always felt, that nothing could  
go wrong, but you're still my inspiration and your  
memory keeps me strong.

And though my heart is heavy, it's also full of love,  
And that's enough to comfort me, while you're in  
Heaven above.

*Always loved, never forgotten, forever missed,  
by Clare X*

*Also remembered by The Delaney and Doyle families  
and friends.*

*Rest in Peace Joe*

You are the

**Light**

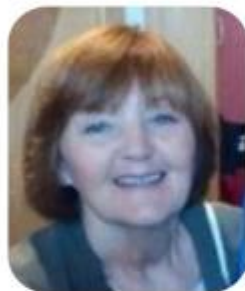
*Of the World*





**BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE**  
**In Loving Memory of**  
**ELIZABETH (Lil) FARRELL**

Green Mill Lane, Ridge Road, Portlaoise.  
Birthday occurs 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - 1<sup>st</sup> birthday in Heaven



I thought of you with love  
today but that is nothing new,  
I thought about you yesterday  
and days before that too,  
I think of you in silence,  
I often speak your name,  
All we have are memories and  
your picture in a frame.

Your memory is our keepsake, with which we will  
never part,  
God has you in His keeping,  
We have you in our hearts.

*Happy Birthday*

*We love and miss you, from your loving husband  
William, children Gemma, William and Eoin,  
son-in-law Kevin, daughters-in-law Lisa and  
Jessica and grandchildren Dylan, Zak, Liadh,  
Grace and Sophia xxx*

*Rest in Peace Elizabeth*

**REMEMBERING**  
**EOIN STONE**

43 Thornberry, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois  
1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary occurs on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021.



*How God Makes Diamonds*  
God makes diamonds out of coal,  
They are harvested from a deep  
dark hole.  
Have you ever wondered why it's  
the case.

That some people are put in a  
very dark place.

For years the coal is put under great strain,  
Some people endure such sorrow and pain.  
Next time you see someone suffering, depressed  
and rugged.

Think first of the coal and then of the nugget.  
One day through God's power they will be  
shining and bright,  
And will sparkle like diamonds on God's glorious  
light. Amen

*Can all those who think of Eoin today,  
a little prayer to Jesus say.*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**MARY BURNS**

Block Rd. Portlaoise.

1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary occurs 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021



Anniversary Mass will be  
celebrated in  
Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church,  
on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April at 10am,  
via webcam.

"You asked for so little, but gave  
so very much"

*Forever in our hearts, Brigid, Joe, Joanne, Michelle  
and Mark,*

*Rest in Peace Mum.*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**LINDA HENRY**

Portlaoise and Limerick Died 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020  
1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary occurred 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021



Dear Friend, those special memoires  
of you will always bring a smile.

If only I could have you back for just  
a little while then we could sit and  
talk again just like we used to do.

You always meant so very much and  
always will do to.

The fact that you are no longer here will always  
cause me pain but your forever in my heart.

*Until we meet again*

*From your friends Katie & Simon*

*Rest in Peace Linda*

**In Loving Memory of**

A dear Husband, Father & Grandfather  
**BRENDAN DELANEY**

Green Mill Lane & St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise.  
Brendan's 89<sup>th</sup> birthday occurs 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary occurs 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021



It's lonely here without you,  
We miss you more each day,  
For life is not the same to us, since you  
were called away,  
To your resting place we visit and place  
flowers there with care,  
But no one knows our heartache when we  
turn and leave you there.

*Sadly missed, never forgotten by your loving wife Anne, Angie,  
Kelley, Tracy, Brendan, Séan, Laura, grandchildren and  
great-grandson.*

Also remembering his mother Mary Delaney, Green Mill  
Lane, whose anniversary occurs 13<sup>th</sup> April. Rest in peace.

*May Brendan Rest in Peace*



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**  
**In Loving Memory of**  
**MERVYN HARVEY**



The family of the late Mervyn Harvey would like to express their sincere thanks to all those who sympathised, sent Mass cards and messages of support on the loss of Mervyn.

We would like to say a very special thank you to all the staff of Portlaoise

Hospital for their kindness and care of Mervyn.

Thanks to Seamus Bourke Funeral Directors for his sensitive and professional handling of Mervyn's Funeral.

Thanks also to the Reverend Victor Fitzpatrick for his kindness and support.

As it would be impossible to thank everyone individually please accept this acknowledgement as a token of our sincere appreciation and gratitude.

*Rest in Peace Mervyn*



**Divine Mercy Sunday**

**11<sup>th</sup> April**

**Chaplet of Divine Mercy at 3pm**

**Followed by**

**Holy Mass and Healing Adoration**

**In St. Fintan's Church, Raheen**

*Join us live on frpaddybyrnefacebook*

**KEEGAN'S FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

50 Years of Professional Service in Portlaoise.



**Contact Matthew**

**087-2549195**

**David 087-2369887**

**HENRY RANKIN**  
**FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

We have opened a new office and show room on  
 Abbeylax Road, Portlaoise.

(opposite the E.S.B. and Condell tractors)

Contact;

057-8620567

PAUL; 087-2562137

NIALL;

086-2770095



**DES & CARMEL MORAN**  
**FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

Main St., Ballyroan, Co. Laois

*24 hour service and personalised attention*

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Carmel 087-6144280

Des 087-2794532

moranundertakerslaois@gmail.com

**Kelly's Funeral Services**

Since the 1940's the Kelly family have been providing Funeral Services in the Abbeylax area.

We offer a 24 hour personal and professional funeral service.

057-8731048

087-2535866

www.kellysfuneralservices.ie

E-mail: info@kellysfuneralservices.ie



*Main Street  
 Abbeylax*



## Portlaoise Parish



## Results for

8th April 2021



### No €19,000 Jackpot Winner

#### WINNERS

Owen Kelly  
Helena Phelan  
Mary McLoughlin  
Cora Carroll  
Maria Groarke  
Paul Bateman  
Kit Phelan  
O. L. & M.  
Fergus Flanagan  
Cathal O'Neill  
Michelle Duggan  
Paddy Campion  
Cora Gorman

#### MATCH 3s €1,000



Play PARISH



#### PROMOTER

Peggy Kelly  
Peggy Kelly  
On Line  
Geraldine O'Neill  
Kathleen Brown  
Anthony Preston  
Kathleen Rigney  
Martleys Shop  
Flanagan Food Store  
Cathal O'Neill  
David Tobin  
Celine Cripps  
Bernie Rice

Follow Us

@PortlaoiseParish

& Like Us

portlaoiseparishlaois

Next Week's Jackpot **€20,000**

## Support for the Parish

We have traditionally depended on the passing of the collection baskets at Sunday Masses for support. *Thank you* to the many who have found new ways of continuing to support the Parish during this time of Lockdown. The generosity of so many means we continue to be well supported and can pay our way at this time.

### Ways to contribute to our Parish

Envelope boxes available at Church porches and Parish Centre

Direct payment by cheque or cash

Cashless Point at the back of the Parish Church

Donation facility on our website

Standing Order forms available at the Parish Centre

Or Transfer directly to our Account

Portlaoise Parish Account:

IBAN: IE53AIBK93327916658045

Portlaoise Parish Clergy Fund Account:

IBAN: IE12AIBK93327916658201

(The BIC for both accounts is AIBKIE2D)

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. Theodore Tomasik SVD  
Tel: 057 8661605

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



Office Hours Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Phone: 057-8621142 / 057-8660722

E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie

Twitter: @portlaoiseparish

MANAGER Declan Kelly

Parish Secretaries Michelle Bartley  
Agnieszka Kaczmarek

Accounts Michelle Conroy

Sacristans Parish Church

Sr. Sybil and Sr. Julie

All Masses and services from the Parish Church are live streamed [www.portlaoiseparish.ie](http://www.portlaoiseparish.ie)

(Sacristy phone attended prior to Mass times 057 8600119)



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 - Claire Scully





# *Divine Mercy Sunday*

Jesus I Trust in You

Chaplet at 3pm  
Sunday 11th April

Followed by Mass and  
Benediction