



4th Sunday of Lent (Year A)

Readings and Hymns

Collect

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: Strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns

In conjunction with the online service you might like to view these hymns on YouTube - with internet links and lyrics so that you can song along:

1) Thine be the Gory -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPH7-dNrwb8>

2) Now thank we all our God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sR6Kajdt3M>

3) It is a thing most wonderful

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8ImUe_UxHQ

4) Let all the world in every corner sing

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_NoW2Hz52w

Exodus 2: 1-10

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, * 'because', she said, 'I drew him out* of the water.'

Psalm 127

Unless the Lord builds the house, *
those who build it labour in vain.

Unless the Lord guards the city, *
the guard keeps watch in vain.

It is in vain that you rise up early *
and go late to rest,

eating the bread of anxious toil; *
for he gives sleep to his beloved.

Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord, *
the fruit of the womb a reward.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior *
are the sons of one's youth.

Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

John 19:25-27

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord our God, you feed us in this life with bread from heaven, the pledge and foreshadowing of future glory. Grant that the working of this sacrament within us may bear fruit in our daily lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Commentary

Exodus 12:1-10

God has assailed the Egyptians with nine plagues: turning the water of the Nile to blood; infestations of frogs, gnats, and flies; terminal illness of livestock; boils; thunder, hail and fire; locusts; and darkness for three days: all this to convince the Pharaoh to "Let my people go, so that they may worship ... [God]" (9:1). The Pharaoh has refused to listen; he has refused to come to the knowledge that "I am the Lord" (7:17). God continues to act in history to the benefit of his chosen people. As is the case for the other plagues, the preparation for the last plague is described at length, but the plague itself occupies only a few verses. A lamb or goat is to be kept in safekeeping ("keep it", v. 6) until close to the full moon ("the fourteenth day"); then "the whole assembled congregation" will slaughter it: here all take on the role of priests. The priestly role extends further: the animal is to be "roasted" (v. 8, not boiled), and it is to be completely consumed (v. 10): a perfect ("without blemish", v. 5) and complete sacrifice.

Psalm 127

This psalm is made up of two wise sayings (vv. 1-2 and 3-5). The first says that human activity is futile without God's active involvement. ("House", v. 1, means Temple, royal palace, dynasty, as well as house.) V. 1b is an example: a guard on the city wall watches "in vain" unless God protects the city. Genesis 3:17-19 tells us that humankind was committed to a life of toil for "bread" (v. 2) for disobeying God; this verse contrasts this with God's gifts to those he loves. All kinds of houses have "sons" (v. 3); they are a gift from God; they protect and support their father in time of need: for example (v. 5b), when others try to make him back down in court ("the gate"). ("Arrows", v. 4, are a symbol of protection.)

Colossians 3:12-17

The author has already begun to describe the true Christian life. In what is probably an early baptismal instruction, he has called on his readers to "Set your minds on things that are

above" (v. 2). When Christ comes again, they will be seen as being with him in power (v. 4) but those who follow evil ways will suffer the wrath of God (v. 5-6). The author has told them: "you have stripped off the old self with its practices" (v. 9) and "have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator" (v. 10).

Now he tells them, chosen by God as they are, what virtues, ethical qualities, are expected of them: "compassion" (v. 12) is sympathy for the needs of others and "meekness" is gentleness and consideration towards others. Christ's forgiveness of them (and us) is a model for their conduct towards each other (v. 13). The primary quality for the Christian is "love" (v. 14).

In v. 15, the word translated "rule" literally means be umpire or referee: so may "the peace of Christ" be the reference point for your consciences, as it is for you all in the Church ("one body"). May the understanding, the knowledge, of the way Christ works be yours, and may sharing this in the community lead you to deeper understanding ("wisdom", v. 16); may you show your thankfulness to the Father through the Son in worship. In all your words and actions, speak and do as though Christ were doing them.

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John 19.25-27

25. Now there stood] Or, But there were standing. By two small particles (men in John 19:23 and de here), scarcely translatable in English, S. John indicates the contrast between the two groups. On the one hand, the four plundering soldiers with the centurion; on the other, the four ministering women with the beloved disciple.

....his mother's sister, Mary] The Greek, like the English, leaves us in doubt whether we here have two women or one, whether altogether there are four women or three. The former is much the more probable alternative. (1) It avoids the very improbable supposition of two sisters having the same name. (2) S. John is fond of parallel expressions; 'His mother and His mother's sister, Mary of Clopas and Mary Magdalene' are two pairs set one against the other. (3) S. Mark (Mark 15:40) mentions Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less, and Salome. Mary Magdalene is common to both narratives, 'Mary the mother of James the Less' is the same as 'Mary of Clopas;' the natural inference is that Salome is the same as 'His mother's sister.' If this is correct, (4) S. John's silence about the name of 'His mother's sister' is explained: she was his own mother, and he is habitually reserved about all closely connected with himself. We have seen already that he never mentions either his own name, or his brother's, or the Virgin's. (5) The very ancient Peshito or Syriac Version adopts this view by inserting 'and' before 'Mary the (wife) of Clopas.'

.....the wife of Cleophas] Rather, the wife of Clopas. The Greek is simply 'the of Clopas,' and 'the daughter of Clopas' may be right, or 'the mother,' or even 'the sister:' but 'wife' is more probably to be supplied. There is no reason for identifying Clopas here with Cleopas in Luke 24:18 : Clopas is Aramaic, Cleopas is Greek. The spelling Cleophas is a mistake derived from Latin MSS. All Greek authorities have Cleopas. If 'wife' is rightly inserted, and she is the mother of James the Less, Clopas is the same as Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3; comp. Matthew 27:56). It is said that Clopas and Alphaeus may be different forms of the same Aramaic name.Mary Magdalene] Introduced, like the Twelve (John 6:67) and Pilate (John 18:29) abruptly and without explanation, as being quite familiar to the readers of the Gospel. See on Matthew 27:56 and Luke 8:2.

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Services

Until further notice our services will take place online, as the church must remain closed for the duration of the corona virus preventative measures. Of course, you are warmly invited to join the online service either at the normal service time, so that we are, in effect, still worshipping together, but the service will remain on the website and YouTube channel for the remainder of the week.

Other church events

Accordingly, it will not be a surprise that all church activities

Prayers

Prayers are said daily for the welfare of our community, our nation and the world. If you have any particular issue that you would like to be prayed for, do please email me on frkevinobrien@me.com or call me on 065 672 4721. All issues will be treated in confidence.

Let us keep one another in our prayers and those of the health services and medical researchers who are striving so hard to keep us safe.

Easter Vestry

Following instruction from Bishop Kenneth and the House of Bishops, Easter Vestries are to be postponed until we may safely gather in large numbers - therefore elected Select Vestry members will remain in post until a new meeting may be convened. Members may be content that the usual requirements of canon law are secondary to what might be termed *force majeure*.

Camino Inglés Pilgrimage

This is very advance notice, as it can take a year to plan such a group event, but I would like to gauge interest in walking the *Camino Inglés*, one of the routes to Santiago de Compostela. It is 118 km long and takes around 8-10 days if we start from *El Ferrol*. Alternatively, we may be able to complete 25km on Irish Pilgrim walks and then complete the final 75km from *A Coruña* (direct flights from Shannon). The way is relatively easy going (no mountains) and we would cover around 15kms per day. I will give a presentation about the walk that gives more information later in the year, so at present I am only looking to have general expressions of interest, rather than a firm commitment. We would probably look to walk in spring/early summer of 2021. Doing so as an ecumenical pilgrimage would be well worth considering.

The Bible Challenge

One way you might like to keep Lent and beyond is to commit to read the Bible from cover to cover. If you have never tried, I have printed an easy guide for you. With three short readings each day you can complete the Bible in a year. Email if you like a reading scheme.

Flat accommodation sought

My music teacher is intending to move to Ennis from Limerick and is looking for a single or double room apartment in the town. A 'granny flat' or house/flat share might also be suitable. If you know of any possible places, I would be grateful if you could let me know.

Confirmation

Please let the Rector know if are thinking of becoming confirmed in 2020 – I can run courses for 1 or 20!

Photos

As part of the website relaunch we would like to assemble a library of photos of our churches, general church life and the local area. If you have any photos that you are willing to share please contact the Rector.

Rector: Email: frkevinobrien@me.com Tel: 065 672 4721