



New Grace From God

Br. John-Marmion Villa, BSC

When I was a senior in school, my family took a holiday abroad, but I slept through my 3 a.m. alarm on the day of departure. When I finally awoke, there was a frenzied panic as I tried to troubleshoot as many possible options to get me to the airport two hours away to meet my family on time for the flight. Hope was slim, but it was there after a few hours of looking through phone books (remember those?) to find an available shuttle bus. But even as I stepped onto the shuttle, I wasn't sure that this plan was going to work out. My panic increased because now I was at the mercy of time. There was nothing else that I could do but to see how things would play out.

We've all had moments like this in our lives, moments when our hearts sink, and paralyzing apprehension takes over. It happens to us when we realize that we didn't show up for that scheduled appointment, when we forgot to pick up our son from school, when we left that report at home, or when we lock our keys in the car. It's a realization that we lost something of significance, and there's going to be a consequence following. We go into a panic mode of sorts, often acting uncharacteristically or erratically, like we're 'losing it'!

Maybe this feeling is what the shepherd, woman, and Prodigal Son felt. What they had lost was of utmost value to them, and there was a heightened awareness of the aftermath if their lost item was not found. A desperate search ensues.

I remember sitting in that shuttle utterly disappointed that I didn't wake up in time and ashamed that I had put myself through those panicked few hours. I was terrified of missing my flight and afraid of my family's reaction were I to miss our vacation abroad. The interior dialogue was deafening during that two-hour journey to the airport. Things didn't get any better when I arrived. Everything heightened as I had to check my luggage and go through security. "What if something else goes wrong?"

In our Gospel text, the word rejoice (and its derivative, joy) appears five times. But note where in the context of the stories it appears ... after a period of turmoil. In other words, joy always follows the anguish. I like what Jean Vanier had to say about this: "Tensions or difficulty can signal the approach of a new grace of God." This new grace can come to us in many and varied ways, but so often, our hearts are not ready to receive that new grace, and the opportunity slips by unnoticed.

I did get to the airport just in the nick of time, and my family was waiting for me at the gate. I was still a little anxious as I waited with them to board the plane. It was only when I took my seat and my father, seated next to me, said, "I'm glad you're here" that a sudden flood of relief and joy came into my heart.

Today, this very familiar Gospel passage speaks to me of joy, and it poses a few very simple questions: "Do I really encounter it?" "What am I willing to endure in order to experience it more deeply?" And "How do I foster joy in others?"

St Mary's
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the
Community

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Christians supporting the Global Climate Protest 20 September 2019

Since a young Swedish girl named Greta Thunberg began striking for action on climate change every Friday, young people around the world—and their teachers, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles—have been responding to her call to take action for the sake of our future. People of faith are joining the call. The next global event is on September 20, when world leaders will gather at the United Nations to discuss the climate crisis.

Pope Francis tells us that “living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue”; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience.” (*Laudato Si*, 217).

On September 20, over one million people will be calling for action on climate change to protect all creation. Our diocese will be joining Pope Francis call to action by joining the

Faiths for Climate Action Prayer Service Famine Memorial at Custom House Quay Friday September 20 @ 11.30am



For way too long, the politicians and the people in power have gotten away with not doing anything to fight the climate crisis, but we will make sure that they will not get away with it any longer. We are striking because we have done our homework and they have not...

I often talk to people who say, ‘No, we have to be hopeful and to inspire each other, and we can’t tell [people] too many negative things’ . . . But, no — we have to tell it like it is. Because if there are no positive things to tell, then what should we do, should we spread false hope? We can’t do that, we have to tell the truth. (Greta Thunberg)

Formal Opening Mass

The formal opening of the new French-speaking chaplaincy in Dublin will take place on **next Sunday 22 September at the 12.30 mass**, after which there will be a small reception. All Welcome. *Soyez les bienvenus chez nous!*

When we stand before Jesus crucified, we see the depth of his love, which exalts and sustains us, but at the same time, unless we are blind, we begin to realize that Jesus’ gaze, burning with love, expands to embrace all his people. We realize once more that he wants to make use of us to draw closer to his beloved people. He takes us from the midst of his people and he sends us to his people; without this sense of belonging we cannot understand our deepest identity.

-Pope Francis

God surrounds us from all sides. He is our Lord who is before, above, and after, and thence also with us in history: the locus of our existence. Despite humanity’s insignificance, God is with us as our Creator who intended and made humankind to be very good. Despite our sin, God is with us, the One who was in Jesus Christ reconciling the world, drawing us unto himself in merciful judgment. Humanity’s evil past is not merely crossed out because of its irrelevancy. Rather, it is in the good care of God.

—Karl Barth (Swiss theologian, 1886-1968)

IN MEMORIAM

6pm: Tina Gaffney (Anniversary)

21/22 September, 11am

Audrey Boyle
Desmond Maloney

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm

Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm

Messe en français 12.30 (2^e et 4^e dimanche du mois)

Daily masses 10am and 12.40pm, Saturday 10am only

-Rosary daily after 10am mass

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

LAST WEEK’S COLLECTIONS

First Collection: €1,120

Share Collection: €900

Weekdays: €706

THANK YOU

Contacts: Fr Fachtna McCarthy, Administrator, Fr Patrick Claffey C.C. Fr Josip Levaković C.C. Tel 01-6600075

Streaming and Website www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie email: info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie

Child Protection: <http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie/ministries/child-protection/> also www.csp.dublindiocese.ie

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