



Nourishing Faith

In *The Tablet* last week there was a particularly fine article by its former arts editor, now an occasional contributor, Brendan McCarthy. In the article Brendan writes about the experience of going to Mass in Notre Dame de Paris over the past several years, and how this has influenced his faith. The article is beautifully written and captures very well his intimate experience and why this was so important..

For a long time he had avoided the great Gothic landmark, overrun with noisy tourists. However, he eventually went to mass there and was, as he puts it, 'enchanted'. He writes of his excitement at what he encountered there. His going there soon became a need and a practice that sustains his spiritual life. Going to 'Sunday evening mass, to the great Marian feasts, but most often to Vespers ...[he] became and anonymous parishioner'. At the same time developed a real sense of belonging. His sense of loss at the destruction of the great cathedral is immense, as it is for many people associated with it on a personal level.

When he was unable to physically attend, he watched Vespers from Notre Dame on KTO, the French Catholic TV Channel. He writes movingly of the moment when the TV camera 'panned slowly away from the northern rose window and a discreet organ improvisation led to the opening prayer... [He] felt expectation and joy; especially at this time of year when darkness comes early and vespers often begins with the *Lucernarium*, the ancient service of light'.... The wonder of it, the play of light and dark, the reflection of the flickering candles in the priest's face re-awoke the memories of childhood' in Kilkenny and his time serving mass in St Mary's Gothic revival style cathedral.

Like many children he has these locked away memories of holy moments in a style of Catholicism some of us still remember: 'high Masses, liturgical choral festivals, organ recitals' and so many other events that marked parish life in Ireland at that time. St. Mary's, Haddington Road, thought not a cathedral, was very much this kind of parish and for many people those memories remain.

Much of this has, of course, disappeared. Religion, like much else in modern life, has been rationalised. In terms used in marketing, it has been 'repackaged'. For many people the mystery has sadly been taken away; the sounds and smells that made Catholicism what it is have faded, it has been, to some extent, disenchanted.

St Mary's is fortunate in having one of the most beautiful churches in Dublin. Visitors often comment on the beauty of the building, but also on the atmosphere that seems to pervade the church, both during liturgy but also at quiet moments during the day, when they 'slip in to say a prayer and light a candle.' These, along with our community prayer, are the moments that keep faith alive. There are, no doubt, ways that this can be further improved

It is also important to be aware of the aesthetic side of our faith as it is a very strong part of our Catholic tradition. Again, our parish is very fortunate in this regard. Central to the interior of the church is the stained glass. One author has noted that: 'St. Mary's is fortunate to have such a rich variety of stained glass and it provides parishioners and visitors alike with an opportunity to see and appreciate European and Irish stained-glass side by side.' There are many other details which can inspire us and nourish our faith, if we are attentive to them and *take the time to look*.

St Mary's
Parish

Serving
the
Community

Serving
the
Family

Serving
the
City

Unusual kindness



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020 "They showed us unusual kindness" (Acts 28:2). 18-25 January

The materials for the 2020 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the Christian churches in Malta and Gozo (Christians Together in Malta).

On 10th February many Christians in Malta celebrate the Feast of the Shipwreck of St Paul, marking and giving thanks for the arrival of Christian faith on these islands. The reading from the Acts of the Apostles used for the feast is the text chosen for this year's Week of Prayer. They are divided in eight daily themes:

- Day 1: Reconciliation: Throwing the cargo overboard
- Day 2: Enlightenment: Seeking and showing forth Christ's light
- Day 3: Hope: Paul's message
- Day 4: Trust: Do not be afraid, believe
- Day 5: Strength: Breaking bread for the journey
- Day 6: Hospitality: Show unusual kindness
- Day 7: Conversion: Changing our hearts and minds
- Day 8: Generosity: Receiving and giving

For more details see <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2020/01/13/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2020/>

On **Sunday the 19th of January at 11.00am, RTE will broadcast a service of worship for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.** This year, the service will be led by friends of Ecumenical Bible Week (EBW), a Dublin based ecumenical project. EBW has taken place in the greater Dublin area since 2014, bringing together a diversity of believers for prayer and reflection in June each year. Both Archbishops of Dublin have lent their personal and institutional support since the start.



THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN UNITY

"Christians spend too much time arguing over scripture, the bible tells us that the early church were one, this was Jesus prayer for his church. Let's spend the time that we spend fighting each other showing the love of Christ, giving our time to helping others supporting the church as commanded."

— Evangelist Jordan Wells

GROW

Promoting Positive Mental Health

GROW Community Mental Health Movement
Thursday at 6.30pm

Carmelite (Whitefriar) Community Centre,
56 Aungier Street, Dublin 2.

Why not come along and learn more about positive mental health, well being, recovery and how GROW may help you achieve this.

Free of charge.

All welcome Contact John 086 8033 126 .

IN MEMORIAM

6pm: Brigid, Patrick and Mary Donoghue (Anniversary)

11am: Ann Brien (Anniversary)

Catholic Schools Week 2020

Catholic Schools Week 2020 will be celebrated from

Sunday 26 January to Sunday 2 February

'Living in Harmony with God's Creation'

Parishes and Catholic Schools across Ireland look at our own responsibility to care for the earth, not just for our own future, but for the future of every one of God's creatures.

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
- Confession: Tuesdays 12.00-13.30

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

1st Collection: €200 (Mon 6th Jan)

1st Collection: €1,235

Share Collection: €942

Weekday collections: N/A

THANK YOU