



St Mary's  
Parish

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the  
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the  
Family

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City

## LIVE A LIFE OF MERCY

*Angie Windnagle*

Recently, I posted a controversial article on social media, and not surprisingly, I was met with a slew of responses from friends describing ways they either agreed or disagreed with me. It was like a lot of social media debates — one sided, heated, and in the end, somewhat pointless. As I reflected, I wondered if my posting was necessary much less virtuous. Had I accomplished what I set out to do? Did I change anyone's mind, or did I stir up discord in friends who normally interact in unity? Was my posting helping further the kingdom of God on earth, or did I compete against that goal?

As I ponder the readings for this weekend's Mass, I find my answer. The theme of holiness is pervasive in each reading, but looking deeper, the theme of mercy shines even more. Indeed, all of Christ's followers are called to be as holy as he is. But more than that, the holiness we are called to is only made possible by his unending mercy, as the psalmist rightly proclaims: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us." It simply isn't enough to say we want to be like Christ. Instead, true disciples are called to be living witnesses of his love and mercy to all those they encounter — whether in person, online, or in passing.

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order shares that "... all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone 'who follows Christ the perfect man, becomes more of a man [i.e., human] himself,' let them exercise their responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service."

To me, this rule exemplifies precisely how we are to heed the words of Jesus in the Gospel. He doesn't call us to keep count, to hold on to grudges, or to constantly defend ourselves when wronged. When I posted the controversial article on social media, it was clear that everyone had an opinion to defend. Rather than helping build a more evangelical and fraternal world, the post became a space for "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," only with words and intellectual arguments.

In the first reading, Moses is called by God to not only be holy, but to show no revenge. The antidote to the selfish desire for revenge is mercy. Even from the days of Moses, God has shown mercy is one of His greatest attributes. This mission of mercy is also given to all His followers.

The psalm continues with this theme as we sing of the Lord's kindness and mercy. I often wonder if my social media activity is a reflection of God's action or the opposite. I wonder if those who follow me could say my posts are "kind and merciful." God reveals Himself as a just judge who speaks immutable truth, but this is not separate or isolated from His unending kindness and love toward humanity. If I don't follow that same mission, I cannot say I'm truly Christian.

The final gut check for me is found in the words of St. Paul in the second reading as he reminds us that we are temples of the Holy Spirit. This means that even those who disagree with me bear the image of God. They should be treated accordingly, not with a tolerance that accepts sin, or with an avoidance of proclaiming the truth, but through actions and words that truly exemplify the love we have received from our Father. This is a love that calls us to conversion and holiness, but one that is kind and merciful.

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

Streaming and Website [www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie](http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie) email: [info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie](mailto:info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie)

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So, in the end, I realized that posting the article didn't help anyone see Christ better. Instead, it sowed a seed of division and discord. The readings this weekend urge us to live a life of mercy in order to be holy so we can be saints someday. A saint is one who sees the beatific vision. That vision needs to start on earth in how we treat those around us who are temples of the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit with whom we want to spend eternity.

### **Guidance when seasonal flu or a more serious epidemic is circulating.**

The annual flu virus raises a number of concerns and how we react to it should not impact negatively on the celebration of the Liturgy. The following are precautionary measures that can be taken to limit the transmission of infection.

**Going to Church** People with flu symptoms are dispensed from their Sunday obligation to attend Mass. Those with flu symptoms should stay at home for seven days from the onset of illness. The obligation to take part in Mass does not apply to those who are sick. The sick person might join in celebrating Mass via the internet or radio and television.

**Communion on the Tongue** In the past, the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) has said receiving Holy Communion directly on the tongue "should be discouraged" during flu season. However, if it does occur, priests or ministers of the Eucharist should clean their hands using an alcohol based hand gel. No one is to be refused communion because they wish to receive on the tongue.

**The Chalice** If the Priest celebrant's health is compromised by cold or flu then the priest's chalice should be restricted to him only and not used to distribute the Precious Blood to other ministers or the assembly. Additional chalices should be used for common distribution.

**General giving of chalice** Where the Precious Blood is offered to all to receive, those who suspect symptoms that may signal impending flu or cold should refrain from receiving the Precious Blood and receive only the Body of Christ in the consecrated host until they are well again.

**Sign of Peace** The HPSC has said that the handshake at the time of the "sign of peace" involves a low risk of spreading the virus. However, since even under ordinary circumstances some people are not able to shake hands due to medical conditions, one might choose among a number of other options of shaking hands to make a bow of the head to the people around you and say "Peace be with you"



**Ash Wednesday: Masses at 10am , 12.40, 18.00**

**LENTE ADORATION  
Following the 6pm Vigil Mass  
EVERY SATURDAY DURING LENT**

**LENT** is about  
**BECOMING,  
DOING, and  
CHANGING,  
WHATEVER IT IS  
THAT IS BLOCKING  
THE FULLNESS OF LIFE  
IN US RIGHT NOW.**  
-- Sister Joan Chittister, OSB

@aNunsLife  
#Lenticipation

### **In Memoriam**

6pm Vigil: Special Intention  
9.30 Winnie Skehan (Months Mind)  
11am: Miriam McMahon  
5pm: Stephanie Kennedy

### **Masses on 29<sup>th</sup> Feb/1<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

6pm: Margaret Walsh and Michael Lyons  
11am... Pat Dunne (Anniversary)

### **Masses and Confession**

**Sundays:** Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm  
Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm  
Messe en français 12.30 (2<sup>e</sup> et 4<sup>e</sup> 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**

1<sup>st</sup> Collection: €1,066  
2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: €1,715 (Accord)

Weekday collections: €395

**THANK YOU**