



parish newsletter

1 May 2022 | Third Sunday of Easter (C)

Jesus said, 'Peter, do you love me?'

Could it be that God's image has become so soiled and distorted that it is hard for us to see it? Our self-serving agendas have done a great job twisting God's image into what profits us. We want our agenda to be God's agenda and use prayer as the convincing leverage we need. Worse still, our success and ego-centric agenda often erases God's image completely, replacing it with our own. St. Oscar Romero instructs us that the Son of Man "dies on the cross to cleanse God's image, which is soiled in today's humanity, a humanity so enslaved, so selfish, so sinful." Striving to preserve control of our destinies at all costs, we fail to see the risen suffering servant, the Christ, standing right beside us.

Jesus, who suffered and died on a cross and was raised from the dead, corrects our soiled image of God. He shows us God as God is, not who we want to make God to be. God is the God of the poor, the weak, and the marginalised. He is the God who tenderly caresses us when we are suffering and hurting, assuring us that all will be safe and well. He is the God of equity, peace, justice, and compassion who wants happiness for each of His children, desiring their well-being and success. God goes where men and women are afraid to go, sitting with the lost, the broken, and the sorrowing. St. Oscar



Romero challenges us to illuminate with "Christ's light ... even the most hideous caverns of the human person: torture, jail, plunder, want, chronic illness. The oppressed must be saved." The resurrection calls us to be God's microphone, a messenger, and a prophet (St. Oscar Romero).

Using eyes that see beyond the limited constructs and desires of our world, we can see the true and real Jesus standing before us, calling us to transformation and change. Asking us more

than once, "do you love me?" We are beckoned to give an answer. Answering in the affirmative, it is now our task to feed the sheep and the lambs who belong to God. In short, equipped with the power of the resurrection and a corrected image of God our task is to make things better, brighter, holier, more life-giving, and just for all of God's children. Considering our choices, our interactions, our philosophies, and aspirations, how can we do this?

Everyday Stewardship

Gifts in Disguise

Have you ever opened a gift and wondered what the giver was thinking?

I won't call out any of my family or friends here, but suffice to say, I think we have all been the confused recipient of a sweater that wasn't our size or a gift card to a store where we don't shop. But we smiled all the same and said how much it meant to us, because we know that when it comes to gifts, it's all about the gesture.

Suffering is a lot like that—the gift you never asked for, and don't really want to receive. Sometimes we look at suffering and, like the

apostles who see Jesus as a stranger on the shore, we don't recognise it for what it can be. We don't appreciate the catalyst suffering can be for change, for growth, for grace.

What was the gift that you received in disguise? Was it a relationship that confounded and frustrated you? Was it a job that tested your spirit? An obstacle that stopped you dead in your tracks? A rejection that threatened to break your spirit?

If I go back and look at the worst gifts I've ever gotten, chances are that I didn't like them because I didn't know what to do with them—they were more fitted for

someone else's interests, someone else's life. It's the same with suffering. We're tempted to cast suffering aside when it comes our way because it doesn't fit the person we are. Suffering is made to fit the person God knows we have the ability, with His grace, to become.

Hang onto that suffering. Unlike the misshapen sweater, it really will come in handy.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

Living the Paschal Mystery

Sometimes people on diets figure that a good way to cut calories and lose weight is to begin early in the morning and skip breakfast. However, nutritionists tell us that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Breakfast gives us the personal jolt we need to get ourselves going with school or work or whatever; a balanced, nutritious breakfast also jolts our metabolism and gives us energy. After the resurrection, the disciples need a jolt. They cannot return to their former way of living. They have encountered Jesus during his earthly ministry. Now they encounter the risen Christ

and are invited to share in his ongoing ministry.

This Sunday's gospel is one in which the word "breakfast" occurs (twice). This is the only occurrence of the word in all of Scripture! It is early in the morning—"already dawn." The right time for breakfast with all its advantages. The disciples have been out fishing and, upon returning to shore, Jesus asks them, "have you caught anything to eat?" Their answer was a simple, unqualified "No." No fish, no breakfast. Not so! Jesus invites them, "Come, have breakfast." It is as though Jesus knows the disciples need a jolt—they need to

be tugged out of their familiar routine and transformed. They need the spiritual nutrition of encounter and belief for them to declare their love and follow with fidelity.

This gospel details the transformation made possible by the risen Christ. Disciples net a great number of fish after a catch-less night. Peter jumps impetuously into the sea instead of staying in the boat. Peter thrice declares his love, supplanting his triple denial—a love that is declared "when they had finished breakfast," after Peter is fortified by the gift of breakfast bread and fish, but even more so by the gift of encounter with the risen

Live the Liturgy

What prevents us from seeing the Lord? We are not used to seeing Jesus in the ordinary, everyday events of our lives. We expect some kind of startling, extraordinary revelation to occur that definitely and unmistakably sends a signal that God wants our attention. We don't expect a visit from Jesus while we are having breakfast, doing the dishes, running after the kids, negotiating a deal at work, or taking a shower! Sometimes when God simply stands on

the shore of our lives casually looking for us, we don't recognise him. Did we ever stop and think that God is really and truly interested in the routine, run of the mill events of our lives? So, "what did you do today?" God may ask. Maybe we don't think that God is concerned about such things, or we are so consumed with life's demands that we give it little if any thought. Perhaps we are determined to achieve our own success, desire to control things

ourselves or not really sure what God cares about. God is there. One day, out of the

Christ. The Resurrection transforms the way things are. The risen Christ transforms the way we are, enabling us to obey his ongoing invitation, "Follow me." We are fortified by Jesus' risen Presence, by his invitation to follow, by his own love for us that transforms our love into faithfulness and fruitfulness. Risen Life fortifies us for the transformation needed on our discipleship journey of seeing—believing. Risen Life is given to us by Christ, but we must also seek it. Risen Life is a gift, but we must also grasp it.

Risen Life has its demand—we must eat breakfast with the risen Christ! That is, we must open ourselves to be fortified by all the gifts given to us so that our follow-response is energetic, sustained, and fruitful. Jesus gives us all the nourishment we need in order to meet the demands of daily discipleship. Accepting the nourishment that Jesus offers means that by following him we ourselves become his risen Presence, those who lead others to him. Every day we must take care that our actions announce Jesus' gift of nourishment at the same time that they speak of his goodness and care.

Leading others to Jesus doesn't mean doing big things; it means doing the little things well and so reflect the risen Life dwelling within us. It might mean serving in a soup kitchen once a month. It might mean regularly contributing food gifts for the poor to be brought up during the presentation of gifts at Mass. No matter what our act of love, or when, it always means saying yes to Jesus and to risen Life.

blue, God will get our attention and ask, "Do you love me?"





First Reading

"We are witnesses of these things, as is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him." (Acts 5:32)

Psalm:

I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me. (Ps 29[30])

Second Reading:

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, honour and glory and blessing." (Rev 5:12)

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Lord Jesus, explain the Scriptures to us. Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us. Alleluia!

Gospel:

Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish. (Jn 21:13)

This Week

- 1 THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER (C)**
Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41/Ps 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13 [2a]/Rv 5:11-14/Jn 21:1-19 or 21:1-14
10:30 **Mass** St Mary's Special Intention (50 years)
17:00 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish
- 2 Monday**
St Athanasius
Acts 6:8-15/Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30/Jn 6:22-29
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Áine Warren (RIP)
18:30 **Big Picture Bible Course** St Mary's Catholic Centre
20:00 **Prayer Group** St Cecilia's
- 3 Ss Philip & James**
1 Cor 15:1-8/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5/Jn 14:6-14
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Constantino Balnig (RIP)
13:00 **Over 60s** St Mary's Catholic Centre
17:00 **Chosen Tuesday** Upper Room
- 4 The English Martyrs**
Acts 8:1b-8/Ps 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a/Jn 6:35-40
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Val Jane Scullion
- 5 Thursday**
Acts 8:26-40/Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20/Jn 6:44-51
10:00 **Confessions** St Cecilia's
10:00 **Open House** St Mary's Catholic Centre
10:30 **Mass** St Cecilia's Agnes Mullen (RIP)
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Ints of Hazel Daroczy
17:00 **Evening with Jesus and Friends** Mercy Chapel
- 6 Friday**
Acts 9:1-20/Ps 117:1bc, 2/Jn 6:52-59
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Mary Sverha (RIP)
- 7 Saturday**
St John of Beverly
Acts 9:31-42/Ps 116:12-13, 14-15, 16-17/Jn 6:60-69
10:30 **Confessions** St Mary's
11:00 **Mass** St Mary's Norah Ridley (RIP)
11:45 **Confessions** St Mary's
12:00 **RCIA** Upper Room
18:00 **Vigil Mass** St Cecilia's Holy Souls
- 8 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (C)**
Acts 13:14, 43-52/Ps 100:1-2, 3, 5 [3c]/Rv 7:9, 14b-17/Jn 10:27-30
10:30 **Mass** St Mary's Bill & Ann Murray (RIP)
17:00 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish

Ministry TO THE SICK
Bernadette, Jean Maureen, Christopher, Paula, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa, Cath, the sick sisters at Oaklea, David, Marion, Dave, Neil, Paul, Andrew, Jacob, Stella, David, Alisa, Susan, Mary, Ronnie

BEREAVEMENT Ministry
Norah Doherty, Nora Ridley, Cathy Glaister, Clive Ciraldi

Let us know if you would like a name added to the list.

Questions for the Week

First Reading: The apostles faced trial and even persecution from the religious leaders of Jerusalem (the Sanhedrin) for bearing witness to Jesus' resurrection. Why do you think some people are threatened by the good news of Jesus risen from the dead?

Second Reading: John sees a vision of heaven in which all of the created order is worshipping Jesus as the slain and risen "Lamb." What im-

ages of heaven bring you comfort?

Gospel: The resurrected Jesus appeared to seven of his disciples while they were fishing on the Sea of Tiberias. In doing so, Jesus comes to strengthen Peter for his upcoming leadership role. What gives you strength in your faith journey?

Why do we do that?



Question: Are Catholics allowed to donate their organs?

Answer: Yes, Catholics are allowed to donate their organs. In fact, the Catechism

of the Catholic Church praises this practice when it notes that, "Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity" (no. 2296).

The Church has a series of guidelines for health care providers called The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Services. This document helps us see organ donation as an act of

charity, but it also reminds us that we have to be sure that donations of organs by living donors do not "sacrifice or seriously impair any essential bodily function and the anticipated benefit to the recipient is proportionate to the harm to the donor" (no. 30); trained medical professionals can help to make this assessment. In the case of organ donation at the end of life, we must be sure of the intentions of the donor or of their proxy are always respected, and that the dignity of the human body is al-

ways respected. In the end, we can look to Pope Saint John Paul II and his encyclical *Evangelim Vitae*, where he noted that organ donation is a beautiful act of expressing the culture of life, when "performed in an ethically acceptable manner, with a view to offering a chance of health or even of life itself to the sick who sometimes have no other hope" (no. 86).

Announcements

St Cecilia's Toddlers'
The toddlers' group at St Cecilia's meets on Tuesdays at 9am in St Cecilia's Church Hall. There are plenty of spaces available for parents and toddlers to have a fun morning of activities. It costs £3 per child.

Cleaning St Cecilia's
St Cecilia's needs people who can help keep the church clean. If you've got some spare time and can help please have a chat with one of the Pauls after Mass.

Little Sisters of the Poor
There'll be a retiring collection next weekend for the Little Sisters of the Poor.

First Holy Communion
Over the next few weeks our children will be making their first holy communion at the weekend Masses. Please keep them and their families in your prayers. I would like to thank the parish catechists and the

teachers at St Mary's for preparing these children. Thank-you for the time and effort you have put into sharing your eucharistic faith with these very special young people. May God bless you!

The first holy communion preparation programme takes places after school in St Mary's and is open to every child in the parish, not just those who attend St Mary's Primary School. It will restart in the Autumn term so keep an eye out for information in the parish newsletter later in the summer.

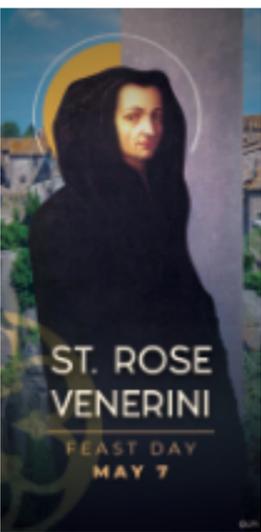
Mercy Chapel Access
The Mercy Chapel is open every day from 8am until 5.30am. The priests pray Morning Prayer at 8am every day and Evening Prayer at 5.15pm Monday to Friday. You are very welcome to join them.

In the next week or so we'll be installing an auto-

matic door-opening mechanism to the internal Mercy Chapel door. This will make it easier for parishioners with mobility aids and push-chairs to enter.

Repairs to the Sanctuary Windows in St Mary's
The consultation period for repair works to the sanctuary windows in St Mary's Church is now finished. We hope to be able to start work in a few weeks' time. Several of the stained glass panels have to be removed so that the lead can be replaced and the glass conserved. The protective grille on the outside is also going to be replaced with polycarbonate. We are still waiting for the final estimate but we expect the final cost to be tens of thousands of pounds.

Eco stoves
We raised £2,240—enough for 75 stoves for our sister parish of Panyangara, Uganda. Thank you!



The story of St. Rose of Venerini (February 9, 1656 – May

Saint of the Week

7, 1728) is one of having faith in God and his calling in your life. Born in Italy in 1656, she was the daughter of a doctor. Following the death of her fiancé, she entered a convent in the hopes of becoming a nun, but soon returned home to care for her mother after the death of her father. In an effort to keep up her spiritual side, St. Rose invited women of the neighbourhood to recite the rosary in her home, and together they formed a sodality.

Unsure of where her life

was headed, she sought the spiritual guidance of a Jesuit priest. After much contemplation, she admitted to feeling called to be a teacher in the world, rather than a nun in a convent. Eventually, she moved ahead and opened a free school for girls in 1685. Eventually, she was invited to oversee the training of teachers and the administration of schools in the Diocese of Montefiascone, which then led to being called upon to organise schools in many parts of

Italy, including Rome. St. Rose died in Rome in 1728 amid a number of miracles that many credit to her. The group of women she first prayed with in her home eventually became known as the Venerini Sisters, found in the United States and working among Italian immigrants. St. Rose was beatified in 1952 and canonised in 2006.

Stewardship: March 2022

Income	
Collections	£7,729.37
Rent	£1,220.00
Candles	£810.49
Piety Stall	£254.76
Donations	£104.48
Total	£10,118.90
Expenditure	
Heat & Lighting	£2,544.80
Repairs	£587.49
Wages	£3,040.75
Water Rates	£44.30
Council Tax	£111.00
Gen Admin	£1602.65
Total	£7,930.99

Flock Notes

I've always loved today's gospel. I can come back to it time and again and always discover something new or see a familiar detail in a new light.

There is something so human about the disciples wanting to go fishing. After the emotional rollercoaster of the crucifixion, the belief that Jesus was dead along with their hopes and ambitions and then the startling,

almost unbelievable, reality that Jesus was actually alive, that he'd risen from the dead. Can you imagine how emotionally exhausting that must have been for Peter and the others?

At times of stress we often fall back on the things that are most familiar and comforting to us; it's no surprise the Galilean fishermen returned to the lake. And that's where Jesus

meets them, with breakfast already prepared. He knows exactly what they are going through and exactly what they need. All they have to do is trust him to lead the way.

In our own lives stress and worry can make us return to old patterns of behaviour, even unhealthy ones, but even then Jesus meet us there, ready to lead us forward with his love.



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