

Parish of Saint Conval - Weekly Bulletin

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity (A) 6th / 7th June 2020

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Parish Priest: Canon Michael McMahon



Please Pray For Those Who Are Sick: Maria Devlin, Frances Whyte and for those who are working so hard to care for the sick especially those who work in our hospitals.

Please Pray For Those Who Have Died Recently: James Fryars.

Please Pray For Those Whose Anniversaries Occur About Now: Robert Graham, Elizabeth McAdam, Ann McElhinney, Frank Devlin, William Scarff and for the month's mind of Betty Dunnion, Elsie Muggins, Robert Graham.

In The House Porch there are copies of the Bulletin, Mass Sheets, Standing Order Forms and Special Donation Envelopes, Gift Aid Packs, Paper and Pens.

Fr. Michael Will Celebrate Mass Alone Each Day praying for the members of the Parish Community and their intentions. Fr. Michael is still available in emergencies but is observing the Government's advice on social distancing.

St. Mirin's Cathedral And Local Parishes are livestreaming their privately celebrated Masses:
St. Mirin's Cathedral, Paisley - Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/qv7uqhl>
St. Charles', Paisley - Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/r2gww7a>
St. Margaret's, Johnstone - Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/qv5wde5>

Thanks to your ongoing generosity Fr. Michael was able to bank £1,758.30 into the Parish Account from the contributions to the weekly Offertory Collection which you have made with envelopes and donations - many thanks also to those who have moved their contributions to Standing Order or made Donations to the Parish through the Diocesan Debit / Credit Card Portal - we are running at over 50% of our normal contributions - and, of course, our expenses are less - mainly due to energy costs being low as the Church does not need heat or light.

Thank you to those who have signed up for Gift Aid (A scheme whereby HMRC gives to the Parish the tax which you have paid on the money that you give the Parish - 25p in every £1. All that is required is a form signed and a numbered envelope to maintain a record of your donations to enable Fr. Michael to claim). This year - thanks to your ongoing generosity HMRC gave the Parish £5882! The boxes of envelopes for 2020-2021 have now been distributed to those parishioners who currently use them.

These envelopes, a Gift Aid Form, a Standing Order Mandate, a Letter of Thanks (written a few weeks ago as you were supposed to receive your envelopes for the beginning of April) and a Census Form (to enable the Parish to keep in touch with you and your families both by post and online in email communications - I know you may have lived in the Parish for 50 years but no previous Parish Priests kept any records, previously Fr. Michael would see you every week and communicate that way, but now...!) are available in the Porch. These are there to help if you wish - no obligations attached! I'm sorry that there is no Annual Statement of Account yet - the Diocese have - yet again - not managed to provide Fr. Michael with this Summary despite his repeated and earnest requests to do so! He will provide these as soon as they are available. These packs are made up in sealed, sterile packets. So, please come and take a packet - they are all the same so please touch ONLY the one you take - please take all of it and throw away what you do not use. If you open it and leave part of it behind someone else will have to touch it to dispose of it! Hand sanitiser is also available!

Thanks also to your great generosity so quickly provided Fr. Michael has been able to pay the whole Bill for the purchase and installation of the equipment to enable live streaming - he is also investigating the possibilities of having the Live stream pictures available in the Hall simultaneously which would increase our capacity for Sunday by 35% which might make a big difference if we are allowed to gather for Mass while 'Physically Distancing'. So many, many thanks and we look forward to St. Conval's being an online presence for the foreseeable future and continuing to minister to the good people of Linwood - even in a virtual way.

Last Sunday's Mass suffered from a 'muffled and echoing sound' problem. Very briefly, we had tested on weekdays, the sound system moves to a 'Sunday Setting' which takes account of a presence of a number of soft sound-absorbing bodies and Fr. Michael's was the only one there - so that resulted in echo, reverberation, background noise etc., etc. Monday saw more hard work and testing of levels and we have achieved the optimum clarity and tone - as we demonstrated on Wednesday and Friday of last week at morning Mass. All your feedback and comments are welcome!

Remember Fr. Michael has asked the Children of the Parish to contribute a drawing or sketch on a given topic. Fr. Michael realises that he asked you to do this as if you would have easy access to paper and coloured pens, but as you are not in school, perhaps you don't! So paper and pens are now available in the porch of the house - help yourself! This week's topic is 'The Holy Spirit' - if you didn't get a chance to do it last week, our new topic is 'The Last Supper' as next Sunday is the 'Feast of The Body and Blood of Christ'. Please put your name and class on the picture.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair." - Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities.

Charles Dickens was not writing about the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic, but his words from a different time and place certainly ring familiar to millions of the faithful around the world. Many millions have been on lockdown, adhering to government mandates to stay at home, "socially distancing" while being barred from jobs, school, and Church. This has produced a living situation few have experienced before, never expected to experience, and hope to never experience again. As much of the world prepares to reopen Churches and business, Fr Michael talked with a cross-section of people of faith to learn how they faced the best and worst of these times - and what they hope to happen in the months ahead.

The responses are about some main questions:

1. What was the hardest part of being on lockdown?
2. How did you maintain your spiritual life?
3. Looking back at the past couple of months, what didn't you do that you wish you had done?
4. What are you looking forward to most after things open up?

Answers given to Fr. Michael to Question 1 are below and we will do the rest in the weeks to come. Do you have an answer to share? Please email: stconval@rcdop.org.uk

The hardest part of the lockdown Fr. Michael said for himself was not being able to offer confession to my parishioners, not seeing the devout, the people not able to attend Mass, or receive Holy Communion. My spiritual life was much like it always is: daily discipline of prayers: quiet personal prayer as well as The Divine Office and Rosary. As things open up I look forward to baptizing children, marrying couples, and giving Holy Communion to you, the good people of St. Conval's Parish Community.

For others, the response to the question was similar. What was the hardest part of being on lockdown?

- The hardest part of being on lockdown was that I felt, and the feeling persists, that I had stepped into a work fiction. The trouble was, that if we were living a fiction, it would be entertaining and thought-provoking; we are not. This is all as real as the rain.
- Spending so much time alone. Some have been able to keep working from home. I've discovered how even for myself how much connecting with others is important to me. Another challenge has been how to manage the anxiety of other people and their fears about the future of their jobs, how to manage work and schooling our children at home, how to help everyone be able to be okay with a slower pace.
- By far the hardest part of lockdown has been not having access to the Sacraments; confession, Eucharist and Adoration. Not having the physical presence of Christ visible in my every day week has taken a lot of getting used to. While nothing can ever fill that empty space, it has taken getting used to. Apart from that, the children not being able to see their grandparents has been difficult. I know they enjoy and learn a lot from family and it is hard to explain to them the loss of that in-person connection.
- I was able to handle the lockdown during Lent because I saw it as penance. But when it continued through Easter, I was more and more perturbed from the beginning of the shutdown, I saw a spiritual opportunity to embrace a prolonged "Holy Saturday" experience of prayer. Our Lord, in a way, was in the tomb, trapped in the tabernacles, shut off from His followers; clearly, Christ Jesus is beyond and above any humanly constructed restrictions. Praise God that the Mass is returning, at least online.