

# Parish of Saint Conval - Weekly Bulletin

## 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (A) 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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Parish Priest: Canon Michael McMahon



**Please Pray For Those Who Are Sick:** Frank Murray, Winnie Deighan, George Cowan 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:** Bobby McColgan (Requiem Mass Monday 10.00am, Private Funeral thereafter, body departs St. Conval's from Greenfarm Road at 10.50am), Joe Martin (Requiem Mass Wednesday 10.00am, Private Funeral thereafter, body departs St. Conval's from Bridge of Weir Road at 11.00am), John Clarke, Soo Kai Sheng and Fr. Bernard Canning.

**Please Pray For Those Whose Anniversaries Occur About Now:** Margaret Madden, John Dempsey, Gary Willox, John Graham Jnr, Youg Pui King, John Dempsey, Mary Murphy and for the month's mind of Betty Dunnion, Elsie Muggins and Thomas Anderson.

**In The House Porch** there are copies of the Bulletin, Mass Sheets, Census Forms, Standing Order Forms, 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.

**Remember Fr. Michael** has asked the young people of the Parish to contribute a drawing or sketch on a given topic. Paper and pens available in the house porch - help yourself! Theme for next weekend's illustration is 'The Parable of the Sower'. Please put your name and class on the picture. Fr. Michael is offering a prize for the best one! Winners of the best illustrations from previous weeks are; 'Holy Spirit' - Mia Kidd, 'Last Supper' - James, 'Jeremiah' - Joseph, 'Peter and Paul' - Shannon, this week 'Jesus and the Children' - ??? Nice big bar of White Chocolate in the Porch for each of you (one each!).

**Fr. Michael** is attempting to compile a database of the Parish to help us stay in touch with one another - there were no records kept by previous Parish Priests. Please take a Census Form and complete it, returning it to the House (outside door of House Porch accessible). All data held in accordance with GDPR.

**The Announcement** made by the First Minister recently has made it possible to open our Churches for Personal Prayer on Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> July and then again on Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July (on the weekdays in between we will act gradually, so this week on Wednesday) though not yet for the Public Celebration of Mass. This phase will come later and may be quite tricky as we will have to ticket it and gather the details of those who come - so that we can track and trace should any infections ensue. SO please continue to be patient and attend Sunday Mass online.

Fr. Michael has ensured that the Church environment is suitable for the Public Health requirements - this will involve a one-way system for entering and leaving the Church, please enter by the main door sanitising hands on entering, maintaining physical distancing, etc.

Stewards will direct you down the main aisle to a seat, please stay in it for a brief period of prayer and leave by the side aisles and the side door.

We have times when the Church is open and we will require cleaning after each open period.

Thank you for volunteering to help with these tasks of stewarding and cleaning.

The Parish has provided volunteers all the necessary supplies but if visiting please consider wearing your own face mask and gloves.

It will be important for us ALL, while we rejoice to be back in Church, to ensure that our Churches do not become a source of infection spread, so we will err on the side of caution always.

Please be patient so that we do not undo the steps we have made in these long weeks of lockdown, which have been so testing for us all in so many ways, be patient with volunteers who steward and clean also - this is a steep learning curve for us all and a stressful time!

So the schedule for this week is:

Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> July - Mass at 10.30am

Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> July - CHURCH OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER from 12noon until 3.00pm

Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> July - Funeral, as noted above

Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> July - Funeral, as noted above

Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> July - CHURCH OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER from 11.00am until 1.00pm

Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July - Mass at 10.30am

Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July - CHURCH OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER from 12noon until 3.00pm

We will increase our opening hours on the subsequent weekdays when we have volunteers to steward and to clean afterwards, times in next week's Bulletin, website, Facebook, etc.

**Fr. Michael** was invited back by the BBC to present the 'Reflections at the Quay' Television Programme again - it's on Sunday at 11.15am on BBC One Scotland (and then on iPlayer!).

**Throughout The Diocese** all parishioners are invited to contribute to a Spiritual Bouquet the Diocese hopes to present to our two hospitals. The link below takes people to the web page where they can indicate their spiritual contribution i.e. rosaries, prayers, acts of charity. These will be added together and a presentation made to the hospitals. Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/y8ffcunp>

**This Is The Testimony** of Fr. Francois-Marie Lethel who caught, and survived, Covid-19, inspiring stuff!

I write this testimony at Rome on Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> June, day of the Lord's Resurrection, Solemnity of our two great Saints of Rome, Peter and Paul.

Along with other brothers of my Community, I was stricken by the coronavirus, despite our efforts to respect all the health rules. On the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> June, I was very sick and an ambulance took me to the emergency room of the Gemelli Hospital, where St. John Paul II was hospitalized after the attack on his life. On the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup>, I was hospitalized in the 'Columbus Ward', the COVID section of the Hospital, where I stayed for 17 days in complete isolation, shut in my room until I left the hospital on 25<sup>th</sup> June, perfectly cured, without need of care or other controls. I thank Jesus and His Blessed Mother for this somewhat miraculous "resurrection," especially given my 72 years of age!

In the previous months, beginning in March, I had lived in this great test of the pandemic, thinking especially of the suffering of the Parishioners more wounded by the total privation of Holy Communion, especially in Italy and in France.

Now, in this month of June, the Lord Jesus has given me the grace to take part more profoundly, as a priest, in this great test that touched the whole human family, in fact at the moment of the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my priesthood, 21<sup>st</sup> June, which was a Sunday. I felt closer to all the sick and especially to the other priests infected (many died in the previous months in Italy). Therefore, I celebrated this anniversary in total solitude, celebrating Mass in my room. The previous Sunday was the feast of Corpus Christi. I was able to celebrate Mass every day, also in the first days when I was very sick, seated on my bed in front of the night table, transformed into a small altar. I must say that I was very much helped by the example of the Venerable Cardinal Van Thuan, about whom I had written a brief article entitled "The Eucharistic Spirituality of Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan". In fact, when he was in prison, he celebrated Mass every day in solitude and in extreme poverty, always having a consecrated Host in the pocket of his shirt to prolong the celebration with Eucharistic Adoration, affirming that in sorrow his "only strength was the Eucharist." Following his example, I celebrated daily Mass with great simplicity, and the first day I consecrated a small host, which I continually kept in a case, saying also to Jesus: "I take You with me day and night".

It was for me a new and very intense experience of the Truth of the Eucharistic Mystery and of the grace of Priesthood. It was not at all exaggerated spiritualism, but the strongest solidarity with all my sick brothers in the world, in communion with Jesus' redeeming sacrifice and in continual union with His "True Body born of the Virgin Mary, who suffered and died on the Cross for all. As a priest, I could really render present the Crucified and Risen Jesus in this place of pain of the body with the sickness and of soul, in total solitude, with the impossibility of the sick to go to Communion. It was, I hoped and prayed, my greatest service of priestly charity for the other sick people, but also for the doctors, nurses, and all the persons that took care of us with so much charity.

I experienced intensely the inseparability between the True Body of Jesus and His Word in Sacred Scripture, which I read constantly in these days, especially the Gospels and St. Paul, Isaiah, praying also all the Liturgy of the Hours (Breviary). Along with my Bible, I took with me two essential books, which were like "beacons" to me "The Story of a Soul" of St. Therese of Lisieux and the "Treatise of True Devotion to the Holy Virgin" of St. Louis Marie de Montfort.." So with a smartphone, I used the means of communication (telephone, WhatsApp and email) to have contact with Carmelite brothers and sisters in the Order, as well as family members and friends.

For me, these 17 days of hospitalization were the best spiritual retreat of my life as a Carmelite priest, not being able to do anything other than pray from morning until evening, with this form of personal prayer that Teresa of Avila loved. From my window, I could see the Dome of St. Peter's and I prayed a lot for our Pope Francis, like Moses who prayed on the mountain when the People of God were fighting on the plain (cf. Exodus 17:8-12), sharing Therese's boundless hope for the eternal salvation of all souls.

Finally, I experienced myself the charity of the doctors, nurses, and all the persons that came into my room for care, for cleaning, always clothed with the heaviest protection, doing such a courageous service, with the constant danger of contagion. In these very brief daily encounters, there was a very strong current that came from Jesus' Presence. Almost all, men and women, were young, and I was able to talk with all of them, praying for them and for their families, asking for the protection of Jesus and Mary. I was grateful for everything there, also for the food which I could still taste despite the virus! I also thanked the Hospital's Chaplain, whom I asked for wine for the Mass and, especially, the Sacrament of Forgiveness. Being unable to come into the COVID sector, he came as close as possible and gave me Absolution and the Sacrament of the Sick (Anointing).

I had an intense experience of abandonment in the "two Hands of the Father that are Jesus and the Holy Spirit", living more profoundly Therese of Lisieux's spiritual childhood, being fragile and totally dependent as a child. In the uncertainty of the future, I often took up her poem "Just for Today."

There is no merit in all of this. Everything was given to me by Jesus and His Blessed Mother for my brothers and sisters, to walk together to holiness. Truly, everything is grace!