

Year of St. Joseph (Part 4)

‘The Gospels tell us of four dreams (cf. Mt 1:20; 2:13.19.22). They were calls from God, but they were not easy to accept. After each dream, Joseph had to change his plans and take a risk, sacrificing his own plans in order to follow the mysterious designs of God, whom he trusted completely. We may ask ourselves, “Why put so much trust in a dream in the night?”

... Saint Joseph let himself be guided by his dreams without hesitation. Why? Because his heart was directed to God; it was already inclined towards him....

Indeed, Joseph’s dreams led him into experiences he would never have imagined. The first of these upended his betrothal but made him the father of the Messiah; the second caused him to flee to Egypt but saved the life of his family. After the third, which foretold his return to his native land, a fourth dream made him change plans once again, bringing him to Nazareth, the place where Jesus would begin his preaching of the Kingdom of God. Amid all these upheavals, he found the courage to follow God’s will’. (From Pope Francis’ Message for Day of Prayer for Vocations, 25/4/2021)



In the first dream (Mt. 1:20 - 21), Joseph is told: ‘Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear son and you must name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him’. (Mt. 1:24)

In the second dream (Mt. 2:13), the angel tells Joseph: ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child to destroy him.

In the third dream in Egypt (Mt. 2: 19 – 20), Joseph is told that those who want to kill the child are dead and to return to the land of Israel.

In the fourth dream (Mt. 2: 22 – 23), Joseph was warned not to return to Judaea, he left for the region of Galilee and settled in a town called Nazareth. Even though St. Joseph did not understand what he was being asked to do, he did what was necessary to protect Mary and Jesus.



St. Mary’s Parish Dungarvan

April 2021 — Easter Season



Christ is alive is the Easter news. Christ is alive with joy we sing, we celebrate our Risen Lord is our Easter song of joy. CHRIST IS ALIVE! He is our hope...Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive! (paragraph 1) ‘He is in you, he is with you and he never abandons you. However far you wander, he is always there, the Risen One. (2)

(From Pope Francis’ document: ‘Christ is Alive’ which is based on the Synod on Young People which took place in Rome in October 2018).

Pope Francis says (pages 43 – 48) that there are three great truths which we should never get tired of hearing.

1. God loves you. Whatever happens in life I am infinitely loved. Each one of us is the work of his hands. God does not keep track of our failings, but as Pope Francis says: ‘his memory is not a ‘hard disk’ that ‘saves’ and ‘archives’ all our data. His memory is a heart filled with tender compassion, one that finds joy in ‘deleting’/wiping out from us ever trace of evil.’ (115)

2. Christ Saves You! His outstretched arms on the cross say that he is a friend who is willing to give everything. If we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, then we can let ourselves be saved over and over again.

3. He is Alive! We need to keep reminding ourselves that Christ is alive, otherwise we can risk seeing Jesus as a fine model from the distant past, as a memory, as someone who saved us 2,000 years ago. The one who is with us is someone fully alive. He is the Christ, risen from the dead. As St. Paul reminds us: ‘If Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain.’ (1 Cor 15:7) Alive, he can be present in our lives at every moment, to fill it with light and take away all sorrow and loneliness. Even when others leave, he remains. ‘I am with you always, to the end of time. (Mt 28:20) He does not remain in the past. He is with us today and every day. (124 – 125) That’s why we need to stay connected to Jesus, to ‘remain online’ with him. Just as we try not to lose our connection to the internet, we should make sure that we stay connected with the Lord. Asking him ‘Jesus what would you do in my place?’ (158)

Thanks to the Resurrection, Jesus is not be found among the dead but among the living. Christ is alive is the Easter news. Christ is alive is the Easter news. **Christ is alive with joy we sing, we celebrate our Risen Lord is our Easter song of joy.**

Divine Mercy Sunday.

On this feast of Divine Mercy, the most beautiful message comes from Thomas, the disciple who arrived late; he was the only one missing. But the Lord waited for Thomas. Mercy does not abandon those who stay behind. Now, while we are looking forward to a slow and arduous recovery from the pandemic, there is a danger that we will forget those who are left behind. The risk is that we may then be struck by an even worse virus, that of *selfish indifference*. A virus spread by the thought that life is better if it is better for me, and that everything will be fine if it is fine for me. It begins there and ends up selecting one person over another, discarding the poor, and sacrificing those left behind on the altar of progress. **The present pandemic, however, reminds us that there are no differences or borders between those who suffer. We are all frail, all equal, all precious.** May we be profoundly shaken by what is happening all around us: the time has come to eliminate inequalities, to heal the injustice that is undermining the health of the entire human family! Let us learn from the early Christian community described in the Acts of the Apostles. It received mercy and lived with mercy: “All who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need” (Acts 2:44-45). This is not some ideology: it is Christianity.

Pope Francis' homily on Divine Mercy Sunday, delivered April 19, 2020

25th April 2021: 4th Sunday of Easter: Day of Prayer for Vocations

Saint Joseph: The Dream of Vocation

‘St. Joseph, through his ordinary life, he accomplished something extraordinary in the eyes of God....God looks on the heart (cf. 1 Sam 16:7), and in Saint Joseph he recognized the heart of a father, able to give and generate life in the midst of daily routines. Vocations have this same goal: to beget and renew lives every day. The Lord desires to shape the hearts of fathers and mothers: hearts that are open, capable of great initiatives, generous in self-giving, compassionate in comforting anxieties and steadfast in strengthening hopes. The priesthood and the consecrated life greatly need these qualities nowadays, in times marked by fragility but

also by the sufferings due to the pandemic, which has spawned uncertainties and fears about the future and the very meaning of life. **Saint Joseph comes to meet us in his gentle way, as one of “the saints next door”. At the same time, his strong witness can guide us on the journey.**

Saint Joseph suggests to us three key words for each individual’s vocation. The first is dream. Everyone dreams of finding fulfilment in life.... Saint Joseph has much to tell us in this regard, because, through the dreams that God inspired in him, he made of his life a gift.... A second word marks the journey of Saint Joseph and that of vocation: service. **The Gospels show how Joseph lived entirely for others and never for himself... For a vocation – like life itself – matures only through daily fidelity... say yes to God with their lives, through their fidelity each day... This fidelity is the secret of joy.... It the joy of simplicity,** the joy experienced daily by those who care for what truly matters: faithful closeness to God and to our neighbour...May Saint Joseph, protector of vocations, accompany you with his fatherly heart!’ (From Pope Francis Message for Day of Prayer for Vocations, 25/4/2021.)

40/3/50

The **40** days of Lent are followed by the **3** most sacred days (the Easter Triduum) of Jesus’ Last Supper with his apostles, his suffering death and resurrection

St. Augustine spoke of “the most holy triduum of the crucified, buried and risen Lord.”

These are followed by the **50** days of celebrating Easter, that is, a week of weeks—49 days, and on the 50th day we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, promised by the Lord; thus **40/3/50**.

HAPPY EASTER



Easter Collection.

The Easter Collection for the support of the priests of the parish is taken up at this time. **The Easter Collection envelope from the box of envelopes may be used and there are Easter Collection envelopes available in the church and in the porch.** We encourage people who do not usually support the parish or the priests to consider doing so. As expected, income has fallen during the pandemic and only for the loyal supporters our day to day financial situation would be a lot worse. **Please consider supporting your parish and its priests.**