

Pray that many will continue to return to Mass now that the worst restrictions of Covid-19 are lifted. And that others who may be away a long time will come back to be with the local community, celebrate together and pray with us for all our needs. **No parish is perfect, and even the best parishes can improve. Imagine what would happen if every person in our parish did one little thing to make the parish better!**

(From a page-long article by Lorraine Hanley, The Irish Catholic, March 30, 2023, p. 32 with changes and additions.)

The Road to Emmaus: Third Sunday of Easter

“We have all had difficult moments in life, dark moments in which we walked in sadness, pensive, without horizons, with only a wall before us. And Jesus is always beside us to give us hope, to warm our hearts, and to say: “Go ahead. I am with you. Go ahead.” The secret of the road that leads to Emmaus is simply this: despite appearances to the contrary, we continue to be loved and God will never stop loving us. God will walk with us as always, always, even in the most painful moments, even in the worst moments, even in moments of defeat. That is where the Lord is. And this is our hope. Let us go forward with this hope! Because he is beside us and walks with us. Always!”

Pope Francis

Jesus, the Living One.

‘Jesus, the living One, is with us, forever. Let the Church and the world rejoice, for today our hopes no longer come up against the wall of death, for the Lord has built a bridge to life.’ Pope Francis Tweet on Easter Sunday, 9th April 2023.

Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

This novena began on Monday, April 17th at 7.30pm and will continue for nine Mondays at 7.30pm each Monday. No 9.30am Mass on Mondays during the novena. ‘Mother of Perpetual Help, with the greatest confidence we come before your holy picture to be inspired by the example of your life.’ Novena Prayer.

St. Francis de Sales says: ‘Let us run to Mary and, as her little children, cast ourselves into her arms with a perfect confidence’. Like Jesus safe in the arms of his mother Mary in the Icon of our Mother of Perpetual Help, St. Francis de Sales advises to run to the safety of Mary’s arms and bring our needs to her with a perfect confidence.

St. Mary’s Parish Dungarvan

April—May 2023



Welcome Back!..... Keep on Coming Back!

It has been so good to see people gradually coming back to Mass, and particularly during this year’s Holy Week – Easter Ceremonies. It has been uplifting to see so many people attend these beautiful celebrations. Nothing beats being present in person. In this age of high technology and numerous devices, it is wonderful that people can join in celebrations remotely, but it doesn’t surpass being physically present with the community to raise hearts, minds and voices together in praise and thanks to God with family, friends, neighbours and other members of the Christian community in our community celebrations. Some people are unable to attend for various health reasons. For them, to join in the celebrations at home is a great blessing.

Gathering Back: Rebuilding the Eucharistic Community after the Covid Pandemic is a Pastoral Letter which the bishop of Ferns, Bishop Ger Nash wrote to the people of his diocese for Lent 2023. In that letter, Bishop Nash addresses the present situation with regard to church attendance following the lifting of the most severe COVID-19 restrictions. Understanding people’s reservations and reasons for not attending church, he highlights very well the ongoing encouragement needed for people to come back to church celebrations and he gives clear explanations why personal attendance makes sense.

At Mass we believe in the ‘Real Presence’ of Jesus, that he is truly present, giving us His Body and Blood in Holy Communion. Our best response to Jesus’ Real Presence is to honour him with our real presence, in person, physical presence. Bishop Nash put it like this: ‘A return to Sunday Mass in our public places of worship (Parish Churches) is our way of honouring Christ’s sacrifice. We give thanks for his real presence in the Eucharist by offering our own real presence at Church and thus making real our participation in this most communal of acts.’ The church building, the teach a’ phobail, has a special place in each of our lives. It is where we gather in joy and sorrow to celebrate key moments on life’s journey. It is where we gather to celebrate the Lord’s presence with us in a special way at Mass. For our ancestors in faith the Mass always mattered.

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Six Ways I Can Make My Parish Better.

They risked their lives to attend Mass in quiet, hidden locations and walked long distances to get there. For most people today, it is a short journey to Mass. It is a journey worth making to be with others, to celebrate the joy of the Lord with us, and to give strength and the support to each other as member of the community.

Adapting the words from the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles from the Second Sunday of Easter (Acts 2: 42 – 27), we are asked to remain faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the community, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

Weekly Collection Envelopes, May 2023 – May 2024.

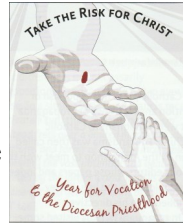
Boxes of weekly and special collection envelopes for May 2023 – May 2024 are being prepared for distribution at the moment. The number of households /individuals using the weekly envelope has decreased dramatically. Please consider taking a box of envelopes for the next year to support your parish and the priests of the parish. This also ensures that the parish benefits greatly from the Tax Rebate Scheme. **The parish office will assist you and give you a Weekly Envelope Request Form which is also available in the church and porches.**

Year of Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood.

30 April 2023 - 21 April 2024.

Vocations/Good Shepherd Sunday 2023 – 2024.

Theme: ‘Take the Risk for Christ’



The Council for Vocations of the Bishops’ Conference has organized this year to promote vocations to the diocesan priesthood.

‘A key objective of this Year of Vocations is to start conversations within families, with priests and in parish communities on the beauty of the vocation of priesthood. Feedback from newly ordained priests indicates a strong correlation between their calling and encouragement received from a priest about their ministry, in other words taking the risk for Christ... in 2023, answering God’s call to journey as a priest is a counter-cultural and courageous decision. Future priests need support to discern their vocation. I encourage any man who seeks to explore their calling to priestly ministry to make contact today with their local priest or diocesan vocations director’. Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, Chairman of the Council for Vocations of the Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

1. Think of Yourself as Part of a Parish Family.

Family members share a common heritage and history...Family members don’t always agree, but they do feel a strong commitment to one another and to the family as a whole.

2. Be welcoming.

When you come together on the weekend for Mass, think of it as a large family reunion – with people you know well, know slightly or don’t know at all... Remember to smile.

3. Use your Gifts and Talents for the Good of the Parish.

God has given each person unique gifts and talents that are intended to be shared – Altar Server, Collector, Reader/Minister of the Word, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (Minister of the Eucharist), Choir, Parish Pastoral Council, etc..

4. Attend Parish Events.

While Sunday Mass is at the heart of any parish community, daily Mass for those who can attend every day or as often as possible offers another opportunity to build community. Other special celebrations, like novenas are arranged from time to time. Online and in person diocesan celebrations which may be arranged from time to time are advertised on the parish (dungarvanparish.ie) and diocesan websites (waterfordlismore.ie). They help us to learn more about our faith.

5. Support Your Parish Financially.

You know how expensive it is to run your own home. Parishes face even higher costs – and depend on parishioners to meet them. Take a serious look at the money you give to your parish each week. At present, here in St. Mary’s, we are preparing the boxes of weekly and priests’ collection envelopes for the next year, May 2023 – May 2024. Please consider using these envelopes for your contributions and also generate income for the Tax Rebate Scheme.

6. Pray for Your Parish.

Keep the priests, deacon, parish staff and fellow parishioners in your daily prayers. Praying a rosary, spending time in Eucharistic Adoration (Thursdays, 10am – 4pm). .

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