

6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR A – 16/17 MAY 2020



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For those wishing to contribute to Stewardship or Priests' collection, the Parish account details are listed below for electronic funds transfer.

1st Collection

Account name: St Bede's Presbytery Account Presbytery

Account BSB: 083 347 Account no. 666017079

2nd Collection

Account name: St Bede's Church Account Church

Account BSB: 083 347 Account no. 458706734

Please click on the link below after 5pm on Saturday, 16th May, to watch the 6th Sunday of Easter Online Mass, celebrated by our priests. <https://youtu.be/Y8RLljirDg>

YOUR PRAYER ARE ASKED FOR:

Margot Boyle, who is sick.

Marie Ellen Lusby, recently deceased and,

Fr. Ross McKenney, Maria Dinh and Maria Tran, whose anniversaries occur about this time.

BAPTISM

We now can celebrate Baptism with 10 attendees. If you wish to have your child baptised during this time, please contact the parish office. As a result, all baptisms at the present time will be celebrated individually.

First reading

Acts 8:5-8,14-17

They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result, there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm 65(66):1-7,16,20

R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

**1/ Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of God's name.
O give voice to glorious praise,
Say to God: "How tremendous your deeds."**

**2/ Before you all the earth shall bow,
Shall sing to you, sing to your name.
Come and see the works of God,
Tremendous the deeds in our midst.**

**3/ God turned the sea into dry land,
They passed through the river dryshod.
Let our joy be then in God who rules for ever in might.**

**4/ Come and hear, all who fear God.
I will tell what happened to my soul.
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer,
But surrounded me with love.**



Second reading

1 Peter 3:15-18

In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

Gospel

John 14:15-21

I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate

Jesus said to his disciples:
'If you love me you will keep my commandments.
I shall ask the Father,
and he will give you another Advocate
to be with you for ever,
that Spirit of truth
whom the world can never receive
since it neither sees nor knows him;
but you know him,



because he is with you, he is in you.
I will not leave you orphans;
I will come back to you.
In a short time, the world will no longer see me;
but you will see me,
because I live and you will live.
On that day you will understand that I am in my Father
and you in me and I in you.
Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them
will be one who loves me;
and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father,
and I shall love him and show myself to him.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION

For five of the six Sundays of Easter this year we have been reading from John’s Gospel and reflecting on life as an Easter people. If we want to bring that down to practicalities – as the readings have been doing for us in those weeks – it is being a people living the virtues of faith, hope and love. Today’s Gospel focuses on the last of these: love.

Being an Easter people is much more than believing that Jesus rose from the dead. It is believing in the risen Christ. Believing in someone is about a relationship, it is about an act of love. Being a people who believe in the risen Christ as about loving Christ who has first loved us, and – as the Gospel says – receiving his commandments and keeping them.

The Gospel today also points us towards Pentecost – the gift of the Advocate, the gift of the Spirit. When we celebrate the feast of the Ascension next week, we will be proclaiming that though Jesus has returned to the Father, he will not leave us orphans (in the words of today’s Gospel) – he gives us the Spirit. The reading from the Acts of the Apostles spoke of what we today call the sacraments of initiation: it recounted Peter and John laying hands on those who had been baptized, and giving them the gift of the Spirit. We share in that gift of the Spirit through the sacraments, and through the life of the Church community.

To reflect on the challenge of today’s readings for us in 2020, there are two particular aspects of our culture and time that we need to confront: firstly the idea that obedience somehow limits our freedom; and secondly that individualism is somehow uncritically a good thing. In a way, we have had to reflect on these as a society, for we have all accepted that for the common good in this time of pandemic, our freedoms have been temporarily constricted and people have by-and-large been obedient to this requirement; and though we have been more isolated than normal, we have been acutely aware of the need to work for the good of all.

In the Gospel, Jesus was very clear that we would receive his commandments and in keeping these we will show our love. Some in our society will see that as an attack of personal freedom, but if we look at the figure of Jesus himself, who always obeyed the will of the Father, we also see someone who was supremely free and fulfilled. As disciples, we can be confident that our true freedom and our true humanity are found in obedience to the will of the Father.

It can also be common to hear a concentration just on a “personal relationship with Jesus Christ”. That, too, is necessary – but the whole witness of the Acts of the Apostles (as seen in today’s first reading) is that our relationship with God is lived out and fulfilled within a community: the Church; and its actions: the sacraments.

At the moment we are living Church in a different reality: the sacraments are less accessible, which for us as Catholics is particularly acutely felt. However, it is also a time for us to have the space to consider all the ways we connect with the Lord.

This week, some of us are able to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist again. It will be a gradual opening up to life as a community gathered around the Table of the Lord, and this will take time and cautious steps. In the meantime, we all continue to journey united in faith and hope and love.



PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

With trust and confidence, we turn now to God our Father and ask his help in being open to the Spirit as we make our prayer to him.

1/ We pray that the leaders of the church may always be receptive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and seek his guidance in their decisions and actions.

Let us pray to the Lord.

2/ For families that are divided and suffering because of bitterness. May the Spirit of peace bring reconciliation, so that whenever there is hurt there may be healing.

Let us pray to the Lord.

3/ We pray that our homes may be places of peace and harmony, where parents seek to guide their children in the way of truth and love.

Let us pray to the Lord.

4/ We pray for the sick of our parish, especially *Margot Boyle*. May they be strengthened and encouraged by the love of friends who care for them.

Let us pray to the Lord.

5/ We pray that our recently deceased, especially *Marie Ellen Lusby*, and those whose anniversaries occur about this time, especially *Fr. Ross McKenney, Maria Dinh and Maria Tran*. May they enjoy Christ's gift of peace.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Almighty Father, we entrust our lives and our need to your care. By the gift of your love bind us together as your church so that we may have the courage to live according to our convictions as followers of Christ. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Family Week 2020: “Building Connections in the Spirit of Hope”

We know that strong relationships are crucial in life and that when we build positive relationships with our families, our children (and their children alike) are more likely to experience the same as they grow and start their own families. **Family Week** (15-21 May 2020) is an opportunity for everyone to celebrate and strengthen family relationships. CatholicCare provides resources and encouragement to schools for Family Week activities.

[Resources for Family Week 2020](#)

Next Sunday, 24th May, is Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord.



Monday 25th May, is the patronal feast of St Bede's. As a result, we will celebrate next Sunday's Youtube Mass from St Bede's and pray especially for our community which gathers there.

