

Mass Times

Sundays: 9 am & 11 am
Saturday Vigil: 6.00 pm
Tuesday & Friday: 9.30 am
Fr. Michael Keohane Co-PP



Baptism

Jayce Joseph O'Mahony.
Olivia Meadhbh Daly.
Cuan Seán Walsh.
Gearóid James Walsh.
 We welcome them into the Christian Family



Ash Wednesday on 14th February, Mass @ 9.30am
Feast of St. Blaise, this Saturday 3rd February,
Blessing of Throats after 6pm Vigil Mass

LOOK UP In the first reading this weekend, Job gives us several words and phrases for the difficulties of life. He speaks of life as 'pressed service', 'hired drudgery', 'nights of grief', 'no hope', 'my eyes will never again see joy'. He is not exactly full of joy this weekend.

The gospel reading is a continuation from previous weeks. Yet again, Jesus is on the move, people are following; he heals people and then moves on to a quiet place. It says that while people are 'crowding round'; he goes moves forward not waiting for adulation and praise. His eyes are fixed on God, not on the praise that may come his way. Jesus shows us where to look and where we are to turn. He does not look inwards, but he looks upwards to the Father and he looks forward.

The great blessing of our gathering is that when we hear something, we physically raise our eyes off the floor to look upwards towards the sanctuary, we look upwards at the host and chalice, we look to Jesus Christ when we receive the Eucharist, our hearts are raised when we join in a hymn and welcome the music and singing. These are all ways of looking upwards, of moving forwards, of placing our hope in God, of seeing beyond the 'pressed service' and weariness of life.

At the start of February and with brighter days ahead we look up to see the blessing of God.

Fr. Michael
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Ballinlough, Blackrock, Blackrock Road, Mahon Family of Parishes

Representatives from the Office of Mission and Ministry in the Diocese will speak at all Masses across the four parishes on the next two weekends. We will continue to pray for the formation of new parish councils in parishes asking God's blessing so that these will be formed in a spirit of prayer and discernment to specifically serve the prayer and faith lives of the parishes.

Youth 2000 St. Valentine's Ball

Our annual fundraising ball takes place in Cork on Saturday 10th February 2024. The event is open to anyone over 18. Tickets cost €68 and can be purchased on eventbrite. The evening will commence with the celebration of Holy Mass by the Bishop of Cork and Ross, Fintan Gavin at 4.00pm at St Patrick's Church, Rochestown followed by the ball nearby in the Rochestown Park Hotel. See www.youth2000.ie for more information.

A brief introduction on today's readings

First reading Job 7:1-4, 6-7
 A big strength of the book of Job is that the writer "tells it like it is." Anyone who has faced suffering or hardship or injustice will be able to identify with the feelings and words of this short yet powerful reading.

Second reading 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
 It may seem a surprise to us, but in the days of Jesus, rabbis were supposed to have a trade and support themselves. In today's passage, St Paul tells us why, as a kind of Christian rabbi, he refuses payment for his work as an apostle. The reasons are quite personal, as we shall hear.

Gospel Mark 1:29-39
 Today we have a thumbnail sketch of Jesus' own ministry. It's a busy schedule, as he helps people in all kinds of needs. Towards the end of this reading, we get a little window on to what it was that kept Jesus going—his times of prayer.

The Papers Say.....

Irish Catholic. (1). No 'right to erase' baptism records for Church defectors -- DPC. (2). Mary Kenny: St. Brigid has been rebranded for our time (3). Ronan Mullen: Irish children are the real losers as mothers and parents erased from Constitution (4). The Archbishop of Lagos speaks about the plight of Christians and Muslims in the war being waged on Nigerian people.

Sacred Heart Messenger. (1). St. Martin de Porres, Son of an Unknown Father. (2) Fr. Donal Neary SJ reflects on the Feast of the Annunciation, asking if it is in fact Christianity's most important day (3). Shall we talk about Dementia? (4) Fr. Bill Toner SJ challenges some approaches to the mixed motivations to good works.

Tablet. (1). A Venezuelan tragedy --- Kenyan missionary Fr. Josiah K'Okal lived and worked with Amerindian people. But since he was found hanged on 2 January, doubts have arisen about the official cause of his death (2). Rome and Canterbury --- Catholics and Anglicans 'go out in pairs' marking Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. (3). Requests for support with bills made to St. Vincent de Paul Society at record levels.

Prayer for the Formation of a Parish Council
Heavenly Father, we come before you with grateful hearts as we embark on the journey of forming our parish Council. We seek your guidance, wisdom, and grace to build a vibrant parish council that reflects the love and teachings of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Lord, bless our efforts and help us to recognize the unique gifts and talents you have bestowed upon each of us. May we be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as we discern the needs of our community and strive to fulfill your mission here on Earth.

We entrust the formation of our parish council to the intercession of Mary, our Mother, who stood by your Son in moments of joy and sorrow. May she guide us in imitating her example of faith, humility, and loving service.

We offer this prayer in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sunday Cuppa continues in the Parish Centre after 11 am mass on 4th February 2024 for tea and refreshments and more chat! Marvellous turnout last time!! Everyone welcome!



Observations

The wall painting places the healing of Peter's mother-in-law in rather grand surroundings. In reality, Peter's family home in Capernaum was a more modest affair. Still, she looks pretty unwell and Peter is definitely concerned.

Behind our translation "she waited on them" lies a more powerful Greek word: she served them, echoing a key Christian term diakonia. Our first reaction, we might think that the poor woman is barely up from her sick bed and there she is back in the kitchen!!!

Two observations may help. Firstly, proof of the healing is part of nearly all healing stories and here we have the proof. Peter's mother-in-law is truly restored to her usual self. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, Mark is underlining discipleship using the key word "to serve".



Reflections

1. The first story (vv. 29-31) is one of healing. You might reflect on times when you were sick in body, mind or spirit and someone was a 'Jesus person' to you, someone who 'took you by the hand and lifted you up'. Remember them with gratitude. Have there been times also when you did this for others?

2. The second story (vv. 32-34) adds another dimension. People are freed from demons. Have you had the experience of being freed from demons that imprisoned you: fear, anxiety, guilt, low self-esteem, addictions, bitterness, etc.? What was it like for you to get that freedom? Who were the 'Jesus people' who helped to free you?

3. The third story (vv. 35-39) has a number of different elements we can consider:

a) Jesus goes off to a desert place to pray. After a hectic day he felt the need for quiet to ground himself once more. In the busyness of life how do you keep in touch with what is going on inside yourself? How do you keep in touch with God? Where do you find your 'deserted place'? What difference does it make for you when you do succeed in taking time out?

b) Jesus shows himself as a person seeking to break new ground. The disciples want him to continue ministry where he is. He wants to move on. What has been your experience of breaking new ground, moving beyond your comfort zone, or trying something you had not tried before? When has this had a life-giving effect for you?

SVP St. Michael's Conference, Blackrock

Appeal for New Members

If you have 2 hours free on a Monday night, and would like to help those in need in our community, you can do so by Home Visitation with St. Vincent de Paul.

BLACKROCK ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Church Gate collection will take place on **Week ending 3/4 February 2024**
 Your support as always is greatly appreciated.

Thought for the day

Which of us is not in need of some kind of healing? The healing touch of Jesus reaches out to all in need: the physically ill, the mentally disturbed, the addicts, the bereaved, the lonely, the distraught, the stressed, the sinners. He desires our well-being, that we might be fully alive and experience life in abundance.

Prayer

I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

(Ephesians 3:16-19)

K O'Mahony OSA

ENTRANCE - Be Still, for the Presence of the Lord

Be Still, for the Presence of the Lord
 Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here. Come, bow before him now, with reverence and fear. In him no sin is found. We stand on holy ground. Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around; He burns with holy fire, with splendour he is crowned. How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of Light! Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place; He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace. No work too hard for him; in faith receive from him. Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

RECESSIONAL - How Great Thou Art

Oh Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds Thy hands have made I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed.

CHORUS: Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art. Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart; Then I shall bow, in humble adoration, And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art. *CHORUS: Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee etc.*

Do This in Memory 2023 - 2024

The next Mass for the First Holy Communion children and their families will take place next **Saturday 10th February @ 6pm**. Families are reminded to bring their Do This in Memory candle, which they received from the parish, with them to this Mass. May God bless the children as they prepare for the Sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion in the coming weeks and months. We will all pray for them.

Anam Cara Cork, the organisation that supports bereaved parents, is holding its monthly Parent Evening for bereaved parents on Wednesday 7th February at 7:15pm in the Maryborough Hotel, Maryborough Hill, Douglas, T12 XR12. This event is free and open to all bereaved parents regardless of the age your child died, the circumstances of their death, or whether their death was recent or not. We also offer an online service. For more info call 01 4045378.