

A few words from the Parish Priest....

When I was 14 or 15 my older sister asked me to go to the Holy Week ceremonies with her at the church in a neighbouring parish. They had a priest she admired, a great choir and was much more active than our little country parish. She was at that time deeply religious, committed to going as an aid to the sick in Lourdes each year and was studying to be a social worker. Her faith was alive and active, she felt drawn to the Lord and knew that Holy Week provides an amazing opportunity to come to know him better. I was happy to go along, maybe because my sister had just got her driving licence and it was a break from the teenage boredom of school holidays. Anyway, we went, starting with Palm Sunday. Up until that point I only thought of it as the Mass with the long Gospel that we had to endure standing up. But on that occasion, we had the booklets with the people's parts and I got caught up in the drama of the Lord's entrance to Jerusalem, the betrayal in the garden, his trial, condemnation and crucifixion between the two thieves on Calvary. As the week unfolded we entered into the beauty of Holy Thursday and I realised for the first time that the washing of the feet set our faith on the foundation of service. The gift from the Last Supper, the Eucharist had for me been about getting communion, but from then I began to understand it as the very gift of the Lord himself, his real presence. Good Friday was amazing, the Solemn Passion liturgy, the Gospel was sung, the cross kissed and I felt he died for my sins too. Later that evening the Stations were done in a dramatic way that really moved me. On Holy Saturday night I went to my first Vigil Mass and was blown away by the gathering at the Paschal fire, the church brightened by the spreading of flickering flames from the candles in the hand of each person there, the readings, Gloria bells, Alleluias sung, the baptism and dressing of the altar, the sheer beauty of celebration of Christ's victory of death. I didn't know at the end of that week that I would head to the seminary and train to be a priest, but I did open my heart of the Lord and I doubt that without my sister's invitation, her sharing with me her faith, without the parish that prepared and celebrated so well that I'd be here today as a priest. Holy Week matters, try and make time for one or all of the ceremonies, let's renew our faith in the Lord and in God's mercy together.

Lenten Reflection in **Balally Church** this afternoon at 4pm. Join vocalist Kerrie O'Connor harpist Mary Louise O'Donnell and violinist Naomi O'Shea for anyone who missed them. We would like to thank Kerrie, Mary Louise, and Naomi for a wonderful, inspirational evening in Rathgar last Sunday.

Collections 7th April 2019

Offertory Collection: €1283
Share Collection: €691

Thank you for your support for these collections, and for your contributions to the Parish Fund each month.

The Annual Advocate Collection for the Sunshine Fund will today Sunday 14th April. The Sunshine Fund, a special works conference of the St. Vincent de Paul provides summer holidays for children all over Dublin who need a holiday; this collection is their only source of funds. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Lough Derg St Oliver Plunkett Pilgrimage 2019 will take place on three Fridays: 31st May; 5th July; and 9th August. See poster at the back of the Church for details, or phone Miriam at: 01 4941171.

Our Lady's Choral Society, the Diocesan choir, is performing a free concert of Handel Highlights in Merchant's Quay Church on Sunday, 14th April at 3pm with soloists and orchestra. In aid of the homeless.

Methodist Church Rathgar Fundraising Concert on 4th May 2019 at 7pm. The concert will feature music by Paul Hindemith, Marcel Grandjany, Camille Saint-Saens, Alphonse Hasselmans as well as Hungarian and Irish folk music with some added surprises arranged and composed by Anna Szombathy, a young Hungarian music student, and even a few lever harp pieces.

HOLY THURSDAY 18th April

Morning Prayer at 10.00am

Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7.30pm

with a collection of Lenten Alms for Trocaire

Holy Hour at Garden of Repose after Mass.

Watch and Pray 8.30pm – 9.30pm

GOOD FRIDAY 19th April

Morning Prayer at 10.00am

Children's Stations at 12.00 noon

Solemn Passion Ceremony at 3.00pm

Stations of the Cross 7.30pm

Prayer around the Cross

HOLY SATURDAY 20th April

Morning Prayer at 10.00am

Confessions 10.30-11.00am

Vigil Mass at 9.00pm

EASTER SUNDAY

Masses of the Resurrection

10.30, 12.00 noon & 6.15pm

EASTER WEEK

Easter Monday Mass at 11.00am

Tuesday to Saturday Mass at 10.00am