

# Ministry Update

A Newsletter for clergy, parish sisters and staff,  
and all involved in ministry in the parish,  
from Kildare and Leighlin Faith Development Services

September 2020



## Keeping Sunday Holy in a Time of Pandemic!

Our Sundays have certainly been a different experience in these past months! As Catholics, Sunday and particularly Sunday Mass is the highpoint of our week as a faith community. Yet we have had to endure the loss of this Sunday gathering and the nourishment of the Eucharist. Thankfully, while still a very different and limited experience, as this Update goes to print public Masses can take place in our diocese. We must continue to follow health and government advice and support all those priests, staff and volunteers in our local parishes who are doing their utmost to help provide the best Sunday and weekday experience possible. Everyone has a part to play in following guidelines and keeping one another safe in the church environment. For many this may mean continuing to stay at home and, where possible, joining in the celebration via webcam or a livestream.

In the midst of a very fluid situation one thing holds firm. Sunday is the day of the Lord. It is the day when we remember and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus – the fundamental event of our Christian faith. Because of this, as followers of Jesus, it is a day we are called to keep holy. The most obvious and primary way we keep Sunday holy is through our attendance at Mass. But our keeping of Sunday is not limited to or exhausted by Mass. And, at a time when we are still dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass and may not be able to attend, this might be a very useful thing to remember.

### Some Ways to Keep Sunday Holy

- + Attend Mass when you can. If you can't, join via webcam / livestream
- + If you can't do this, read and reflect on the Sunday readings alone or as a family
- + Make a spiritual communion (see prayer on page 4)
- + Make time for rest and relaxation
- + Avoid chores that can wait for Monday!
- + Check in on those around you, especially the sick /elderly
- + Visit with family and friends – in person or via a phone call as appropriate
- + Enjoy the beauty of God's creation. Go for a walk or a Sunday drive
- + Share family activities – dress your table and share a Sunday meal together, crafts, baking, board games, gardening...
- + Pray a family rosary
- + Visit a church to pray privately
- + Create a family/personal Sunday tradition

### Some Tips for Praying the Mass via Technology

- + Dress as you would for Mass
- + Have your technology ready and be on time
- + Turn off any other technology that might distract you
- + Invite a member of the family to light a candle before Mass begins, perhaps beside a cross
- + Share in the responses, prayers and gestures (Sign of the Cross etc.) of the Mass
- + Stand for the Gospel and Our Father; kneel as appropriate if you can; share a sign of peace
- + Join in the singing
- + At Holy Communion time, make an Act of Spiritual Communion
- + And finally, go in peace – to live what you have prayed
- + Don't forget to donate on line or by other means to your parish if you can



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

The pandemic is a crisis, and we do not emerge from a crisis the same as before: either we come out of it better, or we come out of it worse. We must come out of it better...

POPE FRANCIS



## A Couple of Questions for Parish Pastoral Councils

What is one thing we can do as a parish community in these days to bring Jesus' love and healing into people's lives?

Who needs us to reach out to them now?  
How?

### World Mission Sunday : 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020

This year's theme, **Together we can do more – Blessed are the peacemakers**, reminds us that the Universal Church family is a global community that must stand together if it is to do more. It also recognises overseas missionaries as peacemakers, who like Jesus Christ, emulate love and harmony as they attempt to reunite fragile people from fractured communities, with God and each other.

Right now missionaries desperately need your help. You can show missionaries you care by supporting their life-giving work on World Mission Sunday. Your prayers and generosity will change lives.

The **Mission Month pack** can be used throughout the month of October and includes: a booklet with daily reflections; a toolkit with updates for parish websites and bulletins and details of how to donate; texts for Mass on Mission Sunday in English and *as Gaeilge*; Children's Resource; and posters.

It can be downloaded at <https://www.wmi.ie/mission-month-pack>



### Sunday 4 October 2020 Day for Life 2020

Resources for Day for Life 2020 are available for download, including:

- ✚ Pastoral Letter in English, Irish & Polish
- ✚ Video Message
- ✚ Prayers of Intercession
- ✚ Homily Notes
- ✚ Prayers
- ✚ Visuals for social media and parish bulletins
- ✚ Useful links

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2020/09/23/day-for-life-2020-choose-life/>



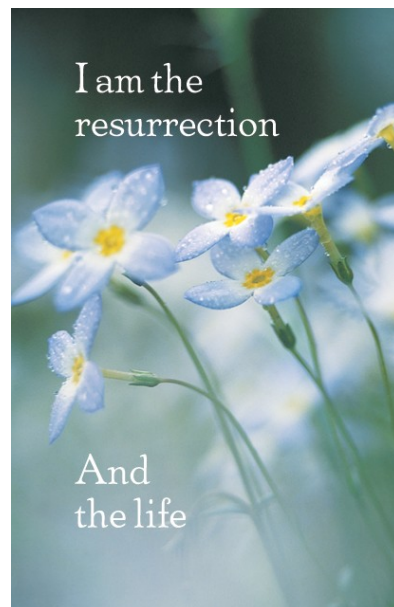
# November Remembrance

*A reminder, an invitation and some ideas...*

This year has been unlike any other in the manner in which we have been able to mark the deaths of loved ones and members of our parish communities. Parishes have done their utmost to continue to offer the support of the Church and the consolation of our faith under very restrictive conditions. The Christian belief in the resurrection, which transforms our understanding of the meaning of death, has continued to be proclaimed and shared with those who mourn. Parishes have continued to accompany families in their time of grief.

As we approach the month of November, we know that it stands out as a month when parishes actively reach out to the bereaved and offer them the consolation of prayer and support, especially through the celebration of the Mass. This year, in the midst of a pandemic which has made the grieving process so much more difficult for people, parishes are being invited to continue to reach out to families in prayerful and practical ways.

While the burden on parish life is great at this time, this outreach of support and care goes to the heart of our mission as a Church to bring Christ's consoling love to those who need it. Because of this, the Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation is asking parish teams, funeral ministry teams, liturgy groups and/or parish pastoral councils to look to their own particular circumstances and to discern what is appropriate and possible for them to do locally to continue this November remembrance of the dead and to reach out to families who have suffered bereavement in the past year.



The commission is providing the following as ideas that may be taken for use or may trigger other local responses that fit better into the experience of the people of your parish.

- The creation of a sacred space where people can pin a photo of a loved one who has died in the past year
- A direct, personal invitation to families to come privately to the church during the week to light a candle, share a memory and say a prayer together (a prayer could be displayed for use)
- At particular time(s) during the week a brief moment of prayer with the reading of the names of the deceased. This could be broadcast via webcam if possible
- The tolling of bells in remembrance at a particular time across the parish/diocese and call to a moment of silent prayer
- Using social media, parish website and, if possible, Sunday Mass on All Saints day, sharing a video greeting of encouragement and consolation from Bishop Denis to those who are mourning, including a prayer
- Sharing information regarding bereavement supports that are available for people
- Actively sharing general advice to people on how to look after their emotional and mental health in the context of COVID, recognising that we are all grieving loss in some form as we go through this experience. Some of this information will appear on [kandle.ie](http://kandle.ie)
- Depending on numbers who have died in the parish, inviting families to one of a number of Masses of Remembrance in the parish
- Blessing of graves and recording of same for parish website /social media platforms

**PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE OTHER IDEAS FOR THIS MONTH OF REMEMBRANCE THAT WE CAN SHARE WITH PARISHES - email Julie at [Julie.Kavanagh@Kandle.ie](mailto:Julie.Kavanagh@Kandle.ie)**





Throughout these months parishes in the Kildare and Leighlin diocesan family have faced enormous challenges and have continued to minister and reach out to people in extraordinarily difficult times.

Hopefully we can all find ways to show our appreciation to the many clergy, parish staff and volunteers of all ages who have helped and continue to help parishes be places of community, prayer, care and outreach.

## Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



### Staying Connected

Many parish and diocesan groups have stayed connected via apps such as Zoom. If you are a member of a parish pastoral council, baptism team, liturgy group, choir, funeral ministry team or other parish group and haven't yet explored this possibility, perhaps now is the time to do so.

Never before has it been as important to stay connected and to support one another. Our parish groups do not have to stop but we might have to be creative in helping them function for the time being. There are people in every parish who have the tech skills. So send out the call for help and you might be pleasantly surprised!

## Locked Down Psalm

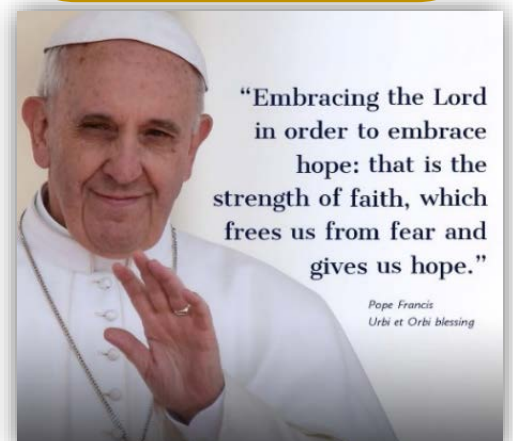
Sadness as a mantle covered me this morning,  
Birds were singing, the sun was shining, the sky was blue,  
My heart, though, was heavy.  
Locked down in my room, enclosed in my thoughts, fearful in my heart:  
for me, for them, for those afar and for those just nearby,  
and for the loved face I see only on my phone.

Grief as a cloud came on me this morning,  
Working - I could not.  
Playing - I didn't want to.  
Making a phone-call - I dreaded a lot.  
Watching the news - I was fed up.  
Crying - I could and my heart wanted to.  
I gave myself leave to cry alone,  
to let a quiet river of tears wash my sadness away.  
I cried before You, who sees, who knows, who understands.  
I cried and said your name: "Jesus", "My God", "My Saviour".  
I cried and I listened in the silence to the echo of my tears in your Heart.

You came into my sadness and You comforted me.  
You came under my cloud and You cried with me.  
You visited my heart and I was alone no more.  
You touched my soul and I let hope rise again.

By: Father Xavier  
Quarr Abbey

ALONE TOGETHER



"Embracing the Lord  
in order to embrace  
hope: that is the  
strength of faith, which  
frees us from fear and  
gives us hope."

Pope Francis  
Urbi et Orbi blessing