

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL GROUP OF PARISHES.

All Saints' Church, St Michan's Church St Werburgh's Church

PARISH NEWSLETTER

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We hope that this newsletter finds you all well, and that you all had a safe and peaceful Easter Sunday. Hopefully not too much chocolate was consumed!! It was a very strange experience celebrating and recording communion for Easter Sunday in an empty church, yet as a community of faith, we must protect each other by staying apart and play our part in protecting our wider community and nation. Easter is a time of hope and expectation, a time when darkness passes and a new world begins. So it will be that the darkness of Covid-19 will pass and we will worship together again in our beautiful churches. Stay safe and well, you are all in our thoughts and prayers.

*God bless,
David and Ross*

Reflection for the Second Sunday of Easter:

We are currently living in a world where technology is coming to the fore as never before. In our lifetime most of us have seen the arrival of the mobile phone, the laptop, the PC, the Internet. At the moment, each week brings something new- this week it has been Zoom, House Party, Jitsi, which are all video conferencing apps, or so I have just discovered! We have become rapidly used to such

innovations and quickly imported them into our lives, never more so than in this time of lockdown, when the use of technology means that we can still communicate with family and friends, even worship together as a community of faith, though we are staying apart to stay safe. We have access to a huge range of communication, information and entertainment with just the click of a button. In our world, seeing is truly believing. And sometimes if we do not see something ourselves, then we find it hard to believe. The gospel reading for this Sunday, the second Sunday of Easter, tells us about Thomas, who did not believe that Jesus was resurrected because he himself did not witness evidence of Jesus' resurrection

'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

Here is the original doubting Thomas. Thomas will not believe that Jesus has risen unless he sees it himself and he is given his hard evidence when Jesus appears to him and the other disciples eight days later.

Then he said to Thomas,

'put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, *'my Lord and my God!'*

Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

As we go through our daily lives, our faith can become tested. This is particularly true in these difficult times across the world, as the Covid-19 pandemic has so changed our lives and caused such hardship, death and grief. Yet in this Thomas should remain as an example to us. Though he often questioned Jesus, he was one of his most faithful and loyal disciples. We should not be afraid to ask questions, of ourselves,



our world or our faith. Questions bring about growth and development and this also applies to our faith. Faith is a journey, with many slips and falls and bumps, yet each incident makes us stronger, gives our faith a depth that can withstand all troubles. In our lives we should remember those words that Jesus spoke to Thomas

'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

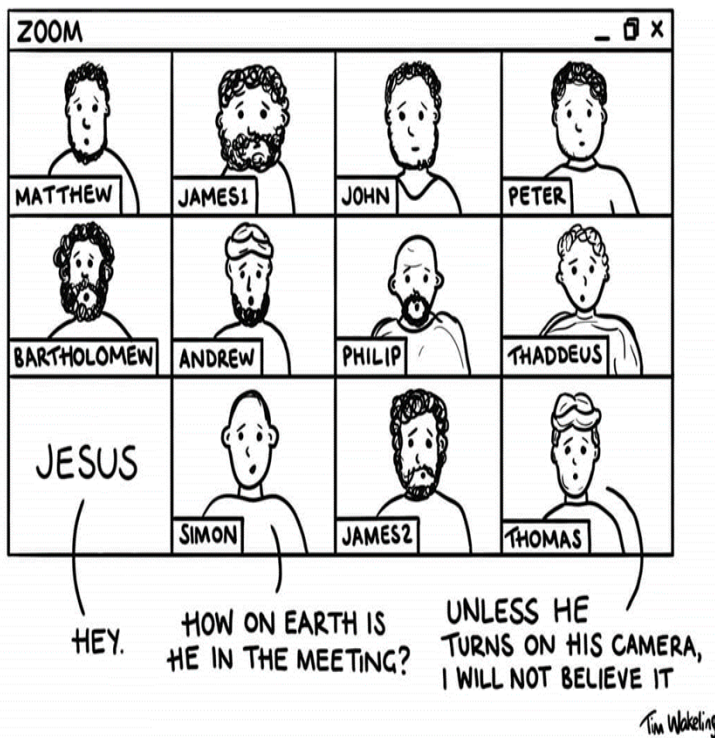
We have not seen Jesus, but we have seen and experienced his love and the power of his word. Our faith will continue to be tested as we face the trials and tribulations of our lives. But it will also be renewed, revitalised and strengthened through our communities and our service. Our faith, and the power of God's love for us, will carry us through all the shadows that we may face.

Easter is not just one day, the season of Easter stretches for a period of fifty days, until Pentecost. Paul Dawson very kindly sent in his recipe for Simnel cake, so you still have lots of time to make it!!



Simnel Cake.

Simnel cakes, an Easter favourite in our house, have been known since medieval times. Simnel cake is a light fruit cake with two layers of almond paste or marzipan, one in the middle and one on top that is toasted. Traditionally the cake was made for the middle Sunday of Lent, *Laetare Sunday* when the forty-day fast would be relaxed. The meaning of the word "Simnel" is uncertain some sources suggest that the word may be derived from the Latin word *simila*, meaning fine, wheat flour. The cake is usually decorated with eleven marzipan balls. These are said to represent the apostles, minus Judas. A twelfth ball is sometimes placed in the centre to represent Jesus. There are many recipes for Simnel Cake available on the internet. This is one that I use.



Almond Paste

- 450g Ground Almonds
- 225g Caster Sugar
- 225g Icing Sugar
- 1 Egg, beaten
- ¼ tsp (1.25ml) Vanilla Essence
- 2 tsp (10ml) lemon juice

Mix the dry ingredients together then mix in the lemon juice and vanilla essence to make a firm paste. Knead well to make a smooth paste.

Alternatively, if you don't want to make almond paste you can buy readymade marzipan. You will need about 750g.

Fruit Cake.

225g Self Raising Flour

175g Butter

175g Brown Sugar

225g Raisins

225g Sultanas

75g Cherries

75g Mixed Peel

4 Eggs, beaten

50g Chopped Almonds

50g Ground Almonds

Rind of 1 Orange

A drop (15ml) of Whiskey

½ tsp Mixed Spice

½ tsp Nutmeg

Almond Paste

Preheat your oven to 140°C. Line a 20cm round deep cake tin with greaseproof paper. Sieve the flour, mixed spice and nutmeg together. Place all remaining ingredients in a large mixing bowl and beat until well mixed. Place half the mixture into the prepared tin. Roll out ⅓ of the almond paste and place onto cake mixture. Cover with remaining cake mixture.

Bake for 3½-4 hours. Check occasionally and cover with greaseproof paper if it's getting too dark on top. Once baked, leave the cake in the tin to cool.

To Decorate

Apricot Jam or marmalade.

Spread apricot jam or marmalade on top of the cake. Roll out another ⅓ of the almond paste to form a 20cm round and place on top. Shape the remaining almond paste into 11 balls and arrange around the top.

Place under a preheated grill for a minute or so to lightly toast.

Paul Dawson

Parish notes:

Following the decision to temporarily cease acts of public worship across the Church of Ireland due to Covid-19, there will be no services in St. Michan's Church or in All Saints Church for the foreseeable future. The buildings are closed but the church is more than a collection of buildings, it is a community of faith and, as such, the church never closes.

At this time we must follow the example of the early church and join together in prayer from our own homes. In order to keep in touch and pray together as a community, we are putting in place several ways to enable this. We will continue with this weekly newsletter, which will be emailed or posted out each week to parishioners.

Secondly we will be recording short services and reflections, which will be posted on our face book page: Christchurch Cathedral Group of Parishes. We also now have a YouTube channel, St. Michan's Church Dublin, which will have recorded services and reflections each week.

At this time, when we are all self isolating and many shops are closed, it can be difficult to access shopping or other services. If any parishioner needs any assistance or is in need of shopping or other supplies, please do not hesitate to contact the curate on 087-9892941 or email: stylesross@gmail.com. Shopping can be left on doorsteps and social distancing can be maintained.



All previously held email addresses have unfortunately been deleted from the office computer system.

If you would like to be added to our email list and consent to us adding your name—please contact the Parish Office at:
office@stmichanschurch.ie

If anyone would like to submit an article or other suitable items of interest or words of wisdom, please send them to:

- The Curate
stylesross@gmail.com
- The Parish
office@stmichanschurch.ie

An excerpt from *Christian Breadcrumbs*, written by the Reverend Christopher Campling, former Dean of Ripon and an uncle of a parishioner in All Saints.

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Victory

Christians sometimes call themselves 'The Easter People', because the truth of Easter is the source and the driving force of the Christian faith. Easter affirms the victory of truth over the lie; love over hatred; life over death.

Easter as the victory of 'the truth' because Jesus was the 'word' of God, who through his life and teaching expressed the truth of the goodness of God. On Good Friday it seemed that the lies of his enemies and betrayal by his friends had defeated him. But No. On Easter day the truth of God's revelation through the life of Jesus was vindicated.

Jesus could be known as 'The Love of God in action' Has love been defeated by hatred? No. On Easter day love is triumphant.

It was said of Jesus' "In him was life" (John 1.4); and Jesus claimed to have come so that "they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10.10). Did death overcome this source of life? No. On Easter Day people proclaimed, "The Lord has risen indeed" (Luke 24.34). On Easter day we go on saying it. "The Lord has risen indeed. Alleluia."

Can we be sure of this? Obviously we cannot today prove something that happened two thousand years ago. But there are good reasons for believing it. First the fact that the tomb was empty. The disciples are sometimes accused of stealing the body; yet they were prepared to die for the belief they proclaimed. And why did not the authorities (Roman and Jewish), who were desperate to stamp out the story of the resurrection, produce the body?

There are also the accounts of Jesus appearing to his disciples, and St. Paul's statement to the Corinthian Church mentioning "more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time" who saw the risen Jesus (1 Corinthians 15. 4-8). These accounts differ as people's experiences differed; but together they affirm that Jesus appeared to people; not that he went on living as you and I do after we have been ill, but in a new and glorified body which was recognisable but was no longer subject to the physical limitations of our bodies. In St. Paul's words this was a 'new creation' – and it's one we are invited to share, both in this life and eternally when we die.

There is also the existence of the Christian Church today which grew out of that broken band of miserable people who had witnessed and felt responsible for the death of Jesus. These same people, in the words of their enemies, "have been turning the world upside down" (Acts 17.6) by the proclamation that "Christ is alive". What could account for their transformation and the Church's continued existence and growth and influence? Nothing less than the impact that God has made upon the world through the life, sacrificial death and the triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Prayers that we can say together at home:

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Loving God,
we place into your care
all our doctors, nurses and healthcare workers.
Give them courage of heart
and strength of mind and body.
Keep them safe from harm.
May they know our deep gratitude
for all they are doing
to heal and help those affected by
the coronavirus.

God of all consolation
may they know your protection and peace.
Bless them in these challenging days
and bless their families.
Amen.

CRAFTS CORNER by Aisling Sheridan

As we all adjust to this new life of confinement and working from home, days can feel long, especially for families with children normally at school and engaging in sports and social activities with their friends. I am working from home, but still find myself with more spare time than usual, and while I don't have children, I have found that immersing myself in arts and crafts is essential to maintain my sanity! For me it's also doubling as time to make a stash of gifts for family and friends for next Christmas (or maybe the next five Christmasses at the rate I'm going!!!!). So I thought I would share a few of my recent creations and tips with you.

Suppliers

First up, you need craft supplies to get started! Many of the bigger stores are not offering online service, but some small Irish ones are. Here are my favourites:

The Fabric Counter (Stoneybatter) – they have a great range of fabrics at really good prices;

This Is Knit (Powerscourt Townhouse Centre) – a great range of yarns, with everything from budget to luxury cashmere;

Bead Bubble (Cork) – they sell online through Etsy. Super prices on all jewellery findings, beads etc and really quick delivery;

Yellow Brick Road (Bachelor's Walk) – as Bead Bubble;

The Doll Store (online only) – absolutely everything for decorating and furnishing dolls houses;

And finally, I believe LIDL are getting in some great craft stuff today, if you are lucky enough to be able to go out to a bricks and mortar shop!

Projects - Christmas Decorations

Yes, I know, we only just had Easter, but why not use this time to get ahead with making Christmas gifts! Here are 2 you can easily make with children:

Tiny Rooms

I adapted this idea from Kirstie's Handmade Christmas on Channel 4. I used balsa wood boxes from Deep Jungle on Etsy, but match boxes or any really small light wood or cardboard boxes would work perfectly. First I painted the outside of the box using acrylic metallic paint from Sostrene Grene. I then decorated the inside and decked out in Christmas dolls house miniatures (a mixture of vintage pieces and some from The Doll Store). Then glue some Christmas ribbon to the back and your diorama is ready to hang! You could make these non-Christmas themed to use at any time of the year.



Felted Hearts

These are super easy and great tree decorations. Simply cut out as many heart shapes from thick felted wool sheets (I use the Sostrene Grene ones) as you want (you need 2 pieces for each decoration). Sew 2 hearts together with wool of a contrasting colour and bead or decorate as you please.



Knitted Animals

There are lots of free patterns online, with Ravelry being one of the best sites. I made the little cat using a pattern from Sincerely Louise, a great knitting blogspot. They make lovely gifts for babies and are really quick to make.

