

Welcome to
St Mary, Our Lady of Victories
& St Andrew's Cathedral
& Our Lady of Good Counsel

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17th Sunday
in Ordinary Time
25 July 2021

Next Sunday: 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Friends and Parishioners,
this Sunday in our parishes we mark the

World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.

So in our Masses let's celebrate and give thanks for the role and contribution of our grandparents in our lives and indeed of all older people to their families and to our parishes. Please come to Mass this Sunday and remember to pray for the eternal rest of your grandparents if they have died, and to pray for God's blessing of health and strength on them if they are still alive.

Much of my priestly ministry centers on visiting the elderly, housebound and frail and I continually see the depths of faith and steadfastness they have, and hear the stories of their love and support for their families, not to mention the good example they so often give, and the wisdom of years which they pass on. We must not forget them. Perhaps I can encourage you to make a visit or call an elderly person living alone on Sunday or in the week ahead (while of course observing relevant Covid guidelines).

Our Holy Father Pope Francis has written a message to grandparents and the elderly, loving addressing them, "as an elderly person myself" and going on to say, "The whole Church is close to you – to us – and cares about you, loves you and does not want to leave you alone! I am well aware that this Message comes to you at a difficult time: the pandemic swept down on us like an unexpected and furious storm; it has been a time of trial for everyone, but especially for us elderly persons.

The Lord is aware of all that we have been through in this time. He is close to those who felt isolated and alone, feelings that became more acute during the pandemic. Tradition has it that Saint Joachim, the grandfather of Jesus, felt estranged from those around him because he had no children; his life, like that of his wife Anne, was considered useless. So the Lord sent an angel to console him. While he mused sadly outside the city gates, a messenger from the Lord appeared to him and said, "Joachim, Joachim! The Lord has heard your insistent prayer". Giotto, in one of his celebrated frescoes, seems to set the scene at night, one of those many sleepless nights, filled with memories, worries and longings to which many of us have come to be accustomed.



Even at the darkest moments, as in these months of pandemic, the Lord continues to send *angels* to console our loneliness and to remind us: "I am with you always". He says this to you, and he says it to me. That is the meaning of this Day, which I wanted to celebrate for the first time in this particular year, as a long period of isolation ends and social life slowly resumes. May every grandfather, every grandmother, every older person, especially those among us who are most alone, receive the visit of an *angel*!

At times those angels will have the face of our grandchildren, at others, the face of family members, lifelong friends or those we have come to know during these trying times, when we have learned how important hugs and visits are for each of us. How sad it makes me that in some places these are still not possible!

The Lord, however, also sends us messengers through his words, which are always at hand. Let us try to read a page of the Gospel every day, to pray with the psalms, to read the prophets! We will be comforted by the Lord's faithfulness.

Iona to Lindisfarne



Father Jim Walls writes:

'On behalf of the St Maria Skobstova House in Calais please accept my thanks for your generous donations forwarded by Fr Kevin. It was a great privilege to pilgrimage between Iona and Lindisfarne in solidarity with the migrants of Calais. Please continue to support them with your prayers and whatever practical means are at your disposal. Jesus' final exhortation in Matthew's Gospel spells out what, as Christians, we should be about...feeding the hungry...clothing the naked...welcoming the stranger...in supporting MSH you are fulfilling these commands. May God bless you, Jim'

Easing of Covid restrictions

We are now able to gather in larger numbers with the social distancing being reduced from two metres to one metre.

We will continue to wear face masks.

We will also be allowed to have congregational singing again albeit with the wearing of face masks.

The Holy Water stoops are not yet to be used.

The Confessionals are not yet to be used.

We will not yet have hospitality after Sunday Mass, but I look forward to when we can safely organise this in the three Churches.

We continue to support the Test and Protect system by the collection and temporary retention of parishioner information.

The requirement to sanitise your hands on entering and leaving our churches also remains in place.

For the time being, Stewards will continue to direct you to seats and to join the procession to receive Holy Communion.

The 'one way' system to move around the church should be followed;

Changes to Mass Booking Arrangements

As a result of the increase in capacity at our Churches, the only Mass you need to continue to book in advance for is the Sunday 11am Mass.

On Eventbrite: Click this link or copy it into your browser:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/celebration-of-mass-at-st-andrews-cathedral-dundee-tickets-112091962076>

For those without internet access, please call **07561 699557**. You should leave a message stating your name, contact number, the date of the 11am Sunday Mass wish to attend.

Sunday Masses in our Churches

Vigil Masses: 4pm in the Cathedral

5.30pm in Our Lady of Good Counsel

Day Masses: 9.45am in Our Lady of Good Counsel

11am & 6pm in Cathedral 11.15am in St Mary's

Weekday Mass this week

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Monday at 9.30am – please note time.

Morning Prayer at 9.15am

Tuesday – Friday at 10am

Morning Prayer at 9.45am

St Mary's, Forebank

Monday - Friday at 11.30am

St Andrew's Cathedral

Monday – Friday at 1pm

Saturday at 10am (with Novena to Our Lady)

CONFESSIONS on request before any Mass

Our Prayers

for the sick: Steven Hackney, Ian Davidson, Jane Budge, Alan McKenzie, Joyce Scott, John McCarry, Margaret McMenemy, Tony Beck, Isobel Blackmore, Karen Dammer, Bridie Mossey, Mel Caullay, Allison Matthew, Jackey Forrest-Moore, Catherine Gallacher, Baby Ben Welsh, Thinley Chodron, Sharon McNally, Natalia Lucka, Benedict Stephens, Gillian Steedman, Steven Kennedy, Aubrey McMullan, Sonya Rostan, Lily Jane Douglas, Alexander McNeil, Sheila McCallum, Marie Manunga;

those who have died recently:

those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

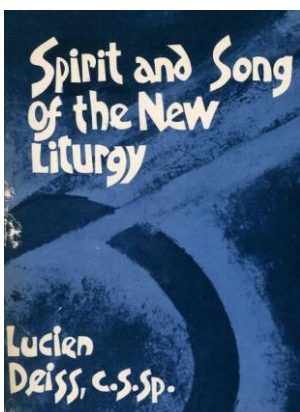
Margaret Henderson, Anne Aidney, Vera Cuipka, John Stewart, Ben McLaughlin, Ellen Ruddy, Mary McGlenn, George Connelly, Frank Kelly, Denis Tully, Sheila Boyle, Joyce Bromberger, Alexander Barber, Joseph Green, Baby Eve Clarke, Giuseppe Zanré, Liam Brennan.

*See, the home of God
is among mortals!*

(Revelation 21:3)



A book which grabbed my attention and inspired me many years ago, I have revisited in recent days. It is titled *Spirit and Song of the New Liturgy* and was written by a much respected French priest who was also a composer and biblical scholar, and indeed a liturgical visionary. Written in 1970, it remains an inspiring (and was a seminal) work after the Council which was acclaimed at the time as an invaluable aid to understanding and implementing the new liturgy. Its spirit was certainly present in the liturgical formation of the Blairs students when I read it first at around the age of sixteen. It inspired me to foster in myself not only a love of the liturgy, its movements, symbols and gestures but also to have a pastoral approach to the Liturgy, as a work of the people, and to see its “work” as the task of the whole assembly.



Father Deiss was no deskbound scholar, he conducted inspiring conferences around the world, and composed - in his native French - many liturgical songs, mostly in the *antiphonal* style which the Council rediscovered as an ideal way of singing the Liturgy in a way through

which the whole assembly could participate. Many of these songs were translated into English in publications going by the name *Biblical Hymns and Psalms* and although they didn't find a great deal of response in parishes in the UK they were regularly used in seminaries and religious houses; a shame they weren't used much in parishes for they – in the true spirit of the Second Vatican Council – referenced and celebrated the “rich fare” of scripture at the table of God's Word. Songs such as

*All the earth proclaim the Lord, Yes I shall arise
and Joy to you, O Virgin Mary come from his hand
(and heart).*

A man who was able to authoritatively look back to the Liturgy of the past which was beginning a process of being renewed at the Council, Deiss wrote that “when the church dons her liturgical “gown” of the 20th century, and finds herself adorned with a new beauty, she does not find fault with the gown she used to wear in the past. On the contrary, the church in every age is made beautiful only by the very splendour of Jesus Christ – a fact which tells us that modesty and humility must be an integral part of the liturgical reform”. Deiss understood that the changes brought about by the Council were not simply for the sake of change itself but to celebrate – in a way suited to a church in the modern world - the solemn mystery of the Trinity.

In his revision of the original book, written twenty five years later and titled *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a new century*, Deiss is in reflective mode as he muses on the early years after the Council and the liturgical experiences thereof. He retains his fundamental joy in the church which is “perpetually youthful, betrothed to Jesus Christ, a church which will never cease growing in the beauty of its youth”. Thus he says, “its prayer, which expresses its dialogue with the Lord will never cease to express its ever new love”.

As we celebrate Christ's Liturgy in our parishes, using the gifts and talents we have, while also being aware of our own inadequacies and the challenges to celebrate well according to the mind of the church as the Holy Father directs, we hold in mind - as Deiss reiterates in his later work, that humility in liturgical reform and celebration is vital. He says: “What a grace it would be if every liturgical celebration opened the door to heaven, if each song uplifted the individual toward the harmony of invisible realities”.

Perhaps every liturgical celebration does indeed open the door to heaven. For God has planned it thus and sets it all before us as a banquet. It is we who must prepare for what God has set in place, opening minds and hearts consciously, humbly, expectantly for all he desires to give us as we celebrate in word and song, ritual and gesture, proclamation and silence. As Deiss puts it in one of his biblical songs:

*Grant to us O Lord
a heart renewed,
recreate in us your own Spirit, Lord.*

Prophets of action

It's been quite a foray into the prophetic tradition over recent Sundays. We've encountered Amos, Ezekiel and Jeremiah. This Sunday though we move from those prophets of the "word" to a prophet of "action" – his name is Elisha and like his master before him (Elijah) he is essentially a "doer" of the word of God.

The first reading at Mass this Sunday takes us to the Second Book of the Kings in the Old Testament and to a very short account of the fourth in a collection of little stories where the prophet Elisha works wonders of various kinds. 2 Kings is a good read!



They will eat and have some left over

Following the usual pattern of the first reading being chosen in order to shed light on the Gospel of the day – which this Sunday is the feeding of the multitude with the loaves and fishes - the little narrative in 2 Kings addresses the question of *How can twenty loaves feed a hundred men?* just as in the Gospel the question is posed by the Lord himself – who of course knows exactly what he is going to do - *Where can we buy some bread for all these people to eat?* In the Elisha story the servant is sceptical, in the Gospel narrative perhaps they are all sceptical, but in both cases the generosity of the donor co-operates with divine power and a sign of divine abundance is given. The message: – be generous yourselves, share, and there might even be leftovers to enjoy.....!

You'll notice that the Gospel passage this Sunday is taken from the Evangelist John, not from Mark, whose lectionary year this is. In our semi-continuous reading of Mark, the account of the miracle of the loaves and fishes follows immediately where we left off last Sunday, with the apostles returning from their missionary work of preaching the good news. But the liturgy directs us this Sunday to John's account of the event because in John's version the giving of the sign opens out to a lengthy and powerful teaching on the Eucharist from the Lord Jesus, a teaching the Church wants us to hear proclaimed and to lovingly cherish on these summer Sundays.



Scholars have wondered why Jesus bothered to ask the question, *Where can we buy bread?* or why he asked it of Philip. Philip, we are told in Mark's Gospel, *comes from Bethsaida in Galilee.* Located on the northern shore of the lake of Galilee the name Bethsaida means "fishing village", so perhaps Philip was indeed the one to ask!

You may have noticed some not-so-familiar texts in the versions of the Eucharistic Prayers which I've been using at Mass on some days recently. We are most of all used to hearing and praying the Second and Third Eucharistic Prayers from the Missal at our Masses, the Second prayer being the most brief and inspired by the writings of Justin, one of the church's early martyrs; the Third Eucharistic Prayer with its familiar image "*from the rising of the sun to its setting*" is a post Vatican II composition. Eucharistic Prayer One is lengthy and with its more solemn language is usually saved for major feast days, and Eucharistic Prayer Four is a through-setting of Preface and complete Eucharistic Prayer, vivid in its symbolism and also quite lengthy, while giving a beautiful and poetic narrative of salvation history as it unfolds. But in addition to these four prayers there are a further six Eucharistic Prayers in the Roman Missal, two entitled "Prayers of Reconciliation" and four others for "various needs and occasions". These four follow the classic Eucharistic Prayer structure and pattern and emphasise different aspects of God's accompanying of his people throughout history. I am drawn to them because their language is fresh and with a contemporary vibe, and their content is richly laden with scriptural images. The texts are easy on the ear and present an invitation to ponder deeply the wonderful realities being described. As we have been reading the Book of Exodus in the weekday liturgy, I have been using the third of these Eucharistic Prayers recently – a text which speaks of God's *mighty hand and outstretched arm as he led the people Israel out of slavery to freedom.*

And I especially cherish the sentiment that *as once he did for his disciples - he (Christ) - now opens the scriptures for us and breaks the bread.*

