

Parish of Malin (Clonca) Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Third Sunday of Easter ( Year B Week 3 )



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Mass Times  
St. Patrick's Church – No Mass  
Star of the Sea Church – No Mass  
St. Mary's Church – No Mass

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Web Site: [www.malinparish.ie](http://www.malinparish.ie)

Facebook: Malin Parish

Details on the times of online Masses and Prayers for the Covid 19 Crisis: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie>

**Sincere Thanks** to those who have sent in their collection envelopes, cheques and donations for the Parish during the past week. Please make cheques payable to "Malin Parochial".

**Baptisms in Malin Parish:** Baptisms can now be celebrated in the parish with a maximum of six people.

**Parish Draw:** Thanks to all our Promoters for organising the Parish Draw so efficiently. The draw for the weeks of April will be done at the end of the month. There are still a few lines left for anyone who has not yet joined the draw. Contact Fr Devlin .

**Trocaire Collection:** Parishioners are asked to send their donations directly to Trocaire using the Freepost addressed envelope that was in the pack for Lent.. The address is Caoimhe de Barra, CEO Trocaire, Freepost NS244 Maynooth, Co Kildare.

**St. Vincent de Paul Malin:** If you find yourself in need of support or know someone who is in need please contact SVP Malin Conference on 0830989600. All matters will be dealt with in confidentiality. Thank you to everyone who supports the SVP Malin conference.

**Parish Prayer Day:** Next Tuesday the 20th we once again pray our Continuous Prayer for Marriage & Family Life for the month of April. During this month we ask you to focus particularly on All Families and pray for them. Thank you for all the effort you make to keep this prayer going. It is becoming more and more important as the months and years go by.

**Gospel: Luke 24:35-48 The risen Jesus appears to his apostles, for he is real and not a ghost**

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread. While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence. Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

#### **Empowered with trust**

This is one of the many post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, except that here more than elsewhere, he is at pains to convince them that he is real, that all has happened as foretold in scripture, and was part of a divine plan.

It's an extraordinary fact that one of our basic attitudes towards God is one of fear. The first time fear is mentioned in the Bible is when Adam and Eve sinned. We are told that they hid, because they were afraid. From then on, most contacts with God begin with the words Fear not; be not afraid. This was even said to Mary, as it was to the shepherds. It is reckoned that Jesus used this expression several dozen times throughout the gospels. When the apostles cried Out to him in the storm, he replied, "Why did you fear, Oh you of little faith?" Today's gospel speaks of the apostles being terribly frightened. This seems strange, as the reason for the fear is the one person who had always been their best friend. This fear certainly shows up the limitations of our humanity. It was always a put-down, when I was a child, to be told that I was afraid of my shadow.

Imagine Jesus pleading with them to believe him. He invites them to touch him, to give him something to eat, to examine his hands and his feet. Human nature is so fragile, and so fickle. I'm not blaming anyone here. Obviously, this is the first time the apostles ever came across a situation like this. We might think that seeing Lazarus, or the daughter of Jairus, or the young man in Naim, getting up and walking after seeming to be dead, should have prepared them for this moment. They had known Jesus on a personal basis, and had felt at home in his company. This time things were different. He had broken free of the constraints of the human body, and

there was a unique presence in him that they had never seen before. We cannot grasp the utter transformation they felt, when someone they knew and loved was so utterly transformed, and now has an unearthly aura about him. While they still doubted, they were filled with joy and wonder as Jesus spoke to them about the promises of scripture, and how he had fulfilled them. Then he sent them to continue what he had begun. In the following line, that is not included in today's gospel, he promises that he will send them the Spirit and they will have a whole new power, when they will share in the new power into which he has now entered.

### **The gift of forgiveness**

If we look back over our lives most of us will find something or other that we very much regret. We might remember speaking or acting in ways that hurt or damaged others. We might be aware of not doing something that we could have done and, that in our heart of hearts, wanted to do. Sometimes these experiences of personal failure can leave us very burdened. We can find it hard to move on from them; they trouble us and we struggle to be free of them. They can weight heavily on us and drain us of energy. We can find ourselves going back in memory to them over and over again.

The first disciples of Jesus must have felt like this in the aftermath of Jesus' crucifixion. During the days of Jesus' final journey, they had all deserted him. Their mood in the aftermath of Good Friday can only have been one of deep regret. They must have felt that their relationship with Jesus was over. According to today's gospel, however, the first words the risen Jesus spoke to his disciples were, 'Peace be with you'. These words assured the disciples of the Lord's forgiveness. For those first disciples, the initial experience of the risen Lord took the form of a profound experience of forgiveness. This was the risen Lord's gift to them. The gift of forgiveness can be difficult to receive at times. We wonder if we are really forgiven. According to the gospel, when Jesus said 'Peace be with you', they responded with alarm and fright and thought that they might be seeing a ghost. The risen Jesus then questioned them, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts?' It took the disciples a while to realize that they were forgiven.

It is only after the disciples had come to receive this gift of forgiveness that they were sent out as messengers of the Lord's forgiveness to others. According to our gospel, the risen Lord, having assured them that they were forgiven, went on to commission them to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins to all the nations. It is forgiven sinners who are entrusted with the task of proclaiming the good news of God's forgiving love to all. This is what we find Peter doing in today's first reading. He declares to the people of Jerusalem that, although they had handed Jesus over to Pilate, God's forgiveness was available to them if they turned to God by believing in Jesus. The church has been faithful to the mission entrusted to the disciples, proclaiming down the centuries the good news that God's forgiveness is stronger than human sin. In raising Jesus from the dead and sending him back to those who had rejected him and failed him, God was declaring that he can raise anyone from their sins. The risen Jesus reveals a faithful, forgiving God. Today's 2nd Reading states this clearly: 'If anyone does sin, we have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is just'.

Before we can receive the Easter gift of God's forgiveness that comes to us through the risen Lord, we must first acknowledge our need of that gift. In the words of today's 2nd Reading, we need to admit the truth. The truth is that we are always in need of the gift of God's forgiveness. Recognizing our need and asking God for the gift of forgiveness is what we call repentance. Peter in the first reading calls on the people of Jerusalem to repent and turn to God so that their sins may be wiped out. The risen Lord in the gospel sends out his disciples to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a privileged opportunity to admit the truth, to acknowledge our need of God's forgiveness and to ask directly for it. In that sacrament that the risen Lord says to us, 'Peace be with you'. The words of absolution include the prayer, 'through the ministry of the church may God grant you pardon and peace'.

The first disciples, having received the gift of the Lord's forgiveness, were sent to spread that forgiveness to others. In a similar way, we who receive the same gift are sent out on the same mission. As forgiven sinners we proclaim with our lives the presence of a forgiving and faithful God. We extend to others the gift we have received from the Lord. This will not always come easy to us. Who was it who said, 'to err is human, to forgive is divine'? If that is true, we need divine help to do what is divine. In the verses that immediately follow where today's gospel ends, the risen Jesus promises his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit upon them. It is only in the power of the Holy Spirit that they would be able to engage in the task that Jesus was entrusting to them. We need the same Spirit if we are to forgive as we have been forgiven. In the weeks ahead that lead up to the feast of Pentecost, we might pray the prayer, 'Come Holy Spirit, fill my heart and enkindle in me the fire of your love'. We could pray this prayer especially during those times when we find ourselves struggling to pass on to others the gift of forgiveness that we continue to receive from the Lord.