

Parish of Malin (Clonca) Sunday 28th March 2021
Palm Sunday of The Lord's Passion (Year B Week 2)



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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

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". New envelopes are available now January to June 2021 are now available in all churches and from Fr. Devlin. Please use these envelopes for your weekly contribution to the parish.

Fr Devlin is happy to bless palms for parishioners who call at Malin Parochial House.

First Communion and Confirmation 2021. Bishop Donal has decided that **First Communions for all parishes will be in September 2021. Confirmation will provisionally be planned for June, but the bishop will make a final decision in mid May.**

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

Reminder! Reminder ! Parish Draw 2021-2022: Parish Draw Cards are now available from Fr. Devlin.

Returns to the Parochial House Malin tomorrow Monday 29th March at 8pm. The first draw will be at the end of April and the parish draw will run from April to April in future years. Sincers thanks to our promoters and members of the draw. It is an important part of parish fundraising. **Promoters can put their cards and payments through letterbox in Malin Parochial House if preferred, to minimise covid risk.**

Knock Shrine: Exploring the Word of God through Prayer. A series of online Scripture Reflections at 9pm each Tuesday night. Knock Shrine will show a series of online night prayer with reflections on Scripture.

Students from St. Louis Community School Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo will deliver this series of talks inspired by Scripture. You can join us online for this new series at www.knockshrine.ie/watch-live every Tuesday at 9pm. Knock Shrine are launching a new online series to engage you each Thursday at 8.30pm during Lent.

This Holy Week, the Priory Institute offers an online Open Access retreat reflecting on the Passion of Christ. Full details and how to register at <https://prioryinstitute.com/events/holy-week-retreat-2021>.

Accord Inishowen Counselling: A professional confidential counselling service is available for couples or individuals through Accord at the Pastoral Centre, Carndonagh. F93 XP59. Contact 074 93 74103, e-mail accordinishowen@gmail.com or book: <https://www.accord.ie/services/marriage-and-relationship-counselling>. Accord Inishowen will be hosting a Virtual Interactive Marriage Preparation Programme (Pre-Marriage Courses) via Zoom on Saturday 10th July 2021. To book online: <https://www.accord.ie/services/marriage-preparation> or email: accordinishowen@gmail.com for more information.

The Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre, working in Partnership with Saint Mary's University, Twickenham, offers the Masters in Catholic School Leadership. This is a post graduate degree dedicated to the professional development and spiritual formation of Catholic school leaders. It is a great opportunity for those currently in leadership roles and those who aspire to, or have an interest in, leadership roles within the Catholic School system. The next intake will be Autumn 2021. If you require any further information, please contact the Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre on 004428 71264087 or email tferry@derrydiocese.org.

Palm Sunday: The Gospel of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem and then his betrayal, trial, crucifixion and Death. It was our sorrows he bore

"He was oppressed and was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (Is 53:7). For the followers of Christ, this Isaiah text evokes a response deep down within us, seeing how they apply to God's only beloved Son, and how he died for all of us. In the words of St Peter, "without having seen him you have come to believe in him, and so you are filled already with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described" (1 Pet 1:8). Without this sincere love of Christ, we are no true followers of his. We cannot say we fully love him, until we appreciate what he suffered for us.

Today, having heard the Passion narrative there is no real necessity to retrace in great detail the events there described. But it is well to bear in mind that Christ was no stranger to hardship, privation and suffering, long before that final day of his life. "Being in the form of God," as St Paul says, from the moment he came on earth, Jesus emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming as human beings are (Phil 2:6f). He, the most high God, suffered the hardships of the poor, at times not even having a place to lay his head. He endured hunger and thirst, and after long days surrounded by crowds seeking a cure, he often spent whole nights at prayer in the hills.

Despite his compassion for all who came to him, he met with hatred and rejection, in particular from Pharisees and priests, who planned to have him killed. How this rejection and hatred must have grieved him. King Lear knew “How sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is, to have a thankless child;” and how must Jesus have felt at being rejected by the people he had chosen, above all others.

So terrible was the inner struggle of Jesus as he faced his death, that in the garden his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground. Another bitter pill was the knowledge that one of his own circle of twelve would betray him, that most of the others would leave him, and that even the loyal St Peter would repeatedly swear he had never met him. But most terrible of all was his feeling of being abandoned by God, his inner spirit shrouded in a darkness that reflected the murky darkness that enveloped Calvary as the end drew near. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

The features of that face so cruelly disfigured were those of the Son of God. The forehead streaming with blood, the hands and feet nailed to the Cross, the body lacerated with scourges, the side pierced with a lance, these were the forehead, the hands and feet, the sacred body, the side of the eternal Word, made visible in Jesus. Why such suffering? We can only say with Isaiah, “It was for our transgressions he was smitten, for our sins he was brought low. On him lay the punishment that brings us healing, through his wounds we are made whole” (53:5ff). God, our Father, grant that your Son’s suffering for us may not be in vain.

Mark’s Account

Each of the four Evangelists give an account of the Passion, but each tells the story with his own particular style and emphasis. The account read this year is written by Mark, Saint Peter’s helper and companion in Rome, and it shows the stark human abandonment of Jesus. The behaviour of the disciples is portrayed negatively. In the garden they fall asleep three times while Jesus prayed. Judas betrayed him, while Peter with a curse denied any knowledge of him. All flee. Jesus’ only words from the cross were: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.” Even these plaintive words were met with derision. Yet, as Jesus breathes his last, God acts to confirm his Son. The veil of the temple was rent in two, and a Roman Centurion confesses: “Truly this was God’s son.” There are moments in the lives of most Christians when they need desperately to cry out with Jesus: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”, only to find, as Jesus did, that God is listening, and can reverse tragedy. It is above all a comfort to those who find it hard to bear the cross to know that it wasn’t easy for God’s own son, either.

In Luke’s account, Jesus is less anguished by his own fate than by his concern for others. He heals the slave’s ear at the time of the arrest; on the road to Calvary he worries about the fate of the women; he forgives those who crucified him; and he promises paradise to the penitent thief. The crucifixion becomes the occasion of divine forgiveness and care, and Jesus dies tranquilly praying: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” St. John, on the other hand, describes the passion of Jesus as his calm, almost royal return into the presence of his Father.

It is important that some see our Lord’s head bowed in dejection, while others observe his arms outstretched in forgiveness, and still others perceive, in the title on the cross, the proclamation of a reigning king. All these accounts combine together to give us food for thought and prayer.

Looking on from a distance

There is great hostility in the story we have just heard, all of it directed against Jesus. There is the hostility of the chief priests, of the Roman soldiers, of those who passed by and jeered as he hung from the cross. Alongside the hostility of those who rejected Jesus, there is the failure of those who had been closest to him. His disciples all deserted him and fled; Judas betrayed him and Peter denied him publicly. Yet, there were a few people who responded to Jesus in that dark hour faithfully and nobly. There was the anonymous woman who in an extravagant gesture of love and respect anointed the head of Jesus. Then there was the Roman centurion, who looked on as Jesus died and exclaimed, ‘this man was son of God’. Joseph of Arimathea took the bold step of going to Pilate to ensure Jesus had a dignified burial. The women disciples who looked on from a distance noted where Jesus was buried and went away to prepare spices to anoint his body at the earliest opportunity. All of these people men and women saw Jesus with eyes of faith and love.

The story we have just heard invites us to identify with those who saw Jesus with the eyes of faith and love, who recognized the light of God in the darkness of Jesus’ passion and death. When we look upon the passion and death of Jesus with such eyes, we see a divine love that is stronger than sin, a divine light that shines in all our darkneses, a divine power that brings new life out of all our deaths, a divine poverty that enriches us at the deepest level of our being. We have heard the story of Jesus’ last journey told in the space of ten minutes. This Holy Week, the church invites us to travel that journey at a much slower pace, day by day as it were. We are invited to enter into that journey with the eyes of the anointing woman, the centurion, Joseph of Arimathea and the group of faithful women. We look beneath the surface of what is happening, we listen deeply to all that is taking place, so as to recognize the good Shepherd who laid down his life for us all, so that we might have life and have it to the full.