

COBH PARISH NEWSLETTER

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS 22ND APRIL 2018

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Vocations Sunday

I must confess that I am a bit a movie buff and watch all sorts of movies (except gory horror). Since the late 1970s, the modern movie industry has discovered that there is a ton of money to be made by putting fantasy action heroes in the big screen. Ask your children or grandchildren about action heroes! Superman, Spiderman, and Batman have each been on the screen in different franchises. Coolness, one-liners and special effects and computer graphics characterise the mostly family-friendly modern action hero movies. Good and evil are back, even if the heroes are now superhuman.



But what is it with the world's enduring fascination with these heroes and superheroes?

Part of the attraction is that these movies of course contain simple **stereotypes** that have universal appeal. Men – apparently—want women to swoon and faint at the sight of the hero, and men want women to be in need of them — vulnerable, in distress and men want to do the saving! Women—apparently! - want a muscular, handsome, rugged, scarred and proven, faithful hero. They want to be saved, and they will stand by their man! Women want to be cherished and feel safe and protected. I repeat, these are stereotypes! Men, on the other hand, want to be the ones to win over, and be favoured by, the beautiful damsel. Men want to be valued, looked up to, admired, singled out, needed and valued for their heroism, integrity, principles, courage, risk-taking, perseverance. In all of the action though men - deep down - need a plan and a quest, an adventure and overall plan and purpose in life in which they and their role seem to make sense. Action hero movies, while a mostly innocent form of escapism, have appeal therefore to these basic needs. This enduring appeal of a straightforward narrative as well as the existence of these drives in all of us seem to point to a higher plan, a marvellous story, and secretly we all want to engage in one. Do we realise however that **we are** all the heroes and heroines in our own stories, and that God already has an

over-riding plan for you and me? That he wants us to be saints, possessing heroic virtue with His help get to heaven. The Pope has recently reminded us of this.

We all have a story, a narrative and I think that it is what is most fascinating to me about people and life generally. We all struggle to make sense of our role here on earth, as we cannot see what lies ahead, and we cannot undo what has led us to this point. We are capable of, if not always open to, change in our path where it is necessary. We may not have as much drama or action, but we have turning points, fateful days and crunch decisions that we have made and continue to make that will determine our ultimate fate. The American author John Eldredge has written much on this topic. It is the departure from the quest and the plan of life that God has set out for each of us, he states, that is the source of so much unhappiness and cynicism in today's world. Why, if there is no game-plan, do we get out of bed in the morning? We are unique, none of us is replaceable, and there will never be anyone quite like you or me! We all have a unique vocation in life, from the day of our Baptism and Confirmation to be God's witnesses in the world. As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI (who celebrated his 91st birthday this week) once put it: 'each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.'

Reading the lives of the saints can be an inspiration to us in our morally confused world amidst the uncertainty of so many in their unending quest for lasting notoriety and the cult of celebrity. These ordinary men and women of the past, on the other hand, stuck by their principles in the face of adversity, and won the (unsought) admiration of all. Who could not be struck by the drama of the life of Pope St John Paul II? Or St (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta, St Maria Goretti, St Francis of Assisi, and so many more. What we all yearn for is ultimately love, meaning, and a sense of direction. All of these are summed up in one word – 'vocation'. Yes, you and I have one. They are different, but they are complementary. Christ calls us and chooses us to this. So it is our relative nearness to Him and willingness to be guided by Him in ongoing prayer that helps us to make sense of every day, of ourselves, of our world, and to expand our horizons to see our role in it to serve, protect and to save! Our deepest desires are actually God's desires for us. That, to me, is what the **Day of Prayer for Vocations** is all about.

Cobh Parish Income: Sunday 15th April: Cathedral: €1884.00, Rushbrooke: €444.00, Ballymore: €173.00, The Mount: €97.00 We thank all who contributed to these collections.

V. Rev. John McCarthy, Adm. 4815619
 Rev. Tom McDermott CC 4812937
 V. Rev. Liam Kelleher 087 8516984
 Rev. Pat O' Donoghue CC 4813601



Baptisms: We welcome into our community Brógan Nichelson and all who were baptised recently.

Priest on Sick Call 087-6872014

First Holy Communion Ceremonies 2018



Deaths: We pray for the repose of the souls of those who died recently. We pray especially today for Kevin Dillon, Rushbrooke and Angela Ellis, Bellevue. May they rest in peace. Memorial Mass for all the deceased of



the past month will be celebrated on Sunday night April 29th at 7.00 pm

We congratulate the girls of **St Mary's NS** who received their First Holy Communion on Saturday 21st of April and we thank their teachers and parents who prepared them.

Schedule for the next few weeks

Saturday	School	Church
Sat. 28 th April	Walterstown N.S.	Ballymore
Sat. 28 th April	Gaelscoil	Cathedral
Sat. 19 th May	Bs. Rinn an Chabhlaigh	Cathedral
Sat., 26 th May	St. Joseph's N.S.	Cathedral
Sat., 26 th May	Bellevue N.S.	Cathedral

All First Communion Masses take place at 10.00am

Young Adult Faith Festival: Friday 27th April, Cobh Parish—Prayer Around The Cross, with the Music of Taize, Cobh Parish Centre at 8.00pm. Contact: Fr Tom McDermott.
Saturday 28th April: St Colman's Cathedral, Eucharistic Celebration. Presider, Bishop William Crean DD. 6.00pm—All welcome. Contact Brian: 086 8349540

8th Amendment Referendum: The Holy Rosary will be recited in the cathedral each week-day from now until May 24th as a special request to the Holy Family and Holy Spirit to guide and inspire the Irish voters to make a wise decision on the upcoming Referendum.

Car stickers available

Have you bought your car sticker yet?

Price €1.50

Available in sacristy, parish office and cathedral bookshop.

Thursday 26th April at St. Benedict's Priory- All night prayer vigil to pray for the protection of the unborn. Begins at 8.30pm with a holy hour. Silence interspersed with prayers until 12.00. Those wishing to stay beyond midnight are asked to remain until 5.30am. Please come and encourage others to join us. Please note that the 12 noon Mass on Sunday April 29th in the cathedral is the 7th in our Novena of Masses for this intention.



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

"REJOICE AND BE GLAD" (Mt 5:12) - continued below is a series of extracts from the Pope's recent Apostolic Exhortation on the call to holiness:

IN THE LIGHT OF THE MASTER

63. There can be any number of theories about what constitutes holiness, with various explanations and distinctions. Beatitudes are like a Christian's identity card. So if anyone asks: "What must one do to be a good Christian?", the answer is clear. We have to do, each in our own way, what Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount. In the Beatitudes, we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives.

64. The word "happy" or "blessed" thus becomes a synonym for "holy". It expresses the fact that those faithful to God and his word, by their self-giving, gain true happiness.

65. Although Jesus' words may strike us as poetic, they clearly run counter to the way things are usually done in our world. Even if we find Jesus' message attractive, the world pushes us towards another way of living. The Beatitudes are in no way trite or undemanding, quite the opposite. We can only practise them if the Holy Spirit fills us with his power and frees us from our weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride.

66. Let us listen once more to Jesus, with all the love and respect that the Master deserves. Let us allow his words to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live. Otherwise, holiness will remain no more than an empty word. We turn now to the individual Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew (cf. Mt 5:3-12).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"

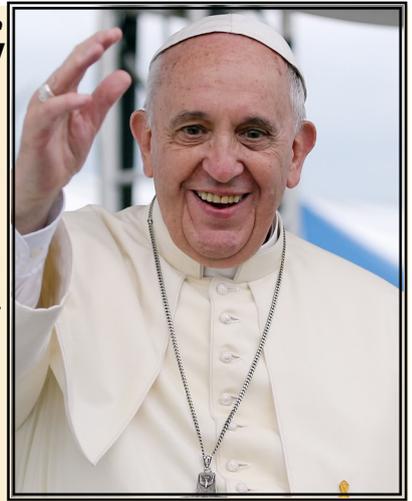
67. The Gospel invites us to peer into the depths of our heart, to see where we find our security in life. Usually the rich feel secure in their wealth, and think that, if that wealth is threatened, the whole meaning of their earthly life can collapse. Jesus himself tells us this in the parable of the rich fool: he speaks of a man who was sure of himself, yet foolish, for it did not dawn on him that he might die that very day (cf. Lk 12:16-21).

68. Wealth ensures nothing. Indeed, once we think we are rich, we can become so self-satisfied that we leave no room for God's word, for the love of our brothers and sisters, or for the enjoyment of the most important things in life. In this way, we miss out on the greatest treasure of all. That is why Jesus calls blessed those who are poor in spirit, those who have a poor heart, for there the Lord can enter with his perennial newness.

69. This spiritual poverty is closely linked to what Saint Ignatius of Loyola calls "holy indifference", which brings us to a radiant interior freedom: "We need to train ourselves to be indifferent in our attitude to all created things, in all that is permitted to our free will and not forbidden; so that on our part, we do not set our hearts on good health rather than bad, riches rather than poverty, honour rather than dishonour, a long life rather than a short one, and so in all the rest".

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth"

71. These are strong words in a world that from the beginning has been a place of conflict, disputes and enmity on all sides, where we constantly pigeonhole others on the basis of their ideas, their customs and even their way of speaking or dressing. Ultimately, it is the reign of pride and vanity, where each



person thinks he or she has the right to dominate others. Nonetheless, impossible as it may seem, Jesus proposes a different way of doing things: the way of meekness. This is what we see him doing with his disciples. It is what we contemplate on his entrance to Jerusalem: "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey" (Mt 21:5; Zech 9:9).

72. Christ says: "Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Mt 11:29). If we are constantly upset and impatient with others, we will end up drained and weary. But if we regard the faults and limitations of others with tenderness and meekness, without an air of superiority, we can actually help them and stop wasting our energy on useless complaining. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux tells us that "perfect charity consists in putting up with others' mistakes, and not being scandalized by their faults".

73. Paul speaks of meekness as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:23). He suggests that, if a wrongful action of one of our brothers or sisters troubles us, we should try to correct them, but "with a spirit of meekness", since "you too could be tempted" (Gal 6:1). Even when we defend our faith and convictions, we are to do so "with meekness" (cf. 1 Pet 3:16). Our enemies too are to be treated "with meekness" (2 Tim 2:25). In the Church we have often erred by not embracing this demand of God's word.

74. Meekness is yet another expression of the interior poverty of those who put their trust in God alone. Indeed, in the Bible the same word - *anawim* - usually refers both to the poor and to the meek. Someone might object: "If I am that meek, they will think that I am an idiot, a fool or a weakling". At times they may, but so be it. It is always better to be meek, for then our deepest desires will be fulfilled. The meek "shall inherit the earth", for they will see God's promises accomplished in their lives. In every situation, the meek put their hope in the Lord, and those who hope for him shall possess the land... and enjoy the fullness of peace (cf. Ps 37:9.11). For his part, the Lord trusts in them: "This is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word" (Is 66:2).

Reacting with meekness and humility: that is holiness.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK