

St. John's and St. Columba's Strathpray

Let us pray for one another and for the world ...

Sunday May 4th Third Sunday of Easter.

'Then the Lord turned my sorrow into joy! He took away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy so that I might sing glad praises to the Lord instead of lying in silence in the grave. O Lord my God, I will keep on thanking you forever!' Psalm 30:11-12.

'It's easy to get bogged down in the millions of little details that make up our daily life. Pay the bills. Wash the clothes. Meet the deadline. Cook the dinner.

Go. Pick up. Clean up. Get up.

Sometimes we just need to stop ... and breathe.

Take a day, an hour, a moment, to look around at the glorious splendour of God's creation. See that sunlight? God spoke, and it soared across the universe to brighten the sky. See that tree? God planted that tree within a seed and then told it how and when to grow. And that face staring back at you in the mirror? God breathed life into your soul and declared you "amazing and wonderful" (Psalm 139:14). Let's not forget to stop once in a while ... to get lost in the wonder.' (Five Minutes of Grace)

Heavenly Father, today please open my eyes to Your wonder all around me, especially in the ordinary things. Amen.

We pray for the congregation of St. Ninian, Glenurquhart: Rt. Rev. Rob Hardwick.



Monday May 5th

'... there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart.' Jeremiah 20:9.

'At times we may feel like Jeremiah in his initial resistance to the blaze of God's love within him. We may want the glowing, consoling feelings of God's nearness, but not the challenge and the force of it. The fire can be too demanding. We might be fearful of getting too involved with God or afraid that his closeness could ask us to change our lives. We may be unwilling to move out of our comfortable inner quarters and risk the unknowns. Yet the true disciple of Jesus is required to have a heart on fire with God: "You are light for the world

... your light must shine in people's sight." (Matthew 5)

The fire is always meant to transform us, just as wood is turned to flame, as a candle's wax is consumed, as the oil in a lantern is burned. We are the fuel for God's work on earth.' (Joyce Rupp – May I Have This Dance?)



God, who lights our inner blaze and tends the flame, fill us with your radiance. Kindle us with your love. Touch us with your

goodness. May your love shine through all we are and do. Amen.

We pray for Fire and Rescue workers.

Tuesday May 6th

'But when the right time came, the time God decided on, he sent his Son, born of a woman, born as a Jew, to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law so that he could adopt us as his very own sons. And because we are his sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, so now we can rightly speak of God as our dear Father.' Galatians 4:4-6.

'What Paul is saying in these timeless sentences is that Jesus came to rescue human beings from their orphan state. Jesus Christ knew God personally and intimately as "Abba", Father. "Abba" is the Aramaic word for "Daddy". It is a relational, not a remote, form of address. Jesus knew God as "Abba" in heaven before he was born on earth. He knew God as "Abba" in his short life on earth as a human being. And he came into the world to die on the cross so that we also can call God "Abba". Thanks to Jesus we are no longer orphans – but children of God.' (Mark Stibbe – *I Am Your Father*)



Loving Father, your Son, Jesus Christ, revealed your glory in the ordinary things of life – in a carpenter's workshop in Nazareth, at his baptism in the Jordan, in a wedding in Cana, in his work of healing, among the disciples, on the mount of Transfiguration and in the garden of Gethsemane, on the Cross of Calvary and in a cottage in Emmaus. Help us to see traces of glory in the common things of life, for you are always with us and your Fatherly love never fails us but will transform the world, the church, and us. Amen.
We pray for our link Diocese of Tuam.

Wednesday May 7th

***'For God's Kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of the righteousness, peace, and joy which the Holy Spirit gives.'* Romans 14:17.**

'The kingdom is about being fully alive to the joys and struggles of life. The parables about seed growing secretly, the yeast in the dough, and the sower, highlight the inner vitality of God's presence. The kingdom of heaven comes, therefore, as a challenge to a culture which sees life in terms of consuming and looking for material satisfaction. It points rather to a life rooted in the soil of human frailty and open to the realm of the spirit. Life is really about living in openness as creatures before the Creator.' (Robert Warren – *Living Well*)

Lord, help me now to unclutter my life, to organise myself in the direction of simplicity. Teach me to listen to my heart; teach me to welcome change, instead of fearing it. I give you my discontent; my restlessness; my doubt; my despair. Help me to listen to these signs of change, of growth; to listen seriously and to follow where they lead through the breathtaking empty space of an open door. Amen.

We pray for those studying for important exams.

Thursday May 8th

***'Jesus says, "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him ... take up his cross and follow me." Matthew 16:24. Jesus does not say "Make a cross" or "Look for a cross". Each of us has a cross to carry. There is no need to make one or look for one, the cross we have is hard enough for us! But are we willing to take it up, to accept it as our cross? Maybe we suffer from depression, maybe we experience conflict in our families, maybe we are victims of abuse or misunderstanding. We didn't choose any of it, but these things are our crosses. We can ignore them, reject them, refuse them, or hate them. But we can also take up these crosses and follow Jesus with them.'* (Henri Nouwen)**



Servant Christ, help us to follow you on the road to Jerusalem, to set our faces firmly against friendly suggestions for a safe, expedient life: to embrace boldly the way of self-offering, in order to make the earth a place in which your kingdom comes. Amen.

On Europe Day, we pray for the leaders of the European nations.

Friday May 9th

'God is light, and there is no darkness at all in him. If, then, we say that we have fellowship with him, yet at the same time live in the darkness, we are lying both in our words and in our actions. But if we live in the light - just as he is in the light - then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin.' 1 John 1:5-7.

'If I look honestly into the depths of my own self I cannot fail to see sin, to be aware of my failings, and the way in which this happens time and time again. It is humbling to stand before God with our failures, wounds, chaos, vulnerability. I think we all know deep down that it is only by facing them that we can hope to enlighten the darkness. This means that we must start by grieving honestly and without pretence or excuse. It is only when we can stand before God, weak and in need of mercy, without any pretence or façade, that we can hope for acceptance and healing.' (Esther de Waal – Lost In Wonder)

Give me, dear Lord, a pure heart and a wise mind, that I may carry out my tasks according to your will. Save me from all false desires, from pride, greed, envy and anger, and let me accept joyfully every task you set before me. Let me seek to serve the poor, the sad, and those in need. And remind me constantly that I have nothing except what you give me, and can do nothing except what you enable me to do. Amen.

We pray for all who lead pilgrimages, retreats and quiet days.

Saturday May 10th

'For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it.' Ephesians 2:8-9.

'I grew up with the image of a mathematical God who weighted my good and bad deeds on a set of scales and always found me wanting. But God tears up the mathematical tables and introduces the new maths of grace. Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more ... and grace means that there is nothing we can do to make God love us less. Grace means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love.'
(Philip Yancey – What's So Amazing About Grace?)

Lord, in the quiet you come to me gently. Showing your love in bleeding body, broken for me, but leaving me, with quiet courtesy, to make my move. No pressure, argument. No blackmail. Just arms held wide, self-giving. No preconditions. No sense of obligation. Teach me to love like that. Amen.

We pray for those in hospital and those awaiting treatment.

