

THE PARISHES OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST AND ST MARY MAGDALENE
35 Brighton Place, Edinburgh EH15 1LL Bingham Avenue, Edinburgh EH15 3HY

Parish Priest: Fr. Jock Dalrymple: 0131 669 5447

Deacon – Revd Eddie White 07986 015772

Pastoral Team: Alice Codling, Jennifer Morris and Chris Vinestock

Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, EH15 1LP

Administrator: Karen Blair (Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: 10am to 3pm)

Web address: www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk Web address: www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk

Joint e-mail for our sister parishes: stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com

5th Sunday of Lent - Sunday 29 March 2020

WELCOME....If you're visiting, are new to the area, or just live here, you are most welcome in our sister parishes. We are delighted you have joined us. If you are new to the parish, please make yourself known to Fr Jock by email or on the phone and ask for details of how to register on the parishes' roll.



REMEMBER - THIS SATURDAY NIGHT/SUNDAY MORNING THE CLOCKS GO FORWARD AN HOUR...

Thought for the Week: 'Everything we do before a pandemic will seem alarmist. Everything we do after will seem inadequate.' (M. Leavit)

MASS THIS SUNDAY ONLINE AT 11am – live-streamed from the Prayer Room in the Parish House.

Deacon Eddie writes: 'We will, once again, be live streaming the Mass on Sunday after a fruitful trial last week (much to our relief!) The web address will appear as the top post on our Facebook page -

www.facebook.com/StJohnsAndStMaryMagdalenes

and also as the top post on

www.stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes.com/news

At the moment we have an AV specialist coming in to film – but we hope to have our own webcam up and running next week, and to be able to offer Mass each day...'

Access to this Newsletter

While this newsletter has been available via email and online, most people have received a hard copy while attending Sunday Mass or visiting either of our churches.

That is no longer possible....we are trying to build up our Parish Distribution Email Address List of parishioners and intend to send everyone a copy (with the option for the recipient of opting out).

We are also seeking (see below) to divide the two parishes into ten areas and build up a network of co-ordinators and 'friends' whom, among other things, will deliver a hard copy of this newsletter to our more vulnerable and elderly parishioners (many of whom will not be online).

Please check with us if you think we might not have your email address (if you have one) – and let us know of anyone who would like to receive the newsletter but is not doing so at the moment....

(Because we will be sending a group email some email providers block them or class them as spam so please check your junk folder if you not received them)

Hard copies of the newsletter will always be available from the Parish House, as will copies of Living Faith, the three monthly booklet of daily reflections (covering April, May and June) – this edition with the theme ‘I am with you always.’ (Mt 28.20)

A Prayer For These Days

*In these unusual times,
where many of the familiar markers
are shifting,
may the Spirit bless us
not only with discomforts
or easy answers or half-truths,
but with new insights
so that we shall live more deeply in our hearts.
May we reach out to others in ways
we never imagined even a month ago,
and discover strengths within us
which we never believed possible.
And may we be thankful
for each precious new morning.*

(Peter Miller).

OUR CHURCHES, VERY SADLY, ARE NOW CLOSED

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland has called on Catholics to 'pray unceasingly' amidst the global coronavirus pandemic. In a statement released last Wednesday, the bishops, including Archbishop Leo Cushley, confirmed the closure of churches for 'the common good.'

They said: "The outbreak of Covid 19 virus in Scotland demands from all of us a response which recognises the serious threat to all people, especially the elderly and those with underlying illnesses, and our duty of care to them.

'Having given due consideration to the words of the First Minister yesterday evening, we, the Bishops of Scotland, agree that our churches should be closed during this period of national emergency for the common good.

There will be no celebrations of baptism or marriage but we will continue to offer prayers for those who have died and for their families who mourn their passing. The Church is not only a building but the people of God at prayer wherever they may find themselves.

We encourage all Catholics and all people of faith to pray unceasingly in their homes for our nation at this time in particular for our political leaders, our health care professionals and all those suffering from the virus.

May this lived Lenten experience lead us to new life and healing at Easter.'

Caring for Each Other

Our new PEP (Parish Emergency Planning) Group is meeting every two or three days to develop and put into practice plans for pastoral and spiritual and liturgical care in these very new circumstances....**The letter below was emailed out to parishioners on Thursday and Friday this week:**

'Dear All,

PASTORAL CARE OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE PARISHIONERS

Several people have been in touch to offer help with the most vulnerable in our two parishes, and Gary Zoltie, aided by Geoff Dobson, has already begun to co-ordinate our response to the situation. This involves dividing the parishes into ten areas and trying to have one parishioner, aided by several other volunteers, seeking to offer practical support to various 'vulnerable people' in their particular area. If you were 'looking after' a person you would seek to be available on the phone to act as a friend, allay fears, help to get shopping, and deliver the church newsletter. **You would not be offering medical advice nor coming into physical contact with the person and not be putting yourself or the person at risk through home visits.**

If you are willing to be part of a group, can you please link up with Gary - garyzoltie@hotmail.com - by email or phone (07768647923) - with your contact details: ie home address, mobile number, email, and he - or your area co-ordinator - will get back to you in the next couple of days with your list of people to contact. Initially, we would expect each person to have about 5 people with whom to be in touch depending on the number of volunteers.

We have already put together a provisional 'target' list of people with addresses and phone numbers - after trying to make 'informed judgements':initially we would focus on 'VP's' ('vulnerable people'):

St John's :

Vulnerable Parishioners: 58

Over 70s only: 74

Total - 132

St MM's:

Vulnerable Parishioners: 24

Over 70s only: 25

Total - 49

Housebound originally receiving communion - St John's : 41 (included above in VPs)

Housebound originally receiving communion - St MM's : 13 (included above in VPs))

With prayers at this strange and worrying time,

Fr Jock'

A DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE COMMUNITY OF OUR TWO PARISHES – THIS FRIDAY - 3 APRIL

This Friday we had planned to have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in St John's Church from 6am to 12 midnight. That will no longer happen but just because our churches are closed, that does not mean the Church itself is....the Church is present wherever our feet - or perhaps, in this case, our knees - take us....

So on Friday, we plan a **Day of Prayer** covering those same 18 hours. **We would hope that people will commit to an hour or half hour of prayer - with a focus on praying for all in our community and all who are suffering from COVID - 19.**

Many people had already signed up on the lists in our churches - perhaps they might confirm their willingness to pray at their chosen time...while for those that might be interested in signing up, could you express your interest by letting us know through the Facebook page or by dropping a line by email to stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com or ewhite@outlook.com.

With our churches closed, retaining and developing our sense of community is even more important....and there are few better ways to do so than being united in prayer at the same time....

We will hope to offer - **and have offered to us** - further ideas and opportunities in the weeks in front of us...

To give us a Context - Archbishop Cushley's most recent 'Ad Clerum'

The Archbishop sent out an 'Ad Clerum' ('To the Clergy') last Wednesday – we print below excerpts from it (the full letter can be accessed on the archdiocesan website) in order to offer information of what can and (sadly) what can't happen in parish life...

Ad Clerum, 25 March 2020

'Dear brother priests and deacons,

Covid-19 update

As I promised in my *Ad Clerum* last week, I am writing to you again this evening to update you following on from the events of the last few days.

As I did last week, I again appeal to all of you, both to make yourself aware of, and carefully follow, all public health advice about how to limit the spread of this virus. And again, I remind all those of you who are over 70, or who have underlying health conditions, that you must minimise your contact with others.

If you test positive for the virus or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, follow the present Government guidelines on self-isolation and please let the Dean, or me, know of your health status and if you need any help.

Closure of churches

As you will know, the Prime Minister yesterday instructed all people to stay at home (except in exceptional circumstances) and to avoid all gatherings of more than two people. As a result of this announcement, and following instructions from the Scottish Government, the Bishops' Conference reluctantly mandated the closure of all our churches across the country [see Pastoral Letter above].

The Bishops encourage all priests to continue to celebrate daily Mass privately, and to keep in touch with their parishioners through the means of modern technology. Please let your parishioners know that you will be celebrating Mass for them, even if they cannot be present.

Unfortunately, social distancing means that we ought not to distribute the Sacraments except at an inconvenient distance, which means that Holy Communion may now be given to people only in danger of death.

Sunday Mass online

If you are communicating with your people online, please also remind them that, although we cannot go to Mass on Sunday at the moment, we are nevertheless obliged, as Christians, to keep the Sabbath holy. Please, therefore, encourage them to pray at home together and to assist at Mass online if they can.

Sunday Mass is now available in English, Polish and Syro-Malabar, each Sunday, from various places in the diocese.

Christian Initiation at Easter

The situation regarding Holy Week has now changed dramatically. In line with the recent decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, I have reluctantly decided to postpone this year's Chrism Mass indefinitely. The Rites of Christian Initiation that were due to take place at the Easter Vigil must unfortunately also be postponed. If things have returned to normal by then, I propose that these Rites might be held at Pentecost, however we will have to see how things develop before this can be confirmed.

Unhappily, the popular Polish blessing service on Holy Saturday must also be suspended. I invite our Polish priests to be imaginative about holding a blessing service online for their people. Thank you for your understanding.

Visiting the Sick and Elderly, and taking Holy Communion to them

Due to the new regulations announced yesterday, neither you nor your Eucharistic Ministers may now visit the Sick. The only call that you may respond to is to someone in danger of death.

Penance & Reconciliation

The obligation of social distancing will also create some difficulty with regard to the Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation. If you are approached for the Sacrament of Penance, therefore, you must take into account

all the Government's hygiene precautions and maintain a significant distance between yourself and the penitent.

The Anointing of the Sick & Viaticum

Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum should only be carried out in danger of death. If you do anoint someone, let me suggest that you follow the advice from NHS Lothian. If you are over 70, or have underlying conditions, do not expose yourself to risk. Those who do anoint those in danger of death must observe all the Government's hygiene precautions strictly.

Anointing may be applied (e.g. on the back of the hands) using a piece of cotton wool, to be used once and then disposed of properly. In hospital you will be required to put on a disposable gown, mask, and gloves.

Baptisms, Marriages & Funerals

Baptisms and Marriages have been suspended by the State. Funerals now consist solely in a short ceremony either at the graveside or the crematorium, attended by only the immediate family members: how many people will depend on the State, and perhaps the Funeral Directors. No matter how many people come, social distancing must be observed. Offer also to celebrate a Requiem Mass on the day itself for the deceased, although you must do so until further notice without the presence of the people.

Gillis Centre

The Gillis Centre is now closed. The Curial staff are all working from home, but can be contacted on their usual telephone numbers or by email.

Again, I would also ask you to encourage everyone to pray the *Memorare* once a day to Our Lady, Health of the Sick.

Please keep me in your prayers at this time and be sure of my prayers for each one of you.

+Leo Cushley

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

The Memorare

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Friday 3 April - 6am-midnight – In our own homes - 18 Hours of Prayer (see above)

IN THE COMING WEEKS

SUNDAY 5 APRIL – SUNDAY 12 APRIL – PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

NOTICEBOARD

URGENT REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS FROM L'ARCHE, EDINBURGH

Kirsty McCrimmon, the acting Community Leader, writes 'to ask if you or anyone in your network could come and volunteer in one of our houses, or if you know of anyone who could come and work with us on a relief contract. We are really struggling to cope at the moment, and need people who can come and cook, clean, and offer companionship to our core members. Please pass this email on to anyone who you think may be interested. Our main office is closed, so email contact is the best way at the moment edinburgh@larche.org.uk or ring my mobile 07387 106307.

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline (24 hours) : ☎0800 027 1234

PARISH REGISTER

Please pray for those who have died recently: Nona Baer and Brian Patrick O'Connell

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Ellie Meagher, Liz Davis, Alison Stewart and Tom Thornton

St John's

Mar.29:- Constance Miller (2013); Robert Duffy (2011); Charles Herriott (1998); John Ogilvie : **Mar.30:-** Tom Thornton (2017); John Harkin (2003); Giuseppina Nicora (1947); Jean Joyce ; **Mar.31:-** Elizabeth Kelly (2008); Peter Sheridan (2003); Anthony John (2002); Margaret Thackery (2002); Agnes Clyne (1956); Alison Stewart (1994); **Apr.1:-** Ellie Meagher (2016); Kathleen Craig (2014); Hedley Smibert (2008); Margaret Smith (2007); James McAlinden (1987); Mary Anne McWilliams (1972); **Apr.2:-** Mary Burke (1997); Mrs. Brennan (1993); James Magee (1962); **Apr.3:-** Margaret Skead (1999); James Bryce (1978); **Apr.4:-** Terence Anderson (1998); Mary Campbell (1995);.

St Mary Magdalene's

Mar.30:- Christina Renton (1980); **Apr.1:-** Liz Davis (2016); **Apr.2:-** Hugh Boyle (1997); **Apr.4:-** Thomas Freeman (2004);

Sick Parishioners - St. John's: Susan O'Hara, David Reid, Molly Lugton, Jamie Clark, Sheila and Pat Tansey, Frank Logan, Charlotte McGregor, Betty Dougal, Anne Thomson, Eileen Brown, Mike Noonan, Sarah McManus, Sheila Alexander, Patricia Lawler, Mike Burns, Sr Jennifer Lindsay, Ernie Moran, Maureen Low, Pat Hunter, Dolores Jones, Alan Blyth, Mary Slight, Marie White, Cathy Walls, Anna Butler, Mary Phair, Sara Alkahankni, Rose Thornton, Kitty Dykes, Norman Telfer, Philip Jamieson, Guilio Crolla, Alf Macnamara, Stan McKay, Hugh Shannon, Maureen Lawrie, Mary Grady, Kathie Gallagher, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme.

Sick Parishioners - St. Mary Magdalene's: Isobel Phillips, Denis Davidson, Bill Cheyne, Sam Burns, Ella Ayers, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Ann Dockrell, Elizabeth Mackail, John Prior, Sheila Service, John Newell, Ray Donnelly, Michael McPhilipps, Agnes Harvey, Bridget Malone, Charles Malcolm, Margaret Ryan, Jacqueline Hannan, Chris English, Julie Keegan, Rose McKay, Laurie Wallace, Annie Watson, David O'Donnell, Andrew Banks, Jude Ferguson, and Mary & James Muir.

Please pray for sick friends and relatives of parishioners, including: Paul Henderson, Rita Rigg, Ellen Green, Adrian Aylward, Andrew Preston, Celine Diniz, Jamie Mitchell, Eunice Macdonald, Peter Bromley, Audrey Burgess, Kathleen Cawley, Margo Law, Misia Jack, Hannah Muldoon, Emma Bromet, Margaret Lee, Joan Bonnar, Mekala Osborne, Jean Nelson, Frances Green, Felicity McCluskey, Stephen Fernie, Maureen Henderson, Edward Caulfield, Mike Enfield, Anthony Finnerty, Savannah McDonald, Pat Dignan, Sharon Anderson, Igor Rekowski, Peter Hanley, Hazel Marshall, Sr Veronica Marshall, Martin Doherty, Maureen Connolly, Diana Hibbert, Joseph Daly, Roksana Moczulstra, Joan Brooks, Sr May Lewis, Mary Turnbull, Stuart Falconer, Jake Jorden, George Collins, Ena McCann, John Donnelly, Noel Flanagan and young Ray Donovan Syme.

Offertory Collections	St Mary Magdalene	St John the Evangelist
22 March 2020	Direct Debits - £50.00	Direct Debits - £384.75

The St John's 2020-21 **Gift Aid envelopes** are now available – and will be sent out to you by post.



If you would like to set up a standing order or join the Gift Aid scheme then please do let Gary, Siobhan or Karen know

MASS INTENTIONS: This week – Helen Hanlon, Mgr Brian Halloran, People of the Parish, Barbara Devlin and Mary Service, Tony Conway and Brian Patrick O'Connell.

Wise Words From Anglican Bishop Stephen Cottrell

'The whole world is gripped by the fear of uncertainty in ways that most of us in this country have hardly known before. The challenge of the Coronavirus pandemic affects every person and every community. However, I want to write with reassurance. As followers of Jesus Christ we are the custodians of a living hope; ... this means that we of all people need not be overtaken by despair. Moreover we have a particular vocation to offer our nation and our local communities the hope and the medicine of the Gospel... Our belonging to Christ is not just about watching a live-streamed service but being the hands and heart of Jesus in our local communities.'

Faith in the time of COVID-19

Maybe COVID-19 shut down our churches so that we could look around and 'worship God in spirit and in truth'

Myron Pereira SJ, Mumbai, India

It is a tragic understatement to say that the coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease it causes have turned our world upside down. The fact is that the virus has totally shattered our lives.

Perhaps not in a hundred years, since the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918 which destroyed more lives than the Great War, have so many countries, so many peoples of the world, been fear-stricken and traumatized.

How has the virus impacted our lives of faith — religious faith, that is. Since the virus is largely spread through interpersonal contact, government authorities have banned all groups in close proximity — and so all public transport systems and common recreation areas have been closed.

Members of almost all religions gather together to pray and worship. Once again by government fiat, religious believers of all persuasions have been compelled to keep a social distance from each other. For the first time in living memory, Sunday Masses and similar services have been proscribed around the world.

Television, radio and the internet have quickly stepped in to provide virtual services to those compelled to stay at home. Of course, it's not the same. So even though most of us know that this condition will not last forever, we are upset.

How does COVID-19 challenge our faith? It has compelled us to make our faith more personal, to rethink the way in which we believe.

For many of us, creatures of habit, faith is a mechanical exercise, routinely performed on Sundays in the company of friends and family. It's something which soothes but no longer challenges. Now for the first time — as in times of political persecution — we cannot take faith for granted.

In other words, we are asked to move from fideism — blind faith — to a discerning belief. And what should we discern? All of us love this technological culture of ours for giving us the amenities and comforts of modern living — automobiles, refrigeration, air travel, computers and the internet. We can't imagine life without them.

But we rarely think about how this very technological culture has impoverished and polluted the earth, and distanced us from nature.

Indeed global warming, acid rain and extremes of weather have alerted many to the fact that all is not right in our technological world. COVID-19 brings this home with shattering clarity. To our utter dismay, we find that as simple a symptom as coughing and sneezing may have the lethal potentiality to infect and kill.

To wake up this world

So the challenge to our faith lies in ways we usually don't think about, such as to live a life more in tune with nature in terms of diet, work and leisure.

So much of this world today is based on greed and violence. Can we live more simply so that others may simply live? This will change the way we look at the earth and at our world.

For all pandemics point to a relationship of tension between human beings and their surroundings, a relationship gone askew. Every epidemic, be it the plague, cholera, AIDS or the coronavirus, becomes a metaphor telling us that humanity has broken its original covenant with nature, and that nature demands retribution.

For how long will our world be infected with the virus of avarice, ambition and violence? So is COVID-19 a wake-up call to us all, telling us that our way of life is no longer sustainable and that we need to change course drastically? Perhaps it is.

To wake up the Church

In a strange way, COVID-19 is also another wake-up call for the Church. The first wake-up call came in the early 1960s with Vatican II.

By shutting down liturgical services in a church building, Catholics are forced to question the way in which they pray, worship and profess their faith. In other words, they are asked to move from fideism to a discerning belief.

And what should they discern? That their faith today must necessarily become interfaith, where Catholics reach out ecumenically to the other churches in worship and service; and in dialogue with those of other beliefs, with respect and peace-keeping.

But for this we need a new leadership in the Church — an inclusive leadership. There's an urgent need to respond to the desires of Asian, African and Latin American cultures, to the desires of women and the young to exercise authority in service and prophecy. These are desires as yet unfulfilled.

But the old wineskins of a male, white leadership are just too threadbare and patch-ridden for the heady new wines.

And yes, maybe the sole reason why COVID-19 shut down our churches is so that we could look around and "worship God in spirit and in truth." (*John: 4.24*)

Once again, **Pope Francis** has the last word, as when he spoke recently of those who feel trapped by the coronavirus: "**May the Lord help you to discover new ways, new expressions of love, living as you do in this new situation. For in the end, this is a beautiful and creative opportunity to rediscover ourselves.**"

Father Myron Pereira SJ is a media consultant based in Mumbai.

SUNDAY PLUS



Don't lose hope

A Year of the Word

Calling the dead to new life

by Fr Denis McBride
C.Ss.R.

In today's Gospel we hear how the death of Lazarus leaves a large absence in the lives of those who loved him. By the time Jesus arrives Lazarus is already dead and Martha voices her regret: if Jesus had been with them earlier, things would surely have turned out differently.

When Jesus calls the dead Lazarus to come forth he is still wearing the clothes of a dead man. He is still enshrouded. Jesus now addresses the community: "Unbind

him, and let him go free." In obeying the word of Jesus the community plays its part in helping Lazarus unwind and emerge into the light of his new life.

The story of the raising of Lazarus proclaims the great truth that Jesus is Lord of life. He has power to call us out of our tombs – for the Christian life only begins when we, even though we are dead, hear the word of God and obey it. We know from experience that we don't have to be dead physically to be in need of being raised up. We can be dead in the midst of life – hoping for a word from family or friends that will put us together again.

The voice of Jesus calls us all away from making the tomb our natural habitat. It also challenges us to take responsibility for our brother or sister who, like Lazarus, is loved by Jesus. If we see someone buried alive we are invited to do as Jesus and the community do in the Gospel: call them, and help them to go free. If we do that as part of our Lenten task, then resurrection at Easter won't come as too much of a surprise.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk



"Imagine that moment that will come, when Jesus will take us by the hand and tell us: 'Come, come with me. Arise.' There, hope will end and reality will abide, the reality of life. Think hard: Jesus himself will come to each of us and take us by the hand, with his tenderness, his meekness, his love."

Pope Francis

Inspire hope

by Jo Siedlecka

When Jesus and his disciples arrived in Bethany it must have been such a sad scene. The good friends with whom he used to stay had suffered a terrible loss. Seeing his friends weeping, Jesus wept with them. He felt the pain of the loss of a loved one just as we do. Then Martha said to Jesus: "I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus then makes

this incredible statement: "I am the resurrection". To consider Jesus just as a friend in this life is not enough – he is also the resurrection. All who believe in these two aspects of Jesus experience his love and power in life and death. How powerful his words were when he called Lazarus out of the tomb!

When I am feeling hopeless Lord, may my faith be as strong as Martha's and may I hear your voice as Lazarus did.

Jo Siedlecka's website, Independent Catholic News is at www.indcatholicnews.com

Maintain Hope

by Bridie Stringer

In the Gospel account of the raising of Lazarus, Martha and Mary both think that Jesus needs to make a house-call before Lazarus deteriorates to the point where he is beyond recovery and they reproach him with the words: "if you had been here..." However, even in the presence of mortal decay (Lazarus by this stage is starting to decompose), Jesus can still restore life. His apparent lack of urgency to walk a couple of miles to get there in time initially looks like insensitivity but he too is moved to tears by the loss of his friend.

Jesus has chosen to delay his arrival in order to show exactly who he is. His decision to wait is, of course, vindicated as he calls the dead man forth from his burial

chamber. Even against all the odds, Jesus delivers on his promises. Unlike the sorrowful sisters, we can now confidently begin our requests with the words: "Lord, now that you are here..."

Bridie Stringer is married with two daughters, a son-in law and "two adorable grandsons".

Loving Lord, I bring before you everyone I know and love who has died. You know the times when I have felt lonely and my heart has ached for their company. Yet I know that you love them even more than I do. Give them your eternal life. Let them live in my heart. Tell them that I love them. ☪ Amen.

Today:
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

Monday:
Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62
John 8:1-11

Tuesday:
Numbers 21:4-9
John 8:21-30

Wednesday:
Daniel 3:14-20, 24-25, 28
John 8:31-42

Thursday:
Genesis 17:3-9
John 8:51-59

Friday:
Jeremiah 20:10-13
John 10:31-42

Saturday:
Ezekiel 37:21-28
John 11:45-56

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 50:4-7
Philippians 2:6-11
Matthew 26:14 - 27:66



The Challenge of Corona

We were flying to the Moon
We were finding life on Mars
We were dropping bombs with drones
We were getting bigger cars.

We were building finer homes
Flying out to warmer lands
We were busy buying clothes
We were brushing up our tans.

We were throwing out good food
While we watched the starving poor
We kept burning fossil fuels
And our air became less pure.

We were warned by our Pope
Need to mind our Common Home
Need to watch our Carbon Footprint
Try to save our world from doom.

But we didn't want to listen
And we didn't want to hear
We just watched TV and Tablets
Drank our wine and quaffed our beer

Then Corona chose to visit
We were all caught unprepared
This wee microscopic VIRUS
Has our whole world running scared.

So our hands we keep on washing
And we're careful when we cough
We stand six feet from our neighbour
Cause this virus might jump off.

Now we live in isolation
While our hearts are full of fear
And we fill our fridge and cupboards
Just in case it lasts a year.

Pubs and cafés are forbidden
And we dare not go to Mass
Nursing homes we must not visit
Hospitals we have to pass.

But this enforced isolation
Gives us lots of time to think
Time to clean the kitchen cupboards
Time to make our wardrobes shrink.

Could it be that this Corona
Is a blessing in disguise
Makes us think about our lifestyle
Makes us open wide our eyes.

We thought we were all important
Greatest beings on this earth
So we used it and abused it
As if it were ours from birth.

But Corona is a challenge
Makes us take a different view
Helps us see what really matters
What it is we need to do.

We must watch out for our neighbour
Doing everything we can
We are all in this together
Let us love our fellow man.

God is with us every moment
Minding us with loving care
Now we know how much we need Him,
Let us talk to Him in prayer.

So Corona, thanks for coming
Truth to tell, we needed you
But don't overstay your welcome
That, alas, would never do!

*- Sr. Maud Murphy, SSL,
Knock, Ireland*