

Reflection:

Since 1st March we have been on a journey that is totally unfamiliar to us: defined by the arrival in this country of the coronavirus, Covid 19. In a matter of weeks, we have seen schools, churches, shops, restaurants and businesses close, sporting and cultural events cancelled, and people told to keep journeys outside the home to a minimum. The side of this 'inconvenience' that most of us are not seeing, and the reason for the restrictions, is the devastating impact of the virus on those who are infected, the highly infectious nature of the virus, and the need for those treating them to wear highly protective clothing (PPE). The potentially dehumanising effect of this is mitigated by the determination of the health care professionals to see the patient in front of them first as a person. The extraordinary care of those who are sick in hospital or nursing home settings is replicated by the

heightened care of the vulnerable in our community. At this time, when it is uncertain how or when we will return to some kind of normal life, the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus reminds us that, even if we are cocooned at home by ourselves, we are never alone; and when we are moved to think about and show practical concern for those around us who may be obliged to stay at home, the risen Christ is walking with us and working in us.

'Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened.'

(Luke 24: 13)



Fr. Richard

A message from Fr. Paddy...

It's hard to know which day of the week it is. It's hard to know how long we have been in lock-down. And impossible to know when it will end! 'Cocooned' is a very gentle word and may gloss over the fears, anxieties, the boredom, the loneliness and the restlessness that may be very much present in many of our lives.

I am cocooned. I made the category of the elderly by several years. I listen to the news but not too much of it. I don't do social media, though I have succumbed to Zoom and Skype, but in small measure to keep in touch virtually with family. I am, however, very conscious of the parish and all our parishioners. I have received so many kind messages by phone and I have been blessed with the care and kindness of so many. Let me give mention to my neighbours. In fact, I have heard so many good things about parishioners becoming magnificent neighbours. That is what will bring us through this crisis. Looking after ourselves and looking after one another.

But things will be very different. We won't be returning to what was there before Covid-19. The new normal will be different. In the meantime, it is guesswork but it would be great to be back with the church open, with Mass on Sundays and weekdays, with the activities that make us a parish. Let us continue to pray for one another, that the Lord may guide and protect us, give comfort to all who are sick and eternal rest to our departed sisters and brothers.

Spring has brought some lovely weather. But we must not lessen our resolve in keeping the basic guidelines of washing hands, respiratory hygiene and social distancing, observing the two kilometre limit and making only essential journeys. And stay at home!

Let us support one another with the Easter message. While Easter did not happen without Holy Week, it has a powerful message of faith and hope.



PARISH LINK

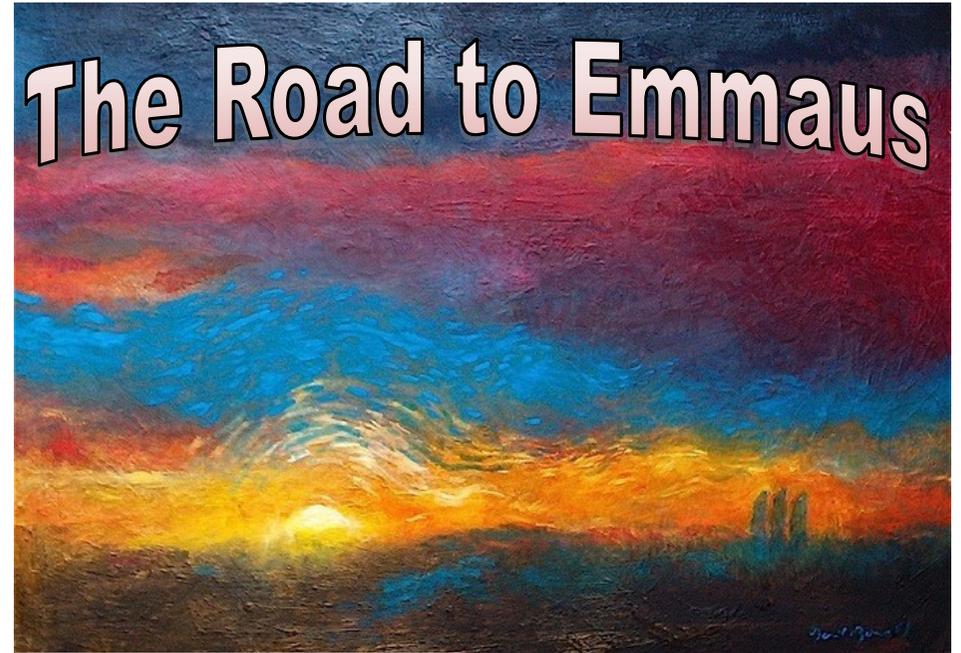


Issue No 27/17

Parish of St. Columba

26 April 2020

The Road to Emmaus



Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight.

Mission Statement *St. Columba's parish is a vibrant and welcoming community of faith, continuing to give practical witness to the Good News of Christ, through worship and reflection, and through Christian service to the community.*

During this time of the Coronavirus COVID-19:

A Prayer for Healthcare Workers Loving God, we place into your care all our doctors, nurses and healthcare workers. Give them courage of heart and strength of mind and body. Keep them safe from harm. May they know our deep gratitude for all they are doing to heal and help those affected by the coronavirus. God of all consolation may they know your protection and peace. Bless them in these challenging days and bless their families.

Amen.

A Prayer for our Priests as they exercise their ministry Eternal God, Be with our priests this day as they seek to minister to your people. May you be a guiding and protective presence with them as they bring the consolation and hope of Your word and the grace and nourishment of Eucharist to those entrusted into their care. Grant them the strength of mind and body, keep them safe to do your will, And give them the courage and peace to face each day with trust and confidence in You. Into your hands O God, we commend them; fill them with your grace and healing. **Amen.**



**Lockdown – A Reflection by
Brother Richard Hendrick OFM Cap**

Yes there is fear. Yes there is isolation. Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness. Yes there is even death.

But, They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise

You can hear the birds again. They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi People are singing to each other
across the empty squares, keeping their windows open so that those who are alone may hear
the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland Is offering free meals and delivery to the
housebound. Today a young woman I know is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood So that the elders may have someone to call on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary.

All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting

All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way

All over the world people are waking up to a new reality

To how big we really are. To how little control we really have.

To what really matters. To Love.

So we pray and we remember that Yes there is fear. But there does not have to be hate.

Yes there is isolation. But there does not have to be loneliness.

Yes there is panic buying. But there does not have to be meanness.

Yes there is sickness. But there does not have to be disease of the soul

Yes there is even death. But there can always be a rebirth of love. Wake to the choices you
make as to how to live now. Today, breathe. Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again The sky is clearing, Spring is coming,

And we are always encompassed by Love. Open the windows of your soul And though you
may not be able to touch across the empty street, Sing.

Brother Richard Hendrick, 13 March 2020

ALONE COVID-19 Helpline have a national support line for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Ireland. Professional staff will be available to answer queries and give advice and reassurance where necessary. The support line will be open Monday to Friday, 8am-8pm, by calling 0818 222 024, and hours may be extended to meet the demand.

Support Services for Older and Vulnerable People These Dedicated helplines are focused specifically on ensuring that the cocooning elderly, vulnerable members of the community or those living alone can access deliveries of groceries, medicine and fuels. Please try to ensure any vulnerable or elderly people in your parish help are aware of these services. **Dublin City Council Helpline 01-2228555**
Email -covidsupport@dublincity.ie

TROCAIRE “Until it is safe, until further instructions, please hold
Working for a Just World onto your Lent Box. Keeping it safe will help keep
you safe too,”

In the meantime, those who are in a position to do so are being asked to make an online donation to help Trócaire reduce the impact of the new coronavirus outbreak on people in the Third World.

**A Virtual Pilgrimage to Knock with the Archdiocese of Dublin
THIS Sunday April 26th**

In these times when travel is restricted, the internet can assist us to reach out to churches that we can temporarily no longer visit. We had planned to hold the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock this month and, unfortunately, we cannot do so due to the government restrictions

Instead, with the cooperation of our friends at Knock Shrine, we will hold a **virtual pilgrimage on Sunday April 26th commencing at 2.30pm with the Rosary and Mass will be celebrated at 3.00pm.**

We would like to encourage as many people as possible to join us in prayer at this time. In this time of difficulty and so many challenges, the virtual pilgrimage will give us an opportunity to pray through the intercession of Our Lady of Knock for all our intentions. Please God, we will be in a position to visit Knock again in person in the not too distant future.

Join the pilgrimage from: <https://www.knockshrine.ie/watch-live.html>

Times are as follows:

- 2.30pm: Rosary
- 3.00pm: Pilgrimage Mass celebrated by the Rector of Knock Shrine, Father Richard Gibbons
- 3.45pm: Benediction
- 4.00pm: Virtual visit to the Apparition Chapel
- 4.15pm: Opportunity to place a petition, light a candle or have a mass said online.



Items for the Parish Link can be e-mailed to parishlink@gmail.com or dropped into the Parish Office letter-box, marked 'Parish Link', by 5pm on the Thursday of week of publication. A contact name and phone number is required for each item. **Ph: 8308257 or email saintcolumba@eircom.net**

Please visit St. Columba's Parish website at www.ionaroadparish.ie and email your comments, good news stories and special parish events to info@ionaroadparish.ie