

The Churches of St John & St Patrick

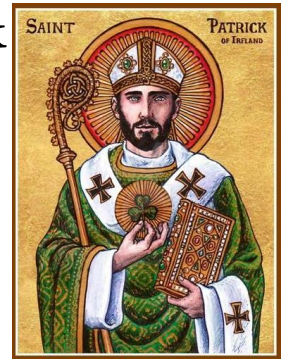
servicing the Parish of St William

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8th April 2020

Dear Parishioners,

One of the consequences of the current restrictions on movement is that we're using our cars less, which is making the world much quieter and the air less polluted. Add to that going out once a day for exercise and it means that some of us may well end up being a bit healthier at the end of all this!

Being obliged to walk more also means that I for one am noticing more. It's amazing how much you miss when you're whizzing past things in the car. Taking a walk each day over the past week, I feel I'm getting to know the parish much better. There really are some interesting houses and beautiful gardens around. And I've discovered them because I've had to slow down.

Slowing down can help our relationship with our Lord too. Wasn't it great to hear the Queen on Sunday evening saying that these difficult times could be 'a time to slow down, to reflect and to pray.' When we slow down and really reflect, we start to notice things we hadn't noticed before, for example in the Gospels.

We all know for example, because we've heard the Passion read many times, that the Romans condemned our Lord to death for political reasons and the Jews because of His 'blasphemy'. But last Sunday for the first time I noticed this: 'Pilate knew THAT IT WAS OUT OF JEALOUSY THAT THEY HAD HANDED HIM OVER.'

Whatever reasons they had given publicly, Pilate knew that they had handed Him over because they were jealous. They were jealous of the love that the people had for Him. They might have won back the people's affection by starting to love the people more themselves. But it was easier to destroy their rival.

To beat our rivals. Or to love more. To see other people as competitors for the world's resources and for the attention and affection of others. Or to see them as brothers and sisters to be loved. Two very different ways of living. And the next few days of Holy Week will remind us that one leads to misery and the other to glory.

If you're watching our parish Mass on Easter Sunday, via the Facebook page, Website or Youtube, I'll be inviting you to renew your Baptismal Promises. I'll be asking you if you believe in Jesus. But more than that. I'll be asking you if you want to do things His way, to follow His path to glory. Let's look forward to Sunday. And to a happy Easter.

God bless you,

Father O'Shea