

*Drawing by John R Hume,
courtesy of Scotland's Churches Trust*

St Mary Magdalene's Church

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PARISH MOTTO - 'THE BEST IS YET TO COME'

Easter Sunday (B)

31st of March 2024

Welcome to Saint Mary Magdalene — we are happy to have you join us today to celebrate Easter Sunday.

“Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal.” I always had trouble with that statement. It seemed to me to be absurd. Yet, the evangelist Luke recorded it. He must have had a reason. Better, the Holy Spirit must have had a reason that the statement be recorded. The words in question were spoken by a man whose name was never mentioned. He was only called a thief.

Later, people would refer to him as the Good Thief. Tradition has given him the name “Dismis,” but we really do not know his name. His name was not important. It is what he said that was important. And, yet what he said was so strange. What the Good Thief, Dismis if you wish, said was directed to the other thief, hanging on a cross on the other side of Jesus. How absurd. He said that God Himself had been condemned. Certainly, this was an exaggeration. But Sacred Scripture is not so shallow. The Primitive Church recited the accounts of the Passion over and over, emphasizing every word, every scene, every concept.

For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

This day was made by the Lord;
we rejoice and are glad.

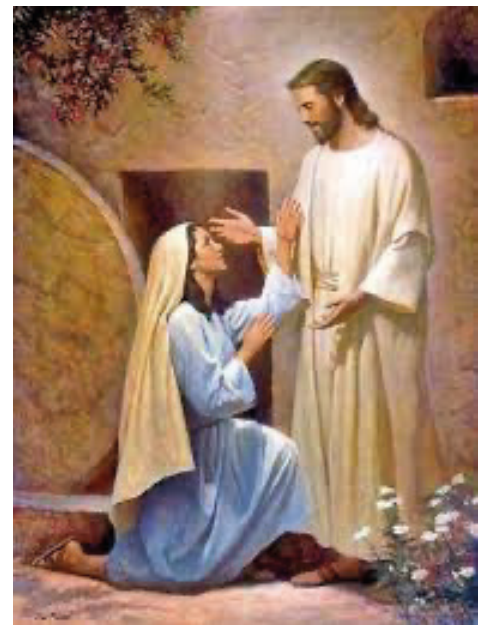
Gospel Acclamation

Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed;
let us celebrate the feast then, in the Lord.

Why was St. Luke so adamant in recording that God had been condemned? What did the Holy Spirit want us to learn? Simply, the Holy Spirit wanted us to know that the world had no use for God. The pagan Romans, like all pagans, were only concerned with materialism. They had their fables of gods, but the intelligentia among them didn't believe the stories. Nor did they really believe the emperors were divine.

The Emperor Tiberius, in his death throes said, mockingly, “I must be becoming a god.” The leaders of the Jewish people believe in God, but they also believe that the political situation was too delicate to have a Messiah. The timing wasn't right. A Messiah could bring down the wrath of Rome and threaten their cushy existence. They certainly did not want a Messiah who claimed to be the Son of the Most High. They turned that claim against Jesus saying that this was blasphemy, giving them an excuse to condemn him to death. The world had no use for God. It wanted God dead. So His Incarnate Presence was murdered along with common, everyday criminals. The Evangelists wanted us to know that although the world killed God, only his human body died.

The world killed God. Years ago Time Magazine had a cover article, “Is God Dead?” Of course the article came out at Easter time, for you could expect no less from those who are on the attack against religion and against all who profess faith. The sad answer to the question “Is God dead?” is that for some people, “Yes, God is dead,” well, at least in their minds, and in their social structure He is dead. Many have no use for God. People who are dead inside cannot envision a living God. But God is not dead. He is not dead to the thief, to the murderer, to the prostitute, to the addict or to us. God is alive. Jesus rose from the dead and proclaimed that death has no hold on Him. Death has no hold on God. Yes, his Incarnate Body was put to death, but death lost its grip.



Jesus triumphed over death. God the Father raised Jesus his Son from the dead. That good thief prayed one last prayer before his life came to an end. He said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And Jesus replied to him, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

The world could not kill God. Nor can it kill those who luxuriate in the Life of God. The Good Thief's act of faith, his act of kindness in what he said to the Crucified Christ, resulted in his sharing the eternal life of that God whom the world tried to destroy. We, who have received the eternal life of the Lord at our Baptism, have been told that as long as we hold onto this Easter Life, He will raise us up when our lives come to an end. Easter is not just about Jesus. It is about us. We have been given the New Life of the Lord. And we receive the promise of faith, the great hope of Christianity.

Have a great week—Stay safe and well and enjoy the gifts and blessings God has given us. May God bless you always.

Fr Bogdan SDS

PRAYERS

We pray for our departed parishioners, friends and family members and for all whose anniversaries occur about this time.

**Eternal rest grant unto their souls,
O Lord. May they rest in peace.
Amen.**

Thank You!!!

We thank you for your spectacular generosity. Your generous support of our Parish and your help with the needs of our community is greatly appreciated!

Collections

Sunday collection 24th March 2024 – £792.50.
SCIAF – Wee Boxes – £167.90.

Easter Monday Masses

9am (English), 11am (Polish).
All are welcome!

Priest's Musing

A woman had lost a lot of weight over the course of several years. One day she and her little niece were going through some old clothes and found an old pair of pants. "Wow," said the woman, "These must have been from when I was over 200!" This surprised her niece. "You were 200?" she asked her aunt. "Yes, I was." said the aunt. The little girl paused for a moment and then asked, "How old are you now?"

SAINTS DAYS THIS WEEK

Monday 1st April

Monday within the Octave of Easter

Tuesday 2nd April

Tuesday within the Octave of Easter

Wednesday 3rd April

Wednesday within the Octave of Easter

Thursday 4th April

Thursday within the Octave of Easter

Friday 5th April

Friday within the Octave of Easter

Saturday 6th April

Saturday within the Octave of Easter

Conversion Practices Consultation

The Scottish Government is consulting on a proposed new law to end conversion practices in Scotland. The proposals, which could see loving mums and dads and caring clergy jailed for up to seven years, have drawn sharp and widespread criticism and been described by Aidan O'Neill KC as "ill-thought out" and "fundamentally illiberal". Please respond to the consultation before the closing date of 2nd April. You will find all that you need, including guidance on responding to the consultation, here: <https://rcpolitics.org/conversion-practices/>

Christ is Risen, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Big thanks to all who took part in the services of Holy Week, including the Holy Triduum, and to the Lectors, Cantors, Eileen Williamson for the music and all who prepared for these sacred liturgies – making them a worthy celebration for all of us. It was a well done!

Important Memorials

Memorials can be dedicated in memory of a loved one, to celebrate a special occasion—birthdays, anniversaries, living and dead etc... or for your own special intention by ordering a Holy Mass. Offering a stipend for a Mass intention is a way of contributing to the upkeep of your priest. It is a donation.

Thank you for all your orders!

The First Witnesses — and us...

In beautiful symmetry, the story of Jesus' human sojourn on earth begins and ends with an angel bringing astonishing news to a woman named Mary.

As Mary Magdalene waits outside the tomb, she discovers that the stone had been rolled away, the stunning emptiness within. Readers of John's Gospel do not know her thoughts, only her posture. Why does she remain when Peter and the beloved disciple return home? Her persistence is clear: "But Mary stayed outside the tomb, weeping" (20:11).

Did she have a glimmer of hope, a faint suspicion based on her friendship with Jesus, that the story hadn't quite ended?

Did her intimacy with him suggest surprises still lay ahead, despite the limp, lifeless corpse, the heavy clunk of stone, the finality of soldiers sealing it? Did her curiosity trump her fear?

Did she weep because she felt bereft and hopeless? Or perhaps she was simply tired, too emotionally drained to think of the next step. When the future is unclear, it is wise to stay grounded in the present until a direction emerges.

Maybe Mary was completely depleted, but she knew deeper down that the God who had been faithful before would be faithful again; God wouldn't abandon her now. No matter how bleak the picture seemed, she waited with silent intention: focused, because she knew something would change.

Her waiting led to surprise: She heard a familiar voice softly speak her name and ask gently why she wept. In the Gospel account of the Good Shepherd, Jesus calls his sheep by name (Jn 10:3); in this case he uses Aramaic, the familiar language of childhood, the instinctive language of prayer.

He comes to her as she is—disheveled, red-eyed, exhausted—not in some idealized, perfectly coiffed version. Jesus' focus on Mary here is touching. He doesn't rehash his own terrible ordeal or triumph in his Resurrection. He asks: "Whom do you seek? Why do you weep?"

Those are good questions for reflection: Whom do we seek? Why do we weep? Often the first, easy answers aren't true. If we respond, "Oh, I'm just fine, thank you very much!" we need to probe deeper. Maybe "fine" is the answer the culture expects; but Jesus knows us better.

**Fr Bogdan and
Deacon Krzysztof
wish you all a
Happy and Holy Easter!**

ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN HOSPITAL? DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS IN HOSPITAL?

Name _____ Hospital _____ Ward _____

Please complete/ tear off and hand it to Fr Bogdan after Mass