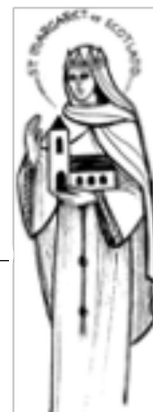


# ST MARGARET'S PAGE

3rd Sunday of Easter (A)

26th April 2020



## *In Peter writes:*

Monday will mark five weeks since the lockdown, and the celebration of Mass, along with every other group activity, from sport to cafes are becoming a distant memory. National lockdown was instigated to protect the lives of the public and protect the capabilities of the NHS to offer medical assistance in very difficult circumstances. The staff have risen to the occasion magnificently and are to be congratulated on their continuing achievements. Judging by the far lower numbers of deaths than originally projected, these policies were the appropriate choice to make. We must, though, always remember that no one is a statistic but a real person, and every death will always leave a family bereaved and in anguish.

The projections of scientists with regard to this pandemic can only be explained in probabilities since there are no comparable tests elsewhere to use as a measure. Therefore, the judgement made with regard to policy to protect the capabilities of the NHS whether it be lockdown, social distancing, home schooling and home working will inevitably be a moral choice undertaken by the government of the day, not a moral choice that many would wish to face. Every moral choice will entail a series of consequences, some of which are unknown at the time of choosing. Newspaper editors want easily understood decisions with which they can agree or disagree, intelligently or not as the case maybe. Yet the world of moral choices is a world of deliberating, of weighing up different courses of action to achieve the desired outcome. The moral law dictates what is not possible, like doing something wrong, such as allowing large numbers to die, a wrong, in order to achieve a good, save the economy. Likewise, to destroy the economic and social livelihoods of everyone, a wrong, with the hope of minimising every death, a good, from the pandemic would be to destroy the very thing trying to be saved, a continuing functioning society. When Field Marshall Montgomery was on his death bed, he was often discovered crying which surprised the staff of this life-long soldier, but he explained that he was crying for the men he had sent to their deaths in trying to win the war and secure the nation. No-one now doubts the moral imperative of the Second World War, even though numerous incidents that took place during the conflict were, in retrospect, of dubious moral value such as the bombing of Dresden.

The ability to choose correctly is an art form learnt throughout life, a journey that includes many false choices on route. No

choice ever takes place in a vacuum, everyone is influenced by many different forces, our family, the current social mores of the times, and maybe even school and Church. However, what is personal to us is the spark that initiates major moral choices. To choose correctly and commit oneself to a course of action is to accept the moral force of the truth. Truth is not an abstract principle but becomes our personal commitment to whatever moral choice has been chosen. These choices take on many forms, long term, serving our families, sustaining our vocation, our work, our community, or immediate, rising above the need to retaliate in argument, choosing to complete an uncongenial task out of love of family. Whatever they may entail, they all fall, for the religious person, within something wider still, the project of faith. Faith too requires a spark.

The two disciples in this Sunday's Gospel reflect on their experience with the stranger, who walked alongside them. 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he explained the scriptures to us'. The stranger, Jesus, sets their hearts alight because He first answers their disappointments concerning Himself. He was indeed destined to suffer and die on the Cross but His suffering was placed within the broader picture of God's plan of salvation that included the Resurrection.

None of this would have been obvious if they had not invited the stranger to sit down with them at table that evening. Without the evening meal the two would have told their friends of the encounter with the stranger on the road. The origin of that spark within them would have remained obscure if the encounter with Jesus had not taken place. Sitting at table gave the two disciples the opportunity to recognise Jesus in the breaking of bread, thus making sense of what took place earlier on the road. The same dynamic acts in the Mass. The expression of forgiveness, mercy and praise that begins Mass and which is followed by the readings, Gospel and explanation brings together the narrative of our life and the narrative of the life of Jesus. The contact between the two makes itself known in the reception of the body and blood in Communion. The Eucharist sustains the spiritual spark that Jesus Christ places in the heart that embraces the moral spark which animates the individual decisions that mark the pursuit of our Christian vocation.

## MASS INTENTIONS

Mass Intentions: If you would like Mass said for your intentions or for the repose of the soul of someone please contact Cynthia at the Parish Office. Cynthia will compile the list which will be published on the Parish website each week.

Fr Peter offers up the Sunday Mass for the intentions of all the Parish, but Masses may be said for specific intentions from Monday to Saturday.

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## MASSES FOR FRONTLINE CARERS AND THE SICK

Every Thursday evening, at 7pm, a bishop, in turn, will celebrate Mass in his cathedral, live streamed, for all those frontline workers in the NHS and care homes, for the sick and their families.

The dates, locations and live-streaming information (link in the name of the cathedral) for the next five Masses have also been announced. They are as follows:

30 April: Bishop Richard Moth, [Arundel Cathedral](#)  
7 May: Bishop Marcus Stock, [Leeds Cathedral](#)  
14 May: Bishop Robert Byrne CO, [Newcastle Cathedral](#)  
21 May: Bishop Mark Davies, [Shrewsbury Cathedral](#)  
28 May: Bishop Terence Draine, [Middlesbrough Cathedral](#)

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## PENTECOST CARDS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF LYNDE HOUSE

Over the next few weeks I would like to ask the children of the Parish to create some Pentecost cards for the Care Home in St Margarets Parish, Lynde House. If you would like to participate in this project please contact the Parish Office so that we may allocate a residents' name to a particular child. There are approximately 75 residents in Lynde House so this is a mighty project but I am sure one that is manageable.

I have received lots of grateful emails for the Easter cards sent out a few weeks ago. They were all much appreciated by both housebound parishioners and residents in the Care Home in Ham.

## PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Mary Reagan, Pauline Slawson, Janet McAllister, Ben, Mark Titmus, Mary Ibbett, Carol Samba, Colin Bartram, Gerry McEntee, Rose Williams, Peter Coughlan, Hilary Sudell, Rose Lorden, William Hamilton, Mary Arnold, Cesar Juan Urrutigoity, Mary Ethel Arnolda, Francesca Bianchin, Sydney and Patricia Parkes, Judith Thomas, Wanda Ostrowska, Christopher Browne, Antonella Sesta, Margaret Masterson, Bernard Sharratt, Carmen Ruibal, Ann Macpherson, Donal Dwyer (brother of Mary Ibbett), Chris McLoughlin (son of Olga), Paul Costello and Kevin Sweeney.

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## LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH CHILDREN

CAFOD are offering a webinar of a Liturgy of the Word with Children at home. Parents and children are encouraged to join online for prayers and reflection on this Sunday's Gospel. It is based on CAFOD children's liturgy resources. The link to register is:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5095942131288155403>

After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

For family support, TenTen are also making freely available resources for families, called Prayers for Home, which include 'Sunday Liturgy for Families' and 'Daily Prayers for Home'

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/primary-subscription/prayers-for-home/sunday-liturgy-for-families/>

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/primary-subscription/prayers-for-home/daily-prayers-for-home/>

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## THE FINANCIAL WELFARE OF ST MARGARET'S

The St Margaret's Virgin Money Giving is now live. You can donate via the "Donate Now" button on the parish website under [Support us](#). This is a secure method for giving.

Even if you are only able to donate less than you might normally do, every gift is valuable

Thank you to everyone for your generosity.