

# St Fillan's & St Joseph's Parish Newsletter

Dunkeld Diocese, Scottish Charity No: SC001810

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Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## Pentecost

During this very difficult period, it was felt that some form of communication/support network could prove very useful to Parishioners, especially those who are housebound and vulnerable.

Please contact Fr. Les by phone 01877 330 702 or by email: [parishpriest@stfdac.co.uk](mailto:parishpriest@stfdac.co.uk) for further information.

### THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT



In the Old Testament, God promised that in the last days, in the days of the Messiah, he would pour out his spirit on all of his people. The apostle Peter quotes this promise to explain what is happening when the apostles speak in tongues at Pentecost. This outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost marks the beginning of the period promised so long ago. **But why would God want to mark this great new beginning, the fulfillment of the Messianic promise, the start of the Church, by having the apostles speak in all the myriad languages of the polyglot world of their time?** There are so many other things the Spirit might have done! Later, filled with the Spirit, the apostles heal the lame, cure the sick, cast out demons. **Why didn't God mark the beginning of the outpouring of his Spirit by something more glorious than the ability to communicate with others without a translator?**

Here we should remember the story of the Tower of Babel, told early in Genesis, not so long after the Fall. The people building the Tower of Babel all spoke one language; but they used this power that the commonality of language gave them, for evil, building a tower that reached to heaven. God defeated them by the simple expedient of multiplying their languages and leaving them unable to understand each other.

Now, Christ offers all people salvation from their sin, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In this age of the Spirit-filled church, all human beings are invited into communion with the Lord and with each other. Human beings can be trusted with unity when they are incorporated into the one body of the Lord. And maybe that is why God marks the beginning of the reign of his Spirit in the Church by overturning the Babel of human language. Filled with the Holy Spirit, human beings can be given again what they lost at the Tower of Babel, not for storming heaven, but for proclaiming the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Eleonore Stump

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### PRAYER INTENTION FROM POPE FRANCIS FOR JUNE 2022

The Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. You are invited to answer the Holy Father's request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this month.



### DAILY OFFERING PRAYER

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. **I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart:** the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of all

Christians. **I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month:**

1. We pray for Christian families around the world; may they embody and experience unconditional love and advance in holiness in their daily lives.
2. We pray for families, that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit and be strengthened in love. May God grant us the grace to support families in their mission.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Think of your own family and loved ones;

- how have you seen God work through them, where do you struggle to see God's grace in them?
- How can you support loving families, both your own family and families in your community at large?



### PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendour of true love; to you we turn with trust.

**Holy Family of Nazareth**, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic churches.

**Holy Family of Nazareth** may families never again experience violence, rejection and division; may all who have been hurt or scandalized find ready comfort and healing.

**Holy Family of Nazareth**, make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family, and its beauty in God's plan. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, graciously hear our prayer. Amen.

*Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia*

## FAMILY CONNECTION

Pentecost is sometimes called the birthday of the Church. The Gospel for Pentecost reminds us that the Church begins with the command to forgive. Within the family, the domestic Church, we learn how to forgive, and we learn to accept forgiveness. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit that enables us to do both. Today is a fitting time to share a family celebration of reconciliation.

As you gather together as a family, sit quietly for a few minutes, inviting all to reflect upon their need to forgive and to receive forgiveness. If there is a situation or issue within the family that needs attention, spend some time reflecting upon the concern and how your family might address it. Read together today's Gospel, John 20:19-23.

Talk together about how Jesus gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us in the work of forgiveness and to bring us peace. Pray together today's psalm, or the **Prayer to the Holy Spirit**, asking that the Holy Spirit help your family. Share with one another the sign of peace.



## PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.  
And kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.  
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit  
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.  
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right  
and always rejoice in your consolation.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

The season of Easter concludes with today's celebration, the feast of Pentecost. On Pentecost we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem; this event marks the beginning of the Church. The story of Pentecost is found in the Acts of the Apostles, today's first reading.

The account in today's Gospel, taken from the Gospel of John, also recounts how Jesus gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to his disciples.

There is no need to try to reconcile these two accounts to each other. It is enough to know that, after his death, Jesus fulfilled his promise to send to his disciples a helper, an advocate, who

would enable them to be his witnesses throughout the world.

We previously heard today's Gospel on the second Sunday of Easter. At that time, we also heard the passage that follows, which describes Jesus' appearance to Thomas.

In that context, we were led to reflect on belief and unbelief.

In the context of the feast of Pentecost, this reading reminds us about the integral connection between the gifts of peace and forgiveness and the action of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace. Jesus then commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

As he breathes the Holy Spirit upon them, Jesus sends his disciples to continue his work of reconciliation through the forgiveness of sins.

This Gospel reminds us that the Church is called to be a reconciling presence in the world.

This reconciling presence of Christ is celebrated in the Church's sacramental life. In the Sacrament of Baptism, we are washed clean from sin and become a new creation in Christ.

In the Sacrament of Penance, the Church celebrates the mercy of God in forgiving sins.

This reconciling presence is also to be a way of life for Christians. In situations of conflict, we are to be agents of peace and harmony among people.

## DAILY PRAYER THIS WEEK

**This week we celebrate the Feast of the Pentecost.** We remember that a group of the first disciples were caught in fear, even after the Resurrection. But, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they are set free, set on fire with courage and the Spirit of Jesus and the Father. It can help us let the Spirit renew us and fill us with new life, giving us hope and empowering us to serve others with a new boldness. **Having celebrated the gift of the Holy Spirit on Sunday,** we are ready to enter this week to explore the depth of that love and the powerful call each of us is given to love one another. The Sermon on the Mount can help us be contemplatives in action this week. The Beatitudes are not eight new commandments. Rather, Jesus saw those following him and saw their weakness and their need, their goodness and their desire, even the cost they pay to follow him. He looked at them and called them "Blessed." **"This year we celebrate Mary as the Mother of the Church** and we can ask Mary to place us, individually and as a church, with her Son and with his own heart. **Let us all begin this week letting Jesus look at us and call us blessed.** Each morning we can practice choosing to focus our attention on some way we are spiritually poor or desiring justice, some way we are merciful or a peace maker, some way we might be experiencing the cost of being a believer, and simply

asking our Lord to convince us of our blessedness there. **It is likely that each of us, every day, can be attentive to some aspect of our daily lives,** some part of our relationships or responsibilities, that place us right there in a place for Jesus to tell us that we will be comforted, satisfied, blessed beyond our imagining. **Some day this week,** each of us will have the opportunity to be the salt that makes relationships, faithful living, have its flavour. We will have our chances to be light in the midst of the darkness that crosses our paths. We can ask Jesus those days - whether in the morning, or in brief background moments during the day - to have us not lose our flavour or to cover our light.

## ORDINARY TIME, Cycle C

**Today we entered the end of the Easter Season with the Solemnity of Pentecost.** *The new liturgical season is probably the most misunderstood season of the liturgical year, mainly because of a confusing name "Ordinary Time."*

**The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity**  
Sunday, June 12, 2022

**The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ**  
Sunday, June 19, 2022

**Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
Sunday, June 26, 2022



## THE POPE'S MESSAGE FOR THE 56TH WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY,

Published initially on the vigil of the Memorial of **St Francis de Sales - patron saint of authors and journalists** – in this year's Message Pope Francis seeks to promote authentic "clear and honest" human communication.



**Dear brothers and sisters,**

Last year we reflected on the need to "Come and See" in order to discover reality and be able to recount it beginning with experiencing events and meeting people. Continuing in this vein, I would now like to draw attention to another word, "listen", which is decisive in the grammar of communication and a condition for genuine dialogue.

In fact, we are losing the ability to listen to those in front of us, both in the normal course of everyday relationships and when debating the most important issues of civil life. At the same time, listening is undergoing an important new development in the field of communication and information through the various podcasts and audio messages available that serve to confirm that listening is still essential in human communication.

A respected doctor, accustomed to treating the wounds of the soul, was once asked what the greatest need of human beings is. He replied: "The boundless desire to be heard". A desire that often remains hidden, but that challenges anyone who is called upon to be an educator or formator, or who otherwise performs a communicative role: parents and teachers, pastors and pastoral workers, communication professionals and others who carry out social or political service.

### **Listening with the ear of the heart**

From the pages of Scripture, we learn that listening means not only the perception of sound, but is essentially linked to the dialogical relationship between God and humanity. "Shema' Israel - Hear, O Israel" (Dt 6:4), the opening words of the first commandment of the Torah, is continually reiterated in the Bible, to the point that Saint Paul would affirm that "faith comes through listening" (cf. Rom 10:17). The initiative, in fact, is God's, who speaks to us, and to whom we respond by listening to him. In the end, even this listening comes from his grace, as is the case with the newborn child who responds to the gaze and the voice of his or her mother and father. Among the five senses, the one favoured by God seems to be hearing, perhaps because it is less invasive, more discreet than sight, and therefore leaves the human being more free.

Listening corresponds to the humble style of God. It is the action that allows God to reveal himself as the One who, by speaking, creates man and woman in his image, and by listening recognizes them as his partners in dialogue. God loves humanity: that is why he addresses his word to them, and why he "inclines his ear" to listen to them.

On the contrary, human beings tend to flee the relationship, to turn their back and "close their ears" so they do not have to listen. The refusal to listen often ends up turning into aggression towards the other, as happened to those listening to the deacon Stephen who, covering their ears, all turned on him at once (cf. Acts 7:57).

On the one hand, then, God always reveals himself by communicating freely; and on the other hand, man and woman are asked to tune in, to be willing to listen. The Lord explicitly calls the human person to a covenant of love, so that they can fully become what they are: the image and likeness of God in his capacity to listen, to welcome, to give space to others. Fundamentally, listening is a dimension of love.

This is why Jesus calls his disciples to evaluate the quality of their listening. "Take heed then how you hear" (Lk 8:18): this is what he exhorts them to do after recounting the parable of the Sower, making it understood that it is not enough simply to listen, but that it is necessary to listen well. Only those who receive the word with an "honest and good" heart and keep it faithfully bear the fruit of life and salvation (cf. Lk 8:15). It is only by paying attention to whom we listen, to what we listen, and to how we listen that we can grow in the art of communicating, the heart of which is not a theory or a technique, but the "openness of heart that makes closeness possible" (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 171).

We all have ears, but many times even those with perfect hearing are unable to hear another person. In fact, there is an interior deafness worse than the physical one. Indeed, listening concerns the whole person, not just the sense of hearing. The true seat of listening is the heart. Though he was very young, King Solomon proved himself wise because he asked the Lord to grant him a "listening heart" (cf. 1 Kings 3:9). Saint Augustine used to encourage listening with the heart (*corde audire*), to receive words not outwardly through the ears, but spiritually in our hearts: "Do not have your heart in your ears, but your ears in your heart". Saint Francis of Assisi exhorted his brothers to "incline the ear of the heart".

Therefore, when seeking true communication, the first type of listening to be rediscovered is listening to oneself, to one's truest needs, those inscribed in each person's inmost being. And we can only start by listening to what makes us unique in creation: the desire to be in relationship with others and with the Other. We are not made to live like atoms, but together.

### **Listening as a condition of good communication**

There is a kind of hearing that is not really listening, but its opposite: eavesdropping. In fact, eavesdropping and spying, exploiting others for our own interests, is an ever-present temptation that nowadays seems to have become more acute in the age of social networks. Rather, what specifically makes communication good and fully human is listening to the person in front of us, face to face, listening to the other person whom we approach with fair, confident, and honest openness.

The lack of listening, which we experience so often in daily life, is unfortunately also evident in public life, where, instead of listening to each other, we often "talk past one another". This is a symptom of the fact that, rather than seeking the true and the good, consensus is sought; rather

than listening, one pays attention to the audience. Good communication, instead, does not try to impress the public with a soundbite, with the aim of ridiculing the other person, but pays attention to the reasons of the other person and tries to grasp the complexity of reality. It is sad when, even in the Church, ideological alignments are formed and listening disappears, leaving sterile opposition in its wake.

In reality, in many dialogues we do not communicate at all. We are simply waiting for the other person to finish speaking in order to impose our point of view. In these situations, as philosopher Abraham Kaplan notes, dialogue is a duologue: a monologue in two voices. In true communication, however, the "I" and the "you" are both "moving out", reaching out to each other.

Listening is therefore the first indispensable ingredient of dialogue and good communication. Communication does not take place if listening has not taken place, and there is no good journalism without the ability to listen. In order to provide solid, balanced, and complete information, it is necessary to listen for a long time. To recount an event or describe an experience in news reporting, it is essential to know how to listen, to be ready to change one's mind, to modify one's initial assumptions.

It is only by putting aside monologues that the harmony of voices that is the guarantee of true communication can be achieved. Listening to several sources, "not stopping at the first tavern" - as the experts in the field teach us - ensures the reliability and seriousness of the information we transmit. Listening to several voices, listening to each other, even in the Church, among brothers and sisters, allows us to exercise the art of discernment, which always appears as the ability to orient ourselves in a symphony of voices.

But why face the exertion of listening? A great diplomat of the Holy See, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, used to speak of the "martyrdom of patience" needed to listen and be heard in negotiations with the most difficult parties, in order to obtain the greatest possible good in conditions of limited freedom. But even in less difficult situations, listening always requires the virtue of patience, together with the ability to allow oneself to be surprised by the truth, even if only a fragment of truth, in the person we are listening to. Only amazement enables knowledge. I think of the infinite curiosity of the child who looks at the world around them with wide-open eyes. Listening with this frame of mind - the wonder of the child in the awareness of an adult - is always enriching because there will always be something, however small, that I can learn from the other person and allow to bear fruit in my own life.

The ability to listen to society is more valuable than ever in this time wounded by the long pandemic. So much previously accumulated mistrust towards "official information" has also caused an "infodemic", within which the world of information is increasingly struggling to be credible and transparent. We need to lend an ear and listen

profoundly, especially to the social unease heightened by the downturn or cessation of many economic activities.

The reality of forced migration is also a complex issue, and no one has a ready-made prescription for solving it. I repeat that, in order to overcome prejudices about migrants and to melt the hardness of our hearts, we should try to listen to their stories. Give each of them a name and a story. Many good journalists already do this. And many others would like to do it, if only they could. Let us encourage them! Let us listen to these stories! Everyone would then be free to support the migration policies they deem most appropriate for their own country. But in any case, we would have before our eyes not numbers, not dangerous invaders, but the faces and stories, gazes, expectations and sufferings of real men and women to listen to.

### Listening to one another in the Church

In the Church, too, there is a great need to listen to and to hear one another. It is the most precious and life-giving gift we can offer each other. "Christians have forgotten that the ministry of listening has been committed to them by him who is himself the great listener and whose work they should share. We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the word of God".

Thus, the Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer reminds us that the first service we owe to others in communion consists in listening to them. Whoever does not know how to listen to his brother or sister will soon no longer be able to listen to God either. The most important task in pastoral activity is the "apostolate of the ear" - to listen before speaking, as the Apostle James exhorts: "Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak" (1:19).

### Freely giving some of our own time to listen to people is the first act of charity

A synodal process has just been launched. Let us pray that it will be a great opportunity to listen to one another. Communion, in fact, is not the result of strategies and programmes, but is built in mutual listening between brothers and sisters. As in a choir, unity does not require uniformity, monotony, but the plurality and variety of voices, polyphony. At the same time, each voice in the choir sings while listening to the other voices and in relation to the harmony of the whole. This harmony is conceived by the composer, but its realization depends on the symphony of each and every voice.

*With the awareness that we participate in a communion that precedes and includes us, we can rediscover a symphonic Church, in which each person is able to sing with his or her own voice, welcoming the voices of others as a gift to manifest the harmony of the whole that the Holy Spirit composes.*

*Rome, Saint John Lateran, 24 January 2022, Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales.*

– Francisus

**INTRODUCTION TO THE ORDINARY TIME:** The rhythm of the liturgical seasons reflects the rhythm of life—with its celebrations of anniversaries and its seasons of quiet growth and maturing. **Ordinary Time**, meaning ordered or numbered time, is celebrated in two segments: **(1)** from the Monday following the Baptism of Our Lord up to Ash Wednesday; and **(2)** from Pentecost Monday to the First Sunday of Advent. **This makes it the largest season of the Liturgical Year.** In vestments usually green, the colour of hope and growth, the Church counts the thirty-three or thirty-four Sundays of Ordinary Time, inviting her children to meditate upon the whole mystery of Christ—his life, miracles and teachings—in the light of his Resurrection. If the faithful are to mature in the spiritual life and increase in faith, they must descend the great mountain peaks of Easter and Christmas in order to "pasture" in the vast verdant meadows of Ordinary Time. Sunday by Sunday, the Pilgrim Church marks her journey through the tempus per annum as she processes through time toward eternity.

