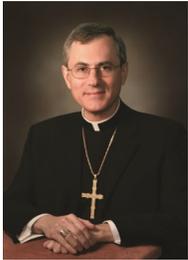




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**THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD
MAY 16, 2021**



Most Rev.
Ronald Peter Fabbro, C.S.B.
Bishop of London

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**All public celebrations of Masses &
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*Saturday 5 PM & Wednesday 12 PM
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A Spirituality of the Ascension

“The Ascension throws some important light on the mystery of love and intimacy. What’s the Ascension?”

It’s an event inside of the life of Jesus and the early church, a feast- day for Christians, a theology, and a spirituality, all woven together into one amorphous bundle of mystery that we too seldom try to unpack and sort out. What does the Ascension mean?

Among other things, that the mystery of how we touch each other's lives is strangely paradoxical in that the wondrous life-giving power of arriving, touching another’s life, speaking words that nurture, doing actions that build up, and giving life for another, depends also upon eventually leaving, being silent, absorbing rather than actively doing, and giving our goodbye and death just as we once gave our presence and our life. Presence depends too upon absence and there’s a blessing we can only give when we go away. That’s why Jesus, when bidding farewell to his friends before his ascension, spoke these words: “It’s better for you that I go away.” “You will be sad now, but your sadness will turn to joy.” “Don’t cling to me, go instead to Galilee and I will meet you there.”

How might we understand these words? How is it better that someone we love goes away? How can the sadness of a goodbye, of a painful leaving, turn to joy?

We often have this kind of experience, simply in less dramatic ways. Parents, for instance, experience this, often excruciatingly, when a child grows up, grows away, and eventually goes away to start life on his or her own. A real death takes place here. An ascension has to happen, an old way of relating has to die, painful as that death is. Yet, it’s better that our children go away. The same is true everywhere in life. When we visit someone, it’s important that we come, it’s also important that we leave. Our leaving, painful though it is, is part of the gift of our visit. Our presence partly depends upon our absence.

This however must be carefully distinguished from what we mean by the axiom: “Absence makes the heart grow fonder.” In essence, that’s not true. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, but only for a while and mostly for the wrong reasons. Physical absence, simple distance from each, without a deeper dynamic of spirit taking place beneath, ends more relationships than it deepens. In the end, most of the time, we simply grow apart. That’s not how the ascension deepens intimacy, presence, and blessing.

The ascension deepens intimacy by giving us precisely a new presence, a deeper, richer one, but one which can only come about if our former way of being present is taken away. Perhaps we understand this best in the experience we have when our children grow up and leave home. It’s painful to see them grow away from us, painful to say that particular goodbye, painful to see them, precisely, ascend.

But, if their words could say what their hearts intuit, they would say what Jesus said before his ascension: “It’s better for you that I go away. There will be sadness now, but that sadness will turn to joy when, one day soon, you will have standing before you a wonderful adult son or daughter who is now in a position to give you the much deeper gift of his or her adulthood.””

Excerpt from A Spirituality of the Ascension, Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, 2004



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QUESTIONS?

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Celebrating the Ascension of the Lord

*Jesus our Savior, as we remember your glorious Ascension,
help us to remember that, like your first disciples,
we should not look for you in the sky.*

*Instead, help us to find you truly present in the words of Scripture,
in the power of sacraments, in the Eucharistic bread and wine,
in your baptized people, and in all the people of the world
whom you died and rose to save.*

*In all the ways you are present to us,
help us always to be open to your Spirit
so that, as we share more and more in your divine life,
we may have the power to live your divine life
in all our days and ways.*

*Fill us with your Spirit so that when people see us,
they will also see you,
not in the sky, but living and present among them.
Amen.*

-Daniel Connors, Editor, Twenty-Third Publications



The National Week for Life and the Family Family, the Domestic Church: A Sign of Hope and Life May 9-16, 2021

This weekend concludes the National Week for Life and the Family. In reflecting on this weekends' readings, as a family, consider discussing the following statements and questions:

In the **First Reading**, Jesus tells his disciples "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." *What are some of the ways in which our families witness to Jesus Christ in the world today? How do we experience God's saving power in our family life?*

The **Responsorial Psalm** commands us to "Sing praises to God." As human beings we have a need to worship and praise. We shout for joy at sporting events and when we recognize the amazing talents of others. *What are some of the ways that we can give thanks and praise to God who is the author and end of our lives?*

The **Second Reading** reminds us of our "glorious inheritance among the saints." We put much preparation into making sure our children will have a good education and we also prepare for our own retirement. These things are very important. *What are some of the things we can do to so that our families can obtain God's "glorious inheritance"?*

In the **Gospel**, Jesus says: "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." *What are some of the ways that we as Christian disciples and as the domestic church can proclaim the gospel to the world?*



St. Vincent de Paul

During the month of April this year, your prayers and financial support have made it possible for your St. Vincent de Paul Society to make 81 calls to assist the poor in our parish, distributing \$3260 in grocery cards. This weekend is the semi-annual appeal for your financial support. Thank you in advance for your support. If you would also like to contribute some time to assist us in making calls, please call for further information.

Laudato Si' Week May 16-24

Pope Francis invites us all to celebrate Laudato Si' Week, which begins this weekend until May 24. It will be the crowning event of the Special Laudato Si' Anniversary Year, and a celebration of the great progress the whole Church has made on its journey to ecological conversion. More information and a video invitation featuring the Holy Father click [here](#).



Rekindling the Gift-St. Peter's Seminary

The annual Parish Appeal for St. Peter's Seminary continues this month. For more information and an update on the work that has been completed and the renewed vision for St. Peter's Seminary click [here](#) for this year's brochure.



Fresh Start Support Services Mother's Day Virtual Baby Bottle Drive May 9-23, 2021

Baby bottles filled with change, cash, cheques or e-transfers to babybottles@fsm.ca - that's the Baby Bottle Drive. It's a simple idea that provides thousands of dollars to help change lives of women and children in our community.

Together, let's fill our virtual baby bottle so that more moms and babies can receive early parenting interventions and continue to live together at Fresh Start and in the community. For more information on Fresh Start Support Services, click [here](#).



Pope Francis' Marian Marathon May 1-31, 2021

"from the whole Church unceasingly ascended prayer to God" (Acts 12:5).

Pope Francis is requesting that during this month of May, particularly dedicated to Our Lady, the entire Church invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary for the end of the pandemic and, in a special way, he is inviting all to pray fervently for those most closely affected by it. During each day of May, guided by a calendar with specific intentions, all the Shrines around the world, united in a communion of supplication, through the prayer of the Rosary, will intercede for an end to the pandemic. Thirty Marian Shrines have been entrusted in leading the daily prayer intentions and will take turns leading this prayer throughout the Church while offering the faithful a series of prayer moments for them to participate throughout the entire day. Among the Marian shrines chosen is that of Notre-Dame-du-Cap, in Trois-Rivières (Québec).

Click [here](#) to access Liturgical Guide and prayer calendar.

The Holy Father will open and close the month of prayer, on the first and last day of the month. Daily prayers will be live broadcast through the official online [channels](#) of the Holy See.



From the Desk of the Rector

"In a world that has enormous possibilities and increasingly diverse influences, Christianity is desperate for more ambassadors and fewer bureaucrats." So says Alan Hilliard. Whenever we encounter Jesus in the Gospel we are reminded that we are to be examples of our mission by the way we love.

Jesus does not just suggest this but commands it numerous times promising us the guidance and strength to do it. However, it has always been a challenge. Nonetheless, we are called to do it and if we do it we will make a difference. How does Jesus really call us to love?

At some point along our journey we would have heard that, in Greek, there are different words for "love": "Eros" – the passionate love that seeks to possess the one loved - romantic love , "Philia" - the love of friendship, rooted in attraction to another discovering there an emotional bond and "Agape" – the special word in the New Testament: love that is a gift that does not have to do with feeling or attraction. This love is not so much affection as connection, a matter of being with and doing for another. Strangely enough we have also heard we don't even have to like the other, but we do have to love. This is the love with which Jesus wishes to strengthen his disciples. He said: "it was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go out and bear fruit that will remain." This love is a gift from God. St. John reminds us: "Everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, because God is love."

It's easy for us to love some people. They are just loveable people. They think the way we do. They appreciate our humor. They always agree with us. But the radical

challenge for every Christian is this: how can I love those I do not like? Is Jesus really asking me to love the unlovable, the inhuman people who have done something awful to us – to our face or behind our back, who don't like or agree with us, or those who hurt us? Well, it would appear, yes! So, is it impossible? Is it an unreal task? How can I do that? I can't, if I haven't understood what the love we celebrate at Easter means.

Jesus is not asking us to become best friends with our enemies nor to like those who are quite unlikable. But he is commanding you and me to care, to be concerned for every child, woman and man who comes across our path. It is possible if we accept the help to do it that God gives us. It is possible to love as Jesus loved not because we're brilliant or super-gifted but because he loves us and lives in us. And isn't that one of the best motivators for loving – to realize we have been loved first? All Jesus is asking us to do is care wherever we find ourselves: this city, our parish, where we work and have fun, the home we take for granted, our own environment. God took on our flesh in the person of Jesus. He walked our ways, experienced what we experience in our sorrows. He lived among us with a particular concern for those who were sinners. This unconditional love ended in crucifixion. And that's the love we celebrate. So, your mission and mine is to reach out to everyone we encounter with respect, compassion and love. The Eucharist, the Word of God, and our prayer give us the strength to be a witness to a God who loves people of every nation and all of creation. We will be moved out of our comfort level and beyond ourselves but isn't that how love works?

Fr. Jim Moeller

REQUESTED MASS INTENTIONS (LIVE STREAMED ONLY)

May 19—Wednesday 12 PM

Marjorie Marfil; Carmen Holbrough;
Mario Vella; Paul Kehoe; Anthony Cassidy;
Intns of John McInerney

May 22—Saturday 5 PM

For the intentions of the parishioners of St. Peter's Cathedral

READINGS FOR MAY 23, 2021—PENTECOST SUNDAY

First Reading - Acts 2.1-11

Responsorial - Ps 104.1ab+24ac, 29b-30, 31+34 (R.30)

R. Lord, send forth your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 12.3b-7, 12-13

Gospel - John 20.19-23

We remember in prayer all those who are sick.

We also pray for those who have died including Teresita Torrefranca; Paul Kehoe, brother-in-law of Diane Kehoe; Erika Brockmann, mother of Wilfred; and comfort those who mourn.

We pray for those serving in pastoral ministry throughout our diocese:

Rev. Raymond Lawhead;
Mrs. Sue Hofgartner, Pastoral Minister;
Rev. Thomas Kuriacko, C.S.T.;
Rev. William Thompson, O.M.I.;
Mrs. Andrea Dula, Campus Minister;
Deacon Bernard McCartney; Rev. Slawomir Szwagrzyk



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