

The ACTS of the Apostles

IMITATING CHRIST'S DEATH

Death is a topic that receives some treatment in the Acts of the Apostles. The deaths of both righteous and unrighteous characters are either briefly noted or narrated at greater length. In the opening chapter of Acts, for example, details about Judas' death are brought to the reader's attention: "Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out" (Acts 1:18). A little later in chapter five, the reader learns about the sudden deaths of Christian converts, Ananias and Sapphira, because they tried to deceive the apostles regarding the money they had received from the sale of a piece of property (Acts 5:1-11). The martyrdom of the Apostle James is briefly mentioned as a prelude to Peter's arrest in Acts 12:1-2: "About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword."

The death of Stephen is given a lot of attention, as Luke tells us about the false charges of blasphemy brought against Stephen, the false witnesses, the high priest calling Stephen to respond to the accusations, Stephen's lengthy speech to the council, and, ultimately, the martyrdom of Stephen in the presence of Saul, who at this stage approves of their killing him (Acts 6:8 - 7:60). The space that Luke gives to narrating Stephen's death marks its centrality in the Acts of the Apostles and Luke's theological agenda, and, therefore, the topic merits further reflection.

You might have already noticed that the elements surrounding Stephen's death noted above mirror the events leading up to Jesus' death - the false accusations, the questioning by the high priest, and so on. Further parallels must be mentioned in relation to Jesus' crucifixion itself (Luke 23:26-49). Comparing Luke's crucifixion scene with the other

Gospels, it is interesting that Luke has shaped the account to emphasize different things. Luke focuses on the theme of forgiveness, given that only Luke's Jesus exclaims in relation to those who crucified him, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Furthermore, Jesus dies entrusting his Spirit to the Father, an expression of Jesus' faith in his heavenly Father: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). Importantly, Stephen also displays concern, and forgiveness, for those who will kill him, given his final prayer, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60). And similar to Jesus who gives up his Spirit to the Father, Stephen dies praying and entrusting his Spirit to Jesus, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). There are other parallels, including the reality that both die a martyr's death, although by different means as Stephen is stoned to death (Acts 7:58), rather than crucified like Jesus.

These parallels show that Luke wishes to make a comparison between both deaths. It is important to enquire about what Luke is trying to communicate here. It appears that Luke is making the point that Jesus' death is a model of how one should approach death - with forgiveness and with faith, entrusting one's spirit or very self to God. A pastoral concern, therefore, lies behind Luke's presentation of both Jesus and Stephen's death. This is consistent with Luke's tendency to portray other characters in the Acts of the Apostles imitating aspects of the life of Jesus. Indeed, the portrayal of Jesus and Stephen's death is compatible with approaches to the pastoral care of the dying in the Roman Catholic tradition, including, administering the sacrament of reconciliation and praying with the dying in anticipation of the afterlife. ■

24 April 2016 - 5th Sunday of Easter Year C

SoulSpace

The ACTS of the Apostles

Imitating Christ's Death

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Season colour: **WHITE**

SERIES: The Acts of the Apostles -
The Church's Beginnings

In this series, **Diane Corkery** invites us to reflect on some of the key themes of the Acts of the Apostles

Today's readings:
Acts 14:21-27
Ps 144
Rev 21:1-5
John 13: 31-35



SUNDAY 24TH APRIL 2016
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Love shown in the members of the Church enables the community to be seen as disciples of Christ. Mutual love within the community overflows to the whole world. Christian charity helps to ease the burden of suffering and eliminate many of its causes.

APPEAL FOR THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

Pope Francis has requested all Catholic churches in Europe to take up a special collection for the people of Ukraine on the Fifth Sunday of Easter, April 24th 2016. According to UN figures, over 9,000 have died since conflict began there in late 2013.

Special envelopes are available for this appeal in the Cathedral. If you have not already taken one please do so today and return it next weekend. Thank You for your generosity.

"This gesture of charity, in addition to relieving material suffering, is intended to express my personal closeness and solidarity, and that of the entire Church, for Ukraine." Pope Francis.

ST MARY'S PARISH - AN INVITATION TO COME ON PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY DOOR - SATURDAY APRIL 30TH AT 11:00 A.M.

"By crossing the threshold of the Holy Door we will find the strength to embrace God's mercy and dedicate ourselves to being merciful with others as the Father has been with us." Pope Francis

Bishop Kevin is delighted to invite us all on pilgrimage to the Holy Door in our Cathedral. The schedule for the day is as follows:-

- 11:00 a.m.** - Gather for Prayer of Departure in our Cathedral
- 11:15 a.m.** - Depart by bus/own transport to Holy Well
- 11:30 a.m.** - Tobernault Holy Well - Reflection, Prayer & Rosary
- 12:30 p.m.** - Gillooly Hall - light lunch followed by inspirational Movie; preparation for entry through the Holy Door
- 1:30 p.m.** - Entry through Holy Door
- Stations associated with Holy Year of Mercy
- Catechesis on Sacrament of Reconciliation given by Bishop Kevin
- Holy Hour with Confessions

A bus will be provided free of charge for those without transport or wish to travel in company with the other pilgrims if space permits.

It is essential to book your place on the pilgrimage bus and lunch. Please do so by calling the Cathedral Parish Office on 071 916 2670 or by e-mail to admin@sligocathedral.ie

There is no cost for the pilgrimage but we would be most grateful for a donation to defray the cost of lunch at the Gillooly Hall.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION We congratulate all pupils from SCOIL ÉOIN NAOFA who receive their First Holy Communion in our Cathedral at 10:30 a.m. Mass today.



SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES

SUNDAY 17TH APRIL PARISH ENV: €2,517 PL/STAND. ORD: €1 525

THANK YOU for your contribution.

ST MARY'S PRESBYTERY ☎ 071 916 2670 **SACRISTY** ☎ 071 916 1261
✉ e-mail us @ news@sligocathedral.ie We welcome your comments.

BINGO - GILLOOLY HALL - TONIGHT APRIL 24TH AT 9:00 p.m.

This week's jackpot is €1,200.

FOLLOW THE ICON JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE
CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Blessed Pope Pius IX presented The Mother of Perpetual Help Icon to the Redemptorists for veneration in their newly built Church of Sant'Alfonso, Rome in December 1865 where it was solemnly installed on April 26th the following year. Just over 12 months later the first copy arrived in Mount St Alphonsus, Limerick. The Icon arrives in our Cathedral for Mass at 7 p.m. on Friday May 6th 2016.

The Icon will leave at 12 noon on Saturday May 7th. For more please see the leaflets at our Cathedral entrance or visit www.followtheicon.ie

FINAL TRAINING FOR NEW MEMBERS OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

Takes place in **St Mary's** on **Thursday April 28th at 8:00 p.m.** Your attendance will be greatly appreciated.

PUBLIC ROSARY FOR LIFE We are invited to join in praying a Rosary for the intention that Ireland will always Cherish and Protect Mothers and their Unborn Babies in the womb. This will take place Sunday May 1st at Tobernalt Holy Well, Sligo at 3pm. All are very welcome.

'THURSDAY TEA' SAME TIME - SAME PLACE - DIFFERENT DAY!

If you enjoy a cuppa and a chat please note 'Thursday Tea' will now be held on **Wednesdays** in the Meeting Room over the Sacristy after 10:30 a.m. Mass. The next morning will be held on **WEDNESDAY APRIL 27TH** Any proceeds from these mornings go the Missions. All welcome.



"ALL PEOPLE ON EARTH COME"

A celebration of Easter Faith, Hope & Love with Sligo Gospel Choir & the African Christian Churches Choirs of Sligo in St Anne's Church, Sligo on Sat. Apr 30th 8 p.m. All welcome. Banquet prepared by Globe House kitchens to follow. Come and share.

BAPTISMS We welcome into God's family DANIEL GLEESON and EMMA FARRELL recently baptised in our Cathedral.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK Lord, we worship as one family, and pray for greater charity and love among all. Amen.

READINGS FOR SUNDAY NEXT 1ST MAY 1st Reading: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29; 2nd Reading: Apoc. 21:10-14, 22-23; Gospel: Jn. 14:23-29.

FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK Mon 25th St Mark, Evangelist; Weds 27th St Asicus, bishop & patron of the Diocese of Elphin; Thurs 28th St George, martyr.

CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Upcoming **EVENTS**
THE WEEK AHEAD

Today April 24th **First Holy Communion** St John's N.S. 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday 27th **'Wednesday Tea'** Upstairs in Cathedral Sacristy immediately after 10:30 a.m. Mass

Saturday 30th **Pilgrimage to the Holy Door** 11:00 a.m.

Confessions 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday May 1st **Baptism** Cathedral 1:00 p.m.

Dates to remember

THE ANNUAL CHURCH GATE COLLECTION In aid of St. Joseph's Young Priests Society takes place this weekend. Please support and pray for vocations.

URSULINE NETWORK Next meeting will be held on Wednesday April 27th in the Convent (opp Cathedral entrance) at 7:00pm. New members welcome.

CENSUS 2016 Tonight is Census Night 2016. Please remember to complete your form which will be collected by an official Enumerator in the coming days.

GALILEE COMMUNITY, BOYLE Alf Monaghan will give his final talk on early Irish Christianity, at Galilee Community, Boyle, on Tuesday evening April 26th at 8pm. For more (071 966 4101 or e-mail: galileecommunity@gmail.com

SLIGO DRAMA CIRCLE Present 'Wasn't It A GoodLife', a re-imagining of April 1916, in Sligo Courthouse from Tues 26 to Fri 29 April @8pm. Adm. free with a request to buy a North West Hospice candle. All donations go to the Hospice.

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH May 1st at HOLY HILL with all invited to noon Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Matt Blake, a popular Carmelite retreat director. Afterwards stay for tea and visiting if you like. Every 1st Sunday through December is an open day at Holy Hill. Please visit holyhill.ie for more.

A BAKE SALE will take place in St Mary's clubhouse in aid of LGFA on Sunday May 1st from 2.30 -5pm. All donations and help will be appreciated.



NORTH WEST STROKE GROUP next meeting Wednesday April 27th at 8pm at the Irish Wheelchair Association premises in Abbeyville, Sligo.

FUNDRAISING TABLE QUIZ Friday April 29th @ 9pm in The Harp Tavern. Table of 4 for €20. Raffle & spot prizes galore. The event is organised by Branán Campbell from Oakfield who is volunteering with UCD Overseas. All funds will go help build a school extension and work with children in Nicaragua where Branán is volunteering this summer. Enquiries/donations please contact 086 198 0609.

THANKS [Cancer Care West](http://CancerCareWest.ie) thank all those who contributed so generously to their recent Church Gate collection. €745.80 was raised with all funds going to the support those affected by a cancer diagnosis in the west of Ireland.

SUMMERHILL COLLEGE STUDENTS Release their album *"The Hill is Alive"* with a special concert featuring special guests Niamh Crowley and Seamie O'Dowd on **Wednesday 27th April** in Summerhill College at **7:30pm**. Doors open at 7pm. Each of the following tickets come with a free CD: Family €25; Adult €15; Student €7.50. Tickets on sale on the night or in advance by ☎ 071 916 0311 or email info@summerhillcollege.ie. Your support is gratefully appreciated.

anniversary & remembrances

| DAY | 8.00 A.M. | 10.30 A.M. |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| TUES 26 th | -- | KATHLEEN MCGARRY & MICHAEL GALLAGHER (Recently Deceased) |
| WEDS 27 th | -- | CLARE O'DOWD |
| THURS 28 th | -- | MICHAEL RYAN |
| FRI 29 th | BERNARD, PETE & EDDIE MURRAY |  Month's Mind VINCENT PAVIA |
| SAT 30 th | MICHAEL CAWLEY |  Month's Mind WALTER McDONAGH |

Rest in peace Your prayers are asked for the repose of the souls of: JOHN DUFFY Union Place & formerly Drumshanbo; MICHAEL GALLAGHER, Cairns Dive, son of Paddy Gallagher, Treacy Avenue. *May God grant them eternal rest and comfort and console their bereaved families and friends.*