

The ACTS of the Apostles

THE CENTRALITY OF WOMEN

The centrality of women to the work of the nascent Christian movement is evident right from the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. Luke tells us that the apostles, along with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, were constantly devoting themselves to prayer (Act 1:13-14). The pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost in chapter 2 is a key passage that confirms the importance of women in the ministerial activity of the early Church. Peter interprets the Pentecost event as a fulfilment of what was written by the prophet Joel and quotes the prophetic text, which includes three significant references to women:

In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit (Acts 2:17-18).

God's inclusive vision is initially affirmed by the reality that God's Spirit is being poured out on 'all' flesh. Furthermore, the specific references to daughters in tandem with sons, and women alongside the mention of men, affirms that God's all-encompassing plan and vision specifically includes women.

This is not surprising, given that such an inclusive vision is apparent right throughout Luke's Gospel. When compared with Matthew and Mark, Luke includes many additional stories that present women as role models of discipleship. For example, Luke's infancy narratives, told from the perspective of Mary, present the mother of Jesus as the epitome of what it means to hear the word of God and obey it (Luke 11:28), as Mary aligns herself with God's will (Luke 1:38) despite not fully comprehending the virgin birth (Luke 1:34). This is completely different from Matthew's infancy narratives, which put the spotlight on Joseph's role in the events surrounding Jesus' birth.

Interestingly, in line with the references to "men and women" and "sons and daughters" in the Joel prophesy mentioned above, Luke

also tends to pair women with men. The story of Simeon's recognition of Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 2:25-35) is directly followed by a story that displays the faith of the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36-38). Other pairings include the Centurion at Capernaum (7:1-10) with the Widow at Nain (7:11-17), and the widow at Zerephath (4:25-26) with Naaman the leper (4:27). This phenomenon is also present in Acts as men and women are frequently referred to together (e.g. Acts 2:17-18; 5:1-11; 8:12; 17:4). The scale of these male-female pairings in Luke-Acts strongly suggests that gender inclusivity is a primary concern for Luke.

Furthermore, Luke's propensity in the Gospel to present women as role models is also present in Acts. In Acts 16:14-15, for example, a reader learns about a businesswoman Lydia, "a worshiper of God" who was eventually baptized, along with her household. Because of her assumed wealth, Lydia has the means to assist the ministry of Paul and his associates by welcoming them into her home. Such hospitality mirrors the hospitality extended to Jesus time and time again in the Gospel of Luke by both male and female characters, such as Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42) and Zacchaeus the tax collector (19:1-10). Similarly, Acts 18:1-3 suggests that Paul receives hospitality from the couple Aquila and Priscilla: "because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them, and they worked together."

While women in Luke-Acts might not have a role similar to the preaching, teaching and baptizing ministry of the apostles, it must be acknowledged that Luke envisages gender inclusivity, particularly through the characteristic feature of pairing men and women together, and his inclination to show that the extension of hospitality is an expectation of both men and women alike. Luke is an author with options. Therefore, the emphasis that he places on women in his two-volume work bespeaks of the centrality of women to the work of the early Church. ■

SoulSpace

The ACTS of the Apostles

The Centrality of Women

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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 15:1-2, 22-29
Ps 66
Rev 21:10-14, 22-23
John 14:23-29



SUNDAY 1ST MAY 2016
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

The Holy Spirit guides the Church from its beginnings. The promise of the gift of the Spirit is a comfort to the disciples as the Lord leaves them.

MONTH OF MAY The Rosary will be recited before the 10.30 a.m. daily Mass. All are invited to attend from 10.00 a.m. for this traditional prayer.

YOUTH MASS – EXAM PREPARATION Each Sunday during May our evening Mass at 7pm will be offered for all students undertaking Second & Third Level Examinations.

CHILDREN'S ROSARY 30TH MAY AT 7PM IN CATHEDRAL

24 HOUR PRAYER VIGIL For our Priests & Vocations to the Priesthood for the Diocese of Elphin takes place on the **eve of Pentecost, Saturday May 14th at 6pm** in our Blessed Sacrament Chapel. If you can give one hour to pray for this very important intention please text or call Angela on 086 3342289.

ST MARY'S PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY DOOR

Our thanks to all who participated in Saturday's Pilgrimage celebrating this special Jubilee Year of Mercy. With nearly 100 pilgrims from Sligo and Boyle parishes the day was a tremendous success. For those who were unable to attend this weekend there will be another opportunity for our parish towards the end of July.

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 **today**, Sunday May 1st at Tobernalt Holy Well, Sligo at 3pm. All are very welcome.

SLIGO PARISHES CLUSTER PILGRIMAGE TO LOUGH DERG

Takes place on Monday 30th May. For booking please contact Sabrina Rooney on 071 914 5028 or call to St. Anne's Parish Office. Cost €40 for Lough Derg and €10 to €15 for the bus (numbers depending). A deposit of €25 is required when booking.

FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH - MAY 6th

Mass will be celebrated at 7:00 p.m. Confessions will take place before the 8:00 a.m.; 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Masses.

ST BERNADETTE'S CHAPEL Rockwood Parade. Mass will be celebrated on Monday May 2nd at 5.15 p.m. All welcome.

JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY - POPE FRANCIS' WORDS
"The way of the Church is not to condemn anyone for ever, it is to pour out the balm of God's mercy."

SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES
SUNDAY 24th APRIL PARISH ENV: €2,262 PL/STAND. ORD: €1,480
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 €1,250.

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 same Icon arrives in our Cathedral marking its 150 years for Mass at 7 p.m. on Friday 6th May 2016.

The Icon will leave at 12 noon on Saturday 7th May.

For more please see the leaflets at our Cathedral entrance

or visit www.followtheicon.ie

Friday 6th May 2016

7.00pm Mass of welcome Celebrated by Bishop Doran

9.00pm Healing service

11.00pm Prayer around the Icon

Saturday 7th May 2016

Mass at 8.00am & 10.30am

You are welcome to come and venerate this special Icon during its time in our Cathedral.

THANKS - ST JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY Wish to thank the Collectors and all who contributed to the Church Gate Collection last weekend. Please continue to pray for vocations.

ELPHIN DIOCESAN CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE
CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, SLIGO

The **DIOCESAN WEDDING JUBILEES** will be celebrated in our Cathedral on Sunday 19th June 2016. Mass will be celebrated at 3:00 p.m. by Bishop Kevin Doran.

Following the ceremony those who wish may join a meal with musical entertainment. If anyone in our Parish is celebrating a Jubilee this year please contact St Michael's Family Life Centre on 071 9170329 or email stmichaelsfamilylifecentre@eircom.net

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK Lord, open my eyes to the revelation of salvation you have gained for us. 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 2nd St Athanasius, bishop & Doctor of the Church; Tues 3rd SS PHILIP & JAMES, APOSTLES; Weds 4th St Conleth, bishop; Thurs 5th Bl Edmund Rice, religious.

CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Upcoming **EVENTS**
THE WEEK AHEAD

Wednesday 4th **'Wednesday Tea'** Upstairs in Cathedral Sacristy immediately after 10:30 a.m. Mass

Friday 6th **First Friday** Mass - 7:00 p.m. with Confession before all Masses

Saturday 7th **Confessions** 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday May 8th **Baptism** Cathedral 1.00 p.m.

Dates to remember

P.T.A.A. SLIGO Meet in St. Mary's at 7.30 p.m. on Friday May 6th immediately after the 7pm Mass.

HSE RETIRED ASSOCIATION GROUP Monthly meeting takes place in St Michael's Family Life Centre on Thurs May 5th at 3pm. New members welcome.
FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH Today and every 1st Sunday through to 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 **today**, Sunday May 1st from 2.30 -5pm. Your support will be greatly appreciated.




CARRAROE YEAR OF MERCY PARISH MISSION 9th-13th May. Mass at 10am with Mission evening programme from 7.30pm. Led by John Pridmore & members of St. Patrick's Community. Various Mission themes include, God's healing, mercy and love with reflections on Our Lady and the Holy Spirit. All welcome. For further information please call Carraroe Parish Office on 071 9162136.

SCOIL URSULA CELEBRATING 50 YEARS 1966 - 2016 To mark this special jubilee a publication is being produced and the school are looking for photographs of 1st Communions, Confirmations, Mission Days, Concerts, Tours or other school events. Short written pieces are also welcome about different aspects of life in the school as it was for you; favourite teacher, a school musical, a sporting event...something that stands out in your mind and is a happy memory of your time. Please spread the word among your Scoil Ursula friends!! E-mail photos or articles to info@scoilursula.com or post to the school's Facebook Page.

CARERS LIAISON & SUPPORT SERVICE (CLASS) Provide free support through a team of trained volunteers for **Carers, Relatives or Friends of people going through mental health issues**. Many CLASS volunteers have been through a similar experience and support is provided on a one to one basis in a safe, neutral and confidential environment. If you would like to receive support, please contact Family Carers Ireland at 071 9143123 or 087 8188716.

SLIGO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LADIES GROUP "Loving Others Missionary Focus". Open to all on Tues 3rd May at 8pm in the Church Hall. Currently undertaking deputation work in Ireland speaker Maud has given a lifetime of service ministering physically and spiritually in the Congo and only recently survived a gun attack. Those who attend will be deeply touched by her story. Light refreshments will be served afterward. For more contact Fiona Simpson on 087 1014058.

ANNIVERSARY & REMEMBRANCES

DAY	8.00 A.M.	10.30 A.M.
MON 2 nd	JOHN O'BRIEN	 1st Anniversary SEAN BOYLE
TUES 3 rd	MARY LYNCH	MAUREEN McHUGH
WEDS 4 th	JOE & MARY WHYTE	JAMES & MARGARET FLANAGAN
THURS 5 th	ANN MARIE DIVERS	KATHLEEN MAGEE
FRI 6 th	FR JOHNNY CREHAN	 Month's Mind FR COLM HAYES
SAT 7 th	DERMOT & ANN STUART	 Month's Mind MARIA LYONS

rest in peace Your prayers are asked for the repose of the soul of: MSGR AUSTIN MCKEON, Pastor Emeritus, Tusk, Co. Roscommon and formerly Summerhill College. *May God grant him eternal rest and comfort and console his bereaved family and friends.*