

The ACTS of the Apostles

THE GENTILE MISSION

One of the central themes of the Acts of the Apostles is the inauguration of the Gentile mission. While Jesus' ministry in Luke's Gospel focuses largely on Jewish outsiders, there is sufficient evidence to confirm that he advocated a mission among those of non-Jewish origin. This is evident from Jesus' first sermon at Nazareth, through which he compares his ministry to the great Jewish prophets Elijah and Elisha who ministered to a Gentile leper and a Gentile widow (Luke 4:25-27). The Gentile mission is also anticipated in the story of the Gentile centurion who sends messengers to Jesus to come and heal his slave (Luke 7:1-10). This man's faith in Jesus and the restoration of his servant to good health by Jesus are representative of the reality that salvation is for the Gentiles.

A reader, however, has to wait until Acts for a full-scale mission to the Gentiles to get underway. A catalyst for the Gentile mission is the failure of the Jewish mission, largely owing to the growing opposition that the apostles faced at the hands of the Jewish authorities, because of the apostles' preaching (Acts 4:2; 7:51-53) and the jealousy that consumed the priests and the Sadducees over the apostles' healing ministry (Acts 5:17). This opposition culminates with the death of Stephen, a key turning point in Acts. Luke tells us that in the direct aftermath of Stephen's death, a severe persecution began against the Church, which resulted in the disciples fleeing Jerusalem and preaching elsewhere (Acts 8:4-25).

A step towards the Gentile mission emerges when some of the disciples go to Samaria and spread the gospel among the Samaritans. Another major turning point is the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who later adopts his Roman name Paul and, eventually, undertakes a full-scale ministry among the Gentiles through his many missionary journeys. While we might be tempted to say that solely human factors, particularly the persecutions in Jerusalem, led to salvation being brought to non-Jews, Luke makes it clear that the inauguration of the Gentile mission was divinely inspired.

Prompted by a series of revelations from God (Acts 10:9-16) and the Spirit (Acts 10:19), Peter makes the journey to Cornelius, a Gentile centurion with a similar characterisation to the

centurion that Jesus encounters in Luke 7:1-10. During Peter's preaching, the Holy Spirit comes upon all who heard his message, leading to Peter's Jewish companions being "astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles" (Acts 10:45). This experience confirms that bringing the good news of salvation to non-Jews is God's will. Indeed, in the next chapter, Peter recalls what happened among these Gentiles to convince Jewish-Christian believers in Jerusalem that the Gentile mission is to be a chief ministerial focus going forward (Acts 11:1-18).

Other key events are crucial to the Gentile mission, including:

- the setting up of a Gentile Church at Antioch under the leadership of Barnabas and Paul;
- the Jerusalem Conference's decision that Gentiles are saved by faith, rather than circumcision and keeping the Jewish law; and
- the acceptance of Paul's preaching among the Gentiles.

The mission to the Gentiles entailed a radical shift in mindset for the apostles and early Jewish-Christian believers. Deeply entrenched boundaries lines existed between Jews and Gentiles, owing to cultural and religious differences. In the temple in Jerusalem, for example, non-Jews were confined to the Court of the Gentiles and were not permitted to enter the worship courts designated for Jews. Jews feared entering Gentile houses because of the possibility of contracting ritual impurity (John 18:28). Kosher food laws prohibited table-fellowship between Jews and Gentiles. These are just some of the differences that drew the boundaries lines between Jews and Gentiles. The establishment and success of the Gentile mission, despite the many differences and obstacles, is a testimony to the openness of the first Jewish Christians to execute God's will, despite the difficulties associated with tearing down entrenched boundaries lines that had long served to keep the outsider at a distance. The Gentile mission is a central aspect of Luke's good news of inclusion, and offers a lesson about being open to engaging with those whom we deem to be outsiders! ■

SoulSpace

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The Gentile Mission

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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 5:27-32, 40-41
Ps 29
Rev 5:11-14
John 21:7-19



SUNDAY 10TH APRIL 2016
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

In the Gospels the disciples never catch fish without the help of Jesus. So when they are told to go out and preach, to make disciples, and to feed the flock, they know that they will do so with his help. For now he is with us always.

OFFERING IN SUPPORT OF THE CLERGY

Sincere thanks to Parishioners who contributed to the Easter Collection for Support of Clergy. The amount collected so far is €6,994. For those who have not yet had the chance to return their envelope there is still time to do so. The collection is vital for the support of our four Clergy. Please support your Priests. Thank you.

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES

The Elphin Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes will take place from 28th August to 2nd September 2016. Cost is €710pps. To book phone Joe Walsh Tours on 01 241 0810. For sick/assisted pilgrims who wish to travel, please contact Fr. Ray Milton at 090 666 1115.

CHARITY TAX FORMS - FINAL REMINDER

Sincere thanks to all who have so far returned their charity tax form. If you have not already returned your tax form please do so as soon as possible. Thank you for your ongoing financial support of our parish. It is deeply appreciated.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK Lord help open my eyes to the revelation of salvation you have gained for us. Amen.

READINGS FOR SUNDAY NEXT 17TH APRIL 1st Reading: Acts 13:14, 43-52; 2nd Reading: Apoc. 7:9, 14-17; Gospel: Jn. 10:27-30.

FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK Mon 11th: St Stanislaus, bishop & martyr; Weds 13th : St Martin I, pope & martyr

TRÓCAIRE BOXES RETURN

Our thanks to those who have handed in their TRÓCAIRE Boxes. The amount so far is €3,578 which is very generous. If you have not yet returned your Box you may do so at any Mass over the coming days. Thank you.

JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY - POPE FRANCIS' WORDS

"To be merciful means to grow in a love which is courageous, generous and real."

SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES

SUNDAY 3RD APRIL PARISH ENV: € PL/STAND. ORD: €

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 10TH at 9:00 p.m.

This week's jackpot is €1,100.



GARDEN OF RESURRECTION

Our Garden of Resurrection in the Cathedral is a symbolic representation of the tomb from which the Risen Lord came forth to declare that the life of faith triumphs over death itself.

Let us join with family and friends in visiting this place of prayer and hope and especially remember those who have gone before us marked with the sign of hope in the Resurrection.

APOSTOLATE OF EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

All parishioners are invited on a special Year of Mercy Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine on Sunday, 24th April. There is a full programme organised for Adults, Teens and Children beginning at 11:30 am. Fr. Declan Hurley Adm. Navan, will give a talk on 'Gazing at the face of Mercy' at 1:30 pm in the Basilica. Bishop Kevin will be chief celebrant at 3pm Mass launching a National Crusade of Prayer for Vocations. For more visit www.eucharisticadoration.ie

**PILGRIM OF THE MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP ICON
PILGRIMAGE OF THE CATHEDRALS OF IRELAND**

Blessed by Pope Francis in Rome on the 23rd of March the Icon was taken back to Ireland by the Irish Redemptorists who celebrate 150 years in Ireland this year and will arrive in our Cathedral on 6th May. Please see posters - more to follow in the coming weeks.

EVENINGS FOR PARENTS A 6 session course begins on Tuesday, 12th April at 8pm in Summerhill College, Sligo. This tried and tested course has contributed to quality of family life for many families. Early booking advised. More @ www.elphindiocese.ie/parents

RECENT CATHEDRAL BAPTISMS We welcome into God's family KASEY SWEENEY; JOHN McDONAGH; BEXLEY MAHON; ROBERT ELLIOTT; KAI MURRAY; EVANCE TONGOMO; AGGEE TONGOMO; SOPHIE KAPATSHEVICH; ANNA BOICOVA; SEBASTIAN POBORCZYK; ARIANNA POBORCZYK; ; LEON PIERCE and MATILDA GORDON.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL NEW MEMBERS TRAINING The next evening will be held in the Gillooly Hall at 8pm on Thursday next, **April 14th**. Your attendance would be much appreciated.

CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Upcoming **EVENTS**
THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 11th **St Joseph's Young Priests Society** Cathedral Sacristy (upstairs) after 10:30 a.m. Mass
Tuesday 12th **Fr Flanagan Prayer Group** St Mary's 8:00 p.m.
Thursday 14th **'Thursday Tea'** Upstairs in Cathedral Sacristy immediately after 10:30 a.m. Mass
Parish Pastoral Council 8 p.m. Gillooly Hall
Confessions 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Saturday 15th **First Holy Communion** St John's N.S. 10:30 a.m.
Sunday 17th **Baptism** Cathedral 1:00 p.m.
Confirm Our Children Mass 7:00 p.m.

Dates to remember

ST JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY Monthly meeting in the Cathedral after the 10.30 am mass on Monday, 11th April. New members are welcome.
FR. FLANAGAN PRAYER GROUP The next meeting will take place on **Tuesday, 12th April** at **8.00pm** in St. Mary's Presbytery. All are most welcome.
ULSTER UNIVERSITY CHOIR CONCERT in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Sligo on Friday 22nd April at 7.30pm. Admission free.
IRISH KIDNEY ASSOC - Fashion show Clarion Hotel, Thurs April 14th @ 8pm. Tickets €15/Children €5. Lots of spot prizes. Music by Seamus Duffy
ANAM CARA MAYO Launch of Information Pack for Bereaved Parents at Harlequin Hotel, Castlebar on 12th April at 11am.
GALILEE COMMUNITY, BOYLE Alf Monaghan will give a series of talks on early Irish Christianity, at Galilee Community, Boyle, every Tuesday evening of April at 8pm. For more ☎ 071 966 4101 or e-mail: galileecommunity@gmail.com
SLIGO CO FLEADH Entry forms available from music teachers or fredfinn.ie
Final entry closing date: 4pm Fri April 15th. Entries to Teresa McCormack, Altvelid, Ballintogher ☎ 071 916 4250.
MAKE-A-WISH FUNDRAISER 'Heroes' themed walk around Killaspugbrone Loop in Strandhill April 17th @ 1pm . Dress up optional, face painting on the day with great prizes. Organised by IT Sligo's 4th Year Business Tourism students.
YEAR OF MERCY HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE Led by Archbishop Eamon Martin Sept 9-17 cost €1,495 per person. To book contact MAP Travel 01 878 3111.

POPE FRANCIS 2ND EXHORTATION ON THE FAMILY: *Amoris Laetitia, The Joy of Love: On Love in the Family* is now online at www.elphindiocese.ie

STAR OF THE SEA RETREAT CENTRE EVENTS: "Where am I in my grief?" with Dr. Kevin Egan, Sat 16th April, 10 - 4 pm. "Wellbeing and stress in the context of our nurturing earth" with Mary Kate Hagan, Sat 23rd April, 10 - 4 pm. Cost: €25 (incl teas/coffees & light lunch). To book: 071 917 6722 / 087 182 5533 / mercyullaghmore@eircom.net

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL - ONE DAY RETREAT April 23rd in Summerhill College from 9:15 a.m. concluding with Mass at 5 p.m. Speakers: Fr. Thady Doyle and John Coyne, speaking on the fruits of the Holy Spirit, Baptism & Christian Healing for the Family. Contact Ursula at 085 776 5294.

anniversary & remembrances

DAY	8.00 A.M.	10.30 A.M.
MON 11 th	HARRY O'BOYLE	--
TUES 12 th	MARGARET CLANCY	DOMINIC, MARY AGNES, HENRY & CARMEL CLEARY
WEDS 13 th	THOMAS COSTELLO	ANNIE McMORROW & Dec'd Family Members
THURS 14 th	PÁDRAIG & LUCY CONNOLLY & Dec'd Family Members	EAMON MARTIN & his daughter BLÁITHÍN
SAT 16 th	--	Month's Mind CATHERINE (Kitty) McLoughlin

rest in peace Your prayers are asked for the repose of the souls of: BABY MICHAELA McDONAGH; EDWARD (Eddie) CONNELL, Sunset Drive, Cartron Point, grandson of Bridgie McGowan, Maugheraboy and RIMA POVILAITIENE late of Lithuania. *May God grant them eternal rest and comfort and console their bereaved families and friends.*