



THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

18th April 2021

**An extract from the homily of Pope Francis
delivered at the Easter Vigil**



FIRE OF LOVE

There are two places in Scripture where the curious detail of a “charcoal fire” is mentioned. One is in today’s Gospel, where the Apostles return from fishing to find bread and fish warming on the fire.

The other is in the scene in the High Priest’s courtyard on Holy Thursday, where Peter and some guards and slaves warm themselves while Jesus is being interrogated inside.

At the first fire, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, as Jesus had predicted.

Today’s charcoal fire becomes the scene of Peter’s repentance, as three times Jesus asks him to make a profession of love. Jesus’ thrice repeated command, “feed My sheep,” shows that Peter is being appointed as the shepherd of the Lord’s entire flock, the head of His Church Jesus’ question, “Do you love me more than these?” is a pointed reminder of Peter’s pledge to lay down his life for Jesus, even if the other Apostles might weaken.

Jesus then explains just what Peter’s love and leadership will require, foretelling Peter’s death by crucifixion (“you will stretch out your hands”). Before His own death, Jesus had warned the Apostles that they would be hated as He was hated, that they would suffer as He suffered. We see the beginnings of that persecution in today’s First Reading. Flogged as Jesus was, the Apostles nonetheless leave “rejoicing that they have been found worthy to suffer.”

Their joy is based on their faith that God will change their “mourning into dancing,” as we sing in today’s Psalm. By their sufferings, they know, they will be counted worthy to stand in heaven before “the Lamb that was slain.

Let us sing to the Lord a song of love

Sing to the Lord a new song; his praise is in the assembly of the saints. We are urged to sing a new song to the Lord, as new men who have learned a new song. A song is a thing of joy; more profoundly, it is a thing of love. Anyone, therefore, who has learned to love the new life, has learned to sing a new song, and the new song reminds us of our new life. The new man, the new song, the new covenant, all belong to the one kingdom of God, and so the new man will sing a new song and will belong to the new covenant.

There is not one who does not love something, but the question is, what to love. The psalms do not tell us not to love, but to choose the object of our love. But how can we choose unless we are first chosen? We cannot love unless someone has loved us first. Listen to the apostle John: We love him, because he first loved us. The source of man’s love for God can only be found in the fact that God loved him first. He has given us himself as the object of our love, and he has also given us its source. What this source is you may learn more clearly from the apostle Paul who tells us: The love of God has been poured into our hearts. This love is not something we generate ourselves; it comes to us through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

My dear brothers and sisters, fruit of the true faith and holy seed of heaven, all you who have been born again in Christ and whose life is from above, listen to me; or rather, listen to the Holy Spirit saying through me: Sing to the Lord a new song. Look, you tell me, I am singing. Yes indeed, you are singing; you are singing clearly, I can hear you. But make sure that your life does not contradict your words. Sing with your voices, your hearts, your lips

Sing to the Lord a new song, and you wish to know what praises to sing. The answer is: His praise is in the assembly of the saints; it is in the singers themselves. If you desire to praise him, then live what you express. Live good lives and you yourselves will be his praise. A Sermon by St Augustine

PREPARATION FOR MASS

It’s often said that, “You only get out of Mass what you put into it.” In other words, if you don’t prepare your heart for Mass, you will likely not be able to receive the many graces God wants to give to you.

This is why various saints have suggested arriving early to Mass and offering a few short prayers of love. Prayers of preparation became such an ingrained tradition that many people would take their place in the pew and instantly kneel down

for a minute or two to say these prayers before every Mass.

There are many different options. Here is an excerpt from a longer prayer written by St. Thomas Aquinas. It highlights the spiritual disposition we should have when we attend Mass and prepares our hearts to receive God's grace.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth. Lord, in your great generosity, heal my sickness ... May I receive the bread of angels, the King of kings and Lord of lords ... with the purity and faith ... that will help to bring me to salvation. Amen.

PLANNED GIVING & GIFT AID

The envelopes for use from 11th April are available on a table at the Lady Altar side of Church. If you are a UK tax payer and would like to Gift Aid your donation, please speak to Father Denis, Catherine or any member of the Finance Committee. Thank you for your continuing support to parish finances, especially during this very challenging past year..

Sat 17th	6.30 pm	People of the Parish
Sun 18th	8.30am 10.30am	Janet Gargard
Mon 19th	7pm	
Tue 20th	No mass	
Wed 21st	10am	
Thu 22nd	No mass	
Fri 23rd	No mass	St George Martyr Patron of England A day of abstinence

Please note that mass intentions as set out above may not always be read out, but the intention is offered.

Holy Hour: Saturday 5.15 - 6.15 pm

Confessions: Saturday 5.45 - 6.15 pm

Or by appointment with Fr. Denis

Family Mass: 1st Sunday 10.30 am

PARISH MASS ON-LINE

Fr. Denis is also still celebrating Mass online at 6.30 pm every Saturday night for the Vigil Mass, & Wednesday morning Mass at 10am. Both are accessible through the Parish Facebook page:

Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity and St Augustine of Canterbury

For more information, please go to the Parish website <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/baldock>

BOOKING TO ATTEND MASS IN PERSON

For all services in Church, you need to book online, through our website below. If the Mass is full, the signing in book at the back of church cannot be used.

THE WEDNESDAY WORD IS AVAILABLE VIA THIS LINK:

<http://www.wednesdayword.org/school/index.htm>

ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL is our Catholic Parish Primary School. Please contact the Head teacher, Thomas Timson on 01462 892478 to make an appointment. The school website is:

<http://www.stjohns4.herts.sch.uk/index.html>

RC HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

Contact Tel: Mobile: 07876 526935 Lister 01438 285518.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:



We pray especially for the sick of the parish and for those who care for and support them, especially, Alastair McCallion, Karen O'Shaughnessy, Angela Gray, Mairead Kirke, and Dick Worbey. We remember those who have died recently; Anna Sokal, and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time: James Barkley; Annie Brooks; Wanda Panico; Carlo Gelmini; Brian Conway; Bronislaw Kreics; Anna Ciampa; Mary Kate Drew; Vivienne Kingham; Paul Solich William Currie; Maureen Eccles; Margaret Du Boulay.

CHURCHES FINANCES & COLLECTION

A word of thanks to all those who have donated for the upkeep of the Parish in one way or another. There are several ways to support the Parish. One of them is via a standing order, which is easy to set up and easy to stop, if you want to, when this difficult period has passed. Please use the bank account details, available from our website below, to set up the standing order if you use online banking, or you can write to, telephone or visit your bank as well. You can also donate via the website. Or, of course, you can contribute after mass in the Collection Plates provided.

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/baldock/donate/>.

Fr. Denis would like to thank everyone for their generosity during this time of pandemic.

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within Your wounds, hide me.

Separated from you, let me never be.

From evil one, protect me.

At the hour of my death, call me.

and close to you, bid me.

That with your saints, I may be.

Praising you forever and ever. Amen