

The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal

Hollywood Congregation

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Newsletter for the week of Sunday, 30 May

Dear friends, ever so slowly the restrictions with which we have lived for past 15 months are beginning to be lifted.

From 24 May many of the rules on travel, indoor hospitality and the mixing of households are being relaxed and on the 10th of June we are going to have further changes to the rules.

But from my careful reading the recommendations and rules for places of worship seem to have remained largely unchanged since Christmas.

In our different congregations we have nevertheless found different ways of going forward.

In Clanabogan we now celebrate The Act of Consecration twice a month as they still have to keep their distance between people from different households so each time half the community attends.

In Mourne Grange the whole community functions as one “bubble” so we have returned to the smaller space of the chapel and people can now sit next to each other but as yet we have not started to share communion.

In Glenraig we have again started a weekly service but only small numbers of people can attend as households in Glenraig are not yet allowed to mix freely. Ballybay is as yet not allowed to recommence having services.

In Hollywood we still have to continue with distancing and with wearing face covering when entering and exiting the building and moving around the passages and the stairs.

We are also still required to clean all contact surfaces and keep a register of attendance for contact tracing.

And communion can only be shared on Wednesdays when we can keep our distance.

We are also not yet allowed to share the cup.

But we have begun to make small changes, for those of you who have been to the service in the past week you will have noticed that the server at the altar is now again taking a more active role.

Also, as bars, restaurants and cafés are allowed to open indoors I feel that we can also return to serving refreshments after the Sunday service.

I will move the table to the landing and if we try to be aware of each other we should be able to serve ourselves and then move on into the community room while keeping the required distance. We will try it out after our service on the 6th of June.

Ben van Lieshout

Hollywood

For Sunday services, please ring to book a place as we can only seat 12-14 people.

(Trinity)

Wednesday 26 th May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
Wednesday 2 nd June	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00

Glencraig

Thursday 27 th May	The Act of Consecration of Man	9.15
Thursday 3 rd June	The Act of Consecration of Man	9.15

Clanabogan

Saturday 29 th May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.30
Sunday 30 th May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.30

The gospel reading for this week is Romans 8:18-27

I have considered that the sufferings of this age are not worthy to be compared with the revelation that will be opened to us.

Creation itself is eagerly awaiting the revelation of the sons of God, for the creation was caught up in the forces of decline, not for its own sake, but for the sake of man's evolution, which is not hopeless, but full of hope.

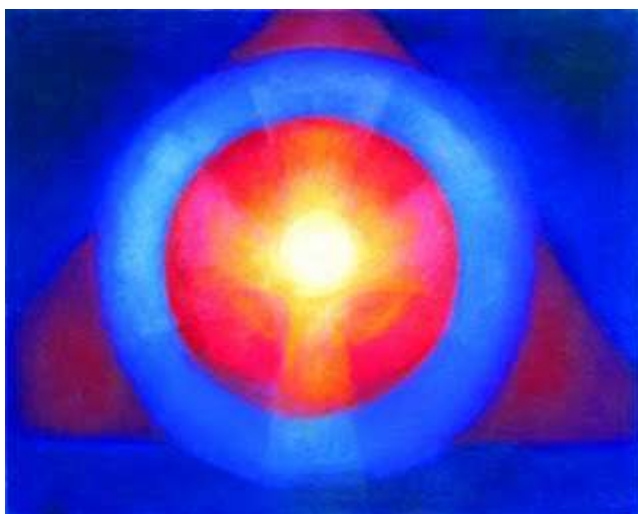
And even the creation will one day be freed from its subjection to the forces of decline, and will share in the freedom attained by the children of God through their spiritual activity.

Through spirit knowledge we know that the whole creation in its distress suffers the pains of unfulfilled birth, and not creation alone, but we ourselves, having in our human nature the first fruits of the spirit, we groan as we eagerly await our entry into full sonship, that the sickness of sin of the bodily nature of mankind be healed.

For in this hope is our life destined for eternity. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he already sees? But as we hope for what we do not yet see, we eagerly await it.

In this manner the spirit supports us also in our weaknesses. When we do not know how to speak to God in prayer, the spirit supports us inwardly in wordless prayer of feeling will.

And he who can see into human hearts knows that the spirit speaks in a divine way in those who keep themselves whole. And we can be sure that all things help those who love God to come nearer to the aim of bringing about the Good



A homily on Romans 8, 15-39

Sons and daughters, just by virtue of being their parents' children, stand to inherit their parents' estate.

They have the hope and expectation of an inheritance simply by virtue of having been born into the family.

At the same time, by virtue of having been born, they may also be 'inheriting' much else: family dynamics to be lived and grappled with, inherited characteristics of temperament and bodily health.

The family of man has inherited many characteristics from our first parents, Adam and Eve.

Being part of the human family means grappling with illusion and sorrow, with illness, and ultimately with death itself.



We were created in Paradise, but have been making a sorry mess of things since.

God saw that mankind's God-given inheritance was depleted, ravaged by deep debts we could never hope to repay.

The inheritance was in ruins. And so He decided to rebuild the estate by creating the possibility of a new ancestor.

Thus He sent His own Son, Christ, to become a new Adam for us. The new body we are to inherit is the resurrection body, the light body of Christ. It is a body we are to inherit when we make ourselves available to take it in. Taking in Christ's body makes us members of a new kind of human family.

Taking in Christ's body, His blood strengthens our own light bodies.

We begin to shine, to radiate His goodness and love out into the world.

And the world rejoices. It rejoices because the shining of the Sons and Daughters of the Spirit gives promise of release to all of creation; for all has fallen into darkness and bondage with us.

All of creation rejoices in the hope and promise of its own inheritance from the sons and daughters of God. For what we will be able to give creation some day is its freedom.