

The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal

Hollywood Congregation

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Newsletter for the week of Sunday 1st August.

Dear friends,

It is not easy to get hold of the relevant information, it seems like the government would rather not want us to know but I have found out that on the 22nd of July Stormont approved the proposals on relaxing covid regulations for places of worship.

That means that from 26 July, the wearing of face coverings will no longer be compulsory in places of worship although they are still recommended.

And the 1.5 – 2 m rule for social distancing in indoor spaces has also been reduced to 1 m.

We are already allowed to share out communion again, I read on the NI direct website:

“There should only be a closer distance when absolutely essential to enable a faith practice to be carried out (for example communion).”

So I did some measuring in our chapel in Hollywood and with keeping 1 m distance we can seat everyone who wants to come. So starting this Sunday you will no longer need to announce yourself and book a place for the Sunday services, you can just turn up. I have not been able to find out if we have to continue to keep a register of attendance for contact tracing because the NI Direct website has not been updated yet so in the meantime I will continue to write down the names of those attending.

Needless to say, if you have any symptoms that could be covid, then stay away, it is now up to our individual responsibility to live with this virus.

This past week I have been very busy with the bees which have gathered a record harvest of honey in this beautiful weather.

On this Sunday I will give a talk about them: “Bees of paradise”, at 11.15 in Hollywood.

Then the following Friday, 6 August we will go for 10 days to Scotland for a break. If a priest is needed in an emergency during this time you can ring Rev Carmel Iveson on 07791314215.

So this will be the last newsletter for a while, I will be in touch again for the last week of August.

Ben van Lieshout

Hollywood

Wednesday 28 th July	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
Sunday 1 st August	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
	Talk and conversation; “Bees of paradise”	11.15

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Saturday 31 st July	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.30
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The gospel for the week of Sunday 1 August is Matthew 7, 1-29

"Do not judge your fellow man, so that your judgment will not someday be visited upon yourself. For with the judgment that you pronounce you also speak your own judgment, and the measure by which you measure will be the measuring rod for your own self. Why do you look to the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not become aware of the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother: "Wait, I will pull the splinter out of your eye"--but mark it well, there is a log in your own eye. You hypocrite, first remove the log from your own eye, and then you may be able to see how to remove the splinter from your brother's eye.

Do not give what is holy to dogs, nor throw pearls to the swine, for these will tread them underfoot, and then turn upon you and tear you also to pieces.

Ask from the heart and it will be given to your heart; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you; for he who asks in uprightness will receive; he who earnestly seeks will find; he who knocks, to him will be opened. Or are there among you those who when his son asks for bread would give him a stone; or when he asks for a fish would offer him a snake? If then you who in spite of wickedness know how to give good things to your children, how much more goodness will your Father in the heavens give to those who earnestly ask him for it.

All that you want that men should do for you, do first for them. This is the true content of the Law and the Prophets.

Walk through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the path is easy which leads to ruin [the abyss] and many are they who walk it. But narrow is the gate and difficult the path that leads to Life, and it is only the individual who finds it.



A homily on Matthew 7: 1 - 14

In last week's reading, we saw how Peter caught the lightning flash of Christ behind the mask of Jesus, the humble itinerant teacher and healer. Such a lightning flash of insight sometimes happens to us. It can deepen our awareness and teach us to change our way of thinking and acting. With insight we can come to see behind the mask that our fellow human beings seem to wear. We may come to realize that it is our own judgment of them that has placed a mask over them. And so we may learn to become more compassionately discerning.



With insight we may also come to see our own enthusiasm for sharing what we know and have discovered. At the same time, we may realize that we have been scattering spiritual treasures at the feet of those who are not yet ready to take them up. We may have caused them to reject and ridicule what we offer. And so we may need to learn to become more compassionately discerning.

In our own lives we may think we know what we need and want. Despite what we ask for, despite what we think we want, we may later realize that what actually happened, what we actually got, was something much deeper, much better. Insight may show us that we may have been asking for stones and the Father gave us bread. And so we have come to learn that the Father is compassionately discerning.

Christ says, "All that you want that human beings should do for you, do first for them". To know what you want others to do for you, and to do this for others means developing something of His compassionate discernment of what I and others, in the depths of our hearts, really want and need