

# The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal

Holywood Congregation

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## Newsletter for the week of Sunday, 9 May

Dear friends, this Sunday is the last of the 6 Sundays of Eastertide and I thought I would share some thoughts by my colleague Luke Barr about this very special season:

### The Red and the Green

At Easter, the altar frontal is red. The chasuble, which the priest wears, is red and green. You will recall that the chasuble has something like a figure 8 on the front, and an elongated U-shape on the back. The chasuble is predominately red; the edges and the shapes are green. At this time of year, the green in nature is astounding. It is fresh and alive. It is nature's life. It is everywhere. We walk past the trees and bushes, and everywhere the green has poured itself out into our world. Life gushes towards us in a greeting in green.

What is this green like? It seems to offer itself up, as a beautiful neutral background to our lives. It is a gentle colour which does not overwhelm us.

Whilst nature blooms in green, our altar at Easter is red. Red is the complimentary colour of green. The two go together. Where green predominates in nature, it is red which is the colour of the human sacred space which has been crafted by the Human Spirit: the altar.

Red is a colour which calls forth our consciousness - we cannot easily overlook it. It demands of us a conscious encounter. The presence of our Self is called forth by it.

We are born into the green, born into Mother Nature. Green is the colour of our nature. But red is the colour of our *culture*, a culture of the conscious Self. We are not slaves to our nature. We can and must leave our childhood relationship to nature behind at some point, and assume our creative 'Son-ship'. We are not bound to what nature has made of us.

We are no longer merely natural beings at the altar, with all our habits, and our pasts which determine us. No, we are free - free of the determining power of the past. We can become new; we can 'make all things new'. The red is an invitation to become a life-artist at the altar; to begin anew whenever and wherever one will, on the canvas of one's biography. This is what Easter and the red asks of us.

This does not mean that we should lord it over nature or become indifferent to her. We should revere and care for our elderly Mother. We should not *isolate* her, sentimentalise her, forget her and hand her over to 'professional carers'. We should each and every one of us venerate Mother Nature, respect her, and look after her in her 'dying earth existence'. Only this way can our immanent journey towards our independence be blessed by her. Otherwise our red independence, our new life becomes the red of passionate egoism and greed.

Whereas, like all good Mothers, Nature wishes her children to become their true Selves, to go their own true way; in which her green is to be replaced by the red of the new Life of the conscious Human Self, an offering being.

Just as we live in a world whose wisdom reveals itself in green, we are tasked to create a world whose wisdom will comprise the red of our True Selves, which 'have their being in love'

Luke Barr

## Holywood

### **Easter**

Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00

## Glencraig

### **Ascension**

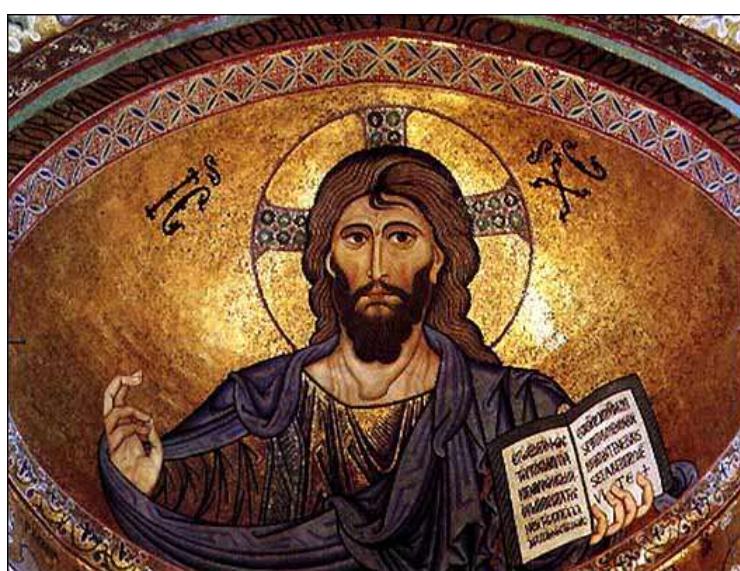
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.45
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## Mourne Grange (In the chapel!)

### **Easter**

Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.15
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**The gospel for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter is John 14:1-31**



"Let not your hearts be troubled. Trust in the power that leads you to the Fatherly Ground of the World and me. In my Father's house, there are many rooms. If it were not so, how could I have said to you, 'I go there to prepare a place for you'? And when I have gone and prepared a place for you, I will come again and take you up into the realm of my being and working, so that where I work, you also may work. And you know the way where I am going."

Then Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I myself am the Way—the Truth—and the Life.

No one finds his way to the Father but through me. If you had known my Being, you would have recognized my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen Him." Then Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father; that would satisfy our deepest yearning."

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Does your heart's voice not tell you that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. But the Father, who lives eternally in me, continues to do his works in them."

Build your faith on the power of my Being that lets you know: I in the Father, the Father in me. Or at least learn to trust through looking at the works themselves that have arisen.

Truly, truly I say to you, whoever trusts in my Being will also do the works that I do -- and greater deeds will he do because I go to the Father.

Whatever you ask for in unity with me, I will do it, so that the deeds of the Father may be revealed in the working of the Son.

When you turn to me in prayer in the power of my name, I will be the Creating One in all your works. If you truly love me, you will share in my spiritual goals.

And I will ask the Father, and He will send to you another Counsellor, who will stand by you forever, even the Spirit of Truth. The earthly world cannot receive this Counsellor, for it cannot perceive his working and does not recognize him.

But you know him, for he will live with you and will work in you.

I will not leave you desolate—I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live also.

On that day, you will truly know what it means that I am in the Father, and you in me and I in you.

Whoever bears my spiritual goals within himself, and brings them to revelation in his working, is one who truly loves me.

And whoever truly loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will reveal myself to him."

Then Judas (not the Iscariot) said, "But Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the people who are in the world?"

Jesus replied, "Whoever truly loves me reveals my Spirit, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and prepare with him a dwelling in the everlasting.

Whoever does not love me cannot reveal my Spirit.

And the spirit power of the word that you hear is not from me; it is the speaking of the Father who sent me.

These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.

But the health-bringing Spirit, the Counsellor whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you everything and will bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled nor let them be afraid.

You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and yet I am coming to you.'

If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I am.

I have told you now before it happens, so that when it happens, you may find trust. I no longer have much to say to you, for soon, the ruler of this world is coming.

He has no power over me.

But I act in accordance with the Father's purpose, as it was entrusted to me so that the world may know that I love the Father. Do the same. Arise; let us be on our way.

## A homily on John 14:1-35

Plant one seed, and in time it will produce hundreds of seeds, all replicas of itself. In this way, the living entity that produced the seed maintains itself through cycles of time.

Out of the Father Ground of all Being, who is existence itself, there emerged the first seed. That seed was (and continues to be) the Logos-Word, the I AM. This Logos-Word spoke, and all of creation came into being. Into all creatures, especially into us, He placed a seed of Himself, an I AM. This seed germinates as we are born, blossoms when as a small child we begin to say "I". This little but all-encompassing "I" continues to blossom and engender seeds throughout our life. The seeds of myself are my words and my actions. I am what I say. I am what I do.

In an ordinary plant, form and seeds are fixed by type. We human I-AM-beings, however, have the capacity to create various types of seeds. For we have choices in speaking, choices in doing. And these choices can create seeds of magnificence and nourishing beauty. Or they can create seeds of weeds and thorns.

Our words and deeds are the seeds from our own Selves. God will reap what we have sown. And in the afterlife, the quality of the word- and deed-seeds we have produced will be what we bring to Him for the future.

Christ is the gardener who watches over our growth and progress. He is the Water of Life. He feeds here, prunes a bit there, trains toward the Light of Himself. He is the Way, and he hopes for a harvest of words and deeds done in His Spirit, done in love, in truth, and from good will. For He will plant the seeds we produce, the seeds of our Selves, and we will germinate again with Him in His garden, in another place, in another season.

