

# The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal

Holywood Congregation

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## Newsletter for the week of Sunday, 20 June

Dear friends,

We are going towards midsummer and the festive season of John the Baptist. Over the past couple of months many of the restrictions on our life have gradually been lifted.

But the promises of a life without distancing and face masks are being pushed further into the future all the time.

In England it will now be another month before there will be any further decisions on this whereas our government in Stormont isn't even talking about it.

So it looks like we may have to continue what we have been doing in our various congregations for the foreseeable future.

But we have made some progress:

- In Glencraig most of the 20 residents that used to come to the service are now again able to attend the Thursday service as people from 6 households can again come together in the chapel. Communion is not shared out yet and the service is only open to Glencraig people.

-In Clanabogan we continue to hold the service twice a month, each time for half the community. Communion is not shared out yet.

-In Mourne Grange we have returned to the chapel and the whole community can attend the fortnightly services that alternate between Saturdays and Sundays. Communion is not shared out yet and the service is only open to Mourne Grange residents.

- In Holywood we continue to have a Sunday service every fortnight for up to 14 people so you still have to book a place though we rarely have had to turn anyone away. We are still required to wear face coverings when moving around the place but we have again started to serve refreshments after the service.

There is a talk once a month and a service for children once a month as well.

During our weekly Wednesday service in Holywood we can share communion as there are not so many people attending.

-That leaves only Ballybay where it has not yet been possible to resume services. I hope that it won't be too long before further restrictions are lifted so that we can again share out communion in all our centres.

I have received a number of copies of our quarterly magazine, "Perspectives", with the very timely theme: "Alone and together". Please collect a copy in Holywood or let me know if you want me to bring you one.

And finally, for the Holywood congregation, Felicity Dalton, who is currently living in Scotland, wants to move over here and join our congregation.

She is coming over for house hunting from 28 June – 1July.

She was going to stay in our guestroom but we now have our son and grandchildren staying.

So if you can offer Felicity a place to stay for those dates, please let me know.

Ben van Lieshout

## Holywood

For Sunday services, please ring (02890424254), text (07974960570) or email (benvl@onetel.com) to book a place as we can only seat 12-14 people.

Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> June	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June</b>	The Act of Consecration of Man Followed by talk and conversation: Transubstantiation (3)	10.00
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00

## Glencraig

Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> June	The Act of Consecration of Man	9.30
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## ***St Johns***

Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	The Act of Consecration of Man	9.30
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## Mourne Grange

Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> June	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.15
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## **The gospel for Sunday 20 June is John 17: 6-11**

Father, I have revealed your name and your being to all human beings whom you have led through destiny to me.

They were yours; they lived out of the powers that worked in folk and family, and now you have given them to me, and into my working that lives in the Self, and they have kept your word in their inmost being.

Thus they have recognized how all the spiritual power that you have given me truly proceeds from you; for all the creative spiritual power that you have given me, I have brought to them. They have taken it up into themselves and have recognized that in truth I come from you, and they have gained insight, and trust that I have been sent by you.

I pray to you for them as individual human beings; they who are to live out of the power of the self, as individuals, I pray to you for them; not for mankind in general, but for the human beings which you have given me.

For they belong to you, just as everything which is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine, and the light of my being can shine in them.

I no longer live in the outer world, but they live in this world. My whole being is devoted to you.

And I am coming to you.

Holy Father, you who give healing to the world, keep in your name and in your being all whom you have given to me, so that they may be one even as we also are one.



### A homily on John 17: 6-11

This reading is taken from Jesus' conversation with his Father the night before He died. It is a summation of the inter-relatedness, the interweaving of the Father and the Son and us. Through this interweaving we can become those human beings filled with the healing Spirit, those out of whom the light of Christ shines. This particular reading is also read sacramentally two other times in a person's life: it is read at the children's Confirmation, when their individual souls and destines are born out of the family milieu. It is also read again just before death, at the Last Anointing. Jesus' words thus can form the bookends of an individual human biography, if they so choose.

This reading also underscores once again the motifs of Pentecost: that each person's individuality is to be preserved; that we are to live out of the power of our selfhood.

And that our selfhood and our destiny, voluntarily connected to Christ, will lead us to the Father and His unifying Spirit.

As the poet John O'Donohue says:

May you recognize in your life the presence,  
Power and light of your soul.

May you realize that you are never alone,  
That your soul in its brightness and belonging  
Connects you intimately with the rhythm of the universe.

May you have respect for your individuality and  
difference.

May you realize that the shape of your soul is unique,  
That you have a special destiny here,  
That behind the façade of your life  
There is something beautiful and eternal happening.

May you learn to see your self  
With the same delight,  
Pride and expectation  
With which God sees you in every moment.\*

\*John O'Donohue, "A Blessing for Solitude" in *To Bless the Space Between Us*, p. 112