

Weekly Bulletin

St. Margaret's, St. Joseph's & St. Finnan's

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Weekly Bulletin Online: www.gaeldom.com/bulletin/

Sunday September 30th. 2007

St. Teresa of the Child Jesus (1st October)

When the reliquary with the bones of St. Teresa of Lisieux arrived in Ireland in May 2001 for a six week visit, thousands of people lined the streets, and a military procession accompanied her remains to the Cathedral. The reliquary was taken around Ireland, and the main



churches in each diocese had the privilege of receiving her remains. The churches remained opened day and night, and it was estimated that throughout Ireland over three millions people prayed at the reliquary. Young people coming out of nightclubs at 1 a.m. in the morning, made their way to the churches where the Reliquary was exposed, and passed a good part of the night in prayer.

On the closing night before the Reliquary returned to France, an Irish bishop said in his homily:

"Here we do not have dry bones, but rather the ashes of what was once a great furnace".

St. Teresa of the Child Jesus was born of good and devout parents at Alençon in France. When she was five years old, she lost her mother, and she committed herself completely to God's providence under the care of her loving father and older sisters, and with such teachers she made wonderful progress both spiritually and academically. When she was nine, she was sent to the Benedictine nuns at Lisieux to be educated, but returned home because she was unwell. Then, at the age of ten she became seriously ill from an unknown virus, and it was when her sister placed a statue of our Lady of Victories in her room, and she prayed to our Lady, that

her illness mysteriously disappeared. Her sister, Celine, who was like a second mother to her, decided to the Carmelite convent, and this was another great loss to her. When she made her First Holy Communion, she received our Lord with such fervour, she seemed to draw from it an insatiable hunger for the Eucharist. She had a great desire to enter the Order of Discalced Carmelites, but because of her age, she was too young to embrace the religious life. However, her father took her to Rome, where she met the Holy Father, and expressed her personal wish to him, and sensing a very special soul, he gave her the unique privilege of entering Carmel at Lisieux at the age of fifteen. By now, another of her sisters had also joined the Carmelites. In the silent atmosphere of the Carmelite Convent, she burned with love for God and neighbour. Her spiritual life followed the teaching of the Gospels so closely, and she became an example to the other novices. She offered her entire life and her sufferings to Almighty God. She contracted tuberculosis, and died at the young age of 24, on September 30, 1897. Her innocent soul passed immediately into the presence of God. Pius XI enrolled her as a Virgin among the Blessed and, two years later on the occasion of the great jubilee, solemnly placed her among the Saints and appointed her the special Patroness of all Missions.

What is so special about St. Teresa that she is able to influence the lives of millions of people?

It was only when the Mother Superior asked her to write about her life shortly before her death. that people came to know something of the personal spirituality of Teresa of the Child Jesus that helped to make her a saint. She called the book *"The Story of a Soul"*, and it became a world best seller.

She described her life as, "A little way of spiritual childhood." She lived each day with unshakable confidence in God's love. What matters in life is, "Not great deeds, but great love." St. Teresa's "Little way" was practiced with humility, and submission. In fact, when she died, two sisters from the convent were overheard saying, "What will they say about poor little Teresa?" How little they knew of the great saint God had called to a special life of love.

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Teresa is known particularly for her "Little Way." In her quest for sanctity, she realized that it was not necessary to accomplish heroic acts or "great deeds" in order to attain holiness. *"Love proves itself by our ordinary everyday deeds. Great deeds are forbidden me. The only way I can prove my love is by scattering flowers and these flowers are every little sacrifice, every glance and word I make to the honour of God."*

She said: *"Sometimes, when I read spiritual treatises, in which perfection is shown with a thousand obstacles in the way and a host of illusions round about it, my poor little mind soon grows weary, I close the learned book, which leaves my head splitting and my heart parched, and I take the Holy Scriptures. Then all seems luminous, a single word opens up infinite horizons to my soul, perfection seems easy; I see that it is enough to realize one's nothingness, and give oneself wholly, like a child, into the arms of the good God. Leaving to great souls, great minds, the fine books I cannot understand, I rejoice to be little because; only children, and those who are like them, will be admitted to the heavenly banquet'.*

Millions have followed this *Little Way*. doing the ordinary simple banal things of each day in a service of love to God. Nothing is too menial or unimportant not to become a prayer offered to Almighty God. She saw herself as a child in the presence of the Father. with a total trust in God's Will.

If you can obtain a copy of *"The Story of a Soul"* it is well life and increase your love of God.
Teresa's *Little Way* helped to make her a saint.

She had never been to the missions, but she offered absolutely everything prayer she said, everything she did, and all her sacrifices for the work of missionaries. And because of this, the Church has made her the Patroness of

the Missions. She talked of spreading flowers and petals on this earth, She promised when I get to heaven, I will send down a shower of roses on those who ask my prayers. Strangely enough, people who have prayed to St. Teresa for a favour found that in some way or another roses come into their lives as a sign that she is aware of their prayers and needs.

She is known as St. Teresa of the Child Jesus because of the appearances the Child made to her.



ORIGIN OF THE NOVENA TO ST. TERESA

Father Putigan, a Jesuit, began the Novena to Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus on December 3, 1925, asking the glorious Saint for one great favour. For nine days he recited the "Glory be to the Father" twenty-four times thanking the Holy Trinity for the favours and Graces showered on Saint Theresa during the twenty-four years of her life on earth. The priest asked Saint Theresa, that as a sign that his novena was heard he would receive from someone a freshly plucked rose. On the third day of the novena, an unknown person sought out Father Putigan and presented him with a beautiful rose.

Father Putigan began the second novena on December 24 of the same year, and as a sign, asked for a white rose On the fourth day of this novena one of the Sister-nurses brought him a white rose saying : "Saint Theresa sent you this."

Amazed, the priest asked: "Where did you get this?" I was in the chapel," said the Sister, "and as I was leaving I passed the altar above where hangs the beautiful picture of Saint Theresa. This rose fell at my feet. I wanted to put it back into the bouquet, but a thought came to me that I should bring it to you." Father Putigan received the favours he had petitioned of the Little Flower of Jesus, and promised to spread the novena to increase devotion to her, and bring her more honour.

In this fashion, from the ninth to the seventeenth of each month, those who want to participate in the twenty-four "Glory be to the Father's" novena, should add to those of their own, the intentions of all who are at that time making the novena, thus forming one great prayer in common.

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Mass at Cille Choirill next Sunday at 3 p.m.

I would be grateful if parishioners would let their relations and friends, who live at a distance, know about the mass. Our final mass of the year will be on **Sunday November 4th** for the Holy Souls.

Once again, I am grateful for how beautifully our cemetery is kept. It is such a consolation to visitors who come to pray at the graves of their loved ones to see the cemetery so well maintained.

Pilgrimage by bus to Lourdes next May—Cost approx £600

Alistair MacLeod is running a pilgrimage by bus to Lourdes next May. This time the route will differ considerably from the last time, with no long journeys.

Departing May 14, 2008

Returning May 23, 2008

1st Day

Fort William to Hull

Overnight on North Sea Ferries to Zeebrugge

2nd Night: DBB in Nevers, mass in convent where St. Bernadette's body is encased below the altar

3rd Night: DBB Rocamadour, magnificent shrine. high on rocks, devoted to the Sacred Heart and Our Lady. Close to Lourdes

4 nights: full board in Lourdes

RETURN

One night: Orleans, DBB

Overnight from Zeebrugge to Hull.

Cabin accommodation, dinner & Breakfast

Arrive Fort William May 23rd.

Church Rota October 8th –7th, 2007

Spean Bridge

Reader: Liz Campbell

Prayers: Angus Campbell

Euch. Ministers: Betty Porter Moira Coutts.

Cleaning: private rota.

Roy Bridge:

Readers: Helen MacDonald Helen MacLean

Prayers: Deirdre MacDonald

Euch. Ministers: Ishbel Campbell Ann MacKintosh

Cleaning: Ishbel Campbell

A new rota will be distributed this weekend

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

The diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes leaves next week from Glasgow, and is being lead by Bishop Murray.

There has been an excellent response from all over the diocese, and there are 75 making the pilgrimage. We wish them a safe journey, and I am sure they will remember all the parishes and the sick in the masses and prayers at the grotto of Our Lady.

Radio nan Gaidheal

During the week of the Mod, Canon John Angus MacDonald is giving a meditation each morning at 7.30 a.m. on *Aithris na Maidne* from Monday, October 15th to Friday, October 19th

He travelled around the area with gaelic interviewer Angela MacEachen, and he recorded one programme in St. Margaret's about Blessed Mary MacKillop, and another at the Commando memorial. I will remind our gaelic speakers nearer the time to remember to switch on during the Mod week.

October Devotions

We will have October Devotions, starting next Sunday evening at 6 p.m, during the month. This will include exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the October prayer to St. Joseph.

We must also think about how much more devotion and honour we can give to the Blessed Sacrament with a regular Holy Hour and Exposition.

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Harvest Festival

Next Sunday October 7th at 11.30 a.m.

Relief for our farmers

It is the tradition all over the country to thank God for the harvest—for all the food we receive from the land and the sea, and to ask God to bless and protect those who produce it.

We would be very grateful for any gifts of vegetables, fruit, cans, baking etc. which you may like to bring to the mass next Sunday. These will be put in front of the altar and blessed during the mass. Afterwards, your gifts will be shared among the senior citizens of Roy Bridge and Spean Bridge.

This year has been a difficult time for farmers with cattle and sheep because of the foot and mouth disease in the south of England. Thankfully, the appeal made to the Government by the farmers to allow the lamb sales to go ahead in Scotland has been successful, otherwise the outcome would have been disastrous for our farmers. With great relief, the lamb sales can take place next week.

The world-wide drought has also caused a serious reduction of grain, and as grain is used for many purposes—making bread, feeding poultry and animals—prices are going to rise considerably in the shops. The wine-growers in Australia have lost a large percentage of their vines because of the drought, and, consequently, there will be much less Australian wine on the market, and what there is will be very expensive. Global warming is now taking its effect all over the world. Places in Africa that are so often arid and dry this time of the year, have become lakes, and people are existing in the most awful conditions. We have much to pray about next Sunday at our Harvest Thanksgiving Mass, and also to ask God to bring nations to their senses to face the reality of the abuse we have made of God's creation. As Pope Benedict said: "It is the poor and vulnerable who have not contributed to global warming who will suffer most."

Chrissie MacEachen



The Mod runs from October 12th—20th, and it will be a great eight days of music in Lochaber, with contestants and visitors coming from all parts of the world, either to take part or just to enjoy the singing and the ceilidhs. It is good to see Chrissie MacEachen being honoured in this month's *Lochaber Life*, and also that shortly she will be given the Freedom of Fort William - a singular honour and well deserved by someone who has done so much for gaelic, and whose choir and soloists have brought so many honours to Fort William. Many of her pupils go on afterwards to have a further interest in music, and some have taken up music as a career.

The death of her husband, Ronald, was a great sadness in her life, and she had the sympathy of the whole community. Yet, she did not allow her personal grief to affect the children. and she carried on valiantly, continuing to win more prizes at the Mods. Chrissie is not only gifted but totally devoted to the children. She herself won a medal when she was only nine at the Dunoon Mod, and later the coveted Gold Medal at the Mod in Skye in 1982. We wish her a great day when she receives the Freedom of Fort William, an honour that everyone feels has been so well-merited and deserved—and, of course, every success at this year's Mod. May God bless her and all that she does for the children of Lochaber.