WORLD MISSION SUNDAY 22nd October 2023

Mass Times

Monday-Friday 7.30am, 8.30am, 10.15am, & 4pm <u>SATURDAY</u> 8.30am, 10.15am Mass for the Sick 3.00pm <u>SUNDAY</u> 9.00am, 11.15am & 7.30pm CONFESSI ONS

MONDAY & FRIDAY

10.45am-12 Noon 3.00pm-4.00pm <u>SATURDAY</u> 10.45am-12noon 2.30pm-4pm



St. Augustine's Church Child Safeguarding Representatives. Fr. Flor O'Callaghan O.S.A. Fr. John Lyng O.S.A. Ms Geraldine van Dam Mr. Robert Ryan Ms Charlotte Gleeson Mr. John Doyle



St. Augustine's Church Limerick MISSION SUNDAY 22nd October 2023

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God and Caesar

The interests of God and Caesar are not always easy to distinguish one from the other. My first Christmas in charge of anything - it was a woebegone kind of parish—I was expected to balance them. It was a job I possibly could have done better and probably couldn't have done worse.

Being Christmas, God was in our village and was to be welcomed with Mass in church and a community party in schoolyard. Though the collective larder of the village had **to be stretched precariously to meet the uncertain coming of the next harvest we couldn't** send Scrooge to welcome the Prince of Peace. So, beer was brewed. Yams and rice were boiled. Scrawny chickens and a couple of goats that had lived on their wits lived no longer. **There was no worry about weather; four months had gone since the last rain and we'd wait** as long for the next. The Mass was prepared, with servers drilled, readers coached and musicians flattered into unwonted amenability. God would be well-come.

Now Caesar, chief of the district, was a different question. He was not of our faith but he considered any gathering of his people illegitimate, maybe even treasonable, were he not there to receive their homage. Ignoring him, I was advised, would leave me on very shaky ground and my ground was shaky enough already. The dead-**man's grip of custom dictated** that I should collect him and return him to his palace when he had his fill of the jollity. That made a total of four hours turbulent driving, with my resentment fermenting and simmering, but afraid to boil over, with every bump in the horrible road.



Caesar sat beside me in the old jeep tediously telling and re-telling the Ninety-Nine Names of Allah. At his side an acolyte acted as air conditioner, his horsetail whisk metronomic in front of the royal face. Behind, in the open back of the pick—up, a lackey held his prayer-mat and kettle—each ornamented to fit his royal station. Others too stood swaying behind. **First among these, His Majesty's bugler. We stopped at each hamlet and this artiste trum**peted as if it were the Last Trump itself and the peasants threw themselves into such attitudes of servility as agility or arthritis allowed.

Behind the bugler stood a little folk-group of praise-**singers who didn't spare them**selves: each time the bugler blew himself out they roared out the finest of things about Allah and, especially, our Caesar.

He took his royal seat on one side of the altar. The crib was on the other. I wont say which side of the altar saw the warmer veneration after the Go in Peace. To tell the truth, before day was done I wasn't sure what or who Christmas there was about.

History is stained by human attempts to marry God and Caesar. We've had Holy Empires and Divine Right Kings and Theocracies and Islamic State and Complete-Way-of-Life Caliphates with Umma over Infidel, all heavily or lightly clad in infallibility. Too often Caesar did better out of them than the God of any gospel, while ordinary people came out worst of all.

The God who invites and the Caesar who compels differ in their ways and interests. Even now a brand of religion which claims to be a "complete way of life" is, unashamedly, a way of death by mass murder for those who demur. And here's another thing:

those who would separate church and state do well so long as they don't become a kind of "church of compulsion" themselves. Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar and God what

belongs to God. The person who said that is our best guide as we make what we can of it.

World Mission Sunday

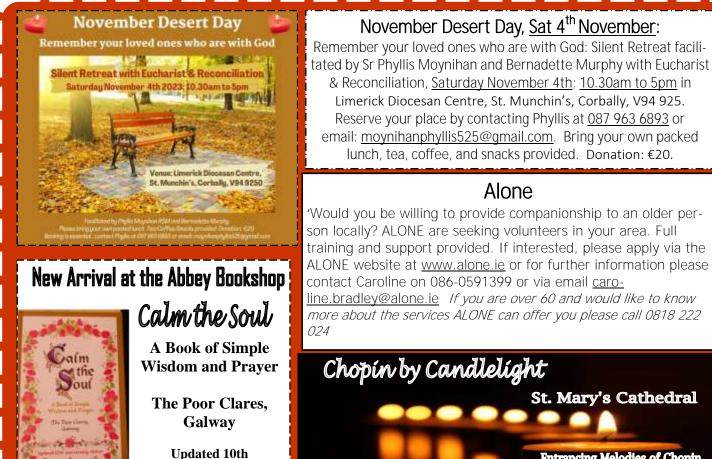
World Mission Sunday is the Holy Father's annual appeal to support overseas mission and missionaries. It takes place in every single parish worldwide where the Church is present. In Ireland, Missio Ireland is tasked with organising the Mission Sunday collection. Missio Ireland is the Pope's official charity for overseas mission.

The fund supports missionary activities in over 1,100 young dioceses: mostly Africa, Asia and Latin America. As young dioceses grow, so do their needs. On top of this, they are often found in remote areas devastated by conflict or natural disasters. The Universal Solidarity Fund provides aid so that missionaries can continue to go these places to share the love of God. Source: Mission Month Toolkit

Pope Francis has chosen the theme this year from Luke (cf.24:13-35): "Hearts on fire, feet on the move". Inspired by the story of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, their encounter with Christ in the word and in the breaking of the bread which sparked in them the enthusiastic desire to set out again towards Jerusalem and proclaim the Lord had truly risen.

Support Mission Sunday

This weekend parishes worldwide celebrate World Mission Sunday. The kindness shown will help overseas missionaries to continue to share the love of God with some of the world's most marginalised and vulnerable people. Thank you for supporting in whatever way you can, and please remember it is more than an appeal for financial help. Missionaries also need spiritual support. On World Mission Sunday missionaries take great strength in knowing that the faithful of the world are keeping them in their thoughts and prayers. If you would like to support Mission Sunday you can leave a donation in any of the mission boxes as you leave the church. Two at the glass door entrance and one at our Roches Street entrance. You can also donate €4 by texting the word 'Mission' to 50300. Thank You.



Anniversary Edition

Friday 27th October at 9pm

Entrancing Melodies of Chopin in an unique candlit experience