

St Francis of Assisi Church

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SUNDAY MASSES: Saturday 5pm, Sunday 8 & 10.30am.

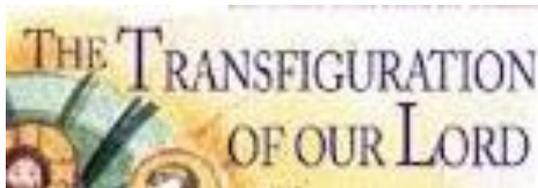
(Confessions are available after each Sunday Mass)

WEEKDAYS: Monday no Mass, Tuesday to Friday 7am, Saturday 8am

Thursday 6-7pm - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament



NEWSLETTER



6 August 2017

To prepare for Sunday Mass, this week the feast of the Transfiguration (August 6), it is a good idea to read and give thought to the readings in your missal or Bible. Here are some questions to ponder.

First Reading [Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14] In the gospels Jesus seems an ordinary human being. This Old Testament reading tells us that his sovereignty is eternal and will never pass away.

Second Reading [2 Peter 1:16-19] St Peter writes that "we have confirmation of what was said in prophecies" because he had seen the Transfiguration

Gospel [Matthew 17:1-9] God the Father says it to everyone: to me, to you, to everyone "Listen!"

This Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Transfiguration and it is worth reflecting that what happened to Peter, James and John sometimes happens in our own lives. They knew Jesus well, they enjoyed his company and they thought the world of him. Then suddenly one day he let them see what he really was, not just a human being but Almighty God in all his glory. In our own lives there are times of Transfiguration, occasions when something happens which takes us out of this world – provided we are open to see it. The ordinary world around us, both in nature and in the lives we lead, has within it the energy and power of God. Occasionally this is revealed to us, sometimes at a wonderful event like a marriage or a birth, sometimes for no obvious reason our heart is touched and brings alive an energy and feeling that we hardly knew existed.

We needn't wait for a Transfiguration for God to reveal himself. The wonderment of a newborn baby may just be wonderment and joy or it may also become a vision of the power of God. The awesome realisation that someone loves you and thinks the world of you may be beautifully human or, more than that, the touch of Almighty God. Even the energy and playfulness of a young puppy can awaken in us the joy and playfulness of the nature of God. Or do we simply think of God as a lovely kind person who never smiles and laughs?

The Transfiguration gave the three apostles a glimpse of the underlying reality that would take them through the horror of the crucifixion. If that is to happen to us, then we need to look for the presence and a touch of God in the ordinary daily joys and sorrows in our lives. In that way we will be open to recognise Christ when he is unexpectedly transfigured in front of our eyes.

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY

Next Sunday will be the feast of the **Assumption** of our Lady, transferred from August 15.

In this centenary year of our Lady's appearance at Fatima, we are asking our Lady to bless our homes. A special **statue of our Lady of Fatima** is being passed from house to house and if you would like to give it a home for one week, you are invited to sign the list at the church door.

On Thursday, August 17, we will have a contemplative evening (6-8pm) centred on **Our Lady Untier of Knots** as our offering to Carifesta, with a visit from a Catholic choir from Trinidad.

COLLECTIONS Last week's collection came to **\$2,981.65.**

CAINCO Many thanks to those parishioners who kindly provided foodstuffs for these young people

OUR LITURGY EXPLAINED - MASS - CREED - THE LITURGICAL YEAR

at St. Patrick's Cathedral 6:00 pm this Thursday and Friday (August 10 & 11) by Fr. Charles Dominique OP
All are invited to attend, especially those involved in church ministry.

AIR CONDITIONING In answer to those who asked who was responsible for installing a/c in the church, we have no hesitation in recommending **ServiceX** for their price, speed and efficiency, with no disturbance to church services.

Attention all youth and young adults between the ages of 16 and 29,
the Universal Church needs you your opinion and views.

The Synod of Bishops in Rome is consulting all young people of God in preparation for a general Assembly with the title "Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment."
We, the youth of Barbados have the amazing opportunity to make our voices heard!

Follow the link below and complete a short survey to give your views on where the Church stands in relation to its young people. A summary of the diocesan responses will be sent to the Vatican where they, and others from around the world, will be discussed by the Synod in Rome
<https://goo.gl/forms/72AFUaNepZ0BORzx2>.

You can also find this survey on our fb page (Diocesan Youth Commission Bridgetown) or hit us up at dyyatcore@gmail.com to have a copy emailed to you.
Let's L.E.V.E.L UP!!!! Let's LEVEL the platform.

CARIFESTA Bishop Jason has given his blessing for the Diocese to host a Celebratory Mass at the Cathedral at 11a.m on 20th August, 2017 specifically for participants of CARIFESTA and the Diocese family. Wearing national dress is welcome.

Please would you pray for these people who are ill : Kenneth Miller, Annie Bend, Veronica Tavernier,, Carlos Phillips, Phillip Alleyne, Lucille Alleyne, Joan Mahon, Mervin Mahon, Carolina Restrepo, Marie Edmund, Carlyle Glean, Taylor Pluna, Peter-Xavier Iweze, Lourdes Rouco, John Griffith, Teresa Hodge, Shimisha Butcher, David Gittens, Annie Bromham, Michael Faul, Alison Howard, Noel Shirley, Natari Edwards, Carol Rowe, Marie Conibert, Jane Fontelle, Aurelija Vasilevskiene, Anna Teelan and Joyce Blennman.

All services held in St Francis Church may be viewed on the Internet: <http://iwcpinc.com/portfolio-view/church-st-francis/>

A shortened form of Fr Michael's homily can be found in the Advocate on Sunday

and after the Sunday on: *Michael A J BarrowYoutube*

LOOKING AHEAD

"Our Blessed Mother in Scripture" Monday August 21st,

From Monday August 21st at 10:30 a.m. and every Monday thereafter until the end of the year, Mrs. Barbara Taylor will lead a Bible Study course entitled: "Our Blessed Mother in Scripture" at the St. Dominic's Pastoral Centre

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THE MIRACLE OF DUNKIRK

It's beginning to look as if one of the unmissable films of summer is going to be Christopher Nolan's *Dunkirk*. The film reminds us of one of the more extraordinary events of the Second World War.

Most of us are uneasy about war stories, particularly those that revel in the quantity of death and destruction we unleashed on our enemies. In fact, for the Second World War there are now only three big military events that retain a hold in the public memory. These are Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain and D-Day. I find it significant that each of these echoes with the great themes of the Bible: Dunkirk is about rescue; the Battle of Britain about deliverance and D-Day about liberation. Dunkirk, however, is a uniquely enthralling story. Who can resist the tale of how, surrounded by overwhelming enemies and faced with imminent annihilation, an entire army escaped to safety by sea? It almost seems like a reworking of the miracle of the biblical Exodus, with the English Channel replacing the Red Sea.

Yet Dunkirk is not simply a gripping story; it is also a thought-provoking one because even today the word 'miracle' hangs over it. Nevertheless, even for the most sceptical, the reality of what happened at Dunkirk is intriguing.

If you don't know the story, on 10th May 1940, Hitler unleashed a military onslaught on France and Belgium. Within days the British Army – outmanoeuvred and unprepared – along with soldiers of other Allied nations, found themselves with their backs to the sea and hemmed in by enemies. The German High Command was able to boast with confidence that its troops were 'proceeding to annihilate the British Army'. That the total destruction of an entire army was imminent was a view shared by many in the military and political leadership of Britain. Prime Minister Winston Churchill found himself preparing to announce to the public an unprecedented military catastrophe involving the capture or death of a third of a million soldiers.

But it didn't happen. On 23rd May, King George VI requested that the following Sunday should be observed as a National Day of Prayer. Late on the Saturday evening the military decision was taken to evacuate as many as possible of the Allied forces. On the Sunday, the nation devoted itself to prayer in an unprecedented way. Eyewitnesses and photographs confirm overflowing congregations in places of worship across the land. Long queues formed outside cathedrals. The same day an urgent request went out for boats of all sizes and shapes to cross the English Channel to rescue the besieged army, a call ultimately answered by around 800 vessels.

Yet even before the praying began (in my experience, prayer often works like that) curious events were happening. In a decision that infuriated his generals and still baffles historians, Hitler ordered his army to halt. Had they continued to fight, the destruction of the Allied forces would have been inevitable and the war would have taken a different, darker and more terrible path. Yet for three days the German tanks and soldiers stood idle while the evacuation unfolded. Not only so, bad weather on the Tuesday grounded the Luftwaffe, allowing Allied soldiers to march unhindered to the beaches. In contrast, on Wednesday the sea was extraordinarily calm, making the perilous evacuation less hazardous. By the time the German Army was finally ordered to renew its attack, over 338,000 troops had been snatched from the beaches, including 140,000 French, Belgian, Dutch and Polish soldiers. Many of them were to return four years later to liberate Europe.

Now you could argue it was all a coincidence, but I think not. It certainly wasn't considered so at the time. Sunday 9th June was declared a National Day of Thanksgiving and, encouraged by Churchill himself, the phrase 'the miracle of Dunkirk' began to circulate.

We live in a world where people are not simply cautious about miracles but they prefer to rule them out entirely. In much of public culture it is an unchangeable and unbreakable rule of life that the miraculous cannot and does not occur. The view is that while we may pray, there is no one on the other end of the line. It's curious how we have come a full circle: in the past, few dared argue with the religious faith that saw the hand of God everywhere; now few dare argue against the atheistic faith that sees God's hand nowhere. The events of Dunkirk might make us want to reconsider the elimination of God as an actor from history and politics. On a more practical level, looking at the challenges facing the British nation, the idea of praying to God for deliverance seems to be something well worth encouraging.

Indeed I think Dunkirk stands as an extraordinary encouragement to pray in faith. However great our problems, God is greater than them all. That 'Dunkirk encouragement' to pray in times of need applies at every level of life and to every challenge, from what may be a petty domestic crisis to a national disaster. And although our nation may not face imminent military catastrophe on the scale that it did in 1940, you don't have to look hard to see major and overwhelming problems. Dunkirk may have been a military epic that should be remembered but, far more importantly, it is an encouragement to pray.

