



NEA NEWSLETTER



Today is officially the first day of spring and it is also St Brigid's Day.



*Lady, from winters dark
Star of Imbolc*, rise!
Dance around our threshold
Scattering warm laughter
Seeds of hospitality
Tolerance, forgiveness
Return again to the folk
You the spring we yearn for!*



* Imbolc is one of the four principal festivals of the Celtic calendar, celebrated on 1st February

Spring is the time for new beginnings. Spring is the time to change whatever it is about your life that is holding you back. Spring is the time to try something you've never tried before. Spring is the time to take a risk.

From WE THANK THEE – a poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird, and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!



Seafield and Eleanor and Kathleen joined Gertrude and the Arrowsmith community to celebrate her 90th birthday with a magnificent cake and chorus! She had lots of phone calls and flowers. We also arranged a surprise zoom call from the community in Noddfa, her sisters Teresa and Catherine, Ellen, and Kathleen O'Donovan much to Gertrude's delight.



Gertrude wishes to thank all those who sent her cards and contacted her. She is now recovering!
Barbara



Congratulations Gertrude !



**FEBRUARY 8:
Talitha Kum Global Prayer
Marathon:**

The theme for the 2022 World Day of Prayer
Against Human Trafficking is

"The Power of Care - Women, Economy, Human Trafficking".

Networks of religious life around the world working to end human trafficking will gather on February 8 for a global marathon of prayer.

You can stay informed and find the latest information on the website for the day of prayer here: <https://preghieracontrotratta.org/>

See the attached notice about
The World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life February 2nd 2022

Brothers and Sisters ...

Go Forth!
 Remember the beauty of your first call.
 Jesus continues to call you today
 With the same full love and untamed grace.

Go Forth!
 There is always more time to do, to encounter,
 To be grateful for, to be astonished by.
 Begin and end with the joy of prayer –
 The marrow of consecrated life.

Go Forth!
 Each of us has a role to play in the Church.
 Witness and sow well each day,
 And look to tomorrow with hope.

Go Forth!
 Grow in love for God so that others
 will be attracted by the divine light in you.
 Welcome the new vocations the Lord sends
 To continue the work of consecration.

~ Pope Francis

One
 of the
 slides
 on the
 power
 point



BLIND BART'S LEAP

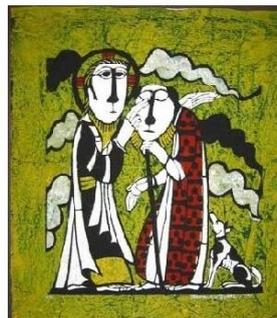
Mark 10:46-52, Matthew 20:29-34, Luke 18:35-40

Open our eyes, O Holy Wisdom,
 to what we cannot see,
 despite our looking.

Open our eyes, Source of All Truth,
 to what we refuse to see,
 despite our need.

Open our eyes, Sacred Coincidence,
 to the opportunities that pass right before us,
 despite our protests of bad luck.

Open our eyes, Alluring Love,
 to the future you call us to create,
 despite our disbelief.



Show us the way,
 that we might shed our sightless selves
 like an old cloak
 and leap, with blind Bartimaeus,
 at the Christ's invitation
 to restore our vision. Amen.

Bruce Sanguin.



Josephine Bakhita – the patron saint of victims
 of modern slavery and human trafficking is celebrated on
 8th February.

On this day Catholics are encouraged to pray for
 all those affected by the crimes of modern slavery and
 human trafficking, and the people that volunteer and
 work to eradicate this crime.

Ode to the Dandelion by Al Fritsch, S.J.



*Teeth of lions, a title bold,
 You thrive in weather hot and cold,
 Despised "weeds" that seems to some
 to foil a monocultured welcome.*

*Instead, you're a loyal reason;
 Season upon fair season
 You give a bright yellow bloom
 to contest grey winter's gloom.*

*You do another grateful thing:
 salad greens, a gift you bring --
 nutrition-packed, folks delight,
 a tasty mess, an awesome sight.*



‘The Snowdrop Fairy’ -
Cicely Mary Barker

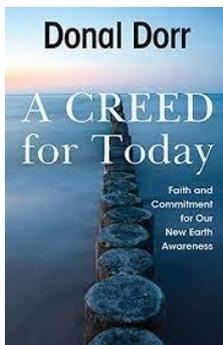
Deep sleeps the Winter,
Cold, wet and grey;
Surely all the world is dead;
Spring is far away.
Wait! the world shall waken;
It is not dead, for lo,
The Fair Maids of February
Stand in the snow!

– from
**‘The First
Spring Day’**
*Christina
Rossetti*



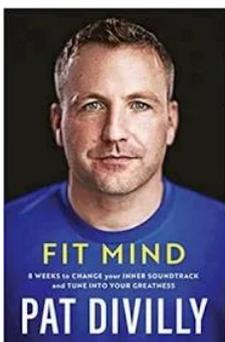
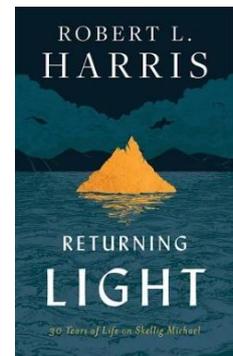
I wonder if the sap is stirring yet,
If wintry birds are dreaming of a mate,
If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the sun
And crocus fires are kindling one by one:
Sing robin, sing:

Recommended reading



In **A Creed for Today** rather than seeing ecological theology as an adjunct to Christian doctrine, Donal Dorr views it as central to our understanding of Catholicism today and integral to understanding our relationship with the natural world. Espousing what he dubs a ‘new earth awareness’, the author lays out a compelling vision for how we should live at both a spiritual and practical level in terms of our Christian faith and the attendant responsibility to care for our planet.

In **Returning Light** Robert Harris reflects on his 30 years as a warden on Skellig Michael - the site of an ancient monastery on a rock-like island off the Kerry coast. He transports readers to this very special world, one where puffins like to visit, and a coastline that was made even more famous by a certain film Star Wars film franchise. It is a reflection on his experience and can be seen as a contemplative prayer in the beauty of his surroundings. It takes the reader to a deeper place, an out of this world experience.



Fit Mind by Pat Divilly - Gill, January
Divilly, a podcaster and wellness coach, writes about how to deal with the internal voice that can be critical, sabotaging our attempts to achieve the things we want. His book includes an eight-week practical programme for mental and emotional fitness, which uses journaling, meditation and self-enquiry. It is about learning to slow down and silence our minds and is particularly relevant as we exit the stress of the past two years and find a positive way forward.

From **LOVE CHANGES EVERYTHING**

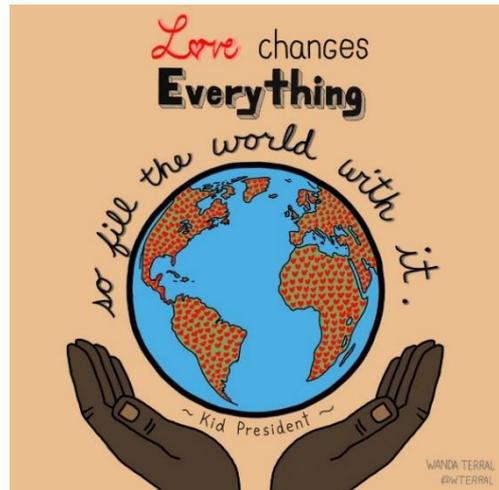
Andrew Lloyd Webber

Love, love changes everything
Hands and faces, earth and sky
Love, love changes everything
How you live and how you die

.....

Love, love changes everything
Days are longer, words mean more
Love, love changes everything
Pain is deeper than before
Love will turn your world around
And that world will last forever
Yes love, love changes everything
Brings you glory, brings you shame
Nothing in the world will ever be the same

.....



The campaign 'Show The Love' asks us all to think about what we most love about the world and how we want to look after it.



TWO WISDOM STORIES

I LOVE YOU SO MUCH

At the end of a busy day, a man and his wife were sitting at home on the veranda in the quiet of twilight, broken only by the sounds of the gentle wind and the swash of the waves.

They were enjoying a glass of wine together.

As the sun slowly sank below the mountains, she broke the soothing silence saying,

"I love you so much I don't know I could ever live without you."

The husband, a tad surprised, asks, *"Is that you or the wine talking?"*

She replies, *"It's me ... talking to the wine."*

And the two burst out laughing!

Source: Recycled and retold by [Philip Chircop sj](#)



INCREASE THE DOSE

An unorthodox doctor, who always thought beyond prescriptions, pills and medication, once said to one of his regular patients:

"I'm starting to suspect that the best medicine for humans is love."

The patient, surprised, shocked even, said: *"What if love doesn't work?"*

The doctor smiled and said, *"Increase the dose."*

Source: Unkown

REFLECTION ON THE BEATITUDES – sent by Eleanor

At a Zoom prayer meeting with people with disabilities on Sunday last, Matthew who is 26 and is in a wheelchair offered the following reflection which was printed on his parish website:

Reflection on The Beatitudes

To the poor, and those in solidarity with them – Remember God is with you.
Those who mourn and feel grief about the state of the world - Remember God is with you.
The non-violent, gentle and humble – Remember God is with you.
Those who hunger and thirst for the common good – Remember God is with you
The merciful and compassionate – Remember God is with you
Those characterized by sincerity, kindness and generosity – Remember God is with you.
Those who work for peace and reconciliation – Remember God is with you
Those who keep seeking justice – Remember God is with you
Those who stand for justice and truth as the prophets did, who refuse to be quiet even when slandered, misrepresented, threatened, imprisoned or harmed – Remember God is with you.

From St Marie's Church website.

The Gospel today is the foundation of my faith. It helps me to try and live like Jesus asks. The beatitudes are for everyone regardless of their abilities or circumstances as long as we follow Jesus' teachings.

This was Matthew's response to a question from the Synod: What is my mission in life?

To go out and spread the faith.
I do it by helping people as best as I can.
I collect stamps and send them to RNIB for guidance dogs.
I have a missio red box and put money in each week from my benefits.
I say prayers for different groups of people.
I pick a different one each day - for example the homeless.
I pray also for individual people I know who are ill or in difficulty.

God Bless

Matthew

HAPPY FOUNDATION DAY 24th February 2022

'The challenge of the gospel and the spirit of faith and zeal which marked our founders, and our founding sisters, urges to respond to the needs of our time and to work with others in action for evangelical justice.' *RSHM Mission Statement*



We've got a responsibility to live up to the legacy of those who came before us by doing all that we can to help those who come after us.

Michelle Obama

How can we change the world?
Change the way that things are?
What will it take?
What have we done so far?
Are we calling for kindness?
Are we leaning together?
Are we leaving a legacy
We'll be proud of forever?
Do we care about others?
Do we try to understand?
Could we unite the globe?
Every place, every land
Every single last person,
All residents by birth.
It's in our best interests
To cherish our earth.
So, what are we doing?
Will it ever be done?
Can we craft a better future
For the generations to come?
Can we nurture all spirits
Between ocean and sky?
Can we change the world?
We can certainly try.

MS MOEM

STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS by Joyce Johnson Rouse

I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me
I am stronger for their courage, I am wiser for their words
I am lifted by their longing for a fair and brighter future
I am grateful for their vision, for their toiling on this Earth.

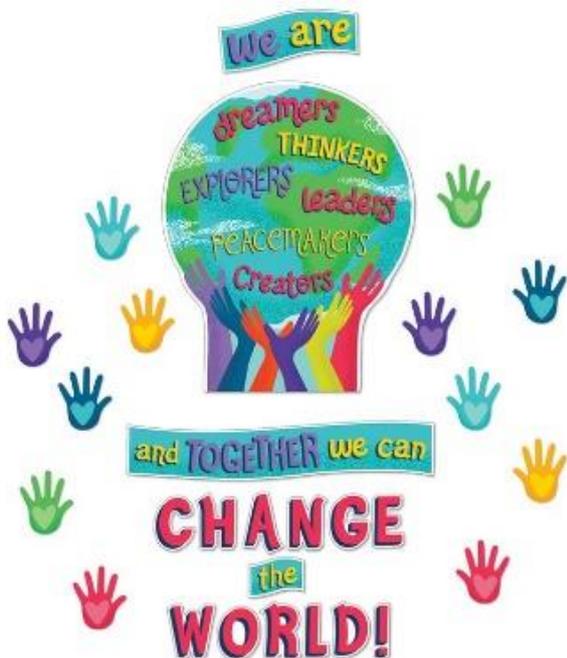
We are standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before us
They are saints and they are humans, they are angels, they are friends
We can see beyond the struggles and the troubles and the challenge
When we know that by our efforts things will be better in the end.

They lift me higher than I could ever fly
Carrying my burdens away
I imagine our world if they hadn't tried
We wouldn't be here celebrating today.

I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me
I am honoured by their passion for our liberty
I will stand a little taller, I will work a little longer
And my shoulders will be there to hold the ones who follow me.

They lift me higher than I could ever fly
Carrying my burdens away
I imagine our world if they hadn't tried
We wouldn't be so very blessed today.

I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me
I am honoured by their passion for our liberty
I will stand a little taller, I will work a little longer
And my shoulders will be there to hold the ones who follow me.



Did you know?

The date on Tuesday 22 February 2022 will be both a palindrome and an ambigram?
The date will read the same from left to right, from right to left AND upside down!

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