

There was once...

cont'd from page 1

all things we are invited seek to cooperate with the grace freely offered to help us live lovingly. We are called to holiness – but this is a work for a lifetime and as we try to respond to that call we are all likely to experience both progress and set backs.

If Boris Johnson wishes to associate himself with the Church, it is our responsibility to make him welcome. Again, that is our mission. Even as it becomes his responsibility to respond to the call to holiness.

There has been much surprise that, being twice divorced, and having apparently had several extra-marital affairs, he was permitted to marry in the Catholic Church.

For this permission to be given two things would have been necessary.

Free to marry?

First it would have had to be demonstrated that he had not previously entered into a Sacramental marriage, and that any other (civil) marriages had been ended by divorce.

- The Church presumes the validity of any civil marriage until such time as it is ended by divorce.
- Sometimes the Church will face the challenge of determining whether even an apparent Sacramental marriage is in fact void – for example because of, at the time of the marriage celebration, one or both parties lacked the capacity or intention on part of to enter into such a bond.

Ready to marry?

Second, every person who is free to marry in the Catholic Church and who wishes to marry in the Catholic Church needs to be carefully prepared for marriage. This is to ensure they have a clear understanding of what they are committing to, and that they have the opportunity to demonstrate to the officiating minister that they have the capacity to make that commitment.

It must be presumed that in the case of Boris Johnson, given his public profile and the potential for scandal to be caused, these two matters were carefully attended to; that the conclusion was that he was free to marry and that in consenting to marriage in the Church he and his wife intended what the Church intends.

The experience of hurt and pain

Some of those surprised by this recent marriage will have also been upset because they themselves, or others known to them, have not been able to demonstrate freedom to (re-)marry in the Church. This will principally have been because although a first marriage may have failed in human terms, the sacramental bond remains.

This circumstance will be especially painful for those who themselves live and have lived exemplary and

faithful lives, who have been 'betrayed' by their spouse, and feel that they are now let down by the disciplines of the Church. The 'failed' first marriage is not only painful in itself, but because (until the death of their spouse.) It continues to be an obstacle that blocks the way to the happiness that might be offered by a second marriage, i.e. a second sacramental marriage..

The great pain that this causes is acknowledged. Following the National Pastoral Congress of 1980 the matter was brought again to Rome's attention by Cardinal Hume and Archbishop Worlock, They sought further help for people in this situation. Discussions and debate continues, with the bishops of England and Wales playing an active part. Yet it is fair to say that, in the years since, for all of the improvement in the pastoral care that the Church seeks to provide to the divorced and separated, basically very little has changed. The Catholic Church cannot see a way of declaring void a real sacramental bond.

All this can be heartbreaking to live with, especially for those who it touches most closely. As we seek to do everything else to find the best remedy to the difficult situation of so many people, let us also remember to pray for the gift of peace and wisdom for those who hurt because of how things presently are, as well as those who are in a position to try to find better ways of addressing people's hurts and needs in the future.

Living the Sacraments we celebrate

In the meantime there is a further thing that it may be helpful to reflect on.

When we celebrate sacraments – any of us, and any sacrament – we make a public commitment that in receiving the sacrament we will seek to cooperate as fully as we can with the grace offered, and avoid any evident contradiction between it and how we live.

For this reason people will surely be looking at how things work out for the new Mr and Mrs Johnson.

But they also, and rightly, will look to us – what does it mean when we accept the responsibility of living the Sacrament of Matrimony? Or the Sacrament of Orders? What does it mean if we accept the invitation to Holy Communion? How do we make use of the Sacrament of Confession to draw further on the grace of God to encourage us in our struggles against sin and to remedy our failings when they do happen?

*May God the eternal Father
keep us of one heart
that the peace of Christ may dwell in us
and be shared by us.*

*May we be witnesses in the world to God's charity,
so that the afflicted and needy
who have known our kindness
may one day receive us thankfully
into the eternal dwelling of God.*



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God ever faithful, you have made a covenant with your people in the gift of your Son, who offered his body for us and poured out his blood for the many.

As we celebrate this Eucharistic sacrifice, build up your Church by deepening within us the life of your covenant and by opening our hearts to those in need.

Preparing for what comes next...

An Open parish meeting is planned for Weds 23 June at 7.30pm to discuss the life of the parish over the coming months - including better support for the Housebound and the use of the Newman Community Centre.

Further details will be confirmed nearer the time.

There was once a wedding in Westminster...

The reporting of the recent marriage of Boris Johnson and Carrie Symonds has not been as accurate and informative as it might have been.

The following reflections are offered to try to answer the questions many Catholics (and others) are asking, and help respond to the upset not a few have felt.

Parishioners who have further questions are very welcome to contact Fr Allen directly to take things further. Boris Johnson has chosen to live his life in the public eye as journalist and politician, often as a controversialist. This almost inevitably means that not only his views but he himself, and how he deals with his responsibilities – his very way of living – are matters that other people feel free to comment on and, often enough, criticise too.

He is far from being unique in having faults and failings, and like the rest of us he is surely 'a sinner'.

The Church, of course, is missioned to offer care and love to sinners. It is a place, a community, where we, who have many frailties, come together to help each other know and respond to the love and mercy of God. We are invited to repent of our sins, to try to overcome our weaknesses, and in *continued on page 4*

Support for the housebound and those in care homes

Lockdown has taught us again just how isolated and vulnerable some people are because of the disabilities and constraints that commonly come with old age and infirmity. Even now social distancing guidance and the like present challenges to how to offer support.

Many parishioners have been generous with time and energy, keeping in contact by phone and helping in whatever ways they can. Some of the housebound have found that the opportunities provided by the Internet and Zoom during lockdown have actually improved their situation. So it is not all bad news!

cont'd on page 3

Keeping Safe at Mass

Face coverings: Regulations require members of the congregation, aged 5 and over, to wear face-coverings over their nose and mouth when in church. **Social distancing:** Please keep a social distance of 1m from anyone not of your household.

Please do not stay in benches for conversation after Mass has ended. Instead leave the church promptly and keep 'safe distance'.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PARISH MASSES DURING THE COMING WEEK

Day	Time	Special Occasion	Notes
Sa 5	4pm	MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST	For the parish
	6pm		Moss Davies RIP (Szambir)
Su 6	9am	11th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Jessie Mary Redmond RIP (R)
	11am		For the parish
M 7	10am		Michael & Kathleen McCusker RIP (Q)
T 8	10am		Ints Mia McDermott (McDermott)
W 9	10am		
Th 10			
F 11	7pm	SACRED HEART	Patrick and Bridget Toner RIP (Quinn)
Sa 12	4pm	11th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	For the parish
	6pm		Jan and Maria Szambir RIP (Szambir)
Su 13	9am	11th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Special Intention - health (Redmond)
	11am		For the parish

Please pray for sick parishioners including Betty Barker, Lyn Hunt; Joan James; Thomas Stevenson. Please pray for James O'Riordan, Margaret Knowles, Lesley Willis, Elizabeth Doyle, Herbert Roberts and all whose anniversaries occur at this time. **Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace.**

The Introductory Rites *help us come together as one, establish communion and prepare ourselves to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.*

The Penitential Act

The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect

The Liturgy of the Word: *The word of God invites us into the unending dialogue between God and his people, a dialogue sealed as we share the Eucharistic food and drink. A brief quiet after the readings helps us to take the word of God to heart and begin a prayerful response to what we have heard.*

Exodus 24:3-8

Moses went and told the people all the commands of the Lord and all the ordinances. In answer, all the people said with one voice, 'We will observe all the commands that the Lord has decreed.' Moses put all the commands of the Lord into writing, and early next morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain, with twelve standing-stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he directed certain young Israelites to offer holocausts and to immolate bullocks to the Lord as communion sacrifices. Half of the blood Moses took up and put into basins, the other half he cast on the altar. And taking the Book of the Covenant he read it to the listening people, and they said, 'We will observe all that the Lord has decreed; we will obey.' Then Moses took the blood and cast it towards the people. This' he said 'is the blood of the Covenant that the Lord has made with you, containing all these rules.'

Psalms 115(116):12-13,15-18

How can I repay the Lord / for his goodness to me?

The cup of salvation I will raise;
I will call on the Lord's name.

O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make;
I will call on the Lord's name.
My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people.

Hebrews 9:11-15

Now Christ has come, as the high priest of all the blessings which were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, which is better than the one made by men's hands because it is not of this created order; and he has entered the sanctuary once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption for us. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer are sprinkled on those who have incurred defilement and they restore the holiness of their outward lives; how much more effectively the blood of Christ, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, can purify our inner self from dead actions so that we do our service to the living God.

He brings a new covenant, as the mediator, only so that the people who were called to an eternal inheritance may actually receive what was promised: his death took place to cancel the sins that infringed the earlier covenant.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the living bread which has come down from heaven, says the Lord. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever. Alleluia!

Mark 14:12-16,22-26

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to Jesus, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, "The Master says: Where is my dining room in which I can eat the passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.' The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.

And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. 'Take it,' he said 'this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them, 'This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.'

After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

*At the words that follow,
up to and including 'the Virgin Mary', all bow.*

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;

he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayer of the Faithful

The Liturgy of the Eucharist *is the re-presentation of the Sacrifice of Christ to the Father, and his gift of life renewed to the Church, for the service of his mission.*

The Offertory: *There is no collection during Mass. Instead, please put your offerings in the basket at the entrance to the church as you arrive, or as you leave.*

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer, the centre and summit of the entire celebration is a memorial proclamation of praise and thanksgiving for God's work of salvation, a proclamation in which the Body and Blood of Christ are made present by the power of the Holy Spirit and the people are joined to Christ in offering his Sacrifice to the Father

The Preface Dialogue

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

Offering Spiritual support... *cont'd from page 1*

We need to take stock of how as a parish we respond to the needs of people who are not in a position to regularly come to Church and the things we do in our meeting rooms etc. And we will do so at the forthcoming parish meeting on 24 June.

Ministers of Holy Communion

A number ministers of Holy Communion have been generous with their time and energy in visiting the sick and housebound - when circumstances permit. But - even leaving COVID aside - this is not quite the easy matter that it maybe used to be.

To strengthen the safeguarding of the vulnerable, in future ministers of Holy Communion should visit people in their homes in twos. This has been the practice of the Society of St Vincent de Paul for a while. It safeguards those being visited who sadly sometimes are taken advantage of, even by ministers of the Church. This has not been a problem for us, thank God, but we need to do all we can to ensure the worst cannot happen.

Visiting in 2s safeguards ministers too. Those visited can become confused and misplace something or forget what has happened to something and can - not meaning to do harm - accuse all sorts of people of having taken it. Having two people present helps avoid putting our volunteer ministers in risk of that difficult and painful thing happening to them.

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE: *The Lord offers reconciliation in and with the invitation to share in the food and drink that is his Body and Blood. Love and mercy are the condition and the fruit of communion in the Lord.*

The Lord's Prayer

Invitation to Communion

Please observe the regulations on social distancing when processing to receive Holy Communion.

Prayer after Communion

The Concluding Rites *sends us out live in our daily lives the Mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection and the unity in Christ we have celebrated. Our mission is to witness to Christ in the world and to bring the Gospel to the poor.*

Blessing and Dismissal

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So we need to do some serious recruiting of people to serve as ministers or to accompany other ministers. The commitment is likely to be to be part of a team maybe visiting one or two people once or twice a month at times suitable to them and the ministers.

Masses in Care Homes

We hope to have monthly Masses in Care Homes and the like where this permitted and where there are two or more Catholic residents. It will be a great help to have one or two parishioners linked to each such home who can help with the practical arrangements (Nothing complicated, just confirming dates and times; attending the Mass; and that sort of thing). They can also help us keep records up to date as to those resident there who would welcome pastoral care from the parish. Having a contact person in place can make a great deal of difference to many people and be a real enrichment of our parish's witness and ministry.

Help with Safeguarding paperwork

Helping the parish keep on top of Safeguarding administration is a further area help is needed with. Mary Rose currently deals with things very well, but as we need to embark on a renewal of DBSs and the challenges of changing regulation she would welcome some help! If anyone could offer a couple of hours as needed things would be a lot easier to manage. If you think you might be able to help please speak with Mary Rose or Fr Allen.

Thank you.