

Welcome to Union Focus Online for May 2020

This Episode :

Message from **Reverend Philip**

How Can We Help You

Bible Readings for each
Sunday in May 2020

PLEASE NOTE:

All events have been cancelled
until further notice.

Easter General Vestries are
postponed until directed by
The Diocesan Council.

Virtual Coffee Lounge

Wednesdays: 1pm – 1.30pm

Everyone is very welcome to
join for a chat with others
from the Parish.

To join the conversation, go to
the **Parish Website** and click
on the link. This will bring you
directly to the Virtual Coffee
Lounge.

www.naasunion.com

**Podcasts with Sunday
Worship** are available each
Sunday Morning.

**You are encouraged to
register on the Parish Website
as you will receive direct
notification of News and
Online Events and in the
future, ALL Events.**

We continue to pray for the
safety and health of all
Members of Naas Union.

Gillian Burke
Coordinator Union Focus

From Your Friend and Rector



As of last night (02/05/20), it seems likely that our church buildings will remain closed until 20th July, due to essential public health restrictions. Interestingly, a majority of churches all over the country are saying that even though the buildings are closed, church attendance has increased. Why is that?

On the one hand, many churches, like **naasunion.com** have embraced the online world like never before. On the other hand, the world is in crisis, and at such times, people become more aware of their spiritual well-being.

Thankfully they are availing of what the churches are offering. This reminds me that the Christian message is indeed one of "Good News." A Gospel that offers healing, strength and salvation. In the online world, there are no denominational, societal or geographical boundaries.

Literally, in most cases, anyone can visit in a non-threatening, unobtrusive way, and perhaps they might visit again. I do wonder whether this increased church online presence may well be part of the post covid-19 normality. Church buildings will of course re-open. Communal corporate worship is at the core of our belief, but it may well be supplemented by an increased online presence which reaches out to many more people.

SONGS OF PRAISE 10TH MAY 2020

A challenge of online worship is that it's easy to become an onlooker rather than an active participant. To encourage participation, a Songs of Praise, will be hosted on **naasunion.com** on 10th May from 9.00am. Please have a think about your favourite Hymn/Worship Song, why it is special to you, and complete the form on the Website. The top eight hymns will be played at the service. The only caveat is that **I need the hymns by Wednesday 6th May** to enable time to put it all together, so please do send me your suggestions in good time.

CHRISTIAN AID QUIZ

At the time of writing, plans are being finalized for a Parish Online Quiz, inspired by Christian Aid. Check out **naasunion.com** where further details will be posted in due course.

VIRTUAL COFFEE LOUNGE

Every Wednesday at 1.00pm to which anyone can pop in.

REGISTER AT [NAASUNION.COM](http://naasunion.com)

If you have not done so, I would encourage you to please sign up at the Parish Website www.naasunion.com, for the latest updates via email and/or secure text messaging.

These are posted regularly and are not necessarily sent to Select Vestry Members, the Parish Magazine List, or those on the Facebook page so it is important to please sign up.

EASTER GENERAL VESTRY 2020

Due to the Covid-19 related restrictions, Easter Vestry has been adjourned to the last date permitted by Section 12 of Chapter III of the Constitution, namely the sixth Monday after Easter Day (i.e. 18th May 2020).

In the event that restrictions still continue, the Bishop will issue a direction to all Parishes to adjourn the Easter Vestries until further notice.

In accordance with the Constitution, for so long as an Easter Vestry cannot be held, the existing Select Vestry remains in office and continues to perform its function accordingly.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY

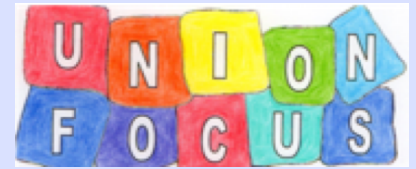
Please continue to pray regarding all that is entailed in the Covid 19 Pandemic. We have a number of parishioners in isolation, some who are cocooning, many who have suffered a loss in income and our prayers are vital. Pray also for the friends and family of Thelma Skoyles who died on Easter Day.

For the present, please stay safe and God's blessing to you all.

Your friend and Rector,

Philip

TEAM UNION FOCUS



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Living in these extraordinary times, as each day unfolds, we become aware of more people who might need some help.

The current restrictions are essential, but living with them is very difficult.

We have a number of people within **Naas Union** who fall into the category of those most at risk – those who are cocooning and have been asked to stay at home at all times.

This has different concerns and anxieties for different people.

Not every person has a family member living in the area.

Although fresh food is available every day in Supermarkets, if you need to order online, there can be a waiting delay of up to 10 days.

- ✓ If you need someone to do some shopping for you or collect an item from any of the essential businesses that are open, please let us know.
- ✓ If you would like to help by being the person who does the shopping or errand, please let us know.
- ✓ If you know of anyone who may benefit from some help, please bring this offer of help to their attention.

You can contact us by

- **Replying to this email**
- **Text 087 2310504 – Leave your name and we will get back to you.**
- **Visit our Parish Website and click the button on the Homepage “Here To Help”.**

Gillian Burke

Getting to know your BIBLE – SUNDAY READINGS FOR MAY 2020

SUNDAY 3rd MAY 2020 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 2: 42 - 47
1 Peter 2: 19 - 25
John 10: 1 - 10

42 They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers.

43 Many miracles and wonders were being done through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe.

44 All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another.

45 They would sell their property and possessions, and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed.

46 Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, 47 praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

Acts 2: 42 - 47

19 God will bless you for this, if you endure the pain of undeserved suffering because you are conscious of his will.

20 For what credit is there if you endure the beatings you deserve for having done wrong? But if you endure suffering even when you have done right, God will bless you for it.

21 It was to this that God called you, for Christ himself suffered for you and left you an example, so that you would follow in his steps.

22 He committed no sin, and no one ever heard a lie come from his lips.

23 When he was insulted, he did not answer back with an insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but

placed his hopes in God, the righteous Judge.

24 Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. It is by his wounds that you have been healed.

25 You were like sheep that had lost their way, but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls.

1 Peter 2: 19 - 25

1 Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out.

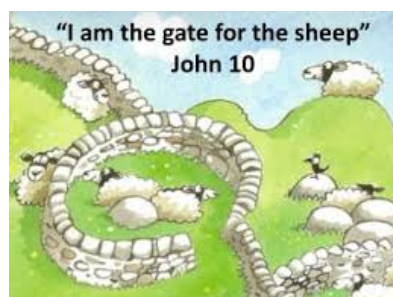
4 When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice.

5 They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice."

6 Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

7 So Jesus said again, "I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep.

8 All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Those who come in by me will



be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture.

10 The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy.

I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness.

John 10: 1 - 10

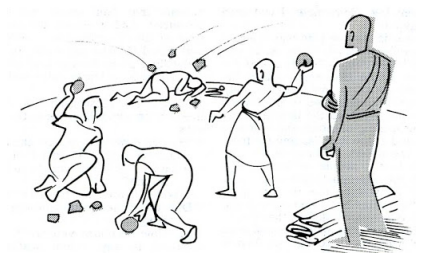
SUNDAY 10th MAY 2020 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 7: 55 - 60
1 Peter 2: 2 - 10
John 14: 1 - 14

55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw God's glory and Jesus standing at the right side of God.

56 "Look!" he said. "I see heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right side of God!"

57 With a loud cry the Council members covered their ears with their hands. Then they all rushed at him at once, 58 threw him out of the city, and stoned him. The witnesses left their cloaks in the care of a young man named Saul.



59 They kept on stoning Stephen as he called out to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

60 He knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord! Do not remember this sin against them!" He said this and died.

Acts 7: 55 - 60

2 Be like newborn babies, always thirsty for the pure spiritual milk, so

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that by drinking it you may grow up and be saved.

3 As the scripture says, "You have found out for yourselves how kind the Lord is."

4 Come to the Lord, the living stone rejected by people as worthless but chosen by God as valuable.

5 Come as living stones, and let yourselves be used in building the spiritual temple, where you will serve as holy priests to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ.

6 For the scripture says, "I chose a valuable stone, which I am placing as the cornerstone in Zion; and whoever believes in him will never be disappointed."

7 This stone is of great value for you that believe; but for those who do not believe: "The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all."



8 And another scripture says, "This is the stone that will make people stumble, the rock that will make them fall." They stumbled because they did not believe in the word; such was God's will for them.

9 But you are the chosen race, the King's priests, the holy nation, God's own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light.

10 At one time you were not God's people, but now you are his people; at one time you did not know God's mercy, but now you have received his mercy.

1 Peter 2: 2 - 10

1 "Do not be worried and upset," Jesus told them. "Believe in God and believe also in me.

2 There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so.

3 And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am.

4 You know the way that leads to the place where I am going."

5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; so how can we know the way to get there?"

6 Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me.

7 Now that you have known me," he said to them, "you will know my Father also, and from now on you do know him and you have seen him."

8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father; that is all we need."

9 Jesus answered, "For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Why, then, do you say, "Show us the Father'?"

10 Do you not believe, Philip, that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I have spoken to you," Jesus said to his disciples, "do not come from me. The Father, who remains in me, does his own work.

11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. If not, believe because of the things I do.



12 I am telling you the truth: those who believe in me will do what I do - yes, they will do even greater things, because I am going to the Father.

13 And I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father's glory will be shown through the Son.

14 If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.

SUNDAY 17th MAY 2020 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 17: 22 - 31

1 Peter 3: 13 - 22

John 14: 15 - 21

22 Paul stood up in front of the city council and said, "I see that in every way you Athenians are very religious.

23 For as I walked through your city and looked at the places where you worship, I found an altar on which is written, "To an Unknown God." That which you worship, then, even though you do not know it, is what I now proclaim to you.

24 God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples made by human hands.

25 Nor does he need anything that we can supply by working for him, since it is he himself who gives life and breath and everything else to everyone.

26 From one human being he created all races of people and made them live throughout the whole earth. He himself fixed beforehand the exact times and the limits of the places where they would live.

27 He did this so that they would look for him, and perhaps find him as they felt around for him. Yet God is actually not far from any one of us; 28 as someone has said, "In him we live and move and exist." It is as some of your poets have said, "We too are his children."

29 Since we are God's children, we should not suppose that his nature is

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anything like an image of gold or silver or stone, shaped by human art and skill.

30 God has overlooked the times when people did not know him, but now he commands all of them everywhere to turn away from their evil ways.

31 For he has fixed a day in which he will judge the whole world with justice by means of a man he has chosen. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising that man from death!"

Acts 17: 22 - 31

13 Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good?

14 But even if you should suffer for doing what is right, how happy you are! Do not be afraid of anyone, and do not worry.

15 But have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and honour him as Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, **16** but do it with gentleness and respect. Keep your conscience clear, so that when you are insulted, those who speak evil of your good conduct as followers of Christ will become ashamed of what they say.



17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if this should be God's will, than for doing evil.

18 For Christ died for sins once and for all, a good man on behalf of sinners, in order to lead you to God. He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually, **19** and in his spiritual existence he went and preached to the imprisoned spirits.

20 These were the spirits of those who had not obeyed God when he waited patiently during the days that Noah was building his boat. The few people in the boat - eight in all - were saved by the water,



21 which was a symbol pointing to baptism, which now saves you. It is not the washing off of bodily dirt, but the promise made to God from a good conscience. It saves you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **22** who has gone to heaven and is at the right side of God, ruling over all angels and heavenly authorities and powers.

1 Peter 3: 13 - 22

15 "If you love me, you will obey my commandments.

16 I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you forever.

17 He is the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and is in you.

18 "When I go, you will not be left all alone; I will come back to you.

19 In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live.

20 When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father and that you are in me, just as I am in you.

21 "Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. My Father will love those who love me; I too will love them and reveal myself to them."

John 14: 15 - 21

SUNDAY 24th MAY 2020 SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 1: 6 - 14

1 Peter 4: 12 – 14; 5: 6 - 11

John 17: 1 - 11

6 When the apostles met together with Jesus, they asked him, "Lord,

will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?" **7** Jesus said to them, "The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be.

8 But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." **9** After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them **11** and said, "Galileans, why are you standing there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven."

12 Then the apostles went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is about half a mile away from the city.

13 They entered the city and went up to the room where they were staying: Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Patriot, and Judas son of James.

14 They gathered frequently to pray as a group, together with the women and with Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers.

Acts 1: 6 - 14

12 My dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful test you are suffering, as though something unusual were happening to you.

13 Rather be glad that you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may be full of joy when his glory is revealed.

14 Happy are you if you are insulted because you are Christ's followers;

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this means that the glorious Spirit, the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

6 Humble yourselves, then, under God's mighty hand, so that he will lift you up in his own good time.

7 Leave all your worries with him, because he cares for you.

8 Be alert, be on watch! Your enemy, the Devil, roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

9 Be firm in your faith and resist him, because you know that other believers in all the world are going through the same kind of sufferings.

10 But after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who calls you to share his eternal glory in union with Christ, will himself perfect you and give you firmness, strength, and a sure foundation.

11 To him be the power forever! Amen.

1 Peter 4: 12 – 14; 5: 6 - 11

1 After Jesus finished saying this, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son, so that the Son may give glory to you.

2 For you gave him authority over all people, so that he might give eternal life to all those you gave him.

3 And eternal life means to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, whom you sent.

4 I have shown your glory on earth; I have finished the work you gave me to do.

5 Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made.

6 "I have made you known to those you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me. They have obeyed your word,⁷ and now they know that everything you gave me comes from you.

8 I gave them the message that you gave me, and they received it; they

know that it is true that I came from you, and they believe that you sent me.

9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those you gave me, for they belong to you.

10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine; and my glory is shown through them.

11 And now I am coming to you; I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world. Holy Father! Keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one just as you and I are one.

John 17: 1 - 11

