

**Confirmation:** Will take place on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 7pm at Our Lady's Shaw Heath. Confirmation is open to those in Year 9 and above and the programme will be run jointly with St Ann's. The meetings will take place on Friday evenings, with the first meeting on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, remaining dates to be confirmed. If you would like to join this year's confirmation programme or would like more information, please email us [stchadsheadle@gmail.com](mailto:stchadsheadle@gmail.com).

**The Care of Creation:** At a time of growing concern for the care of creation, the Church brings to the environmental concerns of our time the perspective of God's creation and the place of humanity within creation. The Church across the country is taking practical steps with IFM (Inter-Diocesan Fuel Management Limited), based in our Shrewsbury Diocese and supplying all 22 dioceses and over 100 schools with 71% green energy and with a 29% carbon offset. The offset schemes include renewable boreholes in Eritrea and a new energy plant in Bangladesh using household waste (including landfill), to reduce the methane being produced and provide renewable power. IFM is also using its buying power to drive the demand for "green gas" in the UK.

**Money Matters:** In April we received £1088.40p in the collection and £1967.70p in standing orders. The collection for the SVP raised £237.10p with an additional £51.25p received from Gift Aid. Thank you very much. Next weekend (15/16 May) there will be a second collection for World Communications Day.

**SVP:** Thank you very much for the donations of clothes that were taken to local prisons, they were very much appreciated. There is still a need for donations (joggers, t-shirts and sweatshirts) so we will have another collection at the beginning of June. Please no hats or garments with hoods. Thank you.

*Please pray for all those who are sick and all those who have died recently. We remember Caroline Baker, Catherine Moran, Calli Fairclough, William Curtis, Joseph Fitzpatrick, Mary Pennington, Maureen Mallon, Mary Mason, Christopher McCarton, Philip Hynes, Mary Fitzpatrick, Josephine Ward, Josephine Harman, Mary Browne, Joan Hitchin, Denis McHale, Norah Roberts, Mary Meaney, George Bains, Mary Dillon, Richard Johnson, John Flanagan, Maureen Laughlin, Reginald Frith, Bridget McDonnell, Colette Richardson and all those who anniversaries occur at this time. May they rest in peace.*

**Parish Safeguarding Reps:** Noel Russell and Bernadette McCrory. If you have any concerns about safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, please speak to them or contact them via the presbytery, in the strictest confidence.

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**Office Hours:** Thursdays 11am – 1pm

## **The Catholic Parish of St Chad, Cheadle**

**Priest: Fr. Sean Davidson**



### **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter Year B**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

We continue our reflections on the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Last week we saw that the empty tomb was a fact beyond dispute. In addition to the existence of the empty tomb it is clear even to a non-believer that the disciples of Jesus Christ soon began to proclaim his bodily Resurrection shortly after his death. How explain this? There are two possible explanations. Either they were telling the truth or they were lying, having taken the dead body and hidden it so well that it has never turned up. (The only other alternative is hallucination but this does not stand up to scrutiny, because different groups of people don't all imagine that the same illusion is unfolding before their eyes, unless perhaps they are partial to taking some ancient hallucinogenic like magic mushrooms, but we find no evidence to think that the apostles were into that kind of thing. Even in the case of potential group-hallucination the people would see different things, but independent groups of disciples in independent places all witnessed the same Risen Lord and heard the same message.

The expert interviewed by Lee Strobel on this question said that this kind of hallucination would be more of a miracle than the Resurrection itself.) So, if they were lying, why did ten of them willingly suffer persecution and then death as martyrs for their proclamation of the Resurrection? Some were tortured but never denied what they had witnessed. Brainwashed people may be willing to die for a lie that they believe is the truth. But if Jesus did not rise, then the disciples really knew this to be the case. Thus, they wouldn't have been dying for a lie that they mistakenly believed was true. They would rather have been dying for a lie that they knew was a lie. Surely, at least one of them would have folded under the pressure and recanted. Also, what did they have to gain by inventing this conspiracy? Usually, religious crooks are in it for the money, but the apostles gave away everything they owned and lived in holy poverty. They gained nothing from the world from the doctrine of the Resurrection except persecution, rejection by their own people, and a brutal early death. Why make up a lie that brings such a fate upon yourself and then stick to it to the bitter end? It would be simpler to conclude that these good people were simply telling the truth.

No time for legends:

Legends usually take centuries to develop, but news of Christ's resurrection spread through the world immediately after his death. The influence of the figure of St Paul whose letters were written around twenty to thirty years after the death of Christ and who himself was killed in Rome around AD63 is crucial. In **1 Corinthians 15:3-8**, (written twenty years after the death of Jesus) St Paul reminds his friends in Corinth of a well-known creed which he had received himself and which he had then passed on to them as their first summary of the Christian faith. Before the Gospels were written down, these creeds were the means by which essential Christian teaching was orally transmitted and then preserved intact by a community through regular recitation. This creed explains the death of Jesus for our sins, his burial, his resurrection, and his apparitions to different individual disciples and groups of disciples. It is generally agreed by critical biblical scholars that Paul received this creed from Peter and James themselves during his fact-finding visit to Jerusalem which took place 3 to 5 years after the crucifixion. Now, Peter and James are listed in this creed as having seen the Risen Christ. Since they are the ones who gave this creed to Paul, this is therefore a statement of their own testimony. This was no legend, but the first-hand testimony of contemporary eyewitnesses. Peter was still alive at the time of writing.

Embarrassing details included in their testimony:

If the apostles were inventing a fraudulent religious conspiracy, then they went about it in curious fashion. It is sad but true that in first century Israel the testimony of women was not accepted as trustworthy. The Jewish historian Josephus explains that evidence given by a woman at that time could not even be used in Jewish courts. Yet, the first witnesses of the Risen Lord were women. Would the apostles have made this up if they were trying to invent a lie? It would only have damaged their cause. People make up lies to help their cause, not to harm it. (It is interesting to note that the Risen Lord did indeed choose women as his first witnesses, and so showed that he trusted in their testimony, thereby overturning the prevailing prejudice of the time. St Mary Magdalene is known as the Apostle to the Apostles, the first person ever to proclaim the truth of the Resurrection. In general, women come out far better than men in the Gospels. No woman had anything to do with Christ's death and his female disciples stayed faithful when his male disciples had abandoned him. Thus, they were rewarded for their love in the moment of the Resurrection.)

May God bless you all.

Fr Sean

### Mass Times & Intentions

Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Vigil	St Ann's	5pm	For Tommy & Bernie Hilton
		<b>St Chad's</b>	7pm	Amelia S. Alcazar RIP
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<b>St Chad's</b>	9am	Kathleen Curtin
		St Ann's	11am	Rosaleen Finnigan RIP
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>		St Ann's	10am	Sheila Hughes RIP
Tues 11 <sup>th</sup>		St Ann's	10am	Anthony Morrissey RIP
		<b>St Chad's</b>	6.30pm	Henry McDaid
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>		<b>No Mass</b>		
Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup>	The Ascension of the Lord	<b>St Chad's</b>	9.30am	Mary Winterbourne
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup>	St Matthias	St Ann's	10am	Mary Lawlor RIP
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup>	Vigil	St Ann's	5pm	Reg Thornberry RIP
		<b>St Chad's</b>	7pm	Mary Friel RIP
Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<b>St Chad's</b>	9am	Margaret Dennehy
		St Ann's	11am	In Thanksgiving (AMB)

**Rosary:** Throughout May we will come together as a parish to pray the Rosary before each of the weekend Mass. The Rosary will start 20 minutes before Mass (6:40pm on Saturdays and 08:40am on Sundays).

**Mass Intentions:** Envelopes are available at the back of the church. Please post the envelope through the presbytery door once completed. Please note that we are now into September with Mass intentions.

**Confessions:** Available on request. Please telephone the presbytery a minimum of 24 hours in advance to arrange.