

Pastoral Reflection
The Feast of the Ascension

I want to share with you one of the best COVID meditations I have read. The title is, “What Does It Mean to Set Jesus Free” by Diane Butler. I believe it is particularly appropriate for the Feast of the Ascension as Jesus returned to the Father. Diana shares a moment she experienced while at prayer before the icon of Jesus in the Washington National Cathedral.

What Does It Mean to Set Jesus Free?

Church historian Diana Butler Bass shares a moment she experienced while at prayer before the icon of Jesus in the Washington National Cathedral:

“Get me out of here,” the voice said again.

I stared up at the icon. “Jesus? Is that you?”

“Get me *out of here*,” I heard again, more insistent now.

“But Lord . . .”

The chapel fell silent, but I know I heard a divine demand for freedom. . . .

Millions of Americans have left church behind, probably many more have left emotionally, and countless others are wondering if they should. One of the most consistent things I hear from those who have left, those doubting their faith, and those just hanging on is that church or Christianity has failed them, wounded them, betrayed them, or maybe just bored them—and they do not want to have much to do with it any longer.

Bass reflects on the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our building-bound Christianity:

As millions have discovered in these many months, Jesus was not confined to a building. Jesus was around our tables at home, with us on walks and hikes, present in music, art, and books, and visible in faces via Zoom. Jesus was with us when we felt we could do no more, overwhelmed by work and online school. Jesus was with us as we prayed with the sick in hospital over cell phones. Jesus did not leave us to suffer alone. COVID-19 forced Jesus out of the cathedral into the world, reminding Christians that church is not a building. Rather, church is wherever two or three are gathered—even if the “two” is only you and your cat—and where Jesus is present in bread that regular people bake, bless, and break at family tables and homemade altars. I did not liberate Jesus from the cathedral; a pandemic did. Jesus is with us. Here.

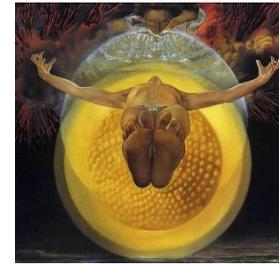
One day, the doors will open again. Many will not go back to church, mostly because they left some time ago. They did not need help to find Jesus in their lives and in the world. They were already discovering what it meant to follow Jesus beyond the church. Perhaps the pandemic hastened the process, caused them to ask new questions, or renewed their courage on the journey.

But many others will return. And, as before, people will sit close, hug and pass the peace, and share bread and wine. I suspect I will pray again at the altar in the National Cathedral, under the gaze of Jesus. I cannot predict what he might say. I do, however, know what I will say: “Thank you.”

Whatever happens, however, I hope none of us will ever forget the Jesus we have met in our own lives, who has been with us in fear and confusion and loss, in forced isolation and the surprising moments of joy, and through the ministrations of our shared human priesthood. It all matters. All of it.

Diana Butler Bass, *Freeing Jesus: Rediscovering Jesus as Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence* (New York: Harper One, 2021), x, xv, 267–268.

Fr. Jack



St. Cronan Catholic Church
The Feast of the Ascension
May 28-29, 2022

Mass Information

SUNDAY – 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

SATURDAY VIGIL – 5:00 p.m.

Wednesdays – 8:00 a.m.

Masks are suggested for all Masses

The Mass for Sunday, June 5 will be recorded and placed on our website: <https://www.stcronan.org/> If anyone is available to serve as lector on Thursday, June 2 at 9:30, please contact Diane G. diane@stcronan.org

Live-streaming continues at the 10:00 am Mass. PLEASE BE ON TIME! Live-streamed masses are available on our Facebook page any time after the 10:00 Mass, <https://www.facebook.com/StCronan>

*Welcome, Archbishop Rozanski,
to the Community of St. Cronan*



ALL THINGS NEW

Our leadership team is awaiting the next meetings of the Archdiocese and will keep us posted on upcoming events as they are scheduled. If you would like further information, you can visit the Archdiocese’s website <https://allthingsnew.archstl.org/> or call our office at 314-289-9384. You can also leave comments about the process at this website.

ACA Update: We have made our goal, and are just \$7,000 away from our challenge goal, and 3 new donors away from our new donor goal. Thank you for your generosity!

Are You Called to be a Sister? The Sisters of St. Joseph Vocation Team invites women interested in religious life to join them at a weekend event June 10-12, 2022. For more information contact vocation@csjlife.org or see the flyer in the Chapel.

Mid-life Singles: Are you looking for a renewed sense of purpose & belonging? Register today for a life-changing REFLECT weekend retreat at King's House Retreat Center, Belleville, IL (20 min from downtown St. Louis), on June 3-5, 2022. Cost is \$215 including meals and a single room. Visit www.ReflectRetreat.com, e-mail reflect.stlouis@gmail.com, or call (314) 283-0044 for details.

Black Lives Matter Vigil, takes place the third Friday of the Month at the corner of Manchester and Kingshighway, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. The next vigil will take place on Friday, June 17. Please join us!

Red Cross Volunteers: The Red Cross is in need of volunteers in the St. Louis Area. Please see the flyer in the Chapel for more information.

Marianist Retreat Center Summer Schedule: This summer, the Marianist Retreat and Conference Center, located in Eureka, MO, is offering three unique retreat opportunities, and you are cordially invited! These and all summer events can be found at: <https://marianistretreat.com/blog/summertime-events-2022/>

North City Deanery is holding a Revival for “A Synodal Church: That All May be One,” June 6 and 7 at 6:30 p.m. (praise and worship at 6:15) at St. Matthew the Apostle Church, 2715 N. Sarah, 63113, with Revivalist Rev. Canon A. Gerard Jordan. Sign up: <http://evite.me/XmAR1KfGp> Please see the flyer in the chapel for further information.

Transformational Journey: A Pilgrimage to the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the National Voting Rights Museum in Selma, the National Memorial for Peace & Justice and the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama is being planned for Thursday, October 20 – Sunday, October 23. Save the dates – more details will follow as they are finalized.

*We pray for the children and teachers of
Robb School in Uvalde, Texas
And for an end to gun violence throughout the world.*

Donations for Ukraine: If you would like to help, please give to the Ukrainian Children's Aid and Relief Effort, Inc. or UCARE, Inc., which is a charity serving the needy and orphaned children of Ukraine. If anyone wants to financially help the Ukrainian situation, please consider this charity. The website is www.ucareinc.org. Bob Hoffman has worked with this group for years..

Compassionate St. Louis: St. Cronan has become a member of this movement to help make our city a more compassionate place. You will be seeing their logo on our bulletins and signs. For further information, please visit their website: <https://www.compassionate-stl.org/about-us>

Day-Long Women's Retreat: Mark your Calendars! Women's Day Long Retreat planned for Saturday, June 25, 2022. Tentative time from 8:30am to 4:30pm. In person and outdoors. Centrally located near Hampton and Hwy 44. Theme and details to follow. Donna Moromarco, Kim Madden, and Mary Middendorf are in the planning stages. Express your interest in attending by emailing mary.middendorf@gmail.com as soon as possible. Space is limited.

Erastus Brown Historical Marker Unveiling Ceremony There is a group in our area who have been working on memorializing lynchings that occurred in Missouri. The next remembrance will take place in Union, Missouri, on Saturday, July 9 at 11:00 a.m. and will honor Mr. Erastus Brown. Please see the flyer in the Chapel for further information.

Prayers Please: Laurel Hayes; Laurel Hayes' parents, Jerry and Nancy; Rose; Robert Nathe's Mother, Eileen; Colleen Wallace's godson, Lachlan; Michelle Frank; Jennifer Lyle and Krista Rakers; Jessica; Nick Ambrose; Al Sprehe; Phil Milner; Leslie Conway; Mike's grandson, Jack; Jim Gorman; Andrew Viraugh's father.; Sharon Orlet's sister, Betty; Nancy Buck's daughter, Jeanne; Kathy Bayless; Tom Kuciejczyk-Kernan's brother, Steve; Barry Buchek's wife, Mary; Trish Curtis' mother and brother; Gavin Barrett-Hayes; Barb Sopp's cousin, Patty Struckhoff; Marie and Roland Martir's granddaughter, Madie, and great-grandson; David Gaillardetz' father, Richard; Fr. Gerry's classmate, Fr. Pat O'Laughlin; Nick and Shirley Ambrose's daughter, Brigid Costello; Shelly Kurtz; Varrietta Anthony; Teresa Sullivan's friend, Caroline Bucci; Kathy Stock's niece, Jill, Fr. Jack's brother, Mike; Natalie Johnson and the Johnson Family.

