

DEAR VISITORS, If you would like to help our small parish, you can do this by “Gift-Aiding” your collection to us today. If you are a tax payer, simply put your offering in the envelopes provided in the church porch and complete your name, address and date. We will then receive an additional **25p** per **£1.00** of your offering which would make a big difference to us. Many thanks.

MARTYRS?

She’s a martyr to her corns, we say. Or perhaps we think that we shouldn’t give publicity to terrorists because they’ll become martyrs. We use the word martyr in a different way from the way it was thought of in gospel times. For us, martyrdom means suffering, like the woman with her corns. And when we hear of the death of various holy people we call it martyrdom. But in fact the word martyr doesn’t necessarily involve suffering or dying.

The word martyr means a witness. If you are a martyr to the cause, then you are a good advert for the cause, a good example or a witness to what the cause is all about.

In fact, although Sts. Peter and Paul were both killed for their faith, they are really martyrs because they both witnessed to it. In an obvious way we can say that dying in order to witness to your faith is the ultimate martyrdom.

Yet what’s important about Peter and Paul isn’t that they died but that they spent their lives passing on the message of Jesus Christ. The ancient Preface prayer for today’s feast speaks of “Peter, our leader in the faith, and Paul, its fearless preacher.”

If we want to emulate the two saints of today’s feast then we don’t have to seek out death before our time; we have to be martyrs by witnessing and passing on what we have been taught and believe. In fact that’s how Christian faith survives. Faith, they say, is not taught but caught. We catch it at our mother’s knee, at the feet of good teachers, from the lips of holy people we come to meet in life.

It’s easy to bypass our job of transmitting the faith by saying that this is the task of others, of clergy and catechists, of teachers and preachers. But the truth is that the only reason why we can celebrate today’s feast is because of generations of mothers, fathers, grandparents, uncles and aunts who accepted the responsibility of handing on their faith to their own families and friends.

Peter and Paul would be happy to accept praise for their martyrdom, for the way they transmitted their faith, but they’d probably be even happier if they thought we were also joining the martyrs’ queue ourselves.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME

There is a selection of good household furniture in the church hall in Forfar, which has been donated from a variety of sources. I would like to create more space for future parish events, which will be held once all Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted. With this in mind, I am happy to announce that all items will be free to a good home. If you or anyone you know would like to see the furniture, please contact myself so that an arrangement can be made to view the items. Unfortunately, the parish is not in a position to provide transport for uplifting this furniture. Thank you.

SCOTTISH BISHOPS RESPOND TO POPE’S INITIATIVE FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH

Scotland’s Catholic Bishops have welcomed a call from Pope Francis for a Synod on the theme of Synodality, to be held in 2023. Commenting, Bishop Hugh Gilbert, said: “The Pope has called for a very participative process, engaging all the faithful, which will prepare for this Synod. We welcome the Initiative for a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission. As the principle and foundation of unity in our dioceses, we look forward to the launch of the Synodal journey, a period of consultation and discernment in our local Churches, on Sunday 17 October this year and preparations are now being made for this. We ask all the faithful to pray for the success of this initiative and to open our hearts and listen to the Holy Spirit speaking through all of us in the Body of Christ.”