



Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone (Diocese of Derry)

St. Patrick's, Greencastle Our Lady of the Wayside, Broughderg

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year B] (31st January, 2021)

Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU

Website: greencastleparish.com • **Email:** greencastlepp@yahoo.com • **Tel:** (028) 816 48474



Thought for the Week: "Everything, then, depends on our ability to see the need for a change of heart, attitudes and lifestyles. Otherwise, political propaganda, the media and the shapers of public opinion will continue to promote an individualistic and uncritical culture subservient to unregulated economic interests and societal institutions at the service of those who already enjoy too much power." *Pope Francis (Fratelli Tutti, No. 166)*

Saturday 30th January	Greencastle (FB)	6.00pm Vigil Mass
Sunday 31st January	Greencastle (FB)	11.00am Mass
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year B]	Greencastle (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary
Monday 1st February	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	10.00am Mass
St. Brigid	Greencastle (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary
Tuesday 2nd February	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	10.00am Mass
Presentation of the Lord	Badoney Lower (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary
Wednesday 3rd February	St. Patrick's	2.00pm to 4.00pm Adoration
St. Blaise (martyr) and	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	7.30pm Mass
St. Ansgar (both bishops)	Badoney Lower (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary
Thursday 4th February	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	10.00am Mass
	Greencastle (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary
Friday 5th February	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	7.30pm Mass: Pete McCullagh (Month's Mind)
St. Agatha (virgin and martyr)	Badoney Lower (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary
Saturday 6th February	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	6.00pm Vigil Mass:
St. Paul Miki and Companions (martyrs)		Mary Ann McCullagh (5 th Anniversary)
Sunday 7th February	St. Patrick's (YouTube)	11.00am Mass
Fifth Sunday in OT [Year B]	Greencastle (FB)	8.00pm Night Prayer and Rosary

The parish bulletin will be available in printed form from the usual places from next weekend

COLLECTIONS	10th January: £270 • 17th January: £255 • 24th January: £220
<i>Please note that these totals do not include envelopes left at Broughderg Post Office or the Parochial House</i>	
<i>These will be counted and added for this weekend's total</i>	

Parish Envelopes: During this time of continuing lockdown and the suspension of public worship can we express our thanks for your continuing generosity to the parish. Please continue to return your parish envelopes to the postbox at the sacristy of St. Patrick's Church, the Parochial House and Broughderg Post Office.

Sick and Housebound: Will receive a phone call during the course of this week during which prayers will be shared. We will especially pray as a parish community for all the sick in our community at home and in hospital at mass on Thursday 4th February at 10.00am and during Night Prayer and Rosary at 8.00pm.

Remembering Our Dead: We pray for the happy repose of the soul of **John Kelly (Cookstown, formerly Formil)** who died last week and **Pete McCullagh** whose Month's Mind occurs on Friday. We also pray for the soul of **Philomena McLaughlin (15th)** and **Thomas McDermott (16th)** whose anniversaries occur now and for all who have died due to COVID-19.

Children in Crossfire Advent Appeal: Some of you very kindly returned your donations over the Christmas and New Year period and now we can officially ask that donations can now be returned to the usual drop off points, Postbox at St. Patrick's Church Sacristy, Parochial House and Broughderg Post Office. We will push this over the next few weeks. Alternatively you can send them to the Children in Crossfire office, 2 St. Joseph's Avenue Derry BT48 6TH. If you didn't get a box and would like one you can still pick them up at the back of the chapel if you are in for private prayer. You can also donate online by visiting justgiving.com/fundraising/advent-appeal.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support at this challenging time

St. Vincent de Paul Helpline: For those in need of assistance please call 07738 837 992

A Word of Thanks: Over the past few weeks I have been overwhelmed by your calls, messages and cards containing your best wishes and prayers as I recover from Covid-19. Thankfully that recovery is ongoing and I will be taking things slowly for the next while. Many thanks to Fr. Forbes for leading us in prayer in recent times. Let us continue to pray for one another and for all those both known and unknown to us who are suffering during this pandemic. May the grace of God bind us all together as we endeavour to go forward to brighter times later this year. *Fr. Edward Gallagher*

Latest Restrictions on Public Worship: As you will be aware restrictions on Public Worship will be continuing into the month of March and perhaps beyond towards Easter. From this week our mass will once more be streamed from St. Patrick's Church on the Parish YouTube Channel. Overtime, starting with some Months Mind Masses, we will have a reader or two and music if the family so wishes. This is permitted now in the regulations for streamed masses. We hope to gradually introduce readers for the Sunday Masses and possibly some music too. As regards other sacraments at this stage it appears quite likely that First Confession planned for 25th March will be rescheduled until after Easter. It is hoped to celebrate one or two Do this in Memory Masses before Easter and also a virtual Service of Light for the Confirmation children. Beginning this coming week Fr. Gallagher will be in touch with those who have booked a wedding this year to progress paperwork over the phone and assess plans for ceremonies which, of course, will be subject to restrictions on numbers and receptions for some time to come. Baptisms can be booked at the moment but again with restrictions on numbers. Only parents, godparents, siblings and grandparents are permitted under the guidelines from the diocese. Anyone who wishes to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation can contact Fr. Gallagher and a socially distant celebration will be arranged. Finally, Ash Wednesday (17th February) and Lent will be very different this year. There will be no distribution of Ashes but suggestions will be offered in advance for those following online masses that day. We continue to pray for patience and perseverance during these times. The schedule for Mass and Night Prayer and Rosary can be seen in the Liturgy Schedule on the left side of this bulletin.

St. Brigid's Day / Candlemas Day: The Feast of St. Brigid will be celebrated with a bilingual mass Monday 1st February at 10.00am on YouTube. If you have St. Brigid's Crosses you wish blessed, please leave them in the church in front of the altar. Please mark your bag with your name and collect after the mass. The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord will be celebrated with online mass Tuesday 2nd February at 10.00am on YouTube, if you have candles to be blessed please leave in front of the altar in a bag with your name and they can be collected afterwards. A small number of blessed candles will be available for purchase during the day at £1.00 each. Please leave money in the candelabra.

St. Angela's College, Sligo – Invitation for Applications for
Part-Time Certificate in Religious Education (Primary) with Online Delivery
 Begins Autumn. The course is open to qualified primary school teachers and qualified post-primary school teachers who wish to transfer to primary school teaching. Parents, sacramental preparation teams and parish catechists who have a specific interest in the area of primary religious education may also apply.
Closing date for Applications: Friday 14th May (may be extended)
 For more info and application forms contact us using the following details:
Address: Mary Kearns, Senior Administrator, School of Education, St. Angela's College, Lough Gill, Sligo
Email: mkearns@stangelas.nuigalway.ie **Website:** stangelas.nuigalway.ie

Sperrin Physiotherapy and Pilates Clinic – Online Pilates Classes (8-week blocks):
Beginners Starts Monday 8th February, 9.30am • **Intermediate** Starts Wednesday 3rd February, 8.00pm
Led by a chartered physiotherapist • Call 07437 762 005 or email roisin@sperrinphysio.com to receive a Zoom link

SUSE+ New Courses: Are you currently unemployed? SUSE+ can help you, we are currently offering help and support to gain qualification and employment. We run Job Searches, CV Building, Interview Preparation. Mentors work 1:1 with participants to help secure a job in local area.

New courses include Foundation Skills in Working with Children, Personal Success & Wellbeing, Progression to Employment, Customer Service, Money Management, Retail, Business Administration, Barista and Essential Skills in Numeracy and Literacy. *For more information email tracy.sharkey@swc.ac.uk or call 074 3653 3475*

Pope Francis' Intention for February (please remember this in your personal prayers)
Universal Intention – Violence Against Women: We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded.

Next Week's Readings: Job 7:1-4, 6-7 • Psalm 146:1-6, R/ v 3 • Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
 Mark 1:29-39 • Lectionary 1:747 **Sunday [Year B] • Weekday [Year 1]**

Catholic Engaged Encountered – Online Marriage Preparation Course via Zoom:

Planned for Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th March. This 2-day course is a positive way of preparing for Marriage where you will discover how you can enrich your future relationship.

For more information and to book call (028) 2763 8512 or visit marriageencounter.ie

Commercial Free Catholic Talk-Radio Station for Ireland – Radio Maria Ireland (RMI):

Commercial free prayer, catechesis, uplifting music, talks, interviews and testimonies

Listen via the app 'RADIO MARIA IRELAND' on mobile devices, streaming on radiomaria.ie or listened to on the phone via a live radio feed by calling +353 (0) 1 437 3277 (no extra charges apply)

A Prayer for Now: God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; Bring hope and courage to us as we wait in uncertainty. Bring hope that you will make us the equal of whatever lies ahead. Bring us to endure what cannot be avoided, for your will is health and wholeness; you are God and we need you. *Amen*

Eucharistic Adoration Prayer Intentions for each hour of weekly Adoration

12noon – 1.00pm Vocation to Priesthood and Religious Life

1.00pm – 2.00pm Married couples and those preparing for Marriage

2.00pm – 3.00pm Sick and the Housebound • **3.00pm – 4.00pm** Strengthening of Faith in our young people

4.00pm – 5.00pm Parish Unity • **5.00pm – 6.00pm** Protecting life and the Earth

6.00pm – 7.00pm The Holy Souls and the Bereaved

Prayer for the End of the Virus: Almighty and merciful Father, who show your love to all your creation. We come before you asking for an end of the Coronavirus currently ravaging our world. Hear graciously the prayers we make for those affected by the virus in various parts of the world. Grant healing to the sick, eternal life to the dead and consolation to the bereaved families. We pray that an effective medicine to combat the sickness be speedily found. We pray for the relevant governments and health authorities, that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. Look upon us in your mercy and forgive us our failings. *Amen*

Towards Peace: A spiritual support service designed for those who have experienced sexual, physical, emotional or spiritual abuse by Catholic Church personnel in Ireland. Support is also available for family members of abuse survivors. The vision of Towards Peace is to provide a safe supportive space, where people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context can be accompanied as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace, one step at a time. Towards Peace provides spiritual support through one-to-one spiritual direction sessions, with a qualified spiritual companion. Up to 9 sessions are offered and they are free.

Website: towardspeace.ie • **Tel:** 01 505 3028 • **Email:** towardspeace@iecon.ie

Trócaire – Recruiting Volunteers: To support their fundraising, campaigning and education work in Ireland. If you are interested in volunteering visit trocaire.org/getinvolved/volunteer or call (028) 9080 8030 for more info

Red Cross: Can you spare 1 hour a week? Would you like to help the Red Cross care for people in your local community? We are looking for volunteers for our wheelchair service and volunteer drivers to help with deliveries and collections. No experience necessary. Full training provided and volunteer expenses reimbursed.

Call Julie White on (028) 7186 3764 / (078) 0302 4011

Online Youth Programmes: To access a wide variety of initiatives and activities by Derry Diocesan Youth, visit: **Facebook:** [DerryDiocesanYouth](https://www.facebook.com/DerryDiocesanYouth) **Instagram:** [derryyouth](https://www.instagram.com/derryyouth)

The Millennium Forum – Changing Place Facility: This is a space which provides a private area for people who require an adult changing bench, hoist and toilet. Over ¼ million people need Changing Places toilets to enable them to get out and about and enjoy the day-to-day activities many of us take for granted. The Millennium Forum Changing Place is open to all members of the public, not only people attending the theatre.

Call our Access and Inclusion Officer Lisa Heaney on (028) 7126 4455 (choose option 1) or email lisah@millenniumforum.co.uk

Epilepsy Action NI: Are you, or someone you care for, living with epilepsy or brain injury?

Epilepsy Action NI and Headway work in partnership to deliver a community-based counselling service in Omagh. The Counselling service is for people over the age of 18 who are affected by epilepsy and / or brain injury or are caring for someone with epilepsy / brain injury and would like some emotional support.

Kindercare Fostering NI: Could you help a child in need? Northern Ireland is currently experiencing a severe shortage of foster carers and particularly carers from the Catholic Community. We are a not-for-profit organisation which works to find safe, secure and loving homes for children and young people in need in Northern Ireland. If you are interested in finding out more:

Tel: (028) 90941690 • **Email:** gillian.devlin@kindercare.co.uk • **Website:** kindercareni.co.uk

Drink Wise, Age Well: Are you over 50? Are you worried about your own or someone else's alcohol use?

For confidential information, advice and support call (028) 8283 9240

Alcoholics Anonymous: Can't stop? There is a solution.

Call AA on (028) 9035 1222 or email csoofaa@btinternet.com. alcoholicsanonymous.ie.

Guidelines on Use of Modern Technology when Working with Children – Use of Photography and Video:

The use of photography and video is an issue of great concern among those working with children. The Diocese recognises that every parish has their own arrangements in relation to its use in schools, youth groups and for the sacraments however the guidelines have been devised below to aid parishes and diocesan groups:

- It is always good practice to seek *written* permission from a parent or guardian before taking any photographs or video footage of children. This written permission must be sought from the parent/guardian or the person who owns the photograph before it can be displayed on promotional materials or websites. This can be incorporated in the registration form when a child joins a group (template permission Resource 10);
- Neither names nor any personal information should be displayed alongside any photographs;
- Special consideration should be given where taking photographs or video footage might be misinterpreted, or the images could be seen as provocative (e.g. beach trip or gymnastics display etc.). It is not to say, however, that with the right planning, these events cannot be recorded and enjoyed.

Photography and video recording are important methods of recording social activity and providing an historic record – illustrating and validating important moments in people's lives. This process is a powerful and personal one, and therefore we must respect the rights of all to make the choice whether or not to be photographed.

From Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, published on behalf of the **Diocesan Safeguarding Committee**

Child Safeguarding: If you or anyone you know has a concern or wishes to report an allegation directly to the statutory authorities, please contact the PSNI / local Health and Social Care Trust. If you are contacting the latter, ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker. Alternatively, if you have a child safeguarding concern in relation to any member of Church personnel and wish to report it to Church authorities, please contact one of the diocesan designated persons, who will in turn report your concern to the relevant statutory authorities. See poster at entrance

The Spiritual Benefits of Weekly Eucharistic Adoration

It helps us to grow in holiness. Jesus is ready to lavish on us, many extra graces and blessings, when we come and spend time with Him in Adoration. It helps us to appreciate Priesthood. Remember, "No Priests, no Eucharist". It is an established fact that where Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is worshipped and adored vocations flourish. When we spend time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration each week or more often, we experience a great peace and contentment.

"...of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the Sacraments themselves". *Pope St. John Paul II*

Mid Ulster Agewell: Are you over 50 years old? Do you live in the Mid Ulster Council area? Would you like a free phone call in the morning to reduce the feeling of loneliness and isolation, reassurance and a listening ear and help keep you up to date with social activities in your local area? A phone call can be arranged between 8.30am and 12.30pm from Monday to Friday.

For more info call Marie Devlin on (028) 796 32170 or email marie.devlin@agewellpartnership.org.

Pope Francis' Prayer for Protection: O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith. You know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine. Love to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us: He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen. We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Accord Counselling Services: Ireland's leading agency supporting marriage and relationships, nationwide through its 60 Centres. Our aim is to help couples prepare for, achieve and sustain their marriage and family relationships, offer ongoing support and assist them in times of difficulty or crisis. Available to couples regardless of their faith, denomination or none. *To avail of this service call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com*

Join the Derry Youth Community (DYC) Adventure: If you are between the ages of 18 and 25 and considering a Gap Year experience why not consider one with a difference? The DYC are a community of faith and service located in the heart of Derry City and serving the young people of the Diocese of Derry.
If faith is important in your life, and you are attracted to the ideal of service, you can find more information by visiting derryyouthcommunity.com or emailing dyc@derrydiocese.org

Trócaire: Every year Trócaire asks for your help during Lent to fund lifesaving programmes around the world. This year, of course, it was not possible to return Trócaire boxes through schools or parishes in the usual way. This is the worst possible timing coming just as the world's poorest people need us most. Therefore, Trócaire are appealing to you to return your Lenten donation. Simply count or estimate what is in your box and donate in the following ways:

1. Online at trocaire.org
2. By phone: 1850 408 408 (ROI) or 0800 912 1200 (NI)
3. By post to Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare (ROI) or Trócaire, 10 King Street, Belfast, BT1 6AD (NI)
4. As with your parish envelope please leave at Broughderg Post Office, St. Patrick's Church Sacristy outside door postbox or the Parochial House. No boxes please.

Please also fill in Gift Aid details on envelope. The contents of each and every Trócaire box, no matter how small, come together to make a significant difference. This virus knows no borders, but neither does our compassion.

ASPIRE: Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's employability service, is currently active with new ways of working. ASPIRE staff are ready to help people apply for and secure jobs; support from the initial search through to the application and with interview prep. Also provide training courses and arrange work experience placements. Omagh (028) 8224 6535 • Enniskillen 028 6632 6478 • Mobile 07799 471 448 • aspire@fermanaghomagh.com

Rural Support: We could help you with financial stress by
 Providing free, confidential face-to-face support • Easing the burden of dealing with debt
 Helping you identify a way forward • Supporting you to take action
Email: info@ruralsupport.org.uk **Website:** ruralsupport.org.uk
 To speak with someone in confidence call our helpline on 0845 606 7 606

Barnardo's NI – Can You Foster? Could you give a home to a vulnerable child when they need it most? Fostering is about giving them a safe, secure place to live for a few weeks, months or even years. Barnardo's Fostering NI is looking for foster carers. Foster placements can be long-term, short-term, emergency, short breaks and parent and child together. You must be over 21 to foster and must have a spare bedroom in your home. Foster carers are offered a fostering fee and allowances; they are given training and support.
To learn more call (028) 9065 2288 or visit barnardos.org.uk/foster

Dún Uladh's Music Classes – Back for 2021 via Zoom: Lessons available in tin whistle, flute, fiddle, banjo, harp, button accordion and concertina for all ages and abilities. Instruments also available to hire.
For more info or to register e-mail music@dunuladh.ie

Deanery of Tyrone Statistics
 17 Parishes in West Tyrone and East Donegal. An estimated Catholic population of 65,670 people are currently served by 20 Derry Diocesan priests under retirement age with assistance of 3 priests in residence and a chaplain to the Polish community.
 8 parishes (47%) have a Catholic population of less than 3,000
 6 parishes (35%) have a Catholic population of 3,000-7,000 people
 3 parishes (18%) have a Catholic population of greater than 7,000 people
 The largest parish serves an estimated 11,500 Catholics
 7 parishes have 1,500 parishioners or less (7,900 combined) each with a resident priest. Is this sustainable?
 In 2008 there were 27 diocesan clergy under retirement age ministering in the Tyrone Deanery, as of 2018 that number is 20. 7 Parish Priests currently serving in the deanery will reach 75 before 2025.
 The maximum number of ordinations across the Derry Diocese by 2025 is 3.
 Age profile: 1 priest is in his 30s, 1 in 40s, 7 in 50s, 6 in 60s and 5 in 70s
 The clergy population has dropped 26% between 2008 and 2018 and by 2025 will have dropped by 52%

The Deep End – Genuine Authority: *Triona Doherty, Athlone, Co. Roscommon (trionad@gmail.com)*
 We probably wouldn't have to think too hard to come with examples of people who seem to fit the above description. Puffed up with a sense of their own importance, they are anxious to be seen as the expert on everything, in spite of limited knowledge or experience. We tend to criticise politicians and other public figures if we feel they are blind to the struggles of ordinary people. They don't know what it's like, to example, to live on a minimum wage, to care for a family member with a disability, or to be at risk of homelessness. On the other hand, it is refreshing when those in power have either faced some of these issues themselves or have made the effort to do some research and really listen to people. We can tell when someone is speaking with genuine authority, care and compassion.
 In today's gospel, those who listen to Jesus' teaching in the synagogue know there is something different and exciting about him. His teaching is in sharp contrast to the scribes they are used to hearing, and makes a deep impression on them. The difference, as stated twice in this passage, is his authority and it leaves his audience 'astonished'. He does not use his position the way we might use our 'little brief authority' to make ourselves look good. Instead he uses his authority to serve, to love, and to bring mercy and freedom.

But man, proud man,
 Dress'd in a little brief authority,
 Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd...
William Shakespeare (Measure for Measure)

Some Important Dates		
Thursday 25th March First Confession for P4 Children	Sunday 4th April Easter Sunday	Saturday 8th May at 11.00am Confirmation
Saturday 5th June at 12noon First Holy Communion	Saturday 3rd / Sunday 4th July Blessing of the Graves in Greencastle / Broughderg	

2019	PARISH STATISTICS	2020
(19) 8 Boys • 11 Girls	Baptisms	(17) 8 Boys • 9 Girls
(25) 12 Boys • 13 Girls	First Communion	(11) 4 Boys • 7 Girls
(16) 9 Boys • 7 Girls	Confirmation	(14) 7 Boys • 7 Girls
1 within parish • 6 outside parish	Weddings	0 within parish • 1 outside parish
11	Deaths and Burials	8

Seeing your life through the lens of the gospel:*John Byrne OSA (jpbyrneosa@gmail.com)*

1. In this first chapter Mark familiarises his readers with the type of things Jesus did to proclaim the kingdom, the Reign of God. Our passage today touches on two of these, the first being that 'he taught as one having authority'. It makes a difference when you listen to someone who is clearly speaking from experience and personal knowledge. Remember people who impressed you in this way.
2. Jesus' combined teaching with healing, and he drove the evil spirit out of the man. The power of God that worked this wonder through Jesus is also at work in and through us today. When have you been freed from some bad habit?
3. The evil spirit convulsed the man before it left him. The path to liberation can be a painful struggle. If you have found it so, who was the Jesus person that helped you through the struggle to freedom?
4. is not only individuals but groups that can be struggling with an evil spirit – jealousy, rivalry, malicious gossiping, abuse of power, etc. Sometimes a Jesus person comes into the group and drives out that evil spirit. Have you experienced this? Perhaps you yourself have been this person on some occasion?

This Week's Calendar of Feasts and Saints:

- Sunday 31st January – St. John Bosco (priest) [1815-1888]** Born in Piedmont, founded the Salesians to educate boys for life. He also became involved in publishing catechetical material for youth. He is a Patron Saint of youth and of Catholic publishers.
- Monday 1st February – St. Brigid** Celebrated for her generosity to the poor. In her case, most of the miracles associated with her relate to healing and household tasks usually attributed to women.
- Wednesday 3rd February – St. Blaise (bishop and martyr)** Bishop of Sebaste, martyred in Armenia. Patron Saint for sore throats and sick cattle. Died in 315.
St. Ansgar (bishop) A Frenchman who became Archbishop of Hamburg in the 9th century and preached the gospel in Denmark and Sweden. Apostle of Scandinavia. Patron Saint of Denmark.
- Friday 5th February – St. Agatha (virgin and martyr)** Died a martyr for the faith at Catania in Sicily in the 3rd century. Patron Saint of bell-founders.
- Saturday 6th February – St. Paul Miki and Companions (martyrs)** Paul Miki, a Japanese Jesuit, and his twenty-five companions were martyred in Nagasaki, Japan. They were the first Martyrs of East Asia to be canonised. They were killed simultaneously by being raised on crosses and then stabbed with spears. Their executioners were astounded upon seeing their joy at being associated to the Passion of Christ.

What Is Spiritual Communion? It has long been a Catholic understanding that when circumstances prevent one from receiving Holy Communion, it is possible to make an Act of Spiritual Communion, which is a source of grace. Spiritual Communion is an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament and lovingly embrace him at a time or in circumstances when one cannot receive Him in sacramental Communion. The most common reason for making an Act of Spiritual Communion is when a person cannot attend Mass. Acts of Spiritual Communion increase our desire to receive sacramental Communion and help us avoid the sins that would make us unable to receive Holy Communion worthily.

Spiritual Communion Prayer: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen