

## Ukraine

### Barron

Christians are peace-makers. Get in the way of evil

Francis to Russian embassy. He said this Lent we pray and we fast for peace

### Mallon

Fear of loss of progress in liberal democracy.

Faith as trust... believing God. I find that I'm only forced to deepen my faith; my grounding in God when all of the other false things that I rely on are removed from me. These days invite us to a deeper faith.

Faith has to translate into action

### Nicky Gumble

Not a time for the church to keep out of politics.

Pray. Everyone needs to use their voice to speak out. Evil is evil. A barbaric act. Name it as evil. Paul in Romans: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. The church should rise up and act; speak out; give money and resources; give hospitality. Open the doors. Every refugee should be welcomed with open arms. Church give hospitality. Lead by example. World should see that the church is at the forefront of overcoming evil with good.

## Covid. How is the church fulfilling her mission to make disciples

### Mallon

Are we more connected with our method than our vision?

In the past: Provide pastoral care to people who showed up.

Covid made us assume an outward posture – go out to minister, even to participants in the church.

Showed that we are able to innovate and embrace new methods.

Let's keep going with that.

### Barron

Part of good news was that we learned how to use new methods. All to the good.

New evangelisation: find ways to go out to meet people

Beginning of crisis we were all forced onto a sort of retreat. Couldn't distract ourselves with trivialities; forced to encounter ourselves; reflect, pray, think, read.

Negative side: In USA, churchgoing was regarded as non-essential to life (unlike strip clubs!) The fact that the church implicitly accepted that is a really bad sign: we've succumbed to

present culture's view that religion is fine as a hobby; something private; not essential to life. We believe it is essential to life. Mortally dangerous to stay away from the worship of God on a regular basis. It damages your spirit/soul, so you won't flourish.

What has the pandemic told us about what we really value? (Crisis reveals)

### Nicky Gumble

Terrible suffering. But God can take something horrific and use it for good. e.g. the crucifixion of the Son of God.

"Rise of Christianity" by Rodney Stark. Church grew rapidly during pandemics of history because during those times the pagans ran away, whereas the Christians ran towards the need. Feeding, caring, medicines. Govt. backed us. People know it's the churches who run foodbanks, homeless shelters... It is now a huge opportunity for evangelisation because of our new appreciation of the power of the internet. The last great innovation of that magnitude was the invention of the printing press. This enabled the Guttenberg Bible to be produced, which put the word of God into the hands of everyone. We need to use technology to get the gospel to every person on the planet. 2033 – two thousandth anniversary of the Resurrection of Jesus!

**What is the most urgent call for the church right now in terms of her mission?**

### Barron

**Declaring Jesus Christ risen from the dead.** That's evangelisation.

Cardinal George's last talk to the priests of Chicago: "At the beginning of the Church there were no parishes, schools, hospitals, Vatican, curia, seminaries, diocesan offices. But there were evangelists."

We maintain our institutions in the measure that they are effective in declaring Jesus Christ risen from the dead. Institutional crises have the benefit of reawakening our sense of priority.

We need to know what we are about.

### Mallon

God is saying the same to the Church today as he was last week and 2,000 years ago.

Experience of deep Christian community; discipleship; vibrant worship; evangelisation. Contrasted with my experience of the parish as a 16 year old. Why can't our parishes be like that? Put our theology into practise.

How do we wake ourselves up? Alpha is not catechesis, it's evangelisation.

### Gumble

I encountered Jesus at age 18 by reading the New Testament. It was as if the person of Jesus emerged from it and it changed my life. Jesus said "I came that you might have life, life in all it's fullness" From that moment I wanted to spend the rest of my life telling people about

it, because I think the most loving thing you can do is to introduce someone to Jesus. I notice today a massive hunger, especially among young people. Everyone is looking for love, and we know that the Son of God loved you and gave himself for you. We need to experience his love by the Holy Spirit coming into our hearts. Everyone is looking for purpose and we know that you will not find the true purpose of your life until you know God through Jesus. Everyone is looking to belong and the Church is not just an organisation you join, it is a family where you belong.

People are more open than they've ever been. Greatest privilege anyone can have is to bring people to Jesus (look at St. Andrew with his brother Peter)

**How do we do this – make evangelisation the main thing, here and now**

Barron

Complex issue, but here's a practical thing: Bring someone back to church when you come next time.

Disaffiliation: to combat it we need to educate ourselves about our faith. Know what you believe.

Mallon

Communal evangelisation. Focus on and shift resources to what's effective. Choose one evangelistic tool (e.g. Alpha). Make sure you include people who haven't up to this point attended church regularly. Distinct movements of evangelisation: Begins with proclamation, leads to accompaniment, helping people to experience encounter with Jesus, then to move into relationship with Jesus, then to make a commitment to him and ultimately to bring them to the sacraments. Have to be concerned about bringing in the harvest.

Gumble

Raniero Cantalamessa three themes: Evangelisation; unity; the Holy Spirit.

If we argue amongst ourselves, the world is not going to believe. Unite around Jesus. What unites us is infinitely greater than what divides us.

Holy Spirit: you will receive power and you will be my witnesses. Not enough to receive the Holy Spirit; it's given that we might experience God's love, but he also sends us out on mission.

**Time of prayer so that we can act on our faith**

Barron

Guide us in the work of evangelisation. Send us on the mission you trusted to your Son and now to us. To bring grace and peace to the world.

Mallon

Purify our faith and make it more precious than gold. Genuine; proclaim; live out; lead people to build up God's kingdom

Gumble

Come, Holy Spirit. (Cantalamessa: Pray, expecting the Holy Spirit to come) Emmanuel – God is with you right now.

### Feedback from watch party:

The webcast inspired us, gave us some ideas for what could be done and we intend to take action on evangelisation and responding in faith to the current situation.