

A low-angle photograph of a roller coaster car at the peak of a tall drop. The car is filled with people and is positioned on a dark track that curves over a massive, dark support column. The sky is a mix of light blue and orange, suggesting sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is thrilling and adventurous.

# Lifequakes

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ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHCATE

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## Lifequakes

It's not a roller coaster that always goes up! We have ups and downs in our lives. Some are great, some are okay; some are devastating. Writer Bruce Feiler writes about all the changes and disruptions that happen in our lives. More often they are involuntary changes than voluntary. I love the term he uses; Lifequakes. The big, huge disruptions that destabilise and disorient us. He calls these events Lifequakes. They disrupt our lives and bring about massive change that leads to life transition. In the course of our lives we have to face at least three to five lifequakes and each transition would last an average of five years. And these aftershocks would haunt us for years. We can't avoid them completely, especially involuntary ones. This pandemic is a global Lifequake. We may experience it differently, at micro and macro levels; but we are all experiencing Covid-Lifequake. He talks about



how to master changes in our life and gives tools to help when those changes come.

This second book of Isaiah is primarily written to the Israelites who were facing a series of lifequakes. They were living in exile in Babylon and God rains over them with comfort and encouragement. God has been faithful to the promise to give the Israelites land and even still they have worshipped other gods. God's response is one of invitation and welcome. He is reaching out to them in the midst of those lifequakes and it's aftershocks. God's voice sounds an awful lot like a street vendor who is trying to get a passer-by to stop and buy their goods. Only, in this case, God is saying, "No money? No problem." Listen to how the passage opens.

"Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, delight yourselves in rich food."

The imperatives in this passage are: Come. Buy. Eat. Listen. Delight. The picture of welcome, grace, and mercy that is painted is beautiful and challenging in so many ways.

Today, the church must be the one to offer this same radical invitation to welcome and grace and mercy. We must be the voice that helps people see how abundant and full and rich life can be when we stop spending our resources on things that do not satisfy, but rather spend them in ways that lead to this abundant life God is offering. Maybe it could sound something like:

—You, who have wasted your life by giving it all to work and not your family – come, rest, join us at the table, **we will help you make it right again.**

—You, who have spent all of your energy on things that hurt more than they help – we see you are hurting also. Come, **you will find forgiveness here.**

—You, who are an addict and have spent your savings on temporary relief – come, have a warm shower, a healthy meal, and good night sleep. **We will help you make new choices in the morning.**

—You who have spent so much of your energy trying to get people to love you that don't even know how to love themselves – **let us love you. We want to.**

—You who have broken yourselves trying to prove your worth – **come, rest, you have always been enough.**

—You who have had your joy stolen by those who will tell you that you don't belong, you aren't ok the way you were born, you are bad – come here with us. God doesn't make mistakes. **You are doing great just like you are.**

I encourage you to find some time to sit with this passage. Let the fullness of its radical love and welcome surprise you and move you to offer the same radical hospitality and vision of abundant life to all you meet. And then in the midst of **“huge disruptions we will be able to rewrite the story of who we are.”**

# Know Your Parish



**T**he Congregation for Clergy on Monday published new guidelines for the world's parishes, which aim to encourage parishes to think of themselves as missionary communities of evangelization.

The guidelines do not publish new norms or policies for parish life, but they do encourage Catholics to think prayerfully about what their parishes are, and what they're for.

Here are a few themes and takeaways:

### **The parish is mission.**

The guidelines offer parishes “a call to go out of themselves, offering instruments for reform, even structural, in a spirit of communion and collaboration, of encounter and closeness, of mercy and solicitude for the proclamation of the Gospel.”

“Since its inception, the Parish is envisioned as a response to a precise pastoral need, namely that of bringing the Gospel to the People through the proclamation of the faith and the celebration of the Sacraments,” the document says.

To meet its mission, “a renewed vitality is required that favours the rediscovery of the vocation of the baptised as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a missionary of the Gospel.” Especially in parts of the world where many people do not know or practice the faith, the document encourages parishes to discern how to think of themselves as missionary communities, and how

to focus on proclaiming the Gospel to all who will hear.

### **The Eucharist and the poor should be central to parish life.**

“The celebration of the Eucharistic mystery is ‘the source and summit of the whole Christian life’ and accordingly, the essential moment for building up the Parish community,” the guidelines instruct.

The Mass should be the centre of parish life, the document says, and the place from which the parish receives its mission. In the Mass, the parish “welcomes the living presence of the Crucified and Risen Lord, receiving the announcement of the entire mystery of salvation.”

### **And, the document says, the poor should be invited to the heart of parish life.**

“A ‘sanctuary’ open to all, the Parish, called to reach out to everyone, without exception, should remember that the poor and excluded must always have a privileged place in the heart of the Church,” the document says.

“The Parish community evangelizes and is evangelized by the poor, discovering anew the call to preach the Word in all settings, whilst recalling the ‘supreme law’ of charity, by which we shall all be judged.”

By **JD Flynn**.

To be continued...

Denver Newsroom, Jul 20, 2020 (CNA)



# BOOKING YOUR PLACE AT MASS

Booking a place is easy! Please click on the following link and choose a Mass time:

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/highgate/events/>



A link is also available via the parish website.

## Christian Stewardship

Last week's collection amounted to £680. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thank you very much for your continuing generosity in support of your Parish.







# GIVE

St. Joseph's mission  
is sustained  
by the grace of God  
and the faithfulness  
of people like

# YOU

We are here because of your generosity.  
Yes, we need your support.

We give because God first gave to us.  
When we give to what God cares about,  
we share in the work of building God's  
Kingdom. When we give generously, we  
share in the true nature of God's abundant  
love.

If Christ is truly the centre of our lives,  
then giving to the church should be an  
outward reflection of an inward change,  
signifying that Christ is first in our lives.

We prayerfully invite you to use E-Giving  
through **Gift Aid** and **Standing Orders** to  
set up a recurring donation or make a one-  
time gift.

It is a way to express gratitude and  
beautiful way to say thank you.

Please visit our website and the portal  
'**Donate to Our Parish**' and download  
the forms you need and make your  
offerings. *And we will be distributing the  
Planned Giving Envelopes at the earliest.*

[www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk](http://www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk)

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