



Saint Mary's Parish Lanark & Saint Isidore's Parish Biggar

1st Sunday of Advent 3rd December 2023



Advent: A Season of Hope

Advent has a dual focus on Jesus's coming, both in his first coming among us as a man and his coming at the end of time. Although this can, at times, lead to confusion, this twofold approach to the season allows Advent to teach us about God's presence among us. In Advent, we learn that God is the basis of hope, and that such hope is the basis for increasing our love of this life.

Eternity is often thought of as a future goal alone. Thoughts like "when I enter eternal life" or "I look forward to eternity" can reveal attitudes that indicate that we might believe God only to be in our future. What this implies, however, is a loss of the presence of God in the here and now, creating a sense of distance between us and God. With this view, God is no longer close to us and our experience. But Advent exists to retool or restore our vision. By focusing on the two comings of Christ, the Advent season reminds us that one cannot exist without the other. Eternity is a goal, yes, but it is also present now — albeit seen dimly as though through a mirror. Eternity enters our time and creation in Jesus, elevating all creation into eternity. The liturgy, the sacraments and the Church itself have become the means by which Christ makes himself present to us today — and therefore eternity is also in our midst, though not in its fullness due to the continued fallenness of the world. Where Jesus is, there is eternity, and we know he is not restrained to heaven alone. Advent helps us to see with fresh eyes that our eternal goal is already in progress because Christ is here with us. Because of his coming among us as man, eternity is within our grasp.



So often we reduce hope to wishful thinking: "I hope I win the lottery" or "I hope this job situation works out," and so forth. This unfortunate reduction of hope has removed the virtue's central character from Christian consciousness. Hope without a guarantee is just wishful thinking. Hope needs some guarantee if it is to be truly hope. If eternity is present already in Christ, then hope finds its guarantee in him. We have hope because we already see the effects of Jesus in our lives and in the life of the Church. Hope gives us the ability to see Christ in all, to encounter him in prayer and sacrament, and to hear him in the Scriptures. All this gives our lives an enduring character. Christian hope says life is not fleeting, but rather is enduring because it is united to Jesus's own life. Advent is the training ground of hope — of recognising God's presence as saving — in the face of whatever is fleeting and passing. Advent is the season of hope.

Advent, as a season of hope, helps increase our desire for God. This is done not only by seeing Him as a future goal, but also by seeing him as someone whom we can encounter today. We meet him and attain our unity with him through the state of life to which he calls us, and through the circumstances of life. God's presence among us becomes clearer to us as we advance in the Christian journey. It is the unfolding of a mystery. And Advent is a time for us to focus on that especially. This mystery will be revealed when we see God face to face. Heaven is in our midst today through Jesus's presence among us. So if Jesus isn't present to us today — meaning our heavenly goal is unattainable — then Christianity is just a fairy tale, a myth or wishful thinking. But if we look at life not as something to be avoided, but something to be embraced, we find that God is running toward us in Christ's Incarnation, meeting us in our lives in such a way that he draws us into God's own life. And this coming of Christ is what Advent is all about.

In the encounter of God we meet the One who loves us first, we experience his love as something life-giving. When we experience love like this, we cannot help but desire the One who seeks us. Seeing Advent as a time to increase our desire for God, then, we learn to experience Christ as the One who is always coming to meet us, always drawing us to himself. By embracing our vocation, our state of life and the situations of our lives, we also embrace opportunities of encounter with God. Advent, then, is our opportunity to recommit ourselves to encountering him through these things. By turning toward the Lord in this way, we will experience his love for us, which will increase our desire for Him, thereby increasing our hope.

Weekly Parish Schedule

Daily Mass & Devotions from St Mary's are Livestreamed on the parish Facebook Page and broadcast on the parish YouTube Channel.

Sunday 3rd December *St Mary's Church will close after 5pm Mass*

10.30am Holy Mass for the 1st Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

12noon Holy Mass for the 1st Sunday of Advent (Holy Trinity)

12.40pm Tea/Coffee, Home Baking & Parish Meeting (Holy Trinity)

5.00pm Holy Mass for the 1st Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

Monday 4th December *St Mary's Church will be opened Monday - Friday from 8am until 4pm*

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

9.30am Holy Mass & Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (St Mary's)

12noon Holy Mass with Anointing of the Sick (St Mary's)

Tuesday 5th December

10.00am Holy Mass (St Catherine's)

11.30am Confessions until 11.55am (St Mary's)

11.40am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

12noon Angelus, Holy Mass & Novena to St Anthony (St Mary's)

Wednesday 6th December

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

9.30am Holy Mass (St Mary's)

7.00pm Online Zoom Rosary (Meeting ID: 832 0468 2198 Passcode: 746256)

Thursday 7th December

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

9.30am Holy Mass & Novena to St Joseph (St Mary's)

Friday 8th December

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

9.30am Holy Mass (St Mary's)

Saturday 9th December *St Mary's Church will close after 5pm Mass*

9.00am Confessions until 9.25am (St Mary's)

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

9.30am Holy Mass (St Mary's)

4.30pm Confessions until 4.50pm (St Mary's)

4.30pm Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

5.00pm Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

Sunday 10th December *St Mary's Church will close after 5pm Mass*

10.30am Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

12noon Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (Holy Trinity)

3.00pm Choir of St Mary's Christmas Concert - Ticketed Event (St Mary's Clubrooms)

5.00pm Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

Parish Finances

St Mary's

Offertory Collection: £ 1,096.00

Standing Orders: £ 100.00

St Marys Mission RCDM

80-17-02 00265809

St Isidore's

Offertory Collection: £ 103.00

Standing Orders: £ 25.00

Parish of St Isidore's

83-16-11 00235026

Clydesdale Foodbank Collection

Our Monthly Foodbank Collection will take place **this weekend**.

Bags of groceries can be handed in to the sacristy or to a Passkeeper, and any monetary donations can be placed in the collection basket in an enveloped cleared marked 'FOODBANK'.



St Mary's St Vincent de Paul Society

If you know of someone who is lonely or maybe a family struggling and would benefit from help from the Society then please put their name and address on a piece of paper and put it into the box which is held every Saturday and Sunday at the back of the church. We will endeavour to help them. No need for your details as strict confidentiality will be observed.

Christmas Coffee Morning & Raffle

The Christmas Coffee Morning will take place on **Sunday 17th December after 10.30 am Mass**. The Christmas Raffle Draw will also take place at this event.

The girls will start selling raffle tickets for this event at Masses from 2nd/3rd December.

Donations for raffle prizes will be gratefully received. Thank you for your continued support.

Choir of St Mary's Concert

The Choir of St Mary's invite you to join in their "*Christmas Joy*" on Sunday 10th December at 3pm.

This is a **TICKET ONLY** event and there are only a few tickets left, priced at £7 each.

All proceeds go to support the great work of the Wayside Club in Glasgow.



Parish Pilgrimage to Fatima & Lisbon 2nd-9th July 2024

Alba Tours have extended the deadline for booking forms and deposits until Sunday 10th December, for anyone who wishes to attend the Parish Pilgrimage in July 2024. At present we have 12 parishioners booked on the pilgrimage, with a similar number from Larkhall and Blackwood. Deposits (£400) can be paid in cash or cheque made payable to: **Alba Tours Ltd**. Once numbers are confirmed we will have a meeting to discuss final arrangements.

St Mary's Heating

As the weather gets colder it is important that we try to keep St Mary's at a temperature for Mass that is comfortable for people; there is nothing worse than a cold church!

In order to help retain the heat in St Mary's please close the outside door after you and make sure the glass door from the narthex into the church is also closed.

Christmas Masses

As you know, Christmas is celebrated on a Monday this year. This means that Christmas Eve, and the First Masses of Christmas will be the Sunday Evening. Sat Vigil & Sunday Morning are still the Sunday Masses for the 4th Sunday in Advent, and we are expected to attend one of those Masses to fulfil our Sunday Obligation. Mass times to follow.

Mass for the Sick

Tomorrow, Monday 4th December at 12noon there will be Mass in St Mary's with Anointing of the Sick. Anointing of the Sick will be available to those who are sick in mind, body or spirit. Tea, Coffee and Soup in the Clubrooms afterwards. All welcome.



Jubilee Sisters Thank You

Sister Julie Marie, Sister Anne and Sister Joan (the three Jubilarians), would like to thank all parishioners for the Mass Cards received and prayers offered as they celebrated their remarkable Jubilees of 80 & 70 years of vocation.

Holy Mass will be offered for your intentions.

***St Nicholas Church
Choir and Friends,
Invite you to their
Christmas Concert on
Sunday 3rd December at 3pm
Donations to St Andrew's Hospice***



Holy Trinity Chapel
Lamington
Biggar
ML12 6HW



Parish Priest
Father John-Paul McShane
St Mary's Church
70 Bannatyne Street
Lanark ML11 7JS
01555 662234
frmcshane@rcdom.org.uk



St Mary's
70 Bannatyne Street
Lanark
ML11 7JS
stmarylanark@rcdom.org.uk
Charity No - SC011041



Please Pray For The Following:



Recently Dead: Bill Hutton; Robert Bell; Liam Fairlie (Chapelhall).

Months Minds & Anniversaries: Fr Joseph Brannigan; Monteith Family; Thomas Bowie; Jim McShane; Bridget Brady; Sadie Littlejohn; All Names Contained in our November Lists.

*Saints of God, come to their aid!
Come to meet them, angels of the Lord!
Receive their soul and present them to God the Most High.*

*May Christ, Who called you, take you to Himself;
may angels lead you to Abraham's side.
Receive their soul and present them to God the Most High.*

Diocesan Events in December

Deceased Clergy Mass

The Annual Deceased Clergy Mass will take place in St James' Church, Coatbridge (ML5 5DF) on Wednesday 6th December at 7pm, remembering in a special way: Canon Joe Cements, Fr Damien Gilhooley and Fr George Donaldson, who died in 2023.

Solemn Dedication of the Cathedral

On Thursday 14th December at 7pm, in Our Lady of Good Aid Cathedral (ML1 1PP), Bishop Toal will celebrate Mass to mark the Solemn Dedication of Motherwell Cathedral, and will give thanks for the first 75 years of the Diocese of Motherwell, while honouring the service and dedication of the Diocesan Choir over the last 40 years.

Bishop Toal extends an invitation, and offers encouragement, to all parishioners to attend these Diocesan events, to pray for our deceased priests and also the future of our diocese.

St Mary's Ministry Rota

Readers:

2nd/3rd December

5.00pm G. Abernethy
10.30am J. Russell
5.00pm M. Davis

16th/17th December

5.00pm R. Kane
10.30am R. Colpitts
5.00pm S. Casserly

9th/10th December

5.00pm A. Haetzman
10.30am M. McCusker
5.00pm N. Donnelly

23rd/24th December

5.00pm R. McConnell
10.30am P. Roberts

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:

2nd/3rd December

5.00pm J. McClafferty
J. McAlavey
10.30am J. Wilson
A. O'Neil

16th/17th December

5.00pm M. Keenan
P. Stewart
10.30am P. Cunningham
A. Cruikshank

9th/10th December

5.00pm A. Dempsey
C. Scott
10.30am G. Duddy
T. Mullen

23rd/24th December

5.00pm T. Mullen
C. McClafferty
10.30am J. McAlavey
J. Wilson