

### Prayer for Vocations:

Loving and generous God, we are your people, the work of your hands. Jesus calls us to heal the broken-hearted, to dry the tears of those who mourn, to give hope to those who despair, and to rejoice in your steadfast love.

Grant to us faith-filled leaders who will embrace Christ's Mission of love and justice.

Bless the Church of the Diocese of Motherwell by raising up dedicated leaders from our families and friends who will serve your people as priests.

Inspire us to know you better and open our hearts to hear your call.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**We pray for the Sick:** Fr Paddy Hughes C.M; James O'Connor; Fr Patrick Walsh; Canon Michael Walsh; Eddie Welsh; Liz Rae.

**We remember all of those who have died recently:** Annie Mundie; Thomas Duffy; Ann Jane McGinley; Mary McCabe; Barbara Ewing.

**We pray for the Month's Mind & Anniversary of:** Catherine Stewart; Eileen Prior; Janette Irvine; Frances Kelly; William Kay; Clare O'Leary; James Kelly; Dan McPhail.



## Parish Information

### Celebrating the Sacraments

**Baptism:** by arrangement with the Parish Priest. In line with Diocesan policy, there is a preparation meeting for the celebration of this Sacrament.

**Marriage:** in line with Diocesan policy, a minimum of six months notice must be given, during which all couples will be expected to participate in Preparation Meetings for their celebration.

**Anointing of the Sick:** on request. Anyone with a planned stay in hospital, should arrange to celebrate this Sacrament before going into hospital.

**St Mary's Clubrooms:** For bookings contact: clubrooms@outlook.com or call 01555 662234

Contact us:

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# St. Mary's Church, Lanark

4th Sunday of Lent (C) {Laetare}

31st March 2019

**INTRODUCTION TO THE MASS** The Mass this Sunday opens with the word 'Rejoice'. It could be because Lent is more than halfway through and the end is in sight. In time past when there was a very severe Lenten discipline that would have been a sensible way of hearing that opening word. But today we speak it because the liturgy proclaims resoundingly the consolation of broken human beings in the gospel of Prodigal Son. God's extravagant love invites all to be at home with him.



### LITURGY OF THE WORD

**First Reading** (Josh. 5:9-12). The people of Israel arrive in the promised land, leaving the darkness and suffering of their slavery behind them.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**Second Reading** (2 Cor. 5:17-21). God does not hold our sinfulness against us but makes us his ambassadors to one another.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.' Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!

**Gospel** (Luke 15:1-3, 11-32). The parable of the prodigal son could more readily be called the parable of the prodigal father because it spells out for us the unlimited love of God for man.

**Think Vocations** "God is making His appeal through us." Does a life dedicated to furthering the grace of reconciliation in Christ for others appeal to you? Consider a vocation as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life. Call your diocesan Vocations Director or contact [www.priestsforScotland.org.uk](http://www.priestsforScotland.org.uk)

### SERVICES FOR THE WEEK:

<b>Monday:</b>	9.30am	Service	7.00pm Mass
<b>Tuesday:</b>	9.30am	Mass	
	12.00noon	Stations of the Cross	
<b>Wednesday:</b>	9.30am	Mass	
<b>Thursday:</b>	12.00noon	Mass	
	7.00pm	Stations of the Cross	
<b>Friday:</b>	9.30am	Mass	
	12.00noon	Stations of the Cross	
<b>Saturday:</b>	9.30am	Mass	

### SUNDAY MASS TIMES:

**Saturday Vigil Mass :** 5.00pm

**Sunday:** 10.30am

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** Saturday: after 9.30am Mass; 4.30pm - 4.50pm; and on request.

St. Mary's Gazette

## FAITH IN FOCUS: PARTY MOOD

When the prodigal son came home they held a party to celebrate the fact that he was part of the fold once more. But there was an empty seat at the party; the older brother refused to come and take part.

The liturgy, and especially the Mass, is the continuation of that party and festivity. At the Eucharist we celebrate the fact that in Jesus Christ we have been redeemed and forgiven, that we are already experiencing a share in the eternal life that God has promised us and that one day we will enjoy seeing God face to face in the never-ending celebration of bliss and happiness in heaven. In the meantime we eat and drink the body and blood of Jesus Christ that was given up and shed for us so that sins may be forgiven.

As you sit in your pew in church, are there any empty seats? It would be surprising if there weren't! Most churches struggle to fill their seats except at the great feasts of the year.

Who belongs in those seats? It's tempting to say that they are older brothers' seats, people who have had some sort of gripe with the church and have decided to give Sunday worship a wide berth. To an extent this is true. We are a fallible group of people and we're quite capable of failing each other at crucial times, and of even putting off people to the extent that they no longer darken our doors. What would happen if we reached out to family and neighbours, to friends who feel that the Church has failed them? Is it worth taking the risk of inviting them to the feast, or should we just write them off as a dead loss? Would it shock us if they said yes?

And what about the person who's sitting in your seat? Yes, you. Are you the life and soul of the party or are you something of a party-poofer? We never find out whether the father finally managed to get the older brother to enter into the spirit. He could have just gone and sat there with a long face. Just turning up isn't enough. Are you glad to be able to celebrate with your whole being, singing and praying, giving thanks for the forgiveness that God has lavished upon you through no merit of your own? Or should we put the fatted calf on the back burner?

## Lenten Reconciliation Service with Individual Confession

This Service will take place on the Wednesday of Holy Week (17th April) at 7.00pm. Please put this in your diary so that you can take the opportunity to receive the forgiveness of God in this Sacrament.

## Message from Anne Elder

Fellow Parishioners, Can I say how very honoured I feel to receive the Diocesan Bene Merenti Medal. This is not just for me but for all the ladies and men who have helped with all the events throughout the years. I would like to thank them as I couldn't have done anything without them. I also want to thank all the parishioners and friends who have made donations, big and small, throughout the years. And of course, my family. Thank you all for your good wishes and Mass cards. Holy Mass will be offered for you all.

## This Weekend - SCIAF Sunday

There will be a 2nd Collection this weekend to support the work of SCIAF - the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland.



## What's on @ St. Mary's

Items for inclusion in St. Mary's Gazette should be handed into the Presbytery in writing by Thursday.

### Church Collections

17.03.19 £1410 £750 to Diocese of Motherwell £660 left to the Parish  
Collection for Sick & Retired Priests £615

300 Club Winner St Catherine's No. 72

### Food Bank

Any donations for the Food Bank will be gratefully received this weekend.

### Holy Mass for the Sick and Housebound

Holy Mass, during which the Sacrament of the Sick will be administered, will be celebrated on Thursday 4th April at 12.00noon. After Holy Mass some refreshments will be served in the Club Rooms. Anyone needing transport to the Church is asked to contact a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society or Fr Jim.

### Christian Aid Lenten Lunches

On Thursdays between 12.00 - 2.00pm in St Nicholas Church Hall.

### The Catholic App

"The Catholic App" is your smart Catholic companion that helps you find Mass, Confession, churches, online parish communities and more. It covers the whole diocese and works in English, Polish, French, Italian, German and Spanish. You can download it for iPhone/iPad or Android by searching for "The Catholic App, Musemantik" in the Apple App Store or Google Play. Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/catholicapp/](http://www.facebook.com/catholicapp/)

### Dog Fouling

It has been noticed by some Parishioners that the grounds of the Church are being used by dog walkers to exercise their animals and use the grounds as a toilet. This is not acceptable! As well as concern for those who keep our grounds in an attractive condition, it is hoped that we will use the grounds for an Easter Egg Hunt for the children on Palm Sunday. This will not be possible if the dog fouling continues as this would pose a health risk to our young people. If you see anyone using the grounds to exercise their dogs, please ask them to stop and also to clean up any mess.

### Easter Raffle

Please take some books of raffle tickets to sell to family & friends. Tickets cost £1, 1st prize is £100 cash; 2nd prize is £30 Morrison's vouchers and there a number of other great prizes! The draw will take place at the Coffee Morning after 10.30am Mass on Palm Sunday. Please return counterfoils and money to the box at the back of the church.

### Collection Envelopes

The collection envelopes for the next year are available at the back of the Church. If you pay tax and give to St Mary's then we are able to claim back the tax you have paid on your donation but only if you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration. This is a very valuable source of income for the Parish. Please remember to reassess your donation in the light of inflation. When did you last increase your donation and over that period how much have costs increased?

