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Charity No - SC011041

ST MARY'S LANARK ST ISIDORE'S BIGGAR ST MARY MAGDALENE'S FORTH



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THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD 10TH JANUARY 2021

Bishops' Conference of Scotland Press Release

Following the First Minister's statement that all places of worship will close from Friday 8 January until Monday 1 February 2021, Scotland's Catholic Bishops have issued the following statement:

"Recognising the dangers posed by the new faster-spreading variant of COVID-19, we note the Scottish Government's decision to close all places of worship from Friday 8 January 2021.

The Scottish Government believes that such measures are necessary to curtail the spread of this new strain during the roll-out of the vaccine. We appreciate the difficult choices facing the Scottish Government at this time and we have shown ourselves ready both to cooperate with and to support its efforts in protecting the common good. This has included curtailing public worship in extreme circumstances and for a limited period.

However, we are also perplexed by the decision, given that the stringent measures taken since last March to ensure public safety in our churches have been effective. No evidence has been forthcoming to justify the inclusion of places of worship as sources of infection. Without such scientific evidence these restrictions will appear to Catholics to be arbitrary and unfair. Moreover, a significant number of other sectors similarly restricted last March alongside public worship – such as construction, manufacturing and elite sports - have now been left free to continue in operation.

We also note that, in England, the essential contribution of public worship to the spiritual welfare of all citizens during this crisis has now been endorsed by the decision not to close places of worship while the Scottish Government has apparently retreated from this view, causing dismay and confusion.

We are very aware of the disappointment these closures will cause not only to our own Catholic community, but to many of our fellow-Christians and those of other faiths in Scotland. We wish to emphasise again the spiritual, social and psychological benefits provided by continuing public worship, and we ask for these to be taken into full account in future decisions. Public worship is a human right and is a duty humanity owes to God. More concretely, Catholics need the Eucharist and the Sacramental encounter with the LORD as necessary to their spiritual wellbeing and their ultimate salvation.

While we unequivocally share the common goal of protecting public health, we urge the Scottish Government, when the present measures are reviewed later in January, to reconsider these restrictions in the light of the above concerns."



Weekly Mass Schedule

Sunday 10th January

10.30am Holy Mass for The Baptism of The Lord
12noon Holy Mass for The Baptism of The Lord
5.00pm Sunday Evening Devotions

Monday 11th January

9.30am Holy Mass
6.00pm Evening Prayer of The Church

Tuesday 12th January

12noon Angelus & Holy Mass
6.00pm Recitation of The Holy Rosary

Wednesday 13th January

9.30am Holy Mass
6.00pm Adoration and Benediction of The Most Blessed Sacrament

Thursday 14th January

9.30am Holy Mass

Friday 15th January

9.30am Holy Mass
3.00pm Divine Mercy Chaplet

Saturday 16th January

9.10am Recitation of The Holy Rosary
9.30am Holy Mass

Sunday 17th January

10.30am Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday In Ordinary Time
12noon Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday In Ordinary Time
5.00pm Sunday Evening Devotions

*All of the above will be Livestreamed through St Mary's Facebook Page,
and shared on St Isidore's and St Mary Magdalene's Group Page.*

A Prayer For Protection In Time Of Pandemic

O Mary, you always brighten our path as a sign of salvation and of hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus' pain while remaining steadfast in faith.

O loving Mother,
you know what we need, and we are confident
you will provide for us as at Cana in Galilee.
Intercede for us with your Son Jesus, the Divine Physician,
for those who have fallen ill, for those who are vulnerable,
and for those who have died.
Intercede also for those charged
with protecting the health and safety of others
and for those who are tending to the sick and seeking a cure.

Help us, O Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who took upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows,
so as to lead us, through the Cross,
to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.



St Mary's Cemetery

After some reflection, and advice from others, Fr John-Paul would like to establish a Volunteer Group to help organise and promote St Mary's Cemetery. The idea of the Group would be to look at the cemetery and plan for the future with how we can make St Mary's Cemetery more usable for the wider community. The cemetery itself is looking slightly neglected, however, it would not take a lot of work to bring it up to standard. The work the Group will undertake is not too strenuous and is a planning group, but may involve some visits to the cemetery, and some light work to tidy the cemetery up. If you are interested in joining the Group or have any comments on the cemetery or its future, please contact Fr John-Paul. We hope that the Group will be established and meet before April, Lockdown permitting.

Carfin Grotto Calendar

Fr Jim Grant, Guardian of Carfin Grotto, has produced a wonderful calendar displaying different shrines from the Grotto. The calendar is on sale in our parishes; we only have 20 copies available, and they are priced at £3 each. There are 10 available for St Mary's, 5 available for St Isidore's, and 5 available for St Mary Magdalene's.

If you would like a copy of the calendar then please email the parish or send a Facebook message.

Delivery can be arranged during our daily exercise.

St Mary's School Funds

The children from St Mary's Primary School have produced a Recipe Book to raise funds for St Mary's Primary School Parent Council. The book is made up of recipes the children use with their families at home and are priced at £5 each.

We have 5 copies available for sale.

If you would like to purchase a copy please contact the parish or send a Facebook message.

Delivery can be arranged during daily exercise.

Financial Support

Finance is something that I never feel comfortable talking about, especially when we are all restricted in our own funds, however, in this current pandemic I am forced to address this subject. The parishioners of St Mary's, St Isidore's, and St Mary Magdalene's have been very generous since my arrival, giving every week without fail; and looking back at last year's finance report it is clear that many people continued to donate during the first lockdown. During this last year our income has been restricted, but the bills have remained constant, and as we enter into another National Lockdown our prospects don't look too good. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued generosity and support to our parishes, without this support and generosity I am not sure where we would be. God bless your continued generosity. Fr John-Paul

2021 Weddings

If you have booked a wedding in St Mary's, Lanark; St Mary Magdalene's, Forth; or St Isidore's, Biggar, for 2021, then please call or email Fr John-Paul as soon as possible to start the relevant paperwork.

If you would like to get married in one of our parishes this year, and have not yet reserved a date, please contact Fr John-Paul to start proceedings.

2021 Baptisms

If you have booked a baptism in St Mary's, Lanark; St Mary Magdalene's, Forth; or St Isidore's, Biggar, for 2021, then please call or email Fr John-Paul as soon as possible to confirm dates and details.

At present Baptisms are cancelled during Lockdown, however, the number of attendees is changing frequently.

An Act Of Spiritual Communion

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 into 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.





Please Pray For The Following:



Recently Dead - Shirley Mortimer Lockhart Avenue
John Renton; Betty Hutchison.

Months Minds & Anniversaries - Marion O'Donnell; George Smith; Matt Reilly Snr; Gerry McGarrigle;
John Michael & Ilene Kane; James O'Leary; Jimmy Littlejohn; May Oliver; Peter Donnelly.

Prayers for the Dead: The Church has always urged the faithful to pray for those who have died, particularly by having Holy Mass offered for the repose of their soul. Pope Francis describes this as, 'the best spiritual help that we can give to their souls, particularly the most abandoned ones.' If you would like Mass offered for the repose of the soul of a loved one please write their name on an envelope with the Mass offering enclosed and give it to Fr John-Paul or hand it into the sacristy or post it through the chapel house letterbox.

Letter From Bishop Toal

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As 2020, with its trials and disruption to so many areas of life, draws to a close I wish you all a Happy New Year and pray with you that 2021 may bring relief and betterment, especially to all who have suffered through the months of the pandemic. With the possibility of receiving the vaccine we can certainly hope that our physical health will be protected and the normal activities which we have missed so much can return, while recognising the need for extra vigilance and care as the virus appears to be spreading again with so much virulence. Let us continue to pray fervently for God's protection for all our dear ones and our world.



I thank all those who have worked through the past six months to make our churches safe and welcoming for those who have managed to return to participate in the Church's public worship. A special word of thanks therefore to all our volunteers - cleaners, stewards, organisers, technicians, musicians and cantors – for the time and effort you have given in opening our churches and ensuring that Holy Mass and other services can be celebrated under current restrictions. I thank the clergy for their caring and enthusiastic ministry in service of their parishioners and communities through this time when so much of our normal priestly and diaconal work has been curtailed and adaptations required which have not always been easy to accept or put into practice. As we look ahead with renewed hope for our Parishes and our Diocese, we pray that we can learn from our present experience and ensure that we continue to be communities of strong faith and Christian charity.

I thank you for your continued material and financial support for the Church. Inevitably with fewer people attending Sunday Masses and the loss of most of the income from halls and other activities, our finances have suffered and it will be hard to recover. It has been heartening to hear that many people have continued to contribute even if they have not been able to attend Mass, and as we enter a New Year with only 20 permitted at each Mass I call upon your generosity in supporting the Church through cash and on-line donations or bank transfers. Some parishes will have had reserves to fall back on in recent months but that it is not the case everywhere and every parish will need your on-going financial commitment.

I thank those who have made special contributions to the Church during the emergency. Some of these have been in response to particular appeals, others in recognition of a need for which a helping hand has been quietly offered. As Bishop I would greatly appreciate any help that the Diocese can receive in fulfilling our responsibilities, particularly in the care of the clergy and in the education of those preparing for ministry. If extra support can be given by generous benefactors it will help relieve the amount requested from the parishes in the year ahead. If anyone can assist, I invite you to contact me either by phone at 01698 841848 or by email at bishoptoal@rcdom.org.uk and I will gratefully discuss this with you.

Although it is necessary to write about the Church's material needs, I am very much aware that our priority is always spiritual and our gratitude is mainly for what we receive from our participation in the Church's worship and mission. Our faith is the Lord's gift to us, and as Catholics we have a strong awareness that our faith is sustained and nourished by the sacramental and devotional life of the Church. We enjoy coming together in the practice of our faith, especially for the Celebration of the Eucharist, and we have felt deprived at times through 2020, so our heart-felt wish and prayer is that we can soon come together again in the fullest way possible to honour God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to seek his blessing upon us. With this desire for the Lord's protection let us enter the New Year offering ourselves and all our endeavours to God, our Creator and Redeemer.

*With my prayers and best wishes,
Yours in Christ,
+ Joseph Toal*