



St. Mary's R. C. Church

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St. Paul's R. C. Church

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Charity Number - SC011041

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Newsletter

Twenty-Fourth Sunday of Year

September 13th^h 2020

My dear parishioners at St. Mary's and St. Paul's,

You are very much in my thoughts and prayers each day and especially when I celebrate the Liturgy. It is good that some of us are able to gather together around the altar of the Lord and when we do so you are very present to us. May the Lord Jesus give to each one of us the special grace we need to follow him closely in these challenging times.

As I mentioned in last week's newsletter Pope Francis is encouraging the church and the world to celebrate a Season of Creation from September 1st - October 4th (Feast of St. Francis of Assisi). In 2015 he published his Encyclical 'Laudato si', inviting us to care for our common home. The following paragraphs are the words of Pope Francis:

"Laudato si', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord". In the words of this beautiful canticle, St. Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. "Praise be to you my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs".

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor, she groans in travail (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.

I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure, whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that St. Francis is the example *par excellence* of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace."

Pope Francis is inviting us all, especially those who are young members of the church, to embrace the world and its peoples. It feels good to be part of that!

Father O'Brien

First Holy Communion at St. Mary's and St. Paul's: the following letter will be of particular interest to the parents of children at St. Mary's Primary who should have celebrated First Holy Communion in May 2020. Discussions are also underway with St. Paul's Primary to reach suitable dates for their celebration of First Holy Communion.

Feast of the Nativity of Mary

September 8th 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well and in good spirits, despite the many challenges affecting us all at this time. The good news is that we are responding to these challenges together and finding ways forward. I am sure it is a deep consolation to us all that our schools have re-opened their doors to welcome back our young people to resume their education and formation.

In consultation with St. Mary's Primary I am delighted to be able to offer some dates for the celebration of First Holy Communion. Of course we need to follow the guidelines set out by the Scottish Government and by the Bishops of Scotland. Each child would be accompanied by parents or guardians plus two other guests, siblings or grandparents or perhaps godparents. The guests should be from the same household.

I know these restrictions mean that our celebration will be different to what we normally have and I feel sorry about that, especially for the children who very much enjoy the company of their school friends on such a beautiful occasion. However, it is important to me as their parish priest that our young parishioners get the opportunity to receive their First Holy Communion and indeed the strength that comes from receiving the Eucharist.

I am looking forward very much to celebrating First Holy Communion with the children from St. Mary's Primary on the following dates:

Saturday, October 31st at 10.30am

Sunday November 1st at 1pm

Saturday, November 7th at 10.30am

Sunday November 8th at 1pm

Saturday November 14th at 10.30am

Sunday November 15th at 1pm

The Headteacher, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, will be in touch with you to invite you to make a booking for one of these dates. I thank you in advance for your co-operation with the school and the parish and look forward very much to welcoming you to St. Mary's with your son or daughter,

Yours sincerely,

Father Henry O'Brien

A Message from the Catholic Men's Society: the CMS continue to meet via Zoom on Monday mornings at 11am to discuss matters of faith and practice in the modern world. Any men of the parish who wish to join in this conversation would be most welcome. Please contact Peter Lavery at laverypeter93@yahoo.com

Booking for Weekday Masses needs to be done on a weekly basis to allow for Requiems; booking for the coming week will be possible on Saturday evenings around 8pm. Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

St. Mary's has seating for thirty-six people (the balcony is not to be used)

St. Paul's has seating for thirty people.

Please think about choosing St. Paul's for your visit as it may well be quieter there, especially on Sunday morning.

The Diocese has recommended that we have a booking system for places at the liturgy; this is for safety reasons and also to ensure that people are not disappointed if they arrive at church and discover they cannot enter. For each service the parish **must** retain details of all those attending to ensure that contact tracing can be carried out if necessary.

Please consult the parish website, stmarysandstpaulshamilton.org, to book a place through Eventbrite or by phoning the church house. Details of our services will be given on the parish website, but please be aware that timings for Mass on the Sunday are different to our normal programme:

Sunday services at St. Mary's: Saturday Vigil at 5.30pm and Sunday Morning at 10.30am
Sunday Services at St. Paul's: Saturday Vigil at 4pm and Sunday Morning at 9.15am.

The weekday Masses this week will be at St. Mary's:

Monday at 10.am

Tuesday at 10.am

Wednesday at 10am

Please book through Eventbrite as this makes things easier for the stewards meeting you at the church door.

Please note that Government guidelines state that only 20 people are permitted to attend Requiems. This means that funerals should be looked upon as private family gatherings; thank you for your understanding and co-operation in this matter.

The guidelines from the Government advise that on entering the building you will be asked to wear a face-covering (this can be a scarf rather than a face-mask) and use the sanitizing gel for your hands. You will then be shown to a seat. As you leave the building you will be asked to use the gel once more. I am sure that we will very quickly adjust to this 'new normal' for the moment.

Thank you to those parishioners who have assisted in the re-opening of our churches by acting as stewards or helping with the cleaning of the benches. I know others would like to help and through time we will need you all as it looks as though we are in this for the long haul!

I am aware that the restrictions which are still in place mean that for the foreseeable future we will be much fewer in number for Sunday Mass. The Scottish Bishops have asked the clergy to remind parishioners that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended. This leads me to suggest that you consider attending one of the weekday Masses, especially if you are retired or still furloughed from your employment. This would also leave places free on the Sunday for those who are working.

Recently Deceased: Terence Kelly, Fr. Niall Hayes, Margaret Flynn, Catherine Burns, Sarah Lyle, James Paul Glancy, Estelle Fox, Elizabeth Mudie, John Cosgrove, Jane Dalton, Robert Reid, Sarah McBain, Elma Aikman, Patricia Hendry,

Special Remembrance: Thomas McInnes, Marie Stirrit, Jessie Forbes, John, James and Elizabeth Fulton, Mary Harvey, Mary and Michael O'Brien and our own deceased relatives and friends and all the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's through the years, *requiescant in pace*.