



St. Mary's R. C. Church

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St. Paul's R. C. Church

Backmuir Road, Hamilton, ML3 0PX
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Fr Henry O'Brien – Parish Priest

Charity Number - SC011041

www.stmarysandstpaulsparishhamilton.org

Newsletter

Seventeenth Sunday of the Year

July 26th 2020

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

It is a deep joy for me as your parish priest to welcome you back to St. Mary's and St. Paul's. How I have missed your good presence day by day and week by week and month by month. What a journey it has been for us all and of course there is the journey that is still to come. But for the moment let us thank God that we have again the opportunity to be where we truly belong, gathered around the altar of the Lord to celebrate the Eucharist together, to be nourished by Jesus the Bread of Life.

I hope your return feels like a coming home, for these sacred buildings, St. Mary's Church and St. Paul's Church, belong to you. My hope has always been that our sacred spaces would feel like a second home to you and to all who are dear to you. I have appreciated greatly those occasions when you would gather here with your extended families for special family events, for in those gatherings you are saying to them, *"This is where we come to celebrate the Eucharist together on a Sunday, where we remember you in our prayers, where we thank God for you and our life together."*

Last Sunday I lit the Paschal Candle to welcome you back. I know that it is not meant to be lit at this time, but I wanted to have it burning brightly to welcome you back. How strange it was to hold this precious candle high on Easter Night and sing *'Lumen Christi'* into the darkness, without hearing your voices singing in response, *'Deo Gratias'*, thanks be to God that Christ, the Light of the World, is risen from the dead and is with us always, even until the end of time.

Along with all our brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church here in Scotland we are truly grateful that we are able to celebrate again the sacraments of the Church, these rites of great spiritual beauty which accompany us on our pilgrimage through life. I look forward very much to catching up with the special occasions that had to be postponed due to Lockdown. Please feel free to be in touch to rearrange dates for your family events.

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 10am;

Tuesday is the Requiem for Mr. Bill Kane at 10am; numbers for Requiems are limited to 20 persons

Wednesday at 10am

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

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.

With goodwill, we will manage! Let us face this challenge with serenity, trusting that the Risen Lord is leading us. At the very end of John's Gospel, in one of the resurrection passages, Jesus' final words to Peter are, "*Follow me!*" The truth is, these are the words of Jesus to every disciple, including you and me. It is in our shared following of the Lord that he will lead us through this to pastures new.

I cannot tell you how much I look forward to celebrating the Eucharist again with you and for you. Let us do our very best to serve the Lord with a joyful heart,
Father O'Brien

Some lovely news: *this coming Saturday Mr. Conal Shirazi and Miss Le Xuan Tan will be married at St. Mary's at 1pm; we wish the young couple every blessing and a long and happy life together.*

Recently Deceased: Mr .William (Bill) Kane

Special Remembrance: James Ward, Patrick Cox, Peggy Boyd, Jim Russell, Annie and William Carlin, Catherine Carney, Peter Carney, Patricia Walker, Eddie Bradshaw, Catherine Franchitti, Frank Lyons, John, James and Elizabeth Fulton, Anthony Gallo, Josephine O'Mailley, Martha McCluskie, Moira Girvan, Christopher Neville, Jan Pelosi, John McGuire, Betty O'Kane, Cathy Cochrane, Michael Cochrane, and our own deceased relatives and friends and all the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's through the years, *reqiescant in pace.*