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Newsletter

Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe

Nov. 26th 2023

Dear parishioners at St. Mary's and St. Paul's,

On this last Sunday of the liturgical year we are celebrating the Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe. It is a majestic image that is placed before us, the humble Jesus returns as Christ the King, who reveals the criteria for belonging to the kingdom of God. Today's wonderful Gospel invites us to sincere personal reflection on how we are responding to the good news of the Gospel. I offer here some words by Pope Francis on this feast:

“After having lived his earthly existence in humility and poverty, Jesus now shows himself in the divine glory that pertains to him, surrounded by hosts of angels. All of humanity is summoned before him and he exercises his authority, separating one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

To those whom he has placed at his right he says: “Come you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.” The righteous are taken aback, because they do not recall ever having met Jesus, much less having helped him in that way, but he declares: “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me”.

These words never cease to move us, because they reveal the extent to which God's love goes: up to the point of taking flesh, but not when we are well, when we are healthy and happy. No. but when we are in need. And in this hidden way he allows himself to be encountered; he reaches out his hand to us as a mendicant, as a needy human person. In this way Jesus reveals the decisive criterion of his judgement, namely, concrete love for a neighbour in difficulty. And in this way, the power of love, the Kingship of God is revealed: in solidarity with those who suffer in order to engender everywhere compassion and works of mercy.

At the end of our life we will be judged on love, that is on our concrete commitment to love and serve Jesus in our littlest and neediest brothers and sisters. That mendicant, that needy person who reaches out his hand, is Jesus, that sick person whom I must visit is Jesus; that inmate is Jesus; that hungry person is Jesus. Let us consider this. Jesus will come at the end of time to judge all nations, but he comes to us each day, in many ways, and asks us to welcome him. *Pope Francis*

Catholic Education Week: this week we celebrate Catholic Education Sunday; representatives from our three schools will join us for the 10.30am liturgy; *a second collection will be taken up next week to support the Catholic Education Office.*

St. Paul's Primary School are having their Christmas Fayre this Thursday; all are welcome to visit the school between 1.30 – 3pm. *Please come along if you are free and enjoy a visit to our little school.*

I offer here the times of the Liturgy for the coming week:

Monday November 27th: Requiem Mass for Mr. Peter Hall at St. Mary's at 10am

Confessions at 6.30-650pm; Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 7pm

Tuesday November 28th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

Rosary at 9.40am

Wednesday November 29th: Requiem Mass at St. Mary's for Mr. James Fletcher at 12.30pm

Reception on Tuesday at 5pm

Wednesday Evening at 6.30pm: Annual Mass for the Faithful Departed; please join us to pray for all who have died since last November and to pray also our own deceased relatives and friends. *Please come to the hall afterwards for some light refreshments together.*

Thursday November 30th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am, Feast of St. Andrew

An Invitation from St. Mary's Primary School: the pupils of St. Mary's Primary would like to perform a very special Nativity for the parishioners of St. Mary's and St. Paul's on **Friday 15th December at 10am in St. Mary's Primary;** if you would like to attend please write your name and contact number on the sheets at the back of the church.

A Letter of Thanks from Hamilton District Foodbank: Mrs. Isobel Graham, Foodbank manager, wrote to say thanks for the donation of £500 from St. Mary's and St. Paul's; the donation will go towards buying low stock items, fresh bread, fresh fruit and veg, fresh eggs etc. The aim of the Foodbank is to provide emergency supply of meals to individuals and families who find themselves struggling to put food on the table in times of economic crisis; 10,332 emergency food items were provided to local people in crisis by Hamilton District Foodbank during 2022/2023, and of this number 3,890 went to children.

Thank you from the Rotary Club to the Catholic Churches in Hamilton and Larkhall: I'm delighted to be able to confirm that our joint efforts resulted in the collection of 3,052 coats; 871 gents, 1802 ladies and 379 children; in addition we delivered 6 bags of jumpers, 1 bag of fleeces, 3 bags of scarves, 2 bags of hats, 1 bag of gloves and 1 bag of trousers; a magnificent effort! The Hamilton Churches contributed a significant amount of the overall total and thank you so much.

The next Coffee Morning and Christmas Card Sale will be next Sunday, 3rd December: the parish stall and Fairtrade are holding a joint coffee morning in the parish hall after the 10.30am Mass. Christmas Cards, Nativity Sets, Advent Calendars will be on sale. *Toast and home-baking will be served. Proceeds will be donated to the Hamilton Drop-In-Centre.*

CREDO: the parish faith-sharing group meets this Tuesday at 1pm in the parish meeting room; there is some tea and cake after the meeting; new members are always welcome.

Advent Faith-Sharing Group: Mr. Ronnie Boyd has offered to lead an evening group on the Wednesdays of Advent, December 6th, 13th and 20th, between 7-8pm in the parish meeting room. Please contact Ronnie on ircboyd@hotmail.co.uk if you would like to take part.

Fr. Mark Connolly, a member of the Mill Hill Missionaries, will be with us next weekend to share something about the good works of the Order and to ask for our support. *A special collection will be taken up.*

Recently Deceased: James Fletcher, Peter Hall, Archie McNeill, David Capaldi, Billie Dunlop, Margaret McGhie, Andrew Quiqley, Elio Ferraccioli, Margaret Keating, Emilio Fernandez, Kate Rodgers

Special Remembrance: Jim Cox, Pat and Alice Mackle, William O'Mailley, Alex and Anna Darragh, Edward and Minnie Morgan, deceased members of the Henderson family and all our deceased relatives and friends and the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's.