



St. Mary's R. C. Church

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Church

Backmuir Road, Hamilton, ML3 0PX

Parish Priest

## Newsletter

## Second Sunday of the Year

January 14<sup>th</sup> 2024

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

I hope this finds you and your families well in these early weeks of 2024. Last Sunday we celebrated Epiphany, the adoration of the Christ-child by the three kings, representing the nations of the world and revealing that Jesus is the universal saviour. Isn't it wonderful that the Good News of the Gospel has reached our ears! The gospel narrative told us that the Magi were warned in a dream to go home by a different route. In a very real sense, the encounter with Jesus invites each one of us to return home by a different route and the gospels provide us with a trustworthy map.

On Monday the church celebrated the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan by his cousin John the Baptist and this closed the celebration of Christmas-tide. It is quite a moment for Jesus for it marks the beginning of his public ministry; there would be no turning back. *Baptism* literally means *immersion* and so Jesus immerses himself in water as a sign that he immerses himself in the will of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, "*Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.*" This Feast marks the beginning of what is called *Ordinary Time*, the liturgical season devoted to the unfolding of the mystery of Christ in all its aspects. We are invited to follow Jesus closely and so experience, in a personal way, the meaning of this unfolding in the mystery of our own lives, for we are deeply united to Jesus through the waters of our own baptism.

In today's Gospel two important moments take place; firstly John the Baptist points out Jesus as the *Lamb of God*, the unique sacrificial Lamb whose death takes away the sins of the world; secondly, two of the Baptist's disciples, including Andrew, accept Jesus' invitation to share his life, *Come and see*, is his response to their question, *Where do you live?* This is the invitation that Jesus gives to every single person who wants to follow him and his beautiful gospel. In coming faithfully each Sunday to the liturgy and taking our place at the Eucharist, we do see and hear a great deal about the mystery of Christ and what following him really means. Of course at the heart of his message is his wonderful invitation to love God and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. We all know that this is the message which has the power to transform the face of the earth. Let's make this journey of discipleship together, supporting one another on our pilgrimage through life and transforming the world in which we live.

*Father O'Brien*

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

**Monday January 15th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am**

*Rosary at 9.40am; Novena at 7pm*

**Tuesday January 16th: Requiem Mass for Mrs. Margaret McGuire at 10am**

*Reception on Monday at 6.15pm*

**Wednesday January 17th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am**

*Rosary at 9.40am*

**Thursday January 18<sup>th</sup>: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am**

*Rosary at 9.40am*

**Parish Pastoral Council** met on Wednesday evening in the parish meeting room at 7pm. The PPC is there to serve the parish community of St. Mary's and St. Paul's. During 2023 you brought forward various concerns and suggestions and a good number of these have been addressed, for example, additional lighting for the car-park area, removal of a small tree growing at the very top of the church roof and maintenance to the path leading from car-park, handrail for side-entrance to church, Missalette for Sunday Mass, more frequent coffee mornings, faith-sharing group during Advent, and the restoration of the cross in the parish garden. So as you can see, your comments and suggestions matter. Please use the email [PPC1846@hotmail.com](mailto:PPC1846@hotmail.com) or the paper and pens at the back of the church to contact the parish council.

**This is a good opportunity to say a special word of thanks to Mr. Robert Burns** who made and installed our new cross and then, with his wife Margaret, donated the finished work to the parish as a gift. The cross is greatly appreciated by so many, especially those who come into our garden to say a prayer *Sincere thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Burns.*

**CREDO the parish faith-sharing group** meets this Tuesday in the parish meeting room at 1 o'clock; new members are always welcome and some tea and biscuits are shared together at the end of the meeting.

**St. Mary's and St. Paul's Walking Group** meet on Tuesday mornings at 11am outside the Museum at the bottom of Muir Street; new participants are always welcome and after the walk, which lasts for one hour, some gather in the coffee shop at the Museum.

**Coffee Morning:** please join us in the parish hall after the 10.30am Mass this Sunday to enjoy some Coffee/Tea/Juice/ and Toast and Cakes.

**Recently Deceased:** Margaret McGuire, James Kincaid, Jean Young, Pat Elvin, Jean Paterson, Amy Cannon, Mary Theresa Somerville, Liam Reid, Olga Devlin

**Special Remembrance:** Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, Joseph O'Neil, Bill Cannon, Joseph Mitchell, James O'Donnell, Desmond Peter Henaghan Snr., Desmond Peter Henaghan Jnr., Catherine Devanny, Lynne Devanney, Daniel Devanney, Agnes Sheerin and all our deceased relatives and friends and the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's.