



St. Mary's R. C. Church

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St. Paul's R. C. Church

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Newsletter

The Twenty-First Sunday of the Year

August 27th, 2023

My dear parishioners,

It is great to see our schools back for the new academic year and to hear their enthusiasm and excitement for all this new term offers. As a parish community we seek to support our head-teachers and teachers in the important responsibilities they have regarding the formation of our young people. We do this in a special way by welcoming them for the celebration of the sacraments here at St. Mary's and St. Paul's. Let us remember our three schools, Holy Cross High, St. Mary's Primary and St. Paul's Primary in our daily prayers.

I thought you might like to read some words by Pope Francis on this Sunday's Gospel:

Today's Gospel is a well-known passage in which Simon, on behalf of the twelve, professes his faith in Jesus as *the Christ, the Son of the living God* and Jesus calls Simon *blessed* for this faith, recognizing in him a special gift of the Father, and tells him, *You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church.*

Let us pause on this very point, on the fact that Jesus gives Simon this name, Peter, which in Jesus' language is pronounced *Kefa*, a word which means *rock*. In the Bible this term *rock* refers to God. Jesus gives it to Simon, not because of his character or for his merits as a human person, but for his *genuine and steadfast faith*, which comes to him from above.

Jesus feels great joy in his heart, because he recognises that God the Father has given Simon steadfast faith on which he, Jesus, can build his church, meaning his community – all of us. Jesus intends to give life to his Church, a people no longer founded on heritage but on faith, which means on the relationship with him, *a relationship of love and trust*. The church is built on our relationship with Jesus. And to begin his church, Jesus needs to find solid faith, steadfast faith in his disciples. And it is this that he must verify at this point of the journey.

Brothers and sisters, what happened in a unique way in St. Peter also happens in every Christian who develops a sincere faith in Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God. Today's Gospel passage also asks each of us, *Is your faith good? How does the Lord find my heart?* Does he find a heart that is firm as a rock, or a heart like sand, that is doubtful, diffident, disbelieving? It will do us good to think about this throughout the day today. If the Lord finds in our heart – I don't say a perfect but – sincere, genuine faith, then he also sees in us living stones with which to build his community.

This community's foundation stone is Christ, the unique cornerstone. On his side, Peter is the rock, the visible foundation of the church's unity; and every baptised person is called to offer Jesus his or her lowly but sincere faith, so that he may continue to build his church today, in every part of the world.

Pope Francis

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

Monday August 28th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

Rosary at 9.40am; Confessions from 6.30-6.50pm; Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 7pm

Tuesday August 29th: Mass at St. Paul's at 10am

Rosary at 9.40am

Wednesday August 30th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

Rosary at 9.40am

Thursday August 31st: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

Rosary at 9.40am

Saturday, September 2nd

Vigil at St. Paul's at 4pm

Vigil at St. Mary's at 5.30pm

Sunday, September 3rd

Mass at St. Paul's at 9.15am

Mass at St. Mary's at 10.30am

Motherwell Annual Vocations Mass: Bishop Toal warmly invites the priests and people of the Diocese to join him in Motherwell Cathedral to pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life on **Thursday, August 31st at 7pm.**

A Special Collection will be taken up next Sunday in all the parishes of Motherwell Diocese to support the costs involved in training people for service in the priesthood and diaconate. In these challenging financial times please feel free to put your offertory donation into the second collection. *Bishop Toal greatly appreciates any assistance we can give to this collection as the costs involved in training people for ordained service are challenging for the diocese. Thank you!*

The Beginning Experience: Listen, Accompany, Heal: this is a weekend for those who find themselves suffering bereavement through divorce, separation or widowhood; the venue is the Conforti Centre, Coatbridge, from 29th September-1st October; for details contact Louise on 07926 571004 or email: louisep398@gmail.com; completed applications must be returned by 16th September 2023.

National Pilgrimage to Carfin on 3rd September: the pilgrimage Mass will take place at Carfin Grotto at 3pm; the Scottish Bishops will be present and ask that we join them in prayer for peace in our troubled world, and especially in Ukraine; Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family in the UK will preach at the Mass, and the choir of the Ukrainian Catholic Church community in Scotland will participate in the Mass along with the Motherwell Diocesan Choir. *All are very welcome to attend this special liturgy.*

CREDO, the parish faith-sharing group meets this Tuesday in the parish meeting room at 1pm. New members are always welcome and after the meeting there is a cup of tea together.

Please pray for,

Recently Deceased: George Currie, James Campbell, Bridie Duggan, Andrea McGarry (Australia)

Special Remembrance: Mark Hughes, Thomas, Elizabeth and John Kane, John and Elizabeth Fulton, James Fulton, Catherine Capuano, Ricardo Capuano, Janet Higgins, Stephanie Higgins, and all our deceased relatives and friends and the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's.