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Newsletter

The Third Sunday of Lent

March 12th 2023

My dear parishioners,

I hope this finds you and your families well. The Gospel for this Third Sunday of Lent presents Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman. It's a beautiful moment for them both. I offer here some thoughts from Pope Francis on this text:

“While the disciples go into the village to buy food, Jesus stays near a well and asks a woman for a drink; she has come there to draw water. Jesus' thirst was not so much for water but for the encounter with a parched soul. Jesus needed to encounter the Samaritan woman in order to open her heart; he asks for a drink so as to bring to light her own thirst. *“How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?”* Jesus responded, *“If you only knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink’, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”*”

The woman is moved by this encounter. She asks Jesus several profound questions that we all carry within but often ignore. We too have many questions to ask, but we don't have the courage to ask Jesus! Lent is the opportune time to look within ourselves, to understand our truest spiritual needs, and to ask the Lord's help in prayer. The Samaritan woman is struck by the great respect Jesus had for her. And when he actually spoke to her of true faith as the relationship with God the Father *“in spirit and in truth,”* she realized that he might be the Messiah. Then Jesus does something extremely rare – he confirms it: *“I am he, the one who is speaking with you.”* He proclaims that he is the Messiah to one who led such a disordered life.”

Pope Francis

By any standards it is a beautiful encounter and a moving moment of mercy and compassion. Such moments with Jesus belong to each one of us; our own often disordered lives are no barrier to him.

Father O'Brien

I offer here the times of the liturgy in the days ahead:

Monday March 13th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

First Confession with pupils from St. Paul's Primary at 6pm

Tuesday March 14th: Mass at St. Paul's at 10am

Wednesday, March 15th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

Stations of the Cross at 9.35am

First Confession with pupils from St. Mary's Primary at 6.30pm

Thursday, March 16th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

Saturday March 18th

Mass at St. Paul's at 4pm

Mass at St. Mary's at 5.30pm

Sunday March 19th:

Mass at St. Paul's at 9.15am

Mass at St. Mary's at 10.30am

A Message from the Parish Council: Thank you for the suggestions and comments placed in the boxes at the back of our churches; these were on the agenda at our recent meeting and responses are on the notice-board at St. Mary's and in the porch at St. Paul's. We have a new simplified e-mail address: PPC1846@hotmail.com which is regularly monitored. Our next meeting is scheduled for April 19th at 7pm and we welcome your ongoing support through your comments, suggestions and questions.

Thank you for your generous response to the Special Collection last Sunday for the Sick and Retired Priests' Fund; our donation to the Diocese came to £1,500, a remarkable response. *Thank you.*

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: there will be Exposition in our side chapel after Mass on Wednesday until 12.30; this depends on people pledging to pray before the Sacrament for 30 minutes.

Annual Special Collection for SCIAF on the Fourth Sunday of Lent: please remember the work of this important Scottish charity in your prayers and if possible share something with them to support their good work among those living in the most difficult of circumstances; *in these challenging times please feel free to put into the second collection the donation you usually put into the Offertory Collection.*

CREDO, the parish prayer group, meets this Tuesday at 1pm in the parish meeting room; afterwards, around 2.30pm, participants enjoy some tea and cake together.

Thank you for supporting last Sunday's Coffee Morning to mark Fairtrade Fortnight; we raised £300 to support the Hamilton Foodbank and this was donated during the week. *Thank you*

Please remember in your prayers:

Recently Deceased: Tracey Archibald, Catherine Coyle, Elizabeth Augustine, Jim Ferrie, Hugh Speirs, Tony Spencer, Margaret Moore, Helen Connolly, John O'Neill, Ian McCann, Thomas Oliver, Frank Morton

Special Remembrance:

Winnie Maxwell, Kay Clancy, Ian McNab, Sadie Burns, Annie and John Donnachie, Hugh and Mary Morgan, William Burns, Anna and Alex Darragh, Bridget and Marie Lynas, Mary and John Dalton, Linda and James Collins, Arch and Catherine Rodden, Mary Rodden, Donald Fleming, Helen and Bernard Fleming, Jim Dow, Patrick Healey, Ann Terrett and all our deceased relatives and friends and the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's, *requiescant in pace.*