



St. Mary's R. C. Church

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St. Paul's R. C. Church

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Newsletter

The Twelfth Sunday of the Year

June 25th 2023

My dear parishioners,

I hope this finds you looking forward to the summer holidays; we wish our teachers and young people a welcome break as the schools close this Tuesday.

I want to thank everyone who came along to St. Paul's last Tuesday evening for our meeting. It was good for us, priest and people to listen together prayerfully to the Bishop's Pastoral Letter regarding his concerns about the future needs of the Diocese, including the number of church buildings we have. We are one parish with two church buildings, which are much loved by us all. This means the possible closure of one of our churches is indeed difficult to contemplate and it was clear from our sharing that your concerns are my concerns, so it is important that we continue this period of discernment. A summary of our meeting will be provided in due course.

On Thursday evening, along with one of our parishioners, I then attended the Finance and General Purposes Meeting of the Diocese of Motherwell; some of the information was sobering. Across the Diocese, Mass attendance is reducing by 4% per year; in 2010, 45,772 people were participating in Sunday Mass and in 2022 this participation had fallen to 20,500. In ten years time this could be 13,000 people attending Sunday Liturgy.

I offer these figures in the sincere hope that the information will encourage us to continue to reflect on the life and ministry of the Catholic Church in the 21st Century. How are we to respond to this reality? I encourage you to speak about these matters together, with your families and with your friends. I suggest these figures call us to pray and work for a new Springtime in the life of the Catholic Church here in Hamilton and in Scotland. What will support this endeavour? Looking ahead, even a little, would it be better to have Centres of Catholic Life and Faith that are vibrant, which we can realistically sustain, both *pastorally* and *financially*.

We are not helpless in the face of such statistics. As I said to you last week, the future does not just happen to us; through our choices, especially our small choices, we are involved in shaping the future. What future do **you** envisage for the Catholic Church in our area? It clearly involves a *new* and *fresh* commitment from us as individuals and as families. This is why the synodal journey that Pope Francis is asking the church to make is so important, for it is **you** who will shape what the Catholic Church will look like in the future. *May St. Mary and St. Paul give us courage and hope!*

Father O'Brien

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

Monday June 26th: Mass at St. Mary's at 10am

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

Tuesday June 27th: Mass at St. Paul's at 10am

St. Paul's Primary will be with us for a Thanksgiving Mass

Wednesday June 28th: Requiem for Mrs Kathleen Lynas at St. Mary's at 10am

Reception on Tuesday at 6pm

Thursday June 29th: Solemnity of St. Peter and St. Paul

Holyday of Obligation

Vigil Mass on Wednesday evening: St. Mary's at 7pm

Masses on Thursday

St. Paul's at 10am

St. Mary's at 12 noon

Saturday, July 1st

Vigil at St. Paul's at 4pm

Vigil at St. Mary's at 5.30pm

Sunday July 2nd

Mass at St. Paul's at 9.15am

Mass at St. Mary's at 10.30am

Bishop Toal invites priests and people to join him on Monday 26th June at 7pm in the Diocesan Offices in Motherwell to discuss how we can renew and develop our pro-Life work in the Diocese of Motherwell. Over the years, great work has been done to assist mothers to have their babies and to care for them after birth; the numbers in Diocesan Pro-Life Groups have declined and it is time to reach out and invite others to become more involved in the Pro-Life cause and the practical help necessary to offer assistance to pregnant women.

Next Sunday a Special Collection will be taken up in every parish in Scotland for **Peter's Pence**; this is the Pope's official charity, which he uses to support the life of the church in some very challenging situations; please feel free to put into the second collection what you usually donate in the offertory.

Credo: Parish Faith Sharing Group will meet this Tuesday at 1pm.

Please pray for those who are ill: Agnes Gallacher,

Recently Deceased: Bishop Maurice Taylor, Kathleen Lynas, Terry Lennox, Anne Reilly, Edna Bambridge, Frances (Hendry) Devine, Helen Kelly, Lesley Hughes, Tom Heffernon, Eddie Hart

Special Remembrance: Margaret Daly Rooney, Charlie Daly, Robert and Ellen Boylan, Moira Boylan, Christopher Clancy, Elizabeth Canning and all our deceased relatives and friends and the benefactors of St. Mary's and St. Paul's