



Sunday 7th March—Third Sunday in Lent (B)

Sunday Mass Streamed from St Mary's at 10am

We pray for those who have died recently: Margaret (Peggy) Dailly, Elpidio Noveros, Maureen Denney, Betty Adese, Joseph Golden, Jim Lutz, John (Jackie) Brown, Catherine (Vicki) Cord; **and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** Andrew Bourke, William Bird, Patrick Stewart, Fausto Reyes, Steven Kierans and Helen Taylor. We also remember all those mentioned in our books of remembrance. **Prayers for the sick:** Please continue to remember in your prayers the sick, especially those mentioned on our sick lists.

Income for February: St Mary's £3,065; St Leonard & St Fergus £1,365; St Columba's £224. There were also donations for SCIAF—£50; Mary's Meals—£50; SVdP—£90. Thank you all for your continuing generosity towards the upkeep of the parishes and the work of the Church.

Legacy Donation: I would like to acknowledge the gift of £1000 in memory of Gertrude Mulligan which St Mary's received from her family. We thank them for their generosity. We will put this money towards the restoration project in St Mary's.

Maintenance Work in St Mary's: With scaffolding having been in place for a good few weeks, we are now at the stage of being able to replace the rotten wooden truss. Although it seems that this work has been progressing slowly, we have to remember that the wood had to be sourced and then carved to the shape of the original timbers. With work starting this week, we should be well clear of the scaffolding by Easter.

SVDP: Digital Connection: The SVDP is a channel for the provision of a small number of tablet devices (and support) designed to help keep people connected. The offer is open to people over 65. If you would benefit from such a device, or know of someone who would, please contact Fr Alex or me as soon as possible.

Lent 2021

Gospel Reflections: The Gospel reflection (Lectio Divina) for the following Sunday will continue this Tuesday at 7pm (Facebook). We are becoming truly international with our input: last week, Rome, this week, Malta!

Stations of the Cross: There will be the opportunity to meditate together on the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 7pm (Facebook).

Opening of the Churches after Lockdown: We are hoping that there will be clarification this week from the First Minister on the re-opening of churches. As soon as we have firm news and have thought through the implications for our churches, I will let you know. Even if we cannot all have Mass physically together, it is my intention to find a way of allowing people to receive Holy Communion on Easter Day itself and to collect some of the newly blessed water. Likewise, if we cannot all be together for Palm Sunday, I will make sure that there is a way in which blessed Palms can be collected. Some of you will have heard of the crowd-funding initiative by Fr Tom White of the Archdiocese of Glasgow. This was to take the Scottish Government to court over its decision to restrict public worship. The first hearing affirmed that there was an argument to be considered and a further hearing is scheduled for 11/12 March. Details of the fund can be found at JustGiving under Thomas White.

Pastoral Visit of Pope Francis to Iraq 5-8th March: Pope Francis has embarked on a long awaited visit to Iraq, a country which is considered the birthplace of Abraham, a key figure in the great monotheistic religions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Iraq is also home to one of the oldest Christian communities in the world. The Holy Father sees this visit as an opportunity to support the beleaguered, suffering Christians of the region and also to call for a peaceful co-existence of religions within the bounds of Iraq and beyond. We pray for the safety of Pope Francis in these days and for the success of his visit. We also pray for the persecuted Christians in Iraq and in the Middle East. May they remain strong in their faith and in their witness to Christ and his Gospel.

Life Issues: Right To Life UK contacted us asking that people are made aware of their 'Stand Up and Smile' campaign to protect babies with cleft-lip and club foot, and also to remember in our prayers the unborn and women facing crisis pregnancies. Today, Sunday 7th, marks International Women's Day. We are asked to pray especially for all pregnant women that they too would be championed and supported by all of us in society, not only tomorrow, but always.

Think Vocations / Pray for Vocations

"We are preaching a crucified Christ." Why not consider the call to preach the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ as a Diocesan priest or permanent deacon? Speak to Fr Mark, your local Vocations Director, contact *Priests for Scotland* or visit our website or Facebook pages (PFS or VocationNetworkScotland).

Lenten Resource

Jacopone da Todi, a Franciscan friar is said to have written the text for the *Stabat Mater* in the 13th century. It has been so popular that numerous composers have set the original Latin text to music. The *Stabat Mater* was used frequently in the Liturgy for centuries and became associated with the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15th. This version has been adapted to be prayed with the Stations of the Cross at Lent.

1. At the cross her station keeping,
treading, in her contemplation
every step his feet have trod.

2. Now she hears the sentence spoken,
feels her heart by sorrow broken,
Mother of incarnate God.

3. As he lifts his cross, she senses
all the weight of earth's offences,
vaunted pride and broken trust.

4. Now she sees his body falling,
hears his anguished spirit calling
God-is-with-us in the dust.

5. On the walk of pain she meets him,
with a kiss of peace she greets him,
in the midst of cosmic strife.

6. Then she sees a passing stranger
share is burden, pain and danger,
On the road to death and life.

7. One kind face among the rabble,
one kind act amid the babble,
sees the image of his face.

8. Once again she sees him stumble,
watches earth its maker humble,
sees the majesty of grace.

9. Even now the Man for Others
hears the cries of anguished mothers,
weeping for a world of pain.

10. Mother shares the pains that grieve him,
feels the stony ground receive him:
Earth's redeemer falls again.

11. Then she sees them strip his body,
wearing still their splendid shoddy,
lest the naked truth be told.

12. Spear-like nails that wound and gore him,
pierce the very womb that bore him,
- love so warm with steel so cold.

13. Yet she stays to see his dying,
hears his voice triumphant crying,
shares the agony of grace.

14. Take away the body, slighted,
let the festival be blighted,
By God's ugly, suffering face.

15. Then amid his mother's sorrows,
someone else's grave he borrows,
nowhere still to lay his head.

16. All creation waits and wonders,
God the final curtain sunders:
Life abundant with the dead!