



Vigil Mass 4.30pm

Sunday 10.30am (also streamed)

Monday-Saturday 10am

Sunday Mass 11.30am

Tuesday & Thursday 8.30 am

Saturday 9am

Vigil Mass 6pm

Sunday 10am

Mon & Wed 6.30pm

Fri 8.30am

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### Sunday 9th January—Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

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**Our Beloved Dead:** Please remember in your prayers — Cathy Malone, Irene McCartney, Robert McCabe, Bill Pennycook, Linda Walker and Elizabeth O'Rourke who have died recently and Gertrude Mulligan, Gary Strachan, Jim Short, Kathleen Murray, Jim, Betty and Graham Gilchrist, May McFee, David Kidd Snr and David Kidd Jnr whose anniversaries occur at this time. We also remember all those mentioned in our books of remembrance. **Prayers for the sick:** Please continue to remember the sick and the terminally ill in your prayers, especially those mentioned on our sick lists.

**Funerals:** Monday 10th January, Crematorium 12.30pm—Robert McCabe; Tuesday 11th January, St Mary's 10am—Elizabeth O'Rourke; Thursday 13th January, St Mary's 10am—Cathy Malone; Crematorium 3.30pm—Irene McCartney; Friday 14th January, St Mary's 10am—Linda Walker.

**Anniversary Masses:** The Mass for the first anniversary of the death of Bishop Vincent will take place in St Andrew's Cathedral this Friday, 14th January at 1pm: all are welcome to attend. The first anniversary Mass for Mgr John Harty will be in St Mungo's, Alloa on Friday 21st January at 7pm. Again, all are welcome to attend.

**Award of the Bene Merenti:** The Holy Father has awarded the 'Bene Merenti' to Alex Leonard of St Leonard & St Fergus in recognition of his 65 years unstinting service to the poor as a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society. We warmly congratulate Alex on this well deserved award. The award will be presented to Alex by Bishop Stephen during a Mass to be celebrated on Wednesday 19th January at 6.30pm in St Leonard & St Fergus. There will be a reception in the hall following the Mass and anyone who is willing to help with the catering is asked to contact Anne McGregor or to speak to Fr Alex or myself and we will pass on your details to Anne.

**Preparation for the Sacraments for children not in Catholic Schools:** So far, I have been approached by three families looking to have help in preparing their children to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. The first meeting for this group will take place in the lower hall at St Mary's next Saturday, 15th January at 3.45pm. If you have not yet approached us with regard to the preparation of your child, please do so as soon as possible.

**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction:** Although we have reinstated Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction in St Leonard & St Fergus, we have been slower to do so in St Mary's. Because of the number of funerals that take place in St Mary's, I feel that Saturday morning is the best time but I am unsure whether to have Exposition before or after the morning Mass. If anyone has strong preferences or other ideas as to when we might have Exposition and Benediction, please let me know. We will aim to begin this part of our liturgical life before the end of January.

**St Columba's Coffee Club:** The Thursday coffee club will restart, next Thursday, 20th and meets from 1-2.30pm in St Columba's Hall.

**Dates for the Diary:** This year Lent begin on Wednesday 2nd March and Easter falls on Sunday 17th April.

**Collections: 02 January || Justice & Peace:** St Mary's £845 || £140; St Columba's £280 || \*\*; St Leonard & St Fergus' £622 || £169 . Thank you for your generous support of the parishes and the work of the Church. **\*\*The special collection from last week will be taken up in St Columba's this Sunday.**

**St Mary's Restoration Fund 100 Club:** Congratulations to this week's winner, Kathleen McGeachie (11). This is now the time to continue supporting this fundraising initiative or to take a break and join again later in the year or next year.

**Charity Donations: Mary's Meals**—Thanks to recent exceptional generosity a further £600 has been forwarded to Mary's Meals for the feeding programme. Grateful thanks also to all who purchased gift cards (total £524) and cooking pots & stoves (total £645). All of our recent donations qualified for the double the love initiative. Many, many thanks. **SCIAF**—£504 was donated through the Christmas 'Real Gift' cards and a further £256 given to the SCIAF Afghanistan appeal. Thank you for your generosity towards these good causes.

### **Think Vocations / Pray for Vocations**

**Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:** "I have taken you by the hand and formed you. I have appointed you." (1st Reading) For what have you been formed? Where are your gifts and personality needed most? Perhaps as a priest, a deacon or in consecrated life? Speak to Fr Mark, your local Vocations Director about priesthood or religious life, email *Priests for Scotland* or see the website or Facebook pages: PFS or VocationNetworkScotland.

**New Year's Resolutions:** No doubt there will be all kinds of resolutions being made for the coming year. Some may be looking for new ways to engage with their faith, their relationship with Christ and with the Church. One recommendation for those with internet access is the 'Bible in a Year'. There is a daily reading from the Scriptures with a short commentary, delivered by Fr Mike Schmitz and available as a Podcast through Ascension Press or through Youtube. The intention is that we can hear the Bible read from start to finish in a year.

**Daily Reflections:** We have paused our regular series of reflections and will restart for Lent. However, there may be the occasional reflection for a feast day or other occasion over the next weeks. These reflections are available to anyone with an email address. If you are not already on the parishes' email list, please leave your details with one of the priests or the pass-keepers or email them to: [stmaryslochee@dunkelddiocese.org.uk](mailto:stmaryslochee@dunkelddiocese.org.uk) and we will add your details as soon as possible.

**Towards a Synodal Church:** The Holy Father, Pope Francis has called us to reflect on what it means to be the Church in our time and for our time. He has called a meeting of the Church to look at the way people perceive the Church both from within and from outside. We will be asked to reflect on what our own experience of Church is—not just what we experience when we come to Church but what it is like to be a Catholic Christian in the world today: the joys and sorrows that we experience as part of the Church, the blessings or hurts that we feel have come to us through the Church. We will also be asked to listen to people who feel distanced from the Church or whose experience of the Church has been less than positive. The Pope has emphasized his desire that we listen to one another, without prejudice, without arguing, without becoming defensive. The Pope knows that we have the most powerful message that the world should hear and a great wealth of teaching and he is passionate that we should find new pastoral ways of reaching out so that others can hear the message and receive Christ into their lives.

In a few weeks we will have the opportunity to complete a straightforward questionnaire which you will be asked to take and fill in, and in Lent there will be the opportunity to gather in groups for Parish Listening Sessions. The Holy Father is adamant that voices should be heard that are normally silent—not the voices of Cardinals, Bishops and priests which are heard often (and often loudly), but the voices of the vast majority of our people who are not part of the clergy, practicing and non-practicing; The Pope wishes to hear the voices of our fellow Christians and people of other faiths and non-believers; the voices of people who feel that their lifestyle or life situation is at odds with the Church's teaching and therefore feel there is no place for them in the Church. We will all have a key part to play in that listening because these are people that we live among, people who are part of our own family or our circle of friends. These are the people that Pope Francis wants us to encounter and listen to. The purpose of the Synod and of this time of preparation is: **to inspire** people to dream about the Church we are called to be; **to make people's hopes flourish**; **to stimulate** trust; **to bind up** wounds; **to weave** new and deeper relationships; **to learn** from one another; **to build** bridges; **to enlighten** minds; **warm** hearts and **restore strength** to our hands. Those words themselves could be the basis for a prayerful reflection for each of us in preparation for this great moment in the life of the Church. Let us begin this good work by praying for its success and for our Holy Father, Pope Francis.