

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH

Saint Mary Immaculate Larkhall &
Our Lady & Saint John's Blackwood

Scottish Charity Number - SC011041

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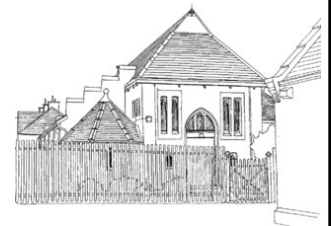
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Our Lady & St John's
Carlisle Road
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St Mary's
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FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD
9TH JANUARY 2022

WHY IS BAPTISM SO IMPORTANT?

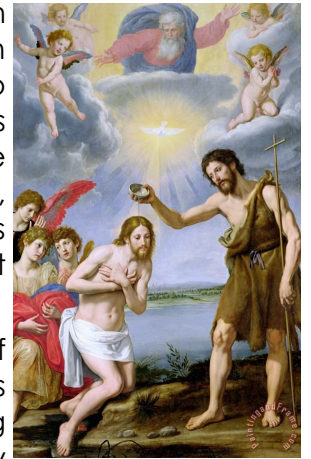
The Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation. "No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5). Christ commanded his disciples to preach the Gospel, draw people to faith in him, and baptise those who come to conversion. The Church does not neglect the mission she has received from Christ to ensure that all be baptised and reborn of water and the Spirit. By Baptism all sins are forgiven, Original Sin and all personal sins, and temporal punishment due to sin is removed. After one has been reborn in Christ, there is nothing to prevent one's entry into God's Kingdom.

However, though all sins are removed, there remains, as an effect of Original Sin, the inclination to sin that is called *concupiscence*. This inclination to sin shows itself in what is sometimes referred to as a darkening of the mind and a weakening of the will, that is, the inability to know clearly the right or wrong of an action and/or the lack of strength to resist temptation and always to do the right thing no matter how hard this is. The effects of Original Sin need not harm us so long as we seek strength to resist them through the Sacraments of Confessions & the Holy Eucharist, prayer, a deepening spirituality, growth in virtue, and a wholehearted dependence on God.

Baptism also gives us new life as adopted children of God. We become sharers of divine life and temples of the Holy Spirit. We are now made righteous by God and live in a state of grace, that is, we live in union with God because of his gracious and loving initiative. Our permanence in the state of grace is called *sanctifying grace* because God "sanctifies" us, that is, makes us his holy people by giving us his life. God continues to assist us by many helps that are called *actual graces*. Thus, we have the ability to live and act under the guidance and light of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This helps us mature in goodness through the practice of virtues, such as the Cardinal Virtues: prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude.

By Baptism we become members of the Church, the Body of Christ. We share in the priesthood of Christ as well as his prophetic and royal mission. "You are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises' of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Baptism provides a common foundation among all Christians, including those not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church. The Church recognises the validity of Baptism in other Christian Churches as long as the rite involved the pouring of or immersion in water, a Trinitarian formula, and the intention to baptise. Those who have been baptised have been saved by their faith in Christ and the grace of Baptism.

"Incorporated into Christ by Baptism, the person baptised is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible (immovable) spiritual mark (character) of his belonging to Christ. No sin can erase this mark, even if sin prevents Baptism from bearing the fruits of salvation. Given once for all Baptism cannot be repeated" (Catechism, no. 1272). This spiritual mark is also called a character, which St. Augustine likened to distinctive brandings impressed upon soldiers and slaves during Roman times to signify the commander or owner to whom they belonged. Baptism marks us permanently as belonging to Christ, whose image we bear.



THIS WEEK IN OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Sunday 9th January

- 10.00am Holy Mass for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (St Mary's)
12noon Holy Mass for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (Our Lady & St John's)
5.00pm Holy Mass for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (Our Lady & St John's)



Monday 10th January

- 11.30am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)
12noon Holy Mass for Monday of the First Week in Ordinary Time (St Mary's)

Tuesday 11th January

- 9.00am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (Our Lady & St John's)
9.30am Holy Mass for Tuesday of the First Week in Ordinary Time (Our Lady & St John's)

Wednesday 12th January

- 9.30am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 9.55am (St Mary's)
10.00am Holy Mass for Wednesday of the First Week in Ordinary Time (St Mary's)
7.00pm Holy Mass for Wednesday of the First Week in Ordinary Time (Our Lady & St John's)

Thursday 13th January

- 9.00am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 9.25am (Our Lady & St John's)
9.30am Holy Mass for the Feast of St Kentigern (Mungo) (Our Lady & St John's)

Friday 14th January

- 10.00am Holy Mass for Friday of the First Week in Ordinary Time (St Mary's)

Saturday 15th January

- 10.00am Holy Mass in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary (St Mary's)
4.45pm Confessions until 5.15pm (St Mary's)
5.30pm Vigil Mass for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (St Mary's)

Sunday 16th January

- 10.00am Holy Mass for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (St Mary's)
12noon Holy Mass for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Our Lady & St John's)
5.00pm Holy Mass for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Our Lady & St John's)

FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

13th January - Feast of St Kentigern - St Kentigern was born in 518. His mother, St Enoch, was a Lothian princess who became pregnant because she was raped. Her father had her cast off into the Firth of Forth in a coracle (a small rounded lightweight boat). She landed on the opposite shore at St Serf's monastic school at Culross. It was he who nicknamed Kentigern Mungo. He went on to become the first Bishop of Glasgow. He was forced out by pagan opponents and spent some time in England and Wales. He returned to spend many more years preaching in the Strathclyde region. He died in the year 603.



SEMINARIANS FOR THE DIOCESE OF MOTHERWELL

We continue to remember in our prayers the young men who are studying for the priesthood for the Diocese of Motherwell and for those young men who are setting out to Salamanca, Spain, to begin the propaedeutic period in preparation for beginning seminary in the autumn. The seminarians from St Mary's College Oscott - Colum Martin, Christopher Igwe and Christopher Morris - will be undertaking pastoral placements in the diocese until the end of this month before returning to Oscott, with Colum Martin being ordained a deacon on 25th June and Christopher Morris being ordained a priest around the same time. The seminarians from the Scots College Rome - Christopher Furmage, Kieran Burt, Ronan McQuade - are returning to Rome this week to continue with their studies. The three men who are beginning the propaedeutic period in Salamanca are: Aidan Farrell from St Mary's, Lanark; Matthew O'Neill from St Mary's, Whifflet and Aidan Kelly from St Ninian's, Hillhouse.

If any young man is considering a vocation to the priesthood and is ready to enter into the discernment process, please speak with Fr Wyllie or contact Fr Charles O'Farrell at Our Lady & St Anne's Hamilton. It is important that we pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood each day, and God-willing we will have someone from our own parish enter seminary in the future.

PARISH STALLS

Our parish stalls stock a range of Mass cards, cards for other occasions and some gifts and religious articles. The stalls generate a small profit for the parish when you purchase items, so please have a look after Mass today. The stall in Our Lady & St John's is located in the old sacristy just to the right of the statue of Our Lady and to the left of the front doors in the porch of St Mary's .

CABARET NIGHT & TRIBUTE ACT



Tickets are now on sale for the Cabaret Night & Tribute Act to take place in the Parish Hall on Friday 28th January from 7.00pm till late. Tickets are priced at £7.00 and can be obtained after the Vigil Mass in St Mary's over the next week and both Masses on a Sunday in Our Lady & St John's. All proceeds are for parish funds so please support this event.

Contact Angela Stewart on 07733440351 to book tickets.

PARISH FINANCES

Collection & Donations:	£800.00
Standing Orders & Bank Transfers:	£1,392.00
Votive Candles (OLSJ):	£101.00
TOTAL:	£2,293.00
St Margaret's Adoption Society:	£704.00
Justice & Peace:	£30.00

Many thanks for your very generous support

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

Many thanks to all those parishioners who contributed to the Christmas Collection over the past few weeks. The total between the Christmas Masses and the Christmas Collection envelopes was £2,850. Very many thanks.

NEW MASS TIMES BOARDS

Fr Wyllie has been working to design new Mass Times Boards for both churches which will be easy to read, attractive and inviting. Daniel Horisk, a parishioner of Sacred Heart & St Gerard's Bellshill, came up with the design which we are going to go ahead with. Hopefully these signs will be in place over the next few weeks.

The sign for St Mary's will be attached to the perimeter fence at the front of the carpark and the sign for Our Lady & St John's will be in the front grounds near the fence held up with two metal poles. The current sign at the front of the church will be taken down and a shrine to Our Lady will be erected there with a statue which was donated to the church a few months ago. The statue is still being refurbished but will hopefully be back with us in the not-too-distant future.

ST JOHN'S PRIMARY ONE ENROLMENT

Parents/carers of children who are 5 years of age between 1st March 2022 and the end of February 2023 are required to register their child for starting school. Parents should register their child at their catchment school.

How do I enrol?

Week beginning 17th January 2022 - enrol your child using South Lanarkshire Council's online enrolment form.

You must identify the catchment school for your permanent home address by using the school catchment checker.

The link to the online form will be given when you select your catchment school.

The online registration form will ask you to provide each child's full birth certificate and two pieces of recent official documentation both containing your permanent home address. Proof of where the child lives may be required.

Accepted official documentation: Utility bill; council tax statement; housing rent card; child benefit documentation.

CHURCH WORKERS SOCIAL

Covid permitting, we will hold the Church Workers Social in the Parish Hall on Friday 18th February from 7.00pm till late, to thank all those who work in our churches, the grounds and in the parish hall including those who acted as stewards. The evening will consist of a drinks reception and bar, three course meal with tea & coffee followed by entertainment. At the beginning of February a list will be available at the back of each church for you to place your name on for catering purposes. A bus will go from Larkhall to Blackwood and back again.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING:

SICK - John Rosato (Australia), Pat Tierney, James Ferguson, Alice Cumming, Janet McIntosh, Annette Thomson, Kathleen Brannigan, Mandy Murray McVie, John Gowans, Kevin Feeney

RIP - Therese Shiels, Baby Olly Tose, Alice Goodwin

MONTHS MINDS & ANNIVERSARIES - Michael Weir, Martin Gibney

Please remember to have your deceased loved ones prayed for on their anniversaries & months mind

LETTER FROM BISHOP TOAL FROM 30TH DECEMBER

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I wish you every blessing for 2022. I thank you for your prayers and support during 2021, and for your good wishes and generosity to the clergy and myself at Christmas.

I pray that you and your families keep well as the omicron variant of the virus spreads in our communities. Hopefully the more optimistic reports on its effects will be true and normality will come a little closer. Until we know though we are asked to be cautious and take the requested steps to protect ourselves and others, including receiving the booster. I can understand that some will be hesitant about coming to church until things improve and it is appropriate for you to decide when that will be the case. If you don't feel able to come to Mass on Sunday at present, then pray at home, preferably with your family, and if possible follow Holy Mass on-line. Sunday is the Lord's Day and it should always be kept in his honour, with time being given to him even when we cannot attend Mass.

I thank all those who work in particular ways to support our parishes and the Diocese. A particular word of thanks to the volunteers who have taken responsibility for caring for our churches and assist those who attend Mass and other services in these difficult times. Your commitment, patience, and good humour is much appreciated.

I thank you for your continuing financial support for the Church. With smaller congregations there has been a fall in income and this is a challenge as we look to the future, especially with the increase in the cost of living and the threat of more rises to come. This has been especially noticeable in the cost of building materials, which are making repair work or improvements more costly. In such circumstances wise judgments are required in deciding what work is essential and what will have to wait. While other parishes can offer some support through the Parochial Investment Fund, parishes do need to seek generous donors and do fund-raising themselves.

All parishes, and indeed other groups, have been asked to participate in the Synodal Process in the first three months of the year. I recognise that the present restrictions on gathering in groups may curtail the planned meetings but I hope that some will be possible with beneficial outcomes for the parishes and the Diocese and Church in Scotland.

Early in January, three young men from Motherwell Diocese are due to leave for the Royal Scots College in Salamanca, Spain, to participate in what is known as the Propaedeutic Course for the Priesthood in Scotland. They are Aidan Farrell from St Mary's, Lanark; Matthew O'Neill from St Mary's, Whifflet, Coatbridge; and Aidan Kelly from St Ninian's, Hillhouse, Hamilton. On behalf of us all I wish them well and assure them of our prayers as they begin their formation for the priesthood in Motherwell Diocese.

Our present seminarians are at home for the Christmas Holidays – Chris Fumage, Ronan McQuade, and Kieran Burt will return to Rome early in January, while Deacon Chris Morris, Colum Martin, and Christopher Igwe will do Parish pastoral placements before returning to St Mary's, Oscott, later in January. I ask your continued prayers for all of them. Deacon Chris Morris is due to be ordained as a priest on June 30th 2022 in Motherwell Cathedral, and Colum Martin to be ordained a deacon the previous week, on June 25th at St Mary's, Oscott. If any man is considering a vocation to the priesthood and is ready to enter into the discernment process, please make yourself known to your Parish Priest or contact Fr Charles O'Farrell at Our Lady and St Anne's, Hamilton. Likewise if any man is considering a vocation to the Permanent Diaconate, please speak to your Parish Priest or contact Fr James Grant at St Francis Xavier's, Carfin, the Vocations' Director for the Permanent Diaconate.

Pope Francis wrote an uplifting letter last Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Family, to married couples, encouraging them to remain aware of and fully open to the person of Christ in their lives together. We intend to have a Mass for married couples, particularly those who married last year or celebrated special anniversaries, in the Cathedral on Thursday 27th January, so hopefully it can go ahead and couples and their families will feel able to attend.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours in Christ,

+ Joseph Toal

