

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH



Our Lady & St John's
Carlisle Road
Blackwood, ML11 9RZ

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

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Parish Priest - Reverend Father Seán G. Wyllie



St Mary's
Raploch Road
Larkhall, ML9 1AN

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTERTIDE
3RD MAY 2026**

OPTATAM TOTIUS

Vatican II dealt with the clergy in three Decrees: *Christus Dominus*, dealing with the office of bishop; *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, on the ministry and life of priests, and this document - *Optatam Totius* (loosely translated as *Desired Renewal of the Whole Church*) which summarises the Church's approach to the formation of future priests at seminary.

The document begins by acknowledging that the Council Fathers are "fully aware that the desired renewal of the whole Church depends to a great extent on the ministry of its priests". It then goes on to speak of the "urgent" task of fostering vocations in our homes, families, parishes, schools and communities. It charges priests in a particular way to foster vocations and attract the interest of youth to the priesthood by their own life lived in a humble and industrious manner and showing a happy spirit in the work that they do.

The Laity are called upon to nurture, promote and encourage vocations to the priesthood, asking that the effective union of the whole People of God be employed through prayer, catechesis and social media to help young men consider their vocation to the priesthood.

The establishing of seminaries both junior and major is dealt with, the leadership and staffing of these institutions is also discussed. The Council asks the relevant Church authorities to ensure that educators, administrators, formators and seminary staff are to be selected from the best men and carefully prepared in sound doctrine, suitable pastoral experience and special spiritual training. The bishops role in seminaries is explained, saying: "The bishop, with a constant and loving solicitude, should encourage those who labour in the seminary and prove himself a true father in Christ to the students themselves".

The celibate state of priests comes in section 10 when it states: "For renouncing the companionship of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, they embrace the Lord with an undivided love". Celibacy is God's gift and it requires to be lived fully and fruitfully.

Then comes the subject of educating seminarians. The Decree expressly requires the men being formed for the priesthood to be educated in humanistic and scientific training, philosophy, the various strands of theology, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Scripture, business administration, sociology, pastoral realities, spirituality, psychology and doctrine.

Further training and ongoing formation is to be introduced where priests are being kept up to date on modern day issues facing the Church and the world.

The document concludes with the beautiful words: "The Fathers of this holy synod... earnestly exhort those who are preparing for the priestly ministry to realise that the hope of the Church and the salvation of souls is being committed to them". They urge them also to receive the norms of this decree willingly and thus to bring forth most abundant fruit which will always remain.

All of us should pray for vocations to the priesthood and our seminarians every day.



THIS WEEK IN OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH

Sunday 3rd May (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 11.00am - 5.45pm)
10.00am Holy Mass for the Fifth Sunday of Eastertide (St Mary's)
12noon Holy Mass for the Fifth Sunday of Eastertide (Our Lady & St John's)
5.00pm Holy Mass for the Fifth Sunday of Eastertide (Our Lady & St John's)

Monday 4th May (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 4.00pm)
11.30am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)
12noon Holy Mass for Monday of the Fifth Week of Eastertide (St Mary's)
12.25pm Novena in honour of St Peregrine (St Mary's)

Tuesday 5th May (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 4.00pm)
9.00am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (Our Lady & St John's)
9.30am Holy Mass for Tuesday of the Fifth Week of Eastertide (Our Lady & St John's)
9.55am Novena in honour of St Anthony (Our Lady & St John's)

Wednesday 6th May (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 7.45pm)
9.30am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)
10.00am Holy Mass for Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Eastertide (St Mary's)
6.30pm Recitation of the Holy Rosary (Our Lady & St John's)
7.00pm Holy Mass for Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Eastertide (Our Lady & St John's)

Thursday 7th May (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 4.00pm)
9.00am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (Our Lady & St John's)
9.30am Holy Mass for Thursday of the Fifth Week of Eastertide (Our Lady & St John's)

Friday 8th May (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 4.00pm)
9.30am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)
10.00am Holy Mass for Friday of the Fifth Week of Eastertide (St Mary's)

Saturday 9th May (St Mary's 9.00am - 5.45pm; OLSJ 11.00am - 1.30pm)
12noon First Holy Communion Mass (Our Lady & St John's)
4.15pm Confessions until 4.45pm (St Mary's)
5.00pm Vigil Mass for the Sixth Sunday of Eastertide (St Mary's)

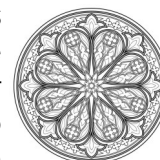


VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

In the Diocese of Motherwell, we look forward to the Ordination of Rev Kieran Burt this summer. Our two seminarians, Aidan and Matthew, are completing their pastoral year in the diocese before returning to Rome after the summer. There are three from the diocese in Salamanca on the propaedeutic period and there have been a number of enquiries for seminary this year, though it is too early to know how many will proceed to Salamanca in January 2027. Any man who is considering a vocation to the Priesthood should make himself known in the first instance to his Parish Priest. His contact details will then be forwarded to the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Charles O'Farrell. If anyone wishes to receive information or encouragement about discerning their vocation, contact can be made with Fr O'Farrell at frofarrell@rcdom.org.uk

STAINED GLASS & STONE WORK

The stained glass and the corroding stonework and leadwork around the windows were inspected by a professional stained glass restoration company. We have received a comprehensive report detailing the work which needs to be carried out as well as the cause of the issues. We are currently looking at grant funding to help with the large costs entailed. A second collection will be taken up at all Masses in Our Lady & St John's for this project until 17th May. The proceeds from the bar at the Parish Friday Drinks for 17th & 24th April and 1st, 8th & 15th May will be set aside for this project. Any donations for this work will be very helpful in offsetting the costs of this important and necessary project.



HEALTH & SAFETY INSPECTION

We are due a Health & Safety Inspection of all our parish properties later this month. A huge amount of work has taken place over the past few months to ready ourselves for this inspection. PAT Testing has been carried out, an Electrical Inspection has taken place, new inter-linked smoke alarms have been fitted in both parish houses, and the next steps from the Electrical Inspection will be carried out in the coming days. The cost of this work, so far, is £4,051.44.

PARISH FINANCES

Offertory Collection & Donations:	£895.00
Standing Orders & Bank Transfers:	£362.00
Stained Glass Collection:	£298.00
Votive Candles:	£480.00
Stall:	£35.00
	£2,070.00

Many thanks for your very generous support

To set up a standing order for the parish:

Account Name - **Our Lady of Fatima Parish**
Account No - **00499758** Sort Code - **800877**

HIRE OF THE PARISH HALL

The Parish Hall is available for private functions, community events, regular lets and fundraising events. Please consider having your parties and functions in the Parish Hall to support the parish. If you would like to find out more information regarding the Hall and bookings, then please contact the Hall through email: **BlackwoodHallBookings@outlook.com**



100 CLUB

Please pay your subscriptions directly into the 100 Club account. **Account Name - Larkhall 100 Club, Sort Code - 80-22-60, Account Number - 17418369.**

GETTING READY FOR SUMMER

We have very committed gardeners who look after our parish gardens faithfully every summer. They do not have time to clear leaves, moss and litter from the parish grounds. If you could spare some time to help clear the weeds, leaves and moss around our parish properties over the next few weeks, preferably before the First Holy Communions (St John's - 9th May, St Mary's - 16th May) to make the place look tidy. Please speak with Bert Lynch (Blackwood) or Stephen Fleming (Larkhall) if you could lend a hand. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

KEYS FOR PARISH PROPERTIES

Each parish has a list of key holders for the various parish properties (churches, houses, halls, garages, out-houses), this is to provide ease of access for parishioners who perform various jobs in the parish (cleaners, those who open and lock the churches, gardeners etc). It has come to Fr Wyllie's attention that there are more people with keys for the various parish properties than are on the official list kept in the parish records. Keys should not be distributed or cut without the express permission of the parish priest. If you have a key for any of the parish properties but did not receive the key directly from Fr Wyllie please hand your key to him at the earliest opportunity.

PARISH SCOTTISH CUP FINAL

The Parish Hall

SATURDAY 23RD MAY

Bar open 12noon; Kick off 3.00pm

Tickets £5.00 - includes pies & snacks



PARISH FRIDAY DRINKS

The Parish Hall

EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON

2.00pm - 9.00pm

Card Payments preferable



PARISH LADIES DAY

The Parish Hall

SATURDAY 6TH JUNE

12noon - 6.00pm

Includes the Abba tribute duo, prosecco Tea & Bar.

TICKETS - £20.00

Available by emailing: BlackwoodHallBookings@outlook.com



PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

SICK - Sheila Coffield, Margaret McCormick, Marjory McMurray, Phyllis Williamson, Louise Gonnella, Faith Lindsay, Pat Whalin, Declan McDonald, Paul McMurray, Margaret Craig, Aaron Mulligan, Stephen Fleming, Marion Bryson, William Young, Andy McGarvey, Julia Brassington, Maureen Crank, Robbie Frew, George Murphy, Phyllis Fleming

RIP - Steven Ross, Councillor Lesley McDonald, Professor Judith Champ, Michael Donnelly

MONTHS MINDS & ANNIVERSARIES - Betty Hamilton, John Leonard, Patricia Weir

Please remember to have your dead loved ones prayed for on their anniversary

COMMUNITY GARDEN

We need help to maintain the community garden from April - September. We appreciate everyone is busy, so in an effort to make this task more manageable, we are looking for people to take on responsibility for a small area. If anyone would like to help, there will be a 'map' at the back of the church. Please contact Vivien on greenferns1@hotmail.com with any questions.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS

The young people who have been preparing for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion in our parish will receive the Sacrament in Blackwood on Saturday 9th May at 12noon, and in Larkhall on Saturday 16th May at 12noon. Please keep the young people, their families, teachers and school staff in your prayers as they enter the final day of preparation for such a special moment.

THINKING OF BECOMING CATHOLIC?

Have you considered becoming Catholic? The first port of call is to meet with Fr Wyllie to have an initial and informal chat, come along to Mass each week and then begin the RCIA programme which will begin at the end of September and run through to Holy Week 2027.

OFFERINGS TO THE PARISH - AN APPEAL

As more and more of us carry less cash and due to the fact that the Bank of Scotland in Larkhall has closed, if you are able, please consider setting up a standing order to the parish. This would really help those who count and bank our collections too. The bank account name, sort code and account number are available on page three of this bulletin.

CONGRATULATIONS

Last Saturday Eliza Grace Steele was welcomed into the Church as a child of God and an heir to everlasting salvation through the waters of Baptism. We extend our congratulations to her parents, godparents and wider family.

QR CODE & DIGITAL GIVING MACHINES

We almost have the new digital giving machines set up. The delay has been on the part of the company who supplies the machines. We will also have the new QR Code set up which will allow parishioners to give digitally through their phones by holding their phone camera to the QR Code and selecting the link which should appear at the bottom of the photo. The QR Code will be attached to the bulletin when it is set up and working properly.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CARDS

Our parish stall has a selection of First Holy Communion cards available as well as many other cards for various occasions. Why not have a look after Mass today. Most cards are £1.00.

GIFTAID ENVELOPES

The current sets of Giftaid envelopes will run out in a few weeks time. The new sets will be available at the back of the church for those who contribute to the weekly collection through the Giftaid envelopes. Please pick up your set of envelopes over the next few weeks.