

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

**THIRD SUNDAY OF THE SEASON OF ADVENT
14TH DECEMBER 2025**

GAUDETE SUNDAY

The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete Sunday, referring to the opening Antiphon often sung at Mass, *Gaudete in Domino semper* (Rejoice in the Lord always). It is a day that signals the upcoming conclusion to the Advent season.

For this reason, the Church urges the faithful to "rejoice," as the time of penance and fasting is drawing to an end, making way for Christmas, a season of joy and feasting.

Pope Benedict XVI in an Angelus message in 2011, explained the difference between two types of joy:

"The liturgy of this Sunday, known as "Gaudete" Sunday, is a special invitation to us to joyfulness, to a vigilance that is not sad but happy. "Gaudete in Domino semper," St Paul wrote: "Rejoice in the Lord always" (*Phil 4:4*). True joy is not a fruit of "divertirsi" [having a good time] understood in the etymological sense of the word di-vertere (diversion), that is, shirking the commitments of life and one's responsibilities.

True joy is linked to something deeper. Of course, in the all too often frenetic pace of daily life it is important to find time for rest and relaxation, but true joy is linked to our relationship with God. Those who have encountered Christ in their own lives feel a serenity and joy in their hearts that no one and no situation can take from them. St Augustine understood this very well; in his quest for truth, peace and joy, after seeking them in vain in many things he concluded with his famous words: "and our heart is restless until it rests in God".

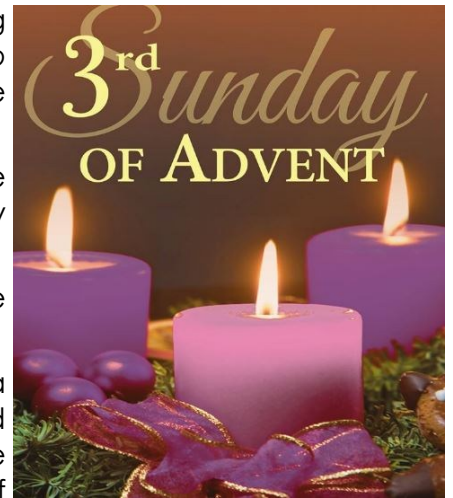
Benedict XVI expanded on this definition of joy, explaining how "True joy is not merely a passing state of mind or something that can be achieved with the person's own effort; rather it is a gift, born from the encounter with the living Person of Jesus and, making room within ourselves, from welcoming the Holy Spirit who guides our lives. It is the invitation of the Apostle Paul who says: 'May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' (*1 Thessalonians 5:23*)."

This means that Christian joy is not something we can grasp at or invent, but something we receive from a personal relationship with God. It is something we receive "from the encounter with the living Person of Jesus."

If we want to foster Christian joy during this Advent season, we must deepen our own relationship with God. Then, and only then, will we possess a joy that the world can't take away.

No matter what happens in our lives, if we stay rooted in Jesus Christ, we will be able to emanate a joy that far surpasses any momentary joy we may feel on earth. It is a joy that endures and brings us life everlasting.

This Sunday is a day of rejoicing for it is the half-way point of our penance and prayer, directing our hearts and minds to the coming of the Lord who will save and redeem all of us. Today we rejoice, as we should every day in the knowledge that the Lord has come to save his people.



THIS WEEK IN OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH

Sunday 14th December (St Mary's open 9.00am - 7.00pm; OLSJ 11.00am - 5.45pm)

10.00am Holy Mass for the Third Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

12noon Holy Mass for the Third Sunday of Advent (Our Lady & St John's)

5.00pm Holy Mass for the Third Sunday of Advent (Our Lady & St John's)

6.30pm Vespers & Benediction (St Mary's)



ADVENT

Monday 15th December (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 4.00pm)

11.30am Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

12noon Rorate Mass for the Monday of the Third Week of Advent (St Mary's)

Tuesday 16th December (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 Third Week of Advent (Our Lady & St John's)

9.55am Novena in honour of St Anthony (Our Lady & St John's)

Wednesday 17th December (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 7.45pm)

9.30am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 9.55am (St Mary's)

9.30am Confessions until 9.50am (St Mary's)

10.00am Holy Mass for the 17th December (St Mary's)

10.30am Novena in honour of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (St Mary's)

6.00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 6.55pm (Our Lady & St John's)

6.00pm Confessions until 6.50pm (Our Lady & St John's)

7.00pm Holy Mass for the 17th December (Our Lady & St John's)

Thursday 18th December (St Mary's 9.00am - 4.00pm; OLSJ 8.00am - 4.00pm)

9.00am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 9.25am (Our Lady & St John's)

9.00am Confessions until 9.20am (Our Lady & St John's)

9.30pm Holy Mass for the 18th December (Our Lady & St John's)

Friday 19th December (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 the 19th December (St Mary's)



Saturday 20th December (St Mary's 9.00am - 5.45pm; OLSJ closed)

3.45pm Confessions until 4.45pm (St Mary's)

5.00pm Vigil Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

5.35pm Confessions after Mass (St Mary's)

PREPARE, REPENT AND BE READY

Over the last few days of Advent the following opportunities for Confession are available. Please try to avail yourself of this beautiful Sacrament in preparation for Christmas.

Wednesday 17th December

9.30am - 9.50am (St Mary's)

6.00pm - 6.50pm (OLSJ)

Thursday 18th December

9.00am - 9.20am (OLSJ)

Saturday 20th December

3.45pm - 4.45pm (St Mary's)

After Vigil Mass (St Mary's)

Sunday 21st December

After the 10.00am, 12noon & 5.00pm Masses

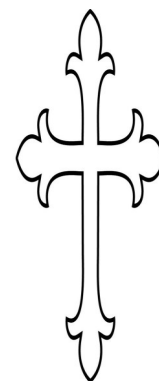
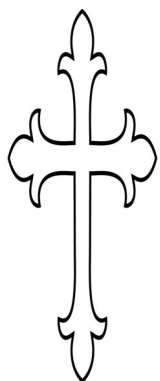
Monday 22nd December

After 12noon Mass (St Mary's)

6.00pm - 7.00pm (St Mary's)

Tuesday 23rd December

After 9.30am Mass (OLSJ)



ST ANDREW'S HOSPICE

Many thanks for your generosity to last week's second collection. £1,050.00 has been forwarded to St Andrew's Hospice from our parish. May God reward you all for your kindness.

TO CONSERVE HEAT PLEASE KEEP THE CHURCH DOORS CLOSED.

PARISH FINANCES

Offertory Collection & Donations:	£960.00
Standing Orders & Bank Transfers	£320.00
Votive Candles:	£680.00
	£1,960.00

Many thanks for your very generous support

St Andrew's Hospice: £1,050.00

To set up a standing order for the parish:

Account Name - **Our Lady of Fatima Parish**

Account No - **00499758** Sort Code - **800877**

Giftaid forms available at back of the church.

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**



VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Three men have been accepted by the bishop to begin formation to the priesthood by participating in the 2026 Propaedeutic period in the Royal Scots College, Salamanca, Spain. There will be another gathering at the Cathedral House, Motherwell this evening, Sunday, at 7.30pm for those considering a vocation to the priesthood. Those who attended previously will be most welcome, along with any others who are thinking about a vocation to the priesthood. Please contact your parish priest or Fr Charles O'Farrell at frofarrell@rcdom.org.uk

VESPERS & BENEDICTION

Evening Prayer of the Church (Vespers) will be prayed in St Mary's this evening, Sunday, at 6.30pm followed by Adoration & Benediction. Please make a special effort to come along and join in this universal prayer of the Church in praying for the Church and the world.

RECONCILIATION MASSES

Unfortunately due to a special Diocesan Mass to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of Motherwell Cathedral, Fr Wyllie has had to cancel the Reconciliation Mass in St Mary's on Monday evening. Confessions in Our Lady & St John's will move to the earlier time of 6.00pm on Wednesday. Fr Wyllie apologises for this change to the scheduled Masses & confessions.

CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCES

Christmas is a time when we feel the loss of our beloved dead most acutely. We can find great comfort in having them remembered at our Christmas Masses. If you wish your deceased loved ones remembered at our Christmas Masses and recorded in our Christmas bulletin, please hand in their names in an envelope clearly marked 'Christmas Remembrances' by **Tuesday 23rd December at 12noon.**



PARISH STALL

There are still some cards and other seasonal items available in our parish stall, it would be great to have as much of this stock sold by Christmas. This is a great way of supporting the parish by purchasing your Christmas cards and other gifts from the parish stall. Please have a look after Mass. Christmas Mass Bouquet cards are on sale for £2.00, the greatest gift we can ever give someone is having the Sacrifice of Mass offered for them. If you're unsure what to get someone for Christmas then why not get a Mass said for them?

THEOLOGY ON TAP

Fr Andrew Robinson will be in the parish to lead our December Theology on Tap on Tuesday 16th beginning at 6.30pm with the talk commencing at 7.00pm. The talk will be on the Christmas story in the Gospels. This is a perfect way for us to learn more about the Christmas narrative as portrayed in the Gospels. Fr Wyllie encourages and invites all parishioners to make a special effort to come along and support this event. All welcome.



PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

SICK - Jim Melville, Anne Connor, Veronica Hood (Hamilton), Jane Hamilton, Faith Lindsay, Pat Whalin, Declan McDonald, Paul McMurray, Margaret Craig, Aaron Mulligan, Stephen Fleming, Marion Bryson, William Young, James Thomson, Andy McGarvey, Julia Brassington, Maureen Crank, Robbie Frew, George Murphy, Phyllis Fleming, Joe Murphy (Dubai)

RIP - Chris Ferris (Wishaw), Neil Agnew (Newmains)

MONTHS MINDS & ANNIVERSARIES - Michael Lyons, Martin Mulhearn, Lucia Stewart, Jim Sherry

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

PRIMARY SCHOOL ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES

This Friday, the pupils of St John's will hold an Advent Service in the school. The pupils of St Mary's will hold a Candlelight Service that day in St Mary's church at 1.45pm to which all are welcome.

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

A second collection is taken up at Christmas as a way of parishioners offering a special Christmas gift to the parish. This collection will be taken up at all Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Those who pay UK Tax are asked to use one of the Christmas Giftaid envelopes.

CHRISTMAS MASSES 2025



CHRISTMAS EVE

Wednesday 24th December

5.00pm - Vigil Mass of Christmas (St Mary's)

8.30pm - First Mass of Christmas (St Mary's)

12.00am - Midnight Mass of Christmas (OLSJ)

CHRISTMAS DAY

Thursday 25th December

10.00am - Dawn Mass of Christmas (St Mary's)

12noon - Day Mass of Christmas (OLSJ)



Please make a special effort to come to Christmas Mass in our parish.



PARISH DRINKS

The Parish Hall

FRIDAY 2.00PM - 9.00PM

SUNDAY 28TH DEC AFTER 12NOON MASS



THEOLOGY ON TAP

The Parish Hall

TUESDAY 16TH DECEMBER

6.30pm, Talk beginning at 7.00pm

Fr Andrew Robinson on the Christmas Narrative



PARISH HOGMANAY PARTY

The Parish Hall

WEDNESDAY 31ST DECEMBER

8.30pm - 1.30am

Ticket - £10.00 (glass of prosecco & a pie), under 16's free

