

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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St Mary's
Raploch Road
Larkhall, ML9 1AN

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
4TH DECEMBER 2022

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Immaculate Conception is a dogma that states that Mary, whose conception was brought about the normal way, was conceived without original sin or its stain. That's what "immaculate" means: without stain. It's important to understand what the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is and what it is not. Some people mistakenly think that the term refers to Christ's conception without the intervention of a human father. Others think the Immaculate Conception means Mary was conceived "of the Holy Spirit," in the way Jesus was, that, too, is incorrect.

The essence of original sin consists in the deprivation of sanctifying grace, and its stain is a corrupt nature. Mary was preserved from these defects by God's grace; from the first instant of her existence she was in the state of sanctifying grace and was free from the corrupt nature original sin brings.

The angel Gabriel said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28). The phrase "full of grace" is a translation of the Greek word *kecharitomene*. It expresses a characteristic of Mary.

The grace given to Mary is at once permanent and of a unique kind. *Kecharitomene* is a perfect passive participle of *charitoo*, meaning "to fill or endow with grace." Since this term is in the perfect tense, it indicates that Mary was graced in the past but with continuing effects in the present. So, the grace Mary enjoyed was not a result of the angel's visit. In fact, Catholics hold, it extended over the whole of her life, from conception onward. She was in a state of sanctifying grace from the first moment of her existence.

Protestants' chief reason for objecting to the Immaculate Conception and Mary's consequent sinlessness is that we are told that "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23). Besides, they say, Mary said her "spirit rejoices in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:47), and only a sinner needs a Saviour. Let's take the second citation first. Mary, too, required a Saviour. Like all other descendants of Adam, she was subject to the necessity of contracting original sin. But by a special intervention of God, undertaken at the instant she was conceived, she was preserved from the stain of original sin and its consequences. She was therefore redeemed by the grace of Christ, but in a special way - by anticipation. All have not sinned, a child or someone who is unaware cannot sin.

Consider an analogy: Suppose a man falls into a deep pit, and someone reaches down to pull him out. The man has been "saved" from the pit. Now imagine a woman walking along, but at the very moment that she is to fall in, someone holds her back and prevents her. She too has been saved from the pit, but in an even better way: She was not simply taken out of the pit, she was prevented from getting stained by the mud in the first place. This is the illustration Christians have used for a thousand years to explain how Mary was saved by Christ. By receiving Christ's grace at her conception, she had his grace applied to her before she was able to become mired in original sin and its stain.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that she was "redeemed in a more exalted fashion, by reason of the merits of her Son" (CCC 492). She has more reason to call God her Saviour than we do, because he saved her in an even more glorious manner!



THIS WEEK IN OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH

Sunday 4th December

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

Monday 5th December

- 11.30am Recitation of the Rosary (St Mary's)
11.30am Confessions until 11.50am (St Mary's)
12noon Holy Mass for Monday of the Second Week of Advent (St Mary's)

Tuesday 6th December

- 9.00am Recitation of the Rosary (Our Lady & St John's)
9.30am Holy Mass for the Memoria of St Nicholas (Our Lady & St John's)
6.00pm Reception of Body (St Mary's)
Recitation of the Rosary at the conclusion of the Reception of the Body (St Mary's)

Wednesday 7th December

- 11.00am Requiem Mass for Jacky McGowan (St Mary's)
6.30pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 6.55pm (Our Lady & St John's)
6.30pm Confessions until 6.50pm (Our Lady & St John's)
7.00pm Holy Mass for the Memoria of St Ambrose (Our Lady & St John's)

Thursday 8th December

- 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)
9.30am Holy Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Our Lady & St John's)
7.00pm Solemn Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (St Mary's)

Friday 9th December

- 10.00am Holy Mass for the Memoria of St Juan Diego (St Mary's)

Saturday 10th December

- 4.00pm Confessions until 4.45pm (St Mary's)
5.00pm Vigil Mass for the Third Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

6th December - Memoria of St Nicholas - St Nicholas was born in 270 and became Bishop of Myra, a Greek city in present-day Turkey. Very little historical fact is available about his life, but he leaves a reputation for generosity and courage. The most famous tale about him tells of him putting gold coins through a man's door to provide dowries for his daughters so that they could avoid prostitution. His practice of quiet giving gave rise to the idea of Santa Claus, which is a variation of his name. He died in 343. He is the patron saint of sailors, children, wolves and pawnbrokers.

7th December – Memoria of St Ambrose - St Ambrose was born in 340 in Trier, Germany, where his father was an official of the Roman Empire. He entered the same profession and became governor of Liguria-Emilia by 372. There was tension between Arian and orthodox parties among the Christians of Milan when they gathered to elect a new bishop in 374 and he counselled them to observe public order. He was an impressive speaker, and they acclaimed him as their bishop though he was only a catechumen, and he had to be baptised and ordained in the space of a few days. He was a strong and popular pastoral leader, opposing Arianism, and once excommunicating the emperor after an atrocity. St Ninian would likely have encountered him returning to Scotland from Rome in 394. He died in 397. He is the patron of the Scots College, Spain as well as the patron of bees, beekeepers and candle makers.

9th December – Memoria of St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoazin - St Juan Diego was born in 1474 and brought up in the Aztec religion, but converted to Catholicism with his wife in 1524 when Franciscan missionaries arrived in their region. In 1531 Our Blessed Lady appeared to him instructing him to tell the local bishop she wanted a church built on Tepeyac Hill, now part of Mexico City. As a proof of her authenticity, Our Lady imprinted an image of herself on his cloak, or 'tilma'. Until he died in 1548, he lived beside the church serving all who visited. He is the patron saint of the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST MARY'S

This year we celebrate the founding of St Mary's Larkhall as a parish back in 1872. This is a moment to give thanks to God for all that the parish has received from his goodness and to place ourselves and our future into his hands. **His Lordship Bishop Toal will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Thursday 8th December at 7.00pm.** All parishioners are very warmly invited to come along to this Mass. We are unable to serve wine in the school, but prosecco will be available outside the church after Mass.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

If you would be willing to help set up the Children's Liturgy in St Mary's at the 10.00am Mass, please speak with Fr Wyllie.



PARISH FINANCES

Collection & Donations:	£855.00
Standing Orders & Bank Transfers:	£310.00
Votives:	£273.00
Stall:	£285.00
TOTAL:	£1,723.00

Many thanks for your very generous support

To set up a Standing Order for your collection:

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

CHURCH BUILDING FUND

A second collection will be taken up at all our Masses next weekend for our Church Building Fund. Since the last collection we have refurbished Our Lady & St John's, replaced a boiler & repaired another, fixed broken slates on the roof of St Mary's and Our Lady & St John's, we paid double insurance for all our parish properties and had a full health & safety audit completed & actioned to ensure all our parish properties are safe and legal. Anything you can give to this second collection will be very gratefully received to help us maintain and improve our parish buildings.

CAROL SERVICE

The Motherwell Diocesan Choir will lead a Carol Service in St Mary's on Wednesday 14th December beginning at 7.00pm. All parishioners and their families are invited to come along to enjoy and take part in the carol singing and in the readings and reflections. It promises to be a wonderful event especially in the year that we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of St Mary's and the 140th anniversary of the opening of Our Lady & St John's. Please keep this evening free in your diary so that we can come together as a parish and give praise to the new born King.



UKRAINIAN FAMILY

A family from Ukraine have recently moved to Lesmahagow and have been receiving assistance from parishioners from Our Lady & St John's together with the SSVP. Having left everything behind to find a new home in our country they have had to begin their new life from scratch. It has been suggested that parishioners could maybe write them a Christmas card to welcome them to the area and to show our solidarity with their plight and suffering. A box will be available at the back of both churches for any parishioner who would like to send the family a Christmas card. There are Christmas cards available in both stalls for anyone who would wish to send a card.

FOODBANK

The next collection for our local foodbank will take place on the weekend 17th/18th December. Please try to donate something to help those less-fortunate this Christmas time.



CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

It is a long standing tradition for parishioners to make a monetary gift to the parish at Christmas time. Christmas Collection envelopes will be available from the back of the church from next weekend. Those who are in the Giffaid scheme are asked to fill out their details on the envelope.

MONTHS MIND MASS

A Months Mind Mass will be offered for the repose of the soul of Canon Willie O'Sullivan in St Barbara's Muirhead on Friday 2nd December at 7.00pm. Canon O'Sullivan spent some time in our parish a few years ago.

MASS FOR DECEASED CLERGY

The Annual Mass for Deceased Clergy will take place in St Mary's Whifflet on Tuesday 6th December at 7.00pm.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING:

SICK - Selina Gold, Adrienne McEnhill, Kathy Newbound, Ernie Girvan, Pat Whalin, Charles Kennedy (Florida), James Ferguson, Alice Cumming, Janet McIntosh, Annette Thomson, Kathleen Brannigan, Mandy Murray McVie, Kevin Feeney

RIP - Jacky McGowan (*Receiving Tuesday at 6.00pm; Requiem Mass Wednesday at 11.00am*), Philip Maguire, John Plunkett (Spain), Robert McMahan

MONTHS MINDS & ANNIVERSARIES - John Corr, Mary Corr, Jennifer Cochran, William Tait, James Sherry

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

MASSES FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IN OUR PARISH

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

5.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas (*Our Lady & St John's*)
8.30pm First Mass of Christmas (*St Mary's*)
12.00am Midnight Mass of Christmas (*St Mary's*)

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

10.00am Dawn Mass of Christmas (*St Mary's*)
12noon Day Mass of Christmas (*Our Lady & St John's*)
No Evening Mass



PARISH STALL

Both our stalls have a variety of Christmas cards and 2023 calendars for sale. We also have beautiful resin cribs for sale at £22.50. If you don't have a crib for your home or you need a new one then why not have a look at the crib statue today? Please try to keep Christ in Christmas by sending religious Christmas cards to your relatives, friends and neighbours. In purchasing from our parish stalls you are supporting the parish. Please have a look after Mass today.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

If you or someone you know will be alone on Christmas day and would like some company and Christmas dinner then please speak with Fr Wyllie or Bob McDermott. It has been proposed that we put on a Christmas dinner for those who may be alone or struggling on Christmas day. There would be dinner and refreshments served in the Parish Hall from 1.30pm until 4.00pm.

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE CREMATORIUM MEMORIAL SERVICE

South Lanarkshire Crematorium Christmas Memorial Service returns on Sunday 4th December at 2.00pm. Fr Quinn from St Leonard's in East Kilbride is helping with the service and anyone who has a loved one who was cremated from SLC are welcome to attend. For more information please phone 0303 123 1016.

CONFESSIONS FOR THE SEASON OF ADVENT

As well as the weekly opportunities for Confessions, which you will find in the weekly schedule on page two, there will be extended opportunities for Confessions on the weekend of 17th/18th December. Please try to avail yourself of this Sacrament of the Lord's love. He is waiting for you.

Saturday 17th December

3.30pm - 4.45pm (*St Mary's*)
After the Vigil Mass (*St Mary's*)

Sunday 18th December

9.15am - 9.45am (*St Mary's*)
10.45am - 11.15pm (*St Mary's*)
12.45pm - 1.15pm (*Our Lady & St John's*)
4.15pm - 4.45pm (*Our Lady & St John's*)
After the Evening Mass (*Our Lady & St John's*)

