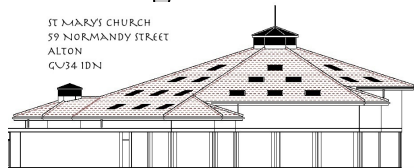


St Mary's Parish Newsletter



ST MARY'S CHURCH
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MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS w/c Sunday 19th November, 2023 33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A1) (Psalter Week 1)

Saturday	Our Lady on Saturday 4.45pm Confessions 5.30pm Matt Marsh, RIP
Sunday	33rd Sunday of the Year
St. Lucy's	9.00am Names in the Book of the Dead
St. Mary's	11.00am Amy & Leonard Gilbert, RIP
Monday	Feria 9.30am Deceased Diocesan Clergy
Tuesday	The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary <u>No Mass</u>
Wednesday	St. Cecilia 9.30am John McGinty, RIP
Thursday	Feria 9.30am Augustine Thomas, RIP
Friday	St. Andrew Dung-Lac & Companions 9.30am Francis Elgee, RIP (F)
Saturday	Our Lady on Saturday 9.30am Deceased members of the Hodson & Azzopardi Family 4.45pm Confessions 5.30pm Harriet Elgee, RIP (F)
Sunday	Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of The Universe
St. Lucy's	9.00am Sheila & Jack Mather, RIP
St. Mary's	11.00am Kathleen Willis & George Wood RIP

33rd Sunday of the Year—19th November, 2023

Entrance Antiphon

The Lord said: I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction. You will call upon me, and I will answer you and I will lead back your captives from every place.

First Reading Proverbs 31:10-13,19-20,30-31

A perfect wife - who can find her?

Responsorial Psalm

O blessed are those who fear the Lord.

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

God will bring with him those who have died in Jesus

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia! Even if you have to die, says the Lord, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life. **Alleluia!**

Gospel Matthew 25:14-30

You have been faithful in small things: come and join in your master's happiness.

Communion Antiphon:

To be near God is my happiness, to place my hope in God the Lord.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.



33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

We must be very careful that the real point of today's first reading is not washed away in genuine concerns over what one can and cannot say about the responsibilities of wives. This is not, in fact, a recipe for 'the perfect wife', but an illustration, from one age, of the virtue of fully employing the talents God gives us. Some things are timeless, such as holding out a hand to the poor, while other talents shift and change. The point is that all of us are gifted in varying ways and degrees: none of us should begrudge anyone else their talents, for fear that we overlook our own. We work wisely and well, looking forward to the master's return, when we can hand over to him not just what he gave us, but also the fruits that our labours have gained.

The kingdom of God is among you

A Pope's Reflection—Pope Benedict

The Word of God this Sunday the second to the last Sunday of the liturgical year invites us to be vigilant and hardworking, in the expectation of the Lord's return at the end of time. The Gospel passage recounts the famous Parable of the Talents, related by St Matthew. The "talent" was an ancient Roman coin, of great value, and precisely because of this parable's popularity it became synonymous with personal gifts, which everyone is called to develop. In fact, the text speaks of "a man going on a journey [who] called his servants and entrusted to them his property". The man in the parable represents Christ himself, the servants are the disciples and the talents are the gifts that Jesus entrusts to them. These gifts, in addition to their natural qualities, thus represent the riches that the Lord Jesus has bequeathed to us as a legacy, so that we may make them productive: his Word, deposited in the Holy Gospel; Baptism, which renews us in the Holy Spirit; prayer the "Our Father" that we raise to God as his children, united in the Son; his forgiveness, which he commanded be offered to all; the Sacrament of his Body sacrificed and his Blood poured out; in a word: the Kingdom of God, which is God himself, present and alive in our midst. This is the treasure that Jesus entrusted to his friends at the end of his brief life on earth. Today's parable stresses the inner disposition necessary to accept and develop this gift. Fear is the wrong attitude: the servant who is afraid of his master and fears his return hides the coin in the earth and it does not produce any fruit. This happens, for example, to those who after receiving Baptism, Communion and Confirmation subsequently bury these gifts beneath a blanket of prejudice, beneath a false image of God that paralyzes faith and good works, thus betraying the Lord's expectations. However, the parable places a greater emphasis on the good fruits brought by the disciples who, happy with the gift they received, did not keep it hidden with fear and jealousy but made it profitable by sharing it and partaking in it. Yes, what Christ has given us is multiplied in its giving! It is a treasure made to be spent, invested and shared with all, as we are taught by the Apostle Paul, that great administrator of Jesus' talents. The Gospel teaching that the liturgy offers us today has also had a strong effect at the historical and social level, encouraging an active and entrepreneurial spirit in the Christian people.

The central message, however, concerns the spirit of responsibility with which to receive God's Kingdom: a responsibility to God and to humanity. This attitude of the heart is embodied perfectly in the Virgin Mary who, on receiving the most precious gift of all, Jesus himself, offered him to the world with immense love. Let us ask her to help us to be "good and faithful servants" so that we may one day enter "into the joy of our Lord".



Please remember in your prayers

Maria Proli, Sister Terry, Eileen Bowler, Francesca Adams, Margaret Hart, Mary McGrath, Sheila Payne, Annie Tomlinson, Rita Rawling, Jonathan Wiltshire, Jeanne Abraham, Alex Smith Mary Sturgess, Brenda Gregory, Kate Cradock, , Margaret Collins, Theresa Davies, The Rogers Family, Flavia Stampa Gruss, ,
& all in need of God's grace at this time.

"What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see the misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like." "God loves each of us as if there were only one of us."
— St. Augustine



The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

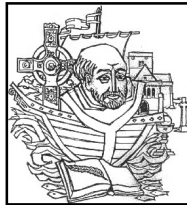
Mary's presentation was celebrated in Jerusalem in the 6th century. A church was built there in honour of this mystery. The Eastern Church was more interested in the feast, but it does appear in the West in the 11th century. Although the feast at times disappeared from the calendar, in the 16th century it became a feast of the universal Church. As with Mary's birth, we read of Mary's presentation in the

temple only in apocryphal literature. In what is recognized as an unhistorical account, the Proto-evangelium of James tells us that Anna and Joachim offered Mary to God in the Temple when she was 3 years old. This was to carry out a promise made to God when Anna was still childless. Though it cannot be proven historically, Mary's presentation has an important theological purpose. It continues the impact of the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and of the birth of Mary. It emphasizes that the holiness conferred on Mary from the beginning of her life on earth continued through her early childhood and beyond.

Reflection: It is sometimes difficult for modern Westerners to appreciate a feast like this. The Eastern Church, however, was quite open to this feast and even somewhat insistent about celebrating it. Even though the feast has no basis in history, it stresses an important truth about Mary: From the beginning of her life, she was dedicated to God. She herself became a greater temple than any made by hands. God came to dwell in her in a marvelous manner and sanctified her for her unique role in God's saving work. At the same time, the magnificence of Mary enriches her children. They—we—too are temples of God and sanctified in order that we might enjoy and share in God's saving work.

November 26th Saint Columba

Columba (*Columbanus*) was the greatest of the Irish missionaries who worked on the European continent. As a young man who was greatly tormented by temptations of the flesh, he sought the advice of a religious woman who had lived a hermit's life for years. He saw in her answer a call to leave the world. He went first to a monk on an island in Lough Erne, then to the great monastic seat of learning at Bangor.



After many years of seclusion and prayer, he travelled to Gaul with 12 companion missionaries. They won wide respect for the rigor of their discipline, their preaching, and their commitment to charity and religious life in a time characterized by clerical laxity and civil strife. Columba established several monasteries in Europe which became centres of religion and culture. His writings include a treatise on penance and against Arianism, sermons, poetry, and his monastic rule. Like all saints, he met opposition. Ultimately he had to appeal to the pope against complaints of Frankish bishops, for vindication of his orthodoxy and approval of Irish customs. He reproved the king for his licentious life, insisting that he marry. Since this threatened the power of the queen mother, Columba was deported back to Ireland. His ship ran aground in a storm, and he continued his work in Europe, ultimately arriving in Italy, where he found favour with the king of the Lombards. In his last years he established the famous monastery of Bobbio, where he died.

Reflection: Now that public sexual license is becoming extreme, we need the Church's memory of a young man as concerned about chastity as Columba. And now that the comfort-captured Western world stands in tragic contrast to starving millions, we need the challenge to austerity and discipline of a group of Irish monks. They were too strict, we say; they went too far. How far shall we go?

In Paradisum Prayer for the Holy Souls

May angels guide you and bring you into paradise: and may all the martyrs come forth to welcome you home; and may they lead you into the holy city, Jerusalem. May the angel chorus sing to welcome you, and like Lazarus, forgotten and poor, you shall have everlasting rest.

Christmas Gift Bags

Very soon we shall be asking for small items for our Christmas Gift Bags to distribute to Parishioners who are not able to attend Mass. Please keep us in mind when you are shopping and perhaps add an extra item to your basket.

FIRST FRIDAY COFFEE & FISH & CHIP LUNCH

The next First Friday Coffee will be on **Friday 1st December** and will be followed by the Fish & Chip Lunch—held in the **Parish Hall**. There will be a list at the back of the Church with lunch options for you to place your order—or please call Pauline on Alton 82617. Following lunch there will be a Demonstration/Workshop for making table decorations in which you can take part (taking home the decoration you have made)

Pre-Christmas Soup Lunch and Fayre Saturday, 25th November in the Parish Hall

We shall be serving soup & rolls from 12 noon and invite all to join us. We plan to have various stalls and would very much appreciate offers of help—and of course donations for our Tombola and Cake stalls. Prizes for the Raffle would also be most welcome. There will be a list at the back of the Church if you are able to help—otherwise please just come along and join the event

We share an appeal letter from Cardinal Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, given in Jerusalem on 2nd Nov 2023...

Dear Brothers and Sisters, May the Lord give you peace! Charity and prayer animate the entire extended family of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, especially during times of extreme hardship. Many lives were saved and much suffering was alleviated thanks to your support in these recent appeals: the Covid-19, Gaza 2021; the Beirut port blast; and the Syria and Turkey earthquake. In all of these situations we heard and answered the cry of the poor. Once again, their cry is heard in the Holy Land because of the war that has been raging now for over three weeks. The current crisis has caused not only death, destruction and hunger in Gaza, but also high unemployment, especially in the Bethlehem area, and other social issues all over the Holy Land. We are facing a crisis that affects countless families from different religions and all of our institutions including schools, hospitals and parishes. In Gaza, our material resources have been extended beyond our walls to include our suffering neighbours and to those who took refuge in other locations. The spirit of coordination was evident as local players also extended a helping hand. We share practically everything from food and water to medicines and supplies. We have learned in this difficult time that to rebuild the physical world we must build and protect trust between people. Hundreds of people from all over the world have contacted us and have helped us to offer concrete support. We know what we need to do, as we have done with all our heart in previous crises, and we will undoubtedly do it again. Please help us to make a concrete difference and to build the necessary environment so that, in this society scarred by hatred, we may again sow the seeds of trust, of hope and of love. Be assured of my prayer and gratitude for each of you!

In Christ, Pierbattista Card. Pizzaballa Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

If you would like to give to the appeal please visit <https://www.lpj.org/posts/general-appeal.html>

WORDS OF COMFORT FOR THE BEREAVED

“Grief never ends....but it changes. It's a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith, It is the price of love.”

S	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D	E	DISCIPLES	SERVANT	THOUSAND
S	W	E	T	N	A	V	R	E	S	COINS	COUNTRY	MASTER
E	T	O	D	W	A	E	D	M	F	MONEY	EARNED	MORE
N	D	R	N	S	O	E	O	M	A	WONDERFUL	FAITHFUL	HAPPINESS
I	E	M	A	D	N	N	N	F	I			
P	N	A	S	R	E	I	I	O	T			
P	R	S	U	Y	E	R	O	M	H			
A	A	T	O	L	S	A	F	C	F			
H	E	E	H	T	F	E	L	U				
R	Y	R	T	N	U	O	C	O	L			

