



St John the Evangelist
Stevenson

22nd March 2020

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Year A



Our Lady Star of the Sea
Saltcoats

Parish Priest: Canon Martin Poland

St John's, Hayocks Road, Stevenson, KA20 4DE

Tel No: 01294 463225

St John's Parish website: www.stevensonstjohns.com

Parish Priest: Canon Martin Poland

St Mary's, 10 Ardrossan Road, Saltcoats KA21 5BW

Tel No: 01294 463461

St Mary's Parish website: www.rcsaltcoats.com

Sr Marie Monique & Sr Ursula: Pastoral Assistants to the Three Towns

Canon Matt McManus (Retired)

COVID—19

Greetings everyone

As a result of the Coronavirus the decision has been taken by the Bishops of Scotland in line with Government advice that all public worship should cease. However I hope that both St Mary's and St John's Churches will be open for people to pay a visit and say their own private prayers in doing so following the guidelines of using hand gel and respecting the need to distance ourselves from people in Church. With this in mind **I hope both Churches will be open from Monday– Friday from 11am- 2pm and on Saturday and Sunday from 2pm—4pm.** It will be helpful if we can ensure a presence in the Church during these periods and rotas will be placed at the back/porch of each Church to be completed. With no idea of the period involved it would be helpful if people put their name to a particular day for each week eg Mondays at 1pm. I appreciate your help in this task and wish to remind you that I say private Mass each day for people of our parishes and their intentions. I hope to use bulletin/information sheet to provide the Sunday readings that people can sit quietly either in Church or at home and reflect on them.

All parish activities are suspended at present but the bulletin can be accessed online on St Mary's parish website as above.

We commend all ladies of the parish to Mary Mother of God on this Mothering Sunday. Keep well everyone.

This would also have been SCIAF Sunday and donations can be made to them online to the SCIAF Wee Box Appeal at www.sciaf.org.uk.

Parish collections can be made directly to the Bank. St Mary's Bank details : Bank of Scotland, Sort Code: 80-09-58; Account Number : 00739970 and St John's Bank details : Bank of Scotland, Sort Code: 80-09-58; Account Number : 00260754.

Parish Collection Envelopes can be put through the door at each Chapel House.

Funeral Masses should be attended by close/immediate family only.

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MARCH. Catholics in China. We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

Christians added "pray for us now and at the hour of our death" in the midst of the Black Plague. The "Hail Mary" prayer that Christians have been praying for centuries is composed of two main parts. The first part of the prayer is derived from the Annunciation, when the angel Gabriel greeted Mary by saying, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28) The next part of the prayer is taken from the Visitation, when Elizabeth greeted Mary with the words, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" (Luke 1:42) At first the prayer was known as the "Salutation of the Blessed Virgin," and only consisted of the two verses joined together. However, during the **Black Plague** (also known as the "Black Death") the prayer was further developed and a second part was added to it. This second part ("Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death") is believed by many to have been added during the plague to ask for the Blessed Mother's protection from the **fatal disease**.

Daily Prayer Pray-as-you-go.org . A Lenten Retreat <https://www.sacredspace.ie/lenten-retreat-2020>

St Bueno's Jesuit Retreat House do a lovely prayer session for the following Sunday. You can find it on <https://stbuenosoutreach.wordpress.com/prego/>

THE FOLLOWING MASS INTENTIONS ARE BEING CELEBRATED THIS WEEK:

Anniversary: John Duncan, Jim Lynn, Annie McKeever and Michael Reilly (Ardrossan).

Recently Deceased: Cathy Meechan, Brendan Fitzpatrick, Louie Barr, Lettie Anderson and Fiona White.

Masses are celebrated also by Fr Gerard McCabe plus Retired Priests, Missio Scotland (Pontifical Mission Societies).

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK. 29th March 2020; Fifth Sunday of Lent: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Psalm 129; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WEEKLY COLLECTIONS.

St Mary's: £603.85 (Envelopes £309.00. Cash £294.85).

St John's: £375.50. (Envelopes £331.00. Cash £44.50).

SCIAF £11.45. Building & Renovations £101.66. Collection envelopes will be returned to the parish of issue and added into the following weeks figures.

PARISH HALLS. Closed until further notice.

MARY'S MEALS. A box is available in both Church porches for donations.

FOOD BANK, STEVENSTON. Foodbank is open each Wednesday from 4pm till 5pm in the parish hall.

FOOD BANK, SALTCOATS . The Foodbank is open at the Salvation Army Hall and will distribute boxes from there each Tuesday from 2pm until 3.30pm.

ST MARY'S SVDP. During Lent, on behalf of the homeless men and women who visit the Ozanam Centre in Glasgow, St Mary's SVDP Conference is collecting ladies and gents toiletries. A box is available at the back of the church.

BULLETIN NOTICES. If you wish anything in the parish bulletin please contact Lorna at St Mary's parish office on 463461 or email saltcoats@gallowaydiocese.org.uk by Thursday morning.

WEST COAST FURNITURE BANK. This is a charity which distributes donated household items to families in need. An estimated 40% of the donations have come from readers of this bulletin. George would like to thank everyone for their generosity. The contact number is 07576232969.

Everyone is in debt to God's mercy, Pope Francis says. Showing and receiving God's mercy are central aspects of Christian life – and everyone is in debt to God for the mercy he has already been shown, Pope Francis said during his general audience address last Wednesday. "Mercy is not one dimension among others, it is the centre of Christian life: there is no Christianity without mercy," he said. "If all our Christianity does not lead us to mercy, we have taken the wrong path," he underlined, "because mercy is the only true goal of every spiritual journey. It is one of the most beautiful fruits of charity." He explained that "we are all debtors: to God, who is so generous, and to our brothers and sisters. We are all 'in deficit' in life. And we need mercy." Catholic News Agency.

Prayers for those affected by plague. The 16th Century ritual of prayers for the world affected by disease included a litany of the saints with petitions. "From plague, famine, and war, Lord, deliver us," they prayed and repeated. "That you deliver us from the scourge of pestilence, we beg you to hear us."

EU SETTLEMENT SCHEME. North Ayrshire Council is assisting EU, EEA and Swiss citizens to apply for Settled Status which will allow you to stay in the UK after 31st December 2020. Full details on how to apply can be found at the back of both churches or at: <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/council/eu-settlement-scheme.aspx>. Information leaflets are available.

***The new terms of the Data Protection Regulation prevent us from publishing the names of the sick either in electronic form or in paper form in the bulletin. A new folder containing the names of the sick will be brought through the Church in the offertory procession each week so that these people are included in our prayers. Please inform the parish office in writing of any names to be either included or taken out of this list.**

YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:



For all the sick in our parishes*

Those who have an anniversary: John Duncan, Jim Lynn, Annie McKeever, Michael Reilly (Ardrossan). Connell Thomas, Agnes Kelly, Sarah Crawford, Bobby McCall, Nanda McGoogan, Patrick Joseph Hamilton (Jnr), Ellen McGarvey, Bridget MacDonald (McGarvey), Arthur Cambridge Jnr, Charles Smith and John McCann.

Those who have died recently: Cathy Meechan, Brendan Fitzpatrick, Lettie Anderson, Fiona White, Ann Marie Dickie, Maureen Morrison, Bert Anderson (Paisley), Gerry Swan, Ian Neal, John McLaughlin (Troon), David Love, Louise Barr, Gerard Boyle, Maria Ho, Wilma Smith, Chris Callaghan, Sadie Harvey, Thomas Joyce, Brian Meechan (Irvine), Albert Trainer, Jimmy Frye, John Jackson (Glasgow), David O'Hare, Gerry Boyle, Gerard O'Kane (Carfin), John Ward (Maybole) and Annette (Grimley) Gentilucci (USA)

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

The Regulation came into force on Friday 25th May 2018, and gives individuals greater rights and control over the use of their personal information. Your privacy is important to the Parish Communities of St. John's and St. Mary's. We use the personal data, provided by you for Pastoral support and the administration of weekly collections. The information is held securely and confidentially in electronic or paper format. We will not share this information with third parties without your prior consent. A fuller Privacy Notice is now available on the Diocesan website. www.gallowaydiocese.org.uk/privacy-policy-and-gdpr

FIRST READING : Samuel 16:1.6-7.10-13

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The Word of the Lord.

PSALM

1. The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit.
2. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.
3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

The Word of the Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 9:1.6-9.13-17.34-38

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a Sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see he said, 'he put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God; he does not keep the Sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they have driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

The Gospel of the Lord

REFLECTION

1. Once again, in the first reading, we see God choosing the small or lowly (in this case the youngest of seven sons) to do the greatest work. Where in your life has something (or someone) considered small, humble, or lowly made a great impact?
2. Psalm 23 proclaims the beloved words, 'The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I shall want'. How have you experienced the abundance of God in your own life.
3. At Easter we renew our baptismal promises, the same ones that were recited on the day when we were baptised and we became 'children of light', as St Paul tells the Ephesians. How do you embrace this call to be a child of light?
4. In your life of faith, when have you had an experience of conversation or suddenly being able to 'see' where before you had a spiritual 'blind spot'?

Neighbouring Parishes:

Father Duncan McVicar, St Peter's, Ardrossan 464063. Father Gerard Magee, St Winin's, Kilwinning 552276.

RC Chaplain at Crosshouse and Ayr Hospitals is Deacon Bill Corbett 01292 521208

Going into Hospital? Ask Canon Poland for the Anointing of the Sick before you are admitted.

Ask the ward Sister to let Deacon Corbett know you are admitted and would appreciate a routine visit.

In an emergency situation ask the nurse on duty for the priest-on-call to be paged.

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PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS - MISSION STATEMENT

The Catholic Church in Scotland is concerned with the lives, safety, wholeness and well-being of each individual person within God's purpose for everyone. It seeks to safeguard the welfare of people of all ages who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations. As a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us, ordained, professed, paid and voluntary members, to work together to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults.