

The Parish Communities of:

ST MARGARET'S CATHEDRAL

John Street, Ayr, KA8 OBS

ST PAUL'S CHURCH

Peggieshill Place, Ayr, KA7 3RF

ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CHURCH

Dalmellington Road, Waterside, KA6 7JF



RC AYR

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Fr Stanislaus Chukwube CSSp

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Parish Bulletin

29th/30th December 2018

Readings

Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6.12-14 Colossians 3: 12-2
Luke 2: 41-52

Response

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!

The Nicene Creed:

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,

begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation

he came down from heaven: *(all bow)*

and by the Holy Spirit

was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried,

and rose again on the third day

in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the Prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Times of Mass and Services 31st December - 6th January

Monday

Mass in St Paul's at 10am

Tuesday

Mass in all three Churches at 11am

Wednesday

Mass in St. Paul's at 10am

Thursday

Mass in St. Margaret's at 10am

Friday

Mass in St. Paul's at 10am

Saturday

Mass in St. Margaret's at 10am

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday Vigil Mass in St. Francis Xavier's at 4pm and
St. Margaret's Cathedral at 6.00pm

Mass in St. Margaret's Cathedral at 9.30am

Mass in St. Paul's at 11.30 am

The Divine Mercy Chaplet will be said before Mass on
Monday and Friday at 9.40am and the Rosary will be
recited on Wednesdays at 9.40am in St. Paul's.

The Rosary will be recited on Tuesday after Mass and
Thursday and Saturday before Mass at 9.30am
in St. Margaret's and on Friday at 10am in
St. Francis Xavier's

Sacrament of Reconciliation

This beautiful Sacrament is available from after Mass
until 10.50 a.m. during Exposition of the Blessed
Sacrament on Thursdays at St. Margaret's and Fridays at
St. Paul's and at any other convenient time.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on
Thursdays in St. Margaret's and Fridays in St. Paul's
after Mass until 11am

Exposition and Prayer for Peace on Hogmanay:

On Monday December 31st there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 12 noon in St. Margaret's Cathedral until 7 p.m. when we will celebrate Benediction and pray for peace on the eve of the New Year. As the Cathedral will remain open for these seven hours we need parishioners from all our parishes to commit to spending some time before the Blessed Sacrament to ensure that there is continuous prayer and a human presence in the Cathedral. There is a list at the back of each Church for you to sign up and commit to being present for a period of time. Thank you.

Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage 2019: Booking forms are now available – see Poster for further details.

Discerning a vocation to the Priesthood or Permanent Diaconate? God **is** calling people to serve the Church in Galloway as ordained ministers. The task we have, every one of us, is to encourage people to hear and respond to this call. If you think someone has a vocation to the Priesthood or Permanent Diaconate why not approach them gently and speak with them about it?

Baptism Preparation Course: The next course for parents requesting Baptism for their children will take place on January 20th & 27th at 4 p.m. The parents of children requesting the Sacrament for their children between January and April next year need to attend these days.

Weekly Collections: Thank you for your continuing generosity towards your parish community through the weekly collection. The offerings last weekend were: St. Margaret's - £926.04; St. Paul's - 638.60; St. Francis Xavier's - TBC.

Foodbank: The Food Bank collections are taken on the 1st Weekend each month.

Special Collection – Justice and Peace (Scotland):

On the Solemnity of the Epiphany next weekend, January 5th/6th, we are asked to take a special collection for Justice and Peace (Scotland) to enable this Bishops' Commission to carry out its work on our behalf both in Scotland and further afield.

Thank you from Fr. David and Fr. Stan: We would like to thank everyone for their great generosity and kindness with cards and gifts at Christmas – all were very much appreciated.

Christmas Nativity Scenes: Our Crib reminds us of what it really is that we celebrate at Christmas. When we gaze upon the Holy Family in the Crib we should be prompted to pray for our own family and friends. Sadly many children have no family to call their own, even in Scotland, and so at each of our Crib scenes there will be a collection box in aid of the St. Margaret's Adoption Society. As this is the Society's main source of income I would urge you to make an offering this year – your financial gift could give a child the gift of a family of their own. The Society have also sent some 'home collection boxes' which you can take home with you and use. These are available at the back of each church and should be brought back by the end of January.

First-Aid Course: There have been a few incidents at Masses lately when it would have been helpful to have a qualified first-aider present, but unfortunately there was not. As a result of this we would like to put together a team of first-aiders across the parishes. If you would like to take part in a certified First Aid Course then please call Angela at the Parish Office (263488) on a Tuesday, Thursday or Friday morning to register or email rcchurchesayr@gmail.com
The Course will be fully-funded by the parishes and the Course will last one full day. Thank you.

Sacramental Preparation Meeting for Parents: These meetings take place in the Hall at 6.30 p.m. on the following dates: Reconciliation - Wednesday January 16th and 30th. First Eucharist - Wednesday March 13th.

SCIAF Lenten Training: SCIAF will be presenting Lenten Training in Galloway Diocese on **Saturday 2nd February 2019, 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.** in the Church Hall of Our Lady and St Meddan's, Troon. This event is open to everyone who is interested in SCIAF and their Lenten Programme. Anyone wishing to reserve a place should contact Jim Berry:- E-mail: Jimb40@btinternet.com
Mobile: 07951 165873 or Tel: 01292 311155

When do we take our Christmas decorations down?

Traditionally we keep our Christmas decorations in our homes until the twelfth night – the Solemnity of the Epiphany, January 6th, and we are blessed this year to have that fall next Sunday. But our Nativity Scene or Crib should remain in place until the Season of Christmas finishes – and that doesn't happen until we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord - this year January 13th. So by all means remove your trees and decorations, but please leave your Crib in place for the whole of this season of joy.

Saint Margaret's

St. Margaret's Hall: Our Hall is available for use by parishioners as a venue for functions and parties. Please contact Tony Mulholland (07780 760338) for anything related to the Hall.

Tea/Coffee: In the hall after Sunday morning Mass.

Saint Paul's

Tea/Coffee: In the hall after Sunday morning Mass.

Saint Francis Xavier's

Friday: The Holy Rosary is recited at 10 a.m. on Friday morning.

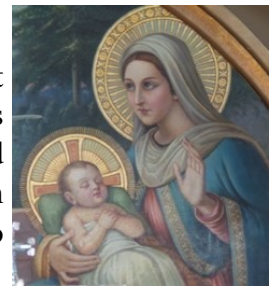
SSVP

Please place your requests for visits to the home/hospital in the box at the back of the Church, please also include the name and contact details of a relative/friend. If you require the assistance of the SVDP please contact 07722 707076.

The SSVP Conference which meets in St. Margaret's is the Conference for the whole of the town, helping anyone in need wherever they live. We could still do with some new members. Please contact Pat Snee on 07722 707076 for more information on how you can help.

Bishop Nolan – Christmas Message 2018

The Christmas Card I sent this year was a traditional card, with a difference. On the front of the card is a picture of Mary holding the child Jesus, the difference was that there was a tear on Mary's cheek, and to find out why we had to turn to the back of the card, and there was a picture of an angel carrying a crown of thorns. Mary is joyful at giving birth to her child, but also sad because she knows her child is also going to have to suffer.



I thought it was a very appropriate card for Christmas because this is a very happy and joyful season, but at the same time it can also be a time of sadness for many people. Sad, because maybe they're separated from ones whom they love, or perhaps someone close to them has died, or perhaps also it's because there is suffering and sorrow in their lives. Each of us has a crown of thorns. But Christmas is a joyful season, and a season of hope because we celebrate the fact that God is with us, that God is with us in our joys and in our sorrows.

So I do hope that no matter how many tears you may have on your cheek, that still you will rejoice during this Christmas season, rejoice and be happy knowing that God is with us in our lives.

+ William Nolan
Bishop of Galloway

***Bishop Nolan's New Year Message will be available to view and listen to on the RC Ayr website and Facebook page from this weekend.

New Year 2019

Please note the different times of Masses for New Year. Weekend Masses and Weekday Masses are at the usual times and in the usual places.

December 31st

10 am Daily Mass (St. Paul's)
12 noon Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 7 pm (Cathedral)
7 pm Prayer for Peace and Benediction

Tuesday January 1st 2019 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

11 am Mass in all three Churches

Feast of the Holy Family – Year ‘C’

Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6.12-14

Colossians 3: 12-21

Luke 2: 41-52

I have often wondered why it is that the writers of the Gospels have not given us more information about the early life of Jesus. Tradition tells us that he began his public ministry at the age of thirty, and taught for a period of three years, but what happened before he set out on his public life? We get a glimpse at one event in today's Gospel when Luke shows us that Jesus is someone special by his words in the Temple, but more importantly we are shown that Jesus is both the Son of God and that he is here among us to carry out his Father's wishes.

The first of these truths is that Jesus is the Son of God. Through all that we know about the birth of Jesus we see that he was someone special and unique, but can we say that he is the Son of God? Yes, Yes and again, Yes. We should be in no doubt about this wonderful truth. We should always remember the splendour of this truth. Again and again though the Gospels Jesus tells us that he is the Son of God and that he and the Father are in close harmony - so close is this that Jesus points out that he and the Father are one.

Yet though he was the Son of God we are told that he went down to Nazareth and lived under the authority of Mary and Joseph. There seems to be a great paradox in this. How can He who existed before all things be under the authority of anyone on earth? I think this shows a wonderful respect of the Lord for us, his family.

Words of Pope Francis

There was no weekly General Audience in the Vatican on Wednesday of this week instead the Holy Father prayed the Angelus with gathered pilgrims on the Feast of St. Stephen and addressed them as follows:



Dear brothers and sisters, good morning! The joy of Christmas still floods our hearts: the marvellous proclamation that Christ is born for us continues and brings peace to the world. In this atmosphere of joy, today we celebrate the feast of St. Stephen, deacon and first martyr. It might seem strange to approach the memory of St. Stephen at the birth of Jesus, because the contrast between the joy of Bethlehem and the drama of Stephen, stoned in Jerusalem in the first persecution against the nascent Church, emerges. In reality it is not so, because the Child Jesus is the Son of God made man, who will save humanity by dying on the cross. Now we contemplate him wrapped in swaddling clothes in the crib; after his crucifixion he will be wrapped again with bandages and placed in a sepulchre.

Saint Stephen was the first to follow in the footsteps of the divine Master with martyrdom; he died like Jesus *entrusting his life* to God and *forgiving* his persecutors. Two attitudes: he entrusted his life to God and forgave. While he was being stoned he said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (*Acts 7:59*). These words are very similar to those pronounced by Christ on the cross: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (*Lk 23:46*). The attitude of Stephen who faithfully imitates the gesture of Jesus is an invitation addressed to each of us to welcome with faith from the hands of the Lord what life holds for us as positive and even negative. Our existence is marked not only by happy circumstances - we know it - but also by moments of difficulty and loss. But trust in God helps us to accept the difficult moments and to live them as an opportunity for growth in faith and building new relationships with our brothers and sisters. It is about abandoning ourselves in the hands of the Lord, who we know to be a Father rich in goodness towards his children.

The second attitude with which Stephen imitated Jesus at the extreme moment of the cross is *forgiveness*. He does not curse his persecutors, but prays for them: "He bent his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin" (*Acts 7:60*). We are called to learn from him to forgive, to always forgive, and it is not easy to do it, we all know it. Forgiveness enlarges the heart, generates sharing, gives serenity and peace. The proto-martyr Stephen shows us the way to go in interpersonal relationships in the family, in the places of school, in the workplace, in the parish and in the different communities. Always open to forgiveness. The logic of forgiveness and mercy is always winning and opens horizons of hope. But forgiveness is cultivated through prayer - that allows us to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Stephen was able to forgive his killers because, filled with the Holy Spirit, he stared at the sky and his eyes open to God (cf. *Acts 7:55*). From the prayer came the strength to suffer martyrdom. We must pray insistently on the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us the gift of fortitude that heals our fears, our weaknesses, our trifles and enlarges our hearts to forgive. Always forgive!

Fr. David's Mass intentions for this week:

Monday – Francis Miller; *Tuesday* – Leverage family; *Wednesday* – McHugh family; *Thursday* – Maureen Sugden; *Friday* – Norrie Bruce; *Saturday* – Lewis Miller; *Sunday* – for the parishes.

Fr Stan's Mass intentions for this week:

Monday – Special intention; *Tuesday* – Jim McMillan; *Wednesday* – Catherine Nicole; *Thursday* – Special intention; *Friday* – Sally Kennedy; *Saturday* – Special intention; *Sunday* – Special intention.