

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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Parish Bulletin

12th/13th January 2019

Readings

Isaiah 40: 1-5.9-11 Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7

Luke 3: 15-16.21-22

Response

Bless the Lord, my soul!

Lord God, how great you are.

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 14th January - 20th January

Monday

Mass in St Paul's at 10am

Tuesday

Mass in St Margaret's at 10am

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

Welcome Back: Our staff and children in our schools returned from their Christmas holidays this week, we hope they had a wonderful break and have returned recharged for the term ahead.

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.

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.

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?

Hospital: If you, or any member of your family are going into Ayr or Crosshouse Hospitals, and would like to receive a visit, and/or Holy Communion; please contact Deacon Bill Corbett (The R.C. Chaplain), on 01292 521208.

Weekly Collections: Thank you for your continuing generosity towards your parish community through the weekly collection. The offerings last weekend were: St. Margaret's - £1003.36; St. Paul's - £775.41; St. Francis Xavier's - 267.64. **Justice & Peace:** St. Margaret's - £651.03; St. Paul's - £400.91; St. Francis Xavier's - £180.90. Thank you.

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 SSVP please contact 07722 707076.

Hogmanay Exposition and Benediction: The recent extended period of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction in the Cathedral was very well received and supported by parishioners from all three of our parish families. As a result of this we will now make this available on the last Saturday of every month. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed immediately after the 10 a.m. Saturday morning Mass and remain so until Benediction at 5 p.m. Once again parishioners will need to commit to being present before the Blessed Sacrament for a period of time if this devotion is to become a permanent part of our parish life. Each month we will pray for a particular purpose and on the last Saturday of January this will be 'Families'. A list will be available in all three churches next weekend for you to commit to being present at a particular time.

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.

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

LADIES: BEAT THE WINTER BLUES at the SPRED Galloway Fashion Swish Event. Join us for a fun & thrifty way to pick up a fresh new look while giving your own pre-loved clothes, shoes & accessories a new home. Friday 1st February 2019, 7-10pm, St Quivox Hall, Prestwick. Tickets £7.50 includes a glass of Prosecco & Nibbles. Further information can be found on www.spredgalloway.org.uk

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

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

Fr. David's Mass intentions for this week:

Monday – Francis Miller; *Tuesday* – Special intention; *Wednesday* – Ned Gallagher; *Thursday* – John O'Toole;
Friday – Ian Drury; *Saturday* – Special intention; *Sunday* – for the parishes.

Fr Stan's Mass intentions for this week:

Monday – Special intention; *Tuesday* – Special intention; *Wednesday* – Mary Johnson & Family; *Thursday* – Francis McLaughlin;
Friday – Special intention; *Saturday* – Winnie McCallum; *Sunday* – Lawrence Gainty.

Saint Margaret's

Loretta (Rita) Donnelly R.I.P.: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Rita Donnelly who lived in Claremont Care Home who has died. Rita's Funeral Service will take place in the Crematorium on Wednesday January 16th at 1.15 p.m. May she rest in peace.

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.

Rosary Circle: Intentions for 2019 are at the back of the Church on the newspaper table.

Readers/Eucharistic Ministers: The new rota is available in the Sacristy.

Saint Paul's

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

Mother & Toddler Group: The group meet on Tuesday morning at 10.30am.

Art Club: The group meet in the hall on Monday at 1.30pm. New members welcome.

Tuesday Club: The group meet in the hall on Tuesday at 2.00pm. New members welcome.

Saint Francis Xavier's

Wednesday: There will be a Service of the Word and Holy Communion on Wednesday morning at 10 a.m.

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

The Baptism of the Lord – Year 'C'

Isaiah 40: 1-5.9-11

Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7

Luke 3: 15-16.21-22

Christmas Day has passed, so now we rush on to Jesus' Baptism – too soon. Consider Christmas. The most extraordinary, fantastic, unbelievable reality – God became Human. Why rush away from that to his Baptism? I'm sure you cannot really grasp this amazing grace. I certainly can't. So I try to sit or kneel in front of God, open my heart and say, 'Is it true?' I don't want to get on to something else, I want to try to 'suss' out in a deeper way this mystery of mysteries, this truth of truths. God is with us. Jesus, Son of Mary is with us! Tell me, Lord, what it means.

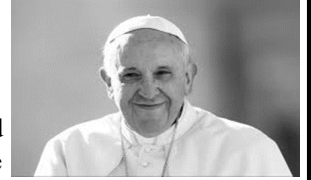
When a child is born, he or she is born into a family. I know that, sadly, this is not always true, but Christian teaching has always given great importance to the stability of the marriage union as the rock upon which the family is built. From and in the family, life grows, the child learns love and care, as well as many other things. The family is the first school in life and immensely important. Parents who do not show affection can maim the child for life. Parents who don't play with the child, read to the child, tell stories, teach the child to read and so on can be doing real harm – the child tends to do less well at school. Home, parental love, interest and presence – there is no substitute.

Now, Jesus at the end of his time on earth spoke to his friends and said to them: 'Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations, baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit'. From that time the Apostles, and later those deputised to do so, have gone through the local and wider world teaching and baptising. And this sacred act or sacrament of using a symbolic combination of mingling water and words, is so basic to the life in Christ that, in necessity, anyone may baptise.

What does Baptism do? As mother and father by God's gift, and by God's activity, the priest gives new life in Christ to the person brought to the Sacrament of Baptism, child or adult. The difficulty I put to you is this. Normally, parents cannot live in the same house as their children without looking after them when they hear them crying. They see to their needs. They nourish them, clean them and comfort them. (How awful! Some do neglect and even abuse children). However, from twenty years experience of accepting families who bring their children for Baptism I have to say – **and say strongly** – a considerable number of parents neglect the Christian nourishment of these children. Is that any less important?

Words of Pope Francis

Pope Francis' Homily for the Feast of the Epiphany



Epiphany: this word indicates the *manifestation* of the Lord, who, as Saint Paul tells us in the second reading, makes himself known to all the nations, today represented by the Magi. In this way, we see revealed the glory of a God who has come for everyone: every nation, language and people is welcomed and loved by him. It is symbolized by the light, which penetrates and illumines all things.

Yet if our God makes himself known for everyone, it is even more surprising *how* he does so. The Gospel speaks of a hum of activity around the palace of King Herod once Jesus appears as a king. The Magi ask: “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews?”. They will find him, but not where they thought: not in the royal palace of Jerusalem, but in a humble abode in Bethlehem. We saw this same paradox at Christmas. The Gospel spoke of the census of the entire world taken in the days of the Emperor Augustus, when Quirinius was governor. But none of the great men of that time realized that the King of history was being born in their own time. Again, when Jesus, some thirty years of age, made himself known publicly, preceded by John the Baptist, the Gospel once more solemnly situates the event, listing all the “magnates” of the time, the great secular and spiritual powers: Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod, Philip, Lysanias, the high priests Annas and Caiaphas. And it concludes by saying that, at that time, “the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness”. To none of the magnates, but to a man who had withdrawn to the desert. Here is the surprise: God does not need the spotlights of the world to make himself known.

When we listen to that list of distinguished personages, we might be tempted to turn the spotlight on them. We might think that it would have been better had the star of Jesus appeared in Rome, on the Palatine Hill, where Augustus ruled over the world; then the whole empire would immediately have become Christian. Or if it had shone on the palace of Herod, he might have done good rather than evil. But God’s light does not shine on those who shine with their own light. God “proposes” himself; he does not “impose” himself. He illumines; he does not blind. It is always a very tempting to confuse God’s light with the lights of the world. How many times have we pursued the seductive lights of power and celebrity, convinced that we are rendering good service to the Gospel! But by doing so, have we not turned the spotlight on the wrong place, because God was not there. His kindly light shines forth in humble love. How many times too, have we, as a Church, attempted to shine with our own light! Yet we are not the *sun* of humanity. We are the *moon* that, despite its shadows, reflects the true light, which is the Lord. He is the light of the world. Him, not us.

The light of God shines on those who receive it. Isaiah, in the first reading, tells us that that light does not prevent the darkness and the thick clouds from covering the earth, but shines forth on those prepared to accept it. And so, the prophet addresses a challenging summons to everyone: “Arise, shine”. We need to *arise*, to get up from our sedentary lives and prepare for a journey. Otherwise, we stand still, like the scribes that Herod consulted; they knew very well where the Messiah was born, but they did not move. We also need to *shine*, to be clothed in God who is light, day by day, until we are fully clothed in Jesus. Yet to be clothed in God, who like the light is simple, we must first put aside our pretentious robes. Otherwise, we will be like Herod, who preferred the earthly lights of success and power to the divine light. The Magi, instead, fulfil the prophecy. They arise and shine, and are clothed in light. They alone see the star in the heavens: not the scribes, nor Herod, nor any of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

In order to find Jesus, we also need to take a different route, to follow a different path, his path, the path of humble love. And we have to persevere. Today’s Gospel ends by saying that the Magi, after encountering Jesus, “left for their own country *by another road*”. Another road, different from that of Herod. An alternative route than that of the world, like the road taken by those who surround Jesus at Christmas: Mary and Joseph, the shepherds. Like the Magi, they left home and became pilgrims on the paths of God. For only those who leave behind their worldly attachments and undertake a journey find the mystery of God.

This holds true for us too. It is not enough to know *where* Jesus was born, as the scribes did, if we do not go there. It is not enough to know *that* Jesus was born, like Herod, if we do not encounter him. When his place becomes our place, when his time becomes our time, when his person becomes our life, then the prophecies come to fulfilment in us. Then Jesus is born within us. He becomes *the living God for me*. Today we are asked to imitate the Magi. They do not debate; they set out. They do not stop to look, but enter the house of Jesus. They do not put themselves at the centre, but bow down before the One who *is* the centre. They do not remain glued to their plans, but are prepared to take other routes. Their actions reveal a close contact with the Lord, a radical openness to him, a total engagement with him. With him, they use the language of love, the same language that Jesus, though an infant, already speaks. Indeed, the Magi go to the Lord not to receive, but to give. Let us ask ourselves this question: at Christmas did we bring gifts to Jesus for his party, or did we only exchange gifts among ourselves?

If we went to the Lord empty-handed, today we can remedy that. The Gospel, in some sense, gives us a little “gift list”: gold, frankincense and myrrh. *Gold*, the most precious of metals, reminds us God has to be granted first place; he has to be worshiped. But do that, we need to remove ourselves from the first place and to recognize our neediness, the fact that we are not self-sufficient. Then there is *frankincense*, which symbolizes a relationship with the Lord, prayer, which like incense rises up to God. Just as incense must burn in order to yield its fragrance, so too, in prayer, we need to “burn” a little of our time, to spend it with the Lord. Not just in words, but also by our actions. We see this in the *myrrh*, the ointment that would be lovingly used to wrap the body of Jesus taken down from the cross. The Lord is pleased when we care for bodies racked by suffering, the flesh of the vulnerable, of those left behind, of those who can only receive without being able to give anything material in return. Precious in the eyes of God is mercy shown to those who have nothing to give back. Gratuitousness!

In this Christmas season now drawing to its close, let us not miss the opportunity to offer a precious gift to our King, who came to us not in worldly pomp, but in the luminous poverty of Bethlehem. If we can do this, his light will shine upon us.