

NEWSLETTER

Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle and St Joseph, Douglas

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Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, 2nd April 2023

(Page 176 in Mass Book)

(Year A for Sundays) (Cycle 1 for weekdays)



Holy Week

Dear Parishioners

This week we received news that Pope Francis is unwell. At the time of writing, it is uncertain whether he will be able to preside at the Holy Week ceremonies. Here is an account of Pope Francis's homily for Palm Sunday last year:

*The Holy Father began his homily remembering how **on Calvary, "two ways of thinking collided."** In the Gospel, the Pope observed, the crucified Jesus' words of forgiveness are in sharp contrast with those who crucified Him, who kept saying to Christ: "Save yourself."*

*The Pope highlighted how God's way of thinking goes against this self-centred suggestion, noting, "The mantra 'save yourself' collides with the words of the Saviour who offers His self." The Lord did not defend or justify Himself. Rather, He prayed to the Father, offered mercy to the good thief and said: "**Father, forgive them**"*

***Jesus, the Pope recalled, did not rebuke His executioners** or threaten punishments in the name of God, but rather prayed for the evildoers. The Pope then said that God does the same with us. "When we cause suffering by our actions, God suffers yet has only one desire: to forgive us".*

Pope Francis invited the faithful to look at the crucified Lord and say: "Thank you, Jesus: you love me and always forgive me, even at those times when I find it hard to love and forgive myself."

*"Let us think about someone who, in our own lives, injured, offended or disappointed us; someone who made us angry, who did not understand us or who set a bad example," the Pope invited, saying, "How often we spend time looking back on those who have wronged us!" Today, the Holy Father insisted, "Jesus teaches us not to remain there, but to react, to **break the vicious circle of evil and sorrow.**" The Lord does not separate us into good and bad, friends and enemies. "We are the ones who do this, and we make God suffer..... For God, all of us are His beloved children, children whom He desires to embrace and forgive. God never tires of forgiving. He does not put up with us for a while and then change His mind, as we are tempted to do."*

Those who crucified Christ, the Pope observed, had premeditated His killing, organized His arrest and trials and now they were standing on Calvary to witness His death. Regardless, he stated, Christ justifies those violent men by saying that "they know not." This, Pope Francis explained, "is how Jesus acts in our regard: He makes Himself our advocate. He does not set Himself against us, but for us and against our sins. These words make us think", the Pope said.

*"When we resort to violence," the Pope continued, "**we show that we no longer know anything about God,** who is our Father, or even about others, who are our brothers and sisters. We lose sight of why we are in the world and even end up committing senseless acts of cruelty."*

*"We see this in **the folly of war,** where Christ is crucified yet another time," Pope Francis said.*

*"**Christ is once more nailed to the Cross in mothers who mourn the unjust death of husbands and sons. He is crucified in refugees who flee from bombs with children in their arms. He is crucified in the elderly left alone to die; in young people deprived of a future; in soldiers sent to kill their brothers and sisters.**"*

The Pope reminded that only one person responded to Jesus' invitation to leave the past and start new while Jesus was on the Cross, namely "a criminal," crucified next to Jesus, who said "Jesus, remember me. The good thief accepted God as his life was ending, and in this way, his life began anew," the Pope said. "In the hell of this world, he saw heaven opening up: 'Today you will be with me in Paradise.' "This", the Pope said, "is the marvel of God's forgiveness, which turned the last request of a man condemned to death into the first canonization of history."

*During Holy Week, the Holy Father said, "**let us cling to the certainty that God can forgive every sin, bridge every distance, and turn all mourning into dancing.** The certainty that with Jesus, there is always a place for everyone. That with Jesus, things are never over. That with Him, it is never too late. With God, we can always come back to life. Take courage!"*

Pope Francis concluded by inviting the faithful to journey towards Easter with His forgiveness, certain that Christ constantly intercedes for us before the Father. "Gazing upon our violent and tormented world," the Pope said Jesus "never tires of repeating: 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'" (Reported by Deborah Castellano Lubov)

Travel permitting, I will be representing our Isle of Man Churches at the **Mass of Chrism in the Metropolitan Cathedral** at 7.30pm this Wednesday evening. I hope to return with the Holy Oils, blessed by the Archbishop. These will be used in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Anointing of the Sick in all our churches throughout the Island in the coming year. *Fr John*

HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2023

Maundy Thursday 6th April: Evening Mass of The Lord's Supper at St Mary's at 7.00pm. This will be followed by 'watching' at the Altar of Repose concluding with **Night Prayer at 9.30pm.**

Good Friday 7th April: there will be TWO Celebrations of The Lord's Passion: 12.00 noon at St Anthony's and 3.00pm at St Mary's.

Holy Saturday 8th April, 7.30pm: Easter Vigil and First Mass of Easter at St Mary's.

Easter Sunday 9th April: Masses as normal: 9.30am at St Anthony's; 11.00am at St Mary's.

- **Ecumenical Lent Course - Walking with Jesus:** This Tuesday 4th April at 7pm is the final session of a gentle reflective course in St Peter's Church, Onchan. This week it will be led by Fr John.
- The **Memory Support Group** will next meet next **Tuesday 4th April at 10.30am-12noon** in St Anthony's Pastoral Centre. Everyone warmly welcomed. Please contact Josie on 406063/Amanda 642879 for further information.
- **CAFOD's Big Lent Walk:** June Quirk, a St Patrick's Peel parishioner, is taking part in this challenge to walk 200km in 40 days during Lent to raise money for CAFOD. The link to donate is <https://cafod.enthuse.com/pf/june-quirk>. Thank you.
- A **Walk of Witness** will take place on **Good Friday** starting at 10am at St Anthony's, along the Promenade praying the stations, through Strand Street and finishing at St Mary's around 11am. All welcome.
- **Easter Sunday Morning Sunrise Service at 6.00am on Douglas Beach** (*meet at the bottom of Broadway*). This traditional ecumenical service will be followed by breakfast baps at St Thomas's Church, Finch Rd, Douglas.
- **Easter Cards:** Easter Cards available in the Repository at the back of St Anthony's Church after Sunday Mass.
- A **Huge Thank You** to all those who generously supported the Lenten lunches. **Proceeds of £765** will be donated to CAFOD Earthquake Appeal for Syria and Turkey. Massive thanks to St Anthony's SVP ladies who helped make soups and desserts and to all who freely gave their time and financial support.

Masses and Services for the coming week

All Masses and Services from St Mary's are live-streamed

Saturday 1st April Palm Sunday	5.00pm	St Mary's	David Callister, sick
Sunday 2nd April Palm Sunday	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	People of our Parishes Mary M ^c Carthy-Glynn, anniv
Monday 3rd April	12.10 noon	St Mary's	Jocelyn Marquez, recently died
Tuesday 4th April	10.00am 12.10 noon 7.00pm	St Anthony's St Mary's <i>St Peter's, Onchan</i>	Matt Donagher, recently died Jennifer Magee, recently died <i>'Walking with Jesus' Lent Course</i>
Wednesday 5th April	12.10 noon 7.00pm	St Mary's <i>St Anthony's</i>	Kathleen Blackwood, anniversary <i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Thursday 6th April HOLY THURSDAY	7.00pm	St Mary's	World Peace Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
Friday 7th April GOOD FRIDAY	12.00 noon 3.00pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	Celebration of the Lord's Passion Celebration of the Lord's Passion
Saturday 8th April HOLY SATURDAY Easter Vigil Mass	11.00am to 12.00noon 7.30pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Confessions Ann Fox, birthday anniversary
Sunday 9th April EASTER SUNDAY	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Jean Cadogan, anniversary People of our Parishes