

NEWSLETTER

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

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29th Sunday of Ordinary Time, 22nd October 2023

World Mission Day

(Page 143 in Mass Book)

(Year A for Sundays) (Cycle 2 for weekdays)

Dear Parishioners

This week we reproduce extracts from the first of a series of meditations the English Dominican Priest **Fr Timothy Ratcliffe OP** was invited to deliver by Pope Francis to those assembled for the Synod in Rome.

*“Our understandings of the Church as our home sometimes clash. **Every living creature needs a home if it is to flourish.** Fish need water and birds need nests. Without a home, we cannot live. Different cultures have different conceptions of home..... At home we are affirmed as we are and invited to be more. **Home is where we are known, loved and safe but challenged to embark on the adventure of faith.**”*

We need to renew the Church as our common home if we are to speak to a world which is suffering from a crisis of homelessness.** We are consuming our little planetary home. There are more than 350 million migrants on the move, fleeing war and violence. Thousands die crossing seas to try to find a home. None of us can be entirely at home unless they are. Even in wealthy countries, millions sleep on the street. Young people are often unable to afford a home. Everywhere there is a terrible spiritual homelessness. Acute individualism, the breakdown of the family, ever deeper inequalities mean that we are afflicted with a tsunami of loneliness. Suicides are rising because without a home, physical and spiritual, one cannot live. **To love is to come home to someone.....

***Different understandings of the Church as home tear us apart today. For some it is defined by its ancient traditions and devotions, its inherited structures and language, the Church we have grown up with and love.** It gives us a clear Christian identity. **For others, the present Church does not seem to be a safe home. It is experienced as exclusive, marginalizing many people, women, the divorced and remarried.** For some it is too Western, too Eurocentric. The ‘Instrumentum Laboris’ mentions also gay people and people in polygamous marriages. They long for a renewed Church in which they will feel fully at home, recognised, affirmed and safe.....*

*For some the idea of a universal welcome, in which everyone is accepted regardless of who they are, is felt as destructive of the Church’s identity. As in a nineteenth century English song, ‘If everybody is somebody then nobody is anybody.’ They believe that identity demands boundaries. But for others, it is the very heart of the Church’s identity to be open. Pope Francis said, **‘The Church is called on to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems and to move towards those who feel the need to take up again their path of faith....’***

For some of us, the Christian identity is above all given, the Church we know and love. For others Christian identity is always provisional, lying ahead as we journey towards the Kingdom in which all walls will fall. Both are necessary! If we stress only our identity is given – This is what it means to be Catholic – we risk becoming a sect. If we just stress the adventure towards an identity yet to be discovered, we risk become a vague Jesus movement. But the Church is a sign and sacrament of the unity of all humanity in Christ in being both.....

When we think of the Church as home, some of us primarily think of God as coming home to us, and others of us coming to home in God. Both are true. We must enlarge the tent of our sympathy to those who think differently.....

***Every local Church is a home for God.....** God makes his home now in places that the world despises..... We must become in a sense homeless. ‘Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.’ (Luke 9.58). They walk to Jerusalem, the holy city where God’s name dwells. But there Jesus dies outside the walls for the sake of all who live outside the walls, as God revealed himself to his people in the wilderness outside the camp. James Alison wrote: ‘God is among us as one cast out’. ‘Therefore, Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his blood. Let us therefore then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured.’ (Hebrews 12.12f).....*

Our lives are nourished by beloved traditions and devotions. If they are lost, we grieve. But also we must remember all those who do not yet feel at home in the Church: women who feel that they are unrecognised in a patriarchy of old white men like me! People who feel that the Church is too Western, too Latin, too colonial. We must journey towards a Church in which they are no longer at the margin but in the centre.....”

Inauguration of the Cathedral Church of St Mary of the Isle: Thank you to those who have already let us know they will be attending the Cathedral Inauguration Ceremony. Preparations are continuing apace for this special historic service - it is not a Mass. It is essential that you let us know your name if you are coming. The closing date for contacting the office is Friday 27th October but, given the number of civic and ecumenical dignitaries from the Island who will be attending, along with visiting bishops and clergy, it would be appreciated if you let us have your name now. In addition to parishioners from St Mary & St Joseph's and St Anthony's, parishioners from St Mary's Castletown, St Columba's Port Erin, St Patrick's Peel and Our Lady Star of the Sea Ramsey have also been allocated seats by their parish priests. We need to ensure there is sufficient seating for everyone whose names we have received. Also, because we are being charged for catering per head, exact numbers are required. We do not wish to waste food or money. Nor do we wish to disappoint those who have had the courtesy to let us know they wish to attend. Thank you.

- The **Annual Fairtrade Sale** will be held from **Thursday 26th to Saturday 28th October** from **10am to 6.30pm** in the **Coill Chapel Hall** above the IOM Business Park. **Lunches supporting 3 Developing World Charities will be served from 12 noon to 2pm each day.** A warm welcome to all.
- *Save the Date:* **St Peter's Mother's Union, Onchan** would like to invite ladies from our church to an afternoon of Christmas entertainment with Wendy McDowell and refreshments on **Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 2pm** at the Village Hall, Onchan (top of Royal Avenue) along with our friends from the Methodist Church in Onchan.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Anthony's £516; St Mary & St Joseph £967. This does not include standing orders and credit card donations. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

Saturday 21st October <i>World Mission Day</i> 29 th Sunday of Ordinary Time	5.00pm	St Mary's	John Coyle, 2 nd anniversary
Sunday 22nd October <i>World Mission Day</i> 29 th Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	People of our Parishes Mike Joe Hennessy, anniversary
Monday 23rd October	12.10 noon	St Mary's	Abner Peñaranda, anniversary
Tuesday 24th October	10.00am No Mass or Service	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> No Mass or Service today
Wednesday 25th October	12.10 noon	St Mary's	Elmer & Joel Marquez, thanksgiving
Thursday 26th October St Chad, St Cedd	10.00am 12.10 noon	St Anthony's St Mary's	Micky & Maeve M ^c Cartan, recently died Tony McCormick, anniversary
Friday 27th October	12.10 noon	St Mary's	Mrs Adams, intentions
Saturday 28th October St Simon & St Jude, Apostles	11.00am to 12noon	St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions
30 th Sunday of Ordinary Time	5.00pm	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Sunday 29th October 30 th Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Evelyn Denver, 7 th anniversary Sarah Williamson, 1 st anniversary

Pope Francis: 'May weapons fall silent; situation in Gaza is desperate'

Appealing for peace in the Holy Land at his General Audience this week, Pope Francis expresses concern for the humanitarian situation in Gaza, calling on all parties to lay down their weapons and all Christians to pray for peace.

"The number of victims is growing and the situation in Gaza is desperate." With these words, Pope Francis turned his thoughts to Palestine and Israel pleading that "everything possible be done to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe."

The Holy Father also drew attention to the unsettling possibility of the conflict's expansion.

"The world already witnesses so many open war fronts," he lamented.

In light of these circumstances, he implored, "Lay down weapons and heed the cries for peace from the poor, the people and the innocent children." "War solves no problems," he said. "It only sows death and destruction, increases hatred, multiplies revenge. War erases the future, it erases the future."

The Holy Father went on to urge all believers to take one side only: that of peace. "But not with words," he continued, "with prayer and with total dedication."