

NEWSLETTER

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

Tel 01624 675509 Email saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk Website www.manxcatholic.org

The Epiphany of the Lord

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



Dear Parishioners

We've had a wet Christmas. 'This is Happiness', is a novel by Noel Williams. Set in Faha, an imaginary village in County Clare, he could as easily be describing rain in the Isle of Man

It had stopped raining.

Nobody in Faha could remember when it started. Rain there on the western seaboard was a condition of living. It came straight-down and sideways, frontwards, backwards and any other wards that God could think of. It came in sweeps, in waves, sometimes in veils. It came dressed as drizzle, as mizzle, as mist, as showers, frequent and widespread, as a wet fog, as a damp day, a drop, a dreeping and an out-and-out downpour. It came the fine day, the bright day and the day promised dry. It came at any time of the day and night; and in all seasons, regardless of calendar and forecast, until in Faha your clothes were rain and your skin was rain and your house was rain with a fireplace. It came off the grey vastness of an Atlantic that threw itself against the land like a lover once spurned and resolved not to be so again. It came accompanied by seagulls and smells of salt and seaweed. It came with cold air and curtained light. It came like a judgement, or, in benign version, like a blessing God had forgotten he had left on. It came for a handkerchief of blue sky, came on westerlies, sometimes – why not? – on easterlies, came in clouds that broke their backs on the mountains in Kerry and fell into Clare, making mud the ground and blind the air. It came disguised as hail, as sleet, but never as snow. It came softly sometimes, its spears turned to kisses, in rain that pretended it was not rain, that had come down to be closer to the fields whose green it loved and fostered, until it drowned them. All of which, to attest to the one truth: in Faha, it rained.

But now it had stopped.

This weekend the magic of Christmas lingers as we celebrate the arrival of the Three Kings, Twelfth Night, the Feast of the Epiphany. Once again Anglican priest-poet Malcolm Guite has a verse for the occasion. It suggests that, as outsiders, we have much in common with the Magi. Their searching is our searching, too.

*It might have been just someone else's story,
Some chosen people get a special king.
We leave them to their own peculiar glory,
We don't belong, it doesn't mean a thing.
But when these three arrive they bring us with them,
Gentiles like us, their wisdom might be ours;
A steady step that finds an inner rhythm,
A pilgrim's eye that sees beyond the stars.
They did not know his name but still they sought him,
They came from elsewhere but still they found;
In temples they found those who sold and bought him,
But in the filthy stable, hallowed ground.
Their courage gives our questing hearts a voice
To seek, to find, to worship, to rejoice.*

I have been overwhelmed by the many cards, gifts and kindnesses that I have received from parishioners this Christmas. Thanks to the many people who help around the parishes, not just at Christmas, but all the year round. I really appreciate your support. Christmas is busy but it's the best time of year to be a priest. I wish you every blessing for the New Year. May it be a year of peace and justice throughout the world. *Fr John*

- The **Memory Support Group** will meet this **Tuesday 9 January 2024** from **10.30am to 12noon**. All welcome. Refreshments served. Please contact Josie on 406063 or Sally on 642879.
- **St Anthony's Bingo** will resume on **Thursday 11 January** at **7.30pm**. Everyone welcome, including visitors.
- The '**Warm and Cosy Hub**' is open on Mondays and Fridays from 10am until 2pm for the winter months in the Columba Club, Circular Road, Douglas. Hot soup with bread & butter will be served with tea, coffee and biscuits.
- **Island Spirituality Network:** Next meeting on **Saturday 13 January** from **10am to 1pm** in St John's Mill. **Revd Jo Smart** will lead the session on **Moving through the Bible – Dance, Movement and Meditation**. Revd Jo came to the Island in September 2022. She lives in Peel and looks after several Methodist chapels in the West and Douglas.
- **Koru Hospital Fund IOM** is holding a **Fund Raising & Thank You Event** in **St Anthony's Pastoral Centre** on **Saturday 20 January 2024** from 10am onwards. There will be Screen Shots, Display Boards, Presentations, Stalls and a Raffle to raise funds to support the School Feeding Programmes. Refreshments will be served. Presentation and Thanks at 3pm. Please see poster at back of church or contact Mary Stewart for more details.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Saturday 6th January <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i> | 5.00pm | St Mary's | Hazel Smith, anniversary |
| Sunday 7th January <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i> | 9.30am 11.00am | St Anthony's St Mary's | Stephen Craig, 33 rd anniversary Billy Murray, anniversary |
| Monday 8th January | 12.10pm | St Mary's | Our Sick Parishioners |
| Tuesday 9th January | 10.00am 12.10pm | St Anthony's St Mary's | Eileen McGuigan, recently died Patrick & Brenda Hughes, deceased |
| Wednesday 10th January | 12.10pm | St Mary's | David Corkill, anniversary |
| Thursday 11th January | 10.00am 12.10pm | St Anthony's St Mary's | <i>Eucharistic Service</i> Jimmy Murphy, recently died |
| Friday 12th January | 12.10pm | St Mary's | John Smallwood, recently died |
| Saturday 13th January | 11.00am to 12noon | St Mary's | Exposition and Confessions |
| 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time | 5.00pm | St Mary's | Tony Gillespie, recently died |
| Sunday 14th January <i>Day of Prayer for Peace</i> | 9.30am 11.00am | St Anthony's St Mary's | People of our Parishes Derek Kenna, recently died |

Over Christmas we invited people to place the names of those whom they would be missing, in a basket, at the foot of the Christmas Tree, in both of our churches. The response has been amazing. There is something sacred about our names. They define who we are. Every Baptism ceremony begins with the question 'What name do you give your child?' This is the name by which we will be known for all eternity. On each of our altars where Mass is celebrated, a book lies open listing the names of those who are sick, those who have died and those with anniversaries. It is updated each week. During Covid we received almost daily emails from people asking for the names of the sick and the dead to be mentioned at Mass, names from people all over the world. The reading aloud of these names of those we love means they are not forgotten. They rest in the heart of God.

Over the Christmas period there are even more names to add to the list of those who have died. Their funerals have taken place this week or will be held in the coming weeks:

Joyce Whiteford, whose funeral service took place in St Anthony's on Friday;

Patricia Cousins, Mandy Davies, Matthias Kaddu, Allan Stone, Jack Kennaugh, Simon Mellon and Leonard Singer

We remember them in our prayers. May they rest in eternal peace.