

## NEWSLETTER

Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas  
Tel 01624 675509 Email [saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk) Website [www.manxcatholic.org](http://www.manxcatholic.org)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

*(Page 151 in Mass book)*

*(Year B for Sundays) (Cycle 2 for weekdays)*



Dear Parishioners

I spoke last week of the death of **Alexei Navalny** and linked his death to the events of Holy Week. I made that connection while ignorant of Navalny's personal beliefs. This week I read the following report from **Canon Robin Gibbons**, a Catholic priest of the Eastern Rite: **'Alexei Navalny's death is a challenge to my Lent, a step into the bewildering chaos of human existence, where good and bad intermingle, but alas where good, justice and righteousness that seem to be so elusive for humans, animals and for our Earthly home itself sometimes is given hope'**.

*'At a court appearance in January 2021, Alexei Navalny revealed he was no longer an atheist, and in public quoted the words of Jesus as found in Matthew 5 :6; "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied". His conversion, extraordinary steadfastness and dark sense of humour in prison and through all his trials, sheds another light on his life and a meaning to his death, particularly as somebody who as I have noted, also embodies in an analogous way, our Lenten journey and now as an example of martyrdom for the sake of justice and righteousness. He said at that trial hearing in January 2021: "Even though our country is built on injustice and we all constantly face injustice..... we also see that millions of people, tens of millions of people, want righteousness. They want the righteousness and sooner or later they will have it.'*

**Saturday, 24 February marks the second anniversary of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia.** It's a conflict that has slipped from the headlines, but the fighting remains intense and the suffering is great. **Bishop Nowakowski**, who looks after the UK's Ukrainian Catholic Community, raises the plight of Ukraine's people, but is quick to call for prayer for **the suffering of the Holy Land caught up in the conflict in Gaza.**

He also emphasises that, although we live miles away from the conflict, during this Lenten time of fasting and almsgiving, the other main pillar of the season - prayer - is where our focus should lie: *'We can't help everybody throughout the world with our limited means, but surely we can pray. Pray for peace, pray for justice, pray for those who are alone. Pray for those who are suffering - especially for those who are suffering separation. We think of the families that have been torn apart because of the war in Ukraine, the tens of thousands of young women who have fled to the United Kingdom with their children while their husbands have had to remain behind to defend Ukraine.'*

*'We see the horrific news coming out of the Holy Land, the suffering that's happening there, both for the Israelis and Palestinians. We see the suffering of the Ukrainian people. So, during this time of Lent, this journey towards the Resurrection of Christ, we're asked three things. We're asked to intensify our prayer. We're asked to abstain or fast. We're also asked to give alms to remember those who are in need. Maybe we can't help everybody throughout the world with our limited means, but surely we can pray.'*

### **Pope Francis' Ash Wednesday Homily 2024**

At the beginning of Lent, Jesus invites each one of us to "go into our inner room," Pope Francis said in his homily for Mass on Ash Wednesday 2024.

"Going into your inner room", means returning to the heart... going from without to within, so that our whole life, including our relationship with God, "reflects the reality of our inner being."

The Pope said that Lent offers us the opportunity to "go back" to our authentic selves, removing all the masks and illusions that we too often wear.

This, he said, is why "in a spirit of prayer and humility, we receive ashes on our head". The ashes remind us we are dust, but dust that is loved and preserved by God: "The ashes placed on our head invite us to rediscover the secret of life" and allow us to feel ourselves to be loved by God "with an eternal love." The traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, he said, "are not mere external practices, but paths that lead to the heart, to the core of our Christian life." It is precisely in the secret chamber within each one of us "that the Lord has descended in order to heal and cleanse us."

"Let us enter into our inner chamber," Pope Francis pleaded. "There the Lord dwells, there our frailty is accepted, and we are loved unconditionally." *Fr John*

- **Ecumenical Lent Course** continues at **St Peter's Church, Onchan on Tuesdays at 7.30pm** on 27 February and 5, 12, 19 & 26 March. This is a gentle reflective course using '**The King's Speech**' which focuses on finding our voice and identity in Christ. Please note the time is 7.30pm, not 7pm as advertised last week.
- **World Day of Prayer Service, Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March at 10.00am** will take place in the Cathedral Church of St Mary of the Isle. The Theme is '**I beg you, bear with one another in love**'. The service is prepared by the **Christian Women of Palestine**. Everyone welcome.
- **Community Connect** is a new initiative by the **Salvation Army** at Ballacottier Crescent, IOM Business Park, Braddan, IM2 2QZ to reach out to those in our community who feel isolated and lonely. A café style space will be offered where volunteers and visitors can play board games together, share hobbies and activities or simply chat in a relaxed and welcoming environment. A place where it's OK not to be OK. **Connect** will meet each Thursday from 10.30am to 12 noon commencing 7 March 2024.
- **Lenten Lunches** of homemade soup, bread & butter, desserts, tea and coffee will be served in St Anthony's Pastoral Centre **each Thursday during Lent** from 12.30 until 2pm. Cost £8. All proceeds to IOM Hospice. Everyone welcome.
- **T and Chat** will meet on **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March from 10.30 - 12noon**. Do come along. Everyone will be warmly welcomed, refreshments served. This group is supported by the SVP. Please contact Josie Lorimer 406063 for further information.
- The **Red Mill Hill Missionary Boxes** for **St Anthony's Church** will be emptied over the next 2 weeks. If you have a box, please leave it in St Anthony's church porch in the usual place.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Mary and St Joseph £1,012, St Anthony's £415. This does not include standing orders or the tap and pay machine at the back of St Mary's church. As always thank you for your generosity.

### Masses and Services for the coming week

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

<b>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February</b>			
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	5.00pm	St Mary's	Karl Slann, 50 <sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February</b>	9.30am	St Anthony's	People of our Parishes
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	11.00am	St Mary's	Phyllis Brohoon, recently died
<b>Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February</b>	12.10pm	St Mary's	Katherine, John, Seamus & Mary, sick
<b>Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February</b>	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Gerard Doran, recently died
<b>Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February</b>	12.10 noon 7.00pm	St Mary's St Anthony's	Kieron McMullan, recently died <b>Stations of the Cross</b>
<b>Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February</b>	10.00am 12.10 noon	St Anthony's St Mary's	Margaret Mary Switzer, anniversary Patricia Ross intention
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March</b> St David; World Day of Prayer	10.00am 12.10 noon	St Mary's St Mary's	<i>World Day of Prayer Service</i> David Corkill, birthday anniversary
<b>Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	11.00am to 12noon	St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	5.00pm	St Mary's	Brendan Murphy, recently died
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	9.30am	St Anthony's	Jack Smart, anniversary
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	11.00am	St Mary's	People of our Parishes

Please remember in your prayers **Lenny McCormick** who died recently. We think of his family and friends who mourn his loss. Eternal rest grant to him.

#### Unwelcome Visitors!

This week I had to call the police regarding suspicious figures in the grounds of St Mary's attempting to enter the building late at night. The police responded promptly and are stepping up their patrols.

The presbytery has also been invaded by mice. This is a new phenomenon.

Maybe my dog Lottie kept both intruders and mice at bay in the past!