

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

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 4th February 2024

(Page 134 in Mass book)

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

Dear Parishioners

The following article reflects on **our increasingly divided world**. Although written from a 'secular' perspective it mirrors gospel values:

*Some psychologists believe our values tend to cluster around certain poles, described as “intrinsic” and “extrinsic”. People with a strong set of intrinsic values are **inclined towards empathy, intimacy and self-acceptance. They tend to be open to challenge and change, interested in universal rights and equality, and protective of other people and the living world.***

*People at the extrinsic end of the spectrum are more attracted to **prestige, status, image, fame, power and wealth. They are strongly motivated by the prospect of individual reward and praise. They are more likely to objectify and exploit other people, to behave rudely and aggressively and to dismiss social and environmental impacts***

*We are not born with our values. They are shaped by the cues and responses we receive from other people and the prevailing mores of our society. **They are also moulded by the political environment we inhabit.** If people live under a cruel and grasping political system, they tend to normalise and internalise it, absorbing its dominant claims and translating them into extrinsic values. This, in turn, permits an even crueller and more grasping political system to develop.*

*If, by contrast, people live in a country in which no one becomes destitute, in which social norms are characterised by **kindness, empathy, community and freedom from want and fear**, their values are likely to shift towards the intrinsic end. This process is known as policy feedback, or the “values ratchet”.....*

*But the shift goes deeper than politics. For well over a century, the US, more than most nations, has worshipped extrinsic values: the American dream is a dream of acquiring wealth, spending it conspicuously and escaping the constraints of other people's needs and demands. It is accompanied, in politics and in popular culture, by toxic myths about failure and success: wealth is the goal, regardless of how it is acquired. **The ubiquity of advertising, the commercialisation of society and the rise of consumerism, alongside the media's obsession with fame and fashion, reinforce this story.** The marketing of insecurity, especially about physical appearance, and the manufacture of unfulfilled wants, dig holes in our psyches that we might try to fill with money, fame or power. For decades, the dominant cultural themes in the US – and in many other nations – have functioned as an almost perfect incubator of extrinsic values.*

*A classic sign of this shift is the individuation of **BLAME**. On both sides of the Atlantic, it now takes extreme forms. **Under the criminal justice bill now passing through the UK parliament, people caught rough sleeping can be imprisoned or fined up to £2,500 if they are deemed to constitute a “nuisance” or cause “damage”. According to article 61 of the bill, “damage” includes smelling bad. It's hard to know where to begin with this. If someone had £2,500 to spare, they wouldn't be on the streets. The UK government is proposing to provide prison cells for rough sleepers, but not homes. Perhaps most importantly, people are being blamed and criminalised for their own destitution, which in many cases will have been caused by government policy....***

When a society values status, money, power and dominance, it is bound to generate frustration. It is mathematically impossible for everyone to be number one. The more the economic elites grab, the more everyone else must lose. Someone must be blamed for the ensuing disappointment. In a culture that worships winners, it can't be them. It must be those evil people pursuing a kinder world, in which wealth is distributed, no one is forgotten and communities and the living planet are protected. (George Monbiot 29th January 2024)

All are invited to the launch of a new book '**Christ's Seven Words from the Cross**' by **Canon John Mann**, to take place at **7pm at St Mary of the Isle on Monday 12th February**. Drinks and nibbles will follow. The former Dean of Belfast Cathedral, Canon Mann lives in retirement on the Island. His book helps us, week by week during Lent, to prepare for Good Friday and Easter. Influenced by his time in Ireland during the 'Troubles', he relates his own experience of human suffering with the events of Good Friday. Everyone welcome.

- Everyone welcome to **St Anthony's Bingo** at 7.30pm on Thursday 8th February.
- The St Anthony's memory support group has changed its name to '**The T and Chat Group**' which will make the group more inclusive. The group will be supported by St Anthony's St Vincent de Paul Society. A donation box will be available. Proceeds will support the excellent work which the SVP carry out discreetly in our community. **The T and Chat Group will meet on 06/02/2024 from 10.30am to noon at St Anthony's Pastoral Centre** when Judith Ley will be joining the Group. Refreshments will be served. All welcome. Please contact Josie Lorimer on 406063.
- **Island Spirituality Network:** Next meeting on **Saturday 10 February** from **10am to 1pm** in St John's Mill with guest speaker **Michael Manning**, the eighth Manx Bard. Michael is also well-known for his years of work with **Manx Homeless Charity, Graih**. Michael's theme for the morning is '**The Bittersweet Scroll: Exploring Poetry and Faith**'.
- **Come and See Group:** Thank you to those who have already been in touch. We will contact you soon with information and start date. This Group is for adults (over 18) who wish to become Catholics or for those who, although Baptised in the Catholic church, have never been Confirmed or made their First Holy Communion. Please get in touch with us at saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk if you wish to be part of the group.
- **First Holy Communion 2024 Preparation:** Parents and Guardians of Year 4 children attending non-Catholic schools, who have contacted us and received application forms, should have been advised of the dates and times of the evening preparation sessions at St Anthony's, Onchan. Six sessions of preparation are required, taking place during March and April. Thank you to our parish catechists who lead the preparation course.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Mary and St Joseph £1,118, St Anthony's £430. This does not include standing orders or the tap and pay machine at the back of church. Thank you for your generosity.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

Saturday 3rd February			
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time	5.00pm	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Sunday 4th February	9.30am	St Anthony's	Sheila Creedon, anniversary
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time	11.00am	St Mary's	May & Tommy O'Hare, anniversary
Monday 5th February St Agatha	12.10pm	St Mary's	Fr John's intentions
Tuesday 6th February St Paul Miki & Companions	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Nikolaj Brana, anniversary
Wednesday 7th February	12.10pm	St Mary's	Mary Glynn, intention
Thursday 8th February St Josephine Bakhita Day for Victims of Trafficking	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	William Graham, recently died Marissa Martin, sick
Friday 9th February	12.10pm	St Mary's	Darryl Doherty, anniversary
Saturday 10th February	11.00am to 12noon	St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions
6th Sunday in Ordinary Time	5.00pm	St Mary's	Josie Ridsdale, anniversary
Sunday 11th February <i>Day of Prayer for the Sick</i>	9.30am	St Anthony's	People of our Parishes
6th Sunday in Ordinary Time	11.00am	St Mary's	Joe Estella, recently died

In recent weeks our parishes have lost several regular parishioners. Last week **Kieron McMullan** died. His funeral took place in Ireland this week. We think of Kieron's wife Patricia and their children. May all those who died rest in eternal peace. We think of their sorrowing families who will continue to grieve their loss.

On Thursday we were saddened by the death of **Shirley Savage**, a much-loved loyal, supportive and dedicated parishioner of St Mary's and St Joseph's. Shirley attended daily Mass and was a constant friendly presence around St Mary's church. She popped in almost every day and discreetly took care of the many thankless tasks without fuss, as well as keeping an eye out for visitors or any difficulties. Before the Cathedral Inauguration Shirley spent hours polishing all the brass candles holders and cleaned the votive candles stands. She took great pride in her church's appearance without expecting any reward. Daily Mass meant a lot to her. Shirley has been greatly missed since she became ill in December. Shirley was grateful to receive Holy Communion at home every Sunday in January. She died peacefully at home. Our thoughts and prayers are with her son Chris and his family in their loss. May her soul rest in peace.