

NEWSLETTER

Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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5th Sunday of Lent, 17th March 2024

(Page 169 in Mass book)

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



Dear Parishioners

This year, as the carnage in Gaza fills our tv screens, the name **Israel** jumps out like a red flag in the readings at Mass. The story of the people of Israel is embedded in our Christian faith. How do our pleas in the bidding prayers for those broken by the brutality of the current conflict in the Holy Land sit with the story of God's people in the Hebrew Bible, a heritage we share and celebrate? However I speak about the terrible scenes in Gaza, I lay myself open to criticism. Am I Islamophobic or anti-Semitic? In calling for peace I can be accused of being one or the other.

In 1968 the Second Vatican Council Declaration *Nostra Aetate* condemned antisemitism. Far from blaming the Jewish people for the death of Jesus, it celebrates Christianity's Jewish roots. *'In company with the Prophets.....the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and "serve him shoulder to shoulder". Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred synod wants to foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues..... Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures....The Church.....decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.'* The document goes on to describe the people of Israel as an olive tree on to which the Gentiles (the Church) have been grafted.

In his historic visit to the Great Synagogue in Rome, Pope Saint John Paul II declared: *'The Jewish religion is not "extrinsic" to us, but in a certain way is "intrinsic" to our own religion. With Judaism therefore we have a relationship which we do not have with any other religion. You are our dearly beloved brothers and, in a certain way, it could be said that you are our elder brothers.* (13th April 1986).

I have visited Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Dachau. Each time it felt like a pilgrimage. Am I able to condemn the horrendous scale of Israel's assault on Gaza and advocate a two-state solution without being accused of turning a blind eye to the atrocities of October 7th? Can I assert Israel's right to exist without being accused of Islamophobia?

There was a good turnout last Tuesday evening at the Manx Museum Lecture Theatre to hear **Dr Alex Shadenberg** of the **Euthanasia Prevention Coalition in Canada** speak on their experience of assisted dying in that country. He was joined by **Dr Duncan Gerry**, consultant in elderly care medicine at Nobles and **Dr Fiona Baker**, a Manx GP. There was unanimity that, irrespective of safeguards built into the original Canadian legislation in 2016, they have not prevented 'mission creep'. Dr Shadenberg shared a number of case studies. Further legislation has removed the requirement that a person must be terminally ill or that their natural death is reasonably foreseeable. People with disabilities are requesting and being granted euthanasia based on poverty, homelessness and other social issues. The message for the Isle of Man was clear:

Once the door is opened to voluntary euthanasia, things cannot be reversed.

The name of the current 'Assisted Dying Bill' might be more accurately entitled 'The Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia Bill'.

A majority of doctors and those involved in palliative care on the Island oppose the Bill.

Recruitment of doctors from the UK to work in the Isle of Man will be affected if the Assisted Dying Bill passes into law.

Individual letters to MHK's are the most effective means of influencing the debate.

Fr John

Amnesty International IOM Group – Everyone is welcome to join a peaceful demonstration outside the Tynwald Building on **Tuesday 19 March from 12 noon to 2pm**. The aim of the event is to request the IOM Chief Minister or Tynwald to release a statement supporting the international call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and to respect the ruling of the International Court of Justice for steps to be taken to prevent a genocide. See printout at the back of church for full details.

The more observant of you will have noticed a number of CCTV cameras have been installed in St Mary's. These are now fully operational. These enable us to ensure that our Cathedral Church continues to be open for private prayer throughout the day.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2024

Maundy Thursday 28th March: 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 29th March: 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 30th March at 12 noon: Traditional Blessing of Food Baskets for the Polish Community at St Mary's.

Holy Saturday 30th March at 7.30pm: Easter Vigil and First Mass of Easter at St Mary's.

Easter Sunday 31st March: Masses as normal: 9.30am at St Anthony's; 11.00am at St Mary's.

- **Ecumenical Lent Course** continues in **St Peter's Church, Onchan on Tuesdays at 7.30pm** on 19 & 26 March.
- **Community Connect** is an 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. This café style space offers a relaxed and welcoming environment, a place where it's OK not to be OK. **Connect** meets each Thursday from 10.30am to 12 noon.
- **Lenten Lunches** are 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.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Mary and St Joseph £964. St Anthony's £610. This does not include standing orders or the tap and pay machine at the back of St Mary's church. Sincere thanks for your generosity.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

Saturday 16th March			
5th Sunday of Lent	5.00pm	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Sunday 17th March <i>St Patrick, Patron of Ireland</i>	9.30am	St Anthony's	Eilish Mellon, recently died
5th Sunday of Lent	11.00am	St Mary's	Quintin Larkin, 2 nd anniversary
Monday 18th March	12.10pm	St Mary's	Mary & Joe McNally
Tuesday 19th March St Joseph	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Peace in the World
Wednesday 20th March	12.10 noon 7.00pm	St Mary's St Anthony's	Liam Cummins, deceased Stations of the Cross
Thursday 21st March	10.00am 12.10 noon	St Anthony's St Mary's	Brenda Quinn, recently died Renee O'Neill, anniversary
Friday 22nd March	12.10 noon	St Mary's	Edna Vargas, recently died
Saturday 23rd March <i>Palm Sunday</i>	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions People of our Parishes
Sunday 24th March <i>Palm Sunday</i>	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Ivan Park, 80 th birthday Mary McCarthy Glynn, anniversary

Oh, be not the first to discover a blot on the fame of a friend.
Oh, be not of discord the mover, for hearts may prove strong in the end.
We none of us know one another and oft' into error we fall,
Then let us speak well of each other or speak not of others at all.

John Dundon (1901-1967)