

NEWSLETTER

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

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Easter Sunday, 31st March 2024 and 2nd Sunday of Easter, 7th April 2024

(Page 251 and 255 in Mass book)

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



Dear Parishioners,

Last Monday the 'Schola' or choir of St German's Anglican Cathedral in Peel sang a setting of the **Lamentations** by 16th century English composer **Thomas Tallis**.

Due to the Cathedral being closed for refurbishment, it took place in St Patrick's Church Peel.

Described as 'an unreformed Roman Catholic', Thomas Tallis served at court as a composer and performer for Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I. While the country flip-flopped from Catholicism to Protestantism during their reigns, his popularity at court never waned. Tallis taught fellow Catholic composer William Byrd. Younger than Tallis, he too tailored his compositions to suit the theological and liturgical preferences of whoever was on the throne. Meanwhile Catholics and Protestants were fined, imprisoned or executed for their faith.

Passages from the Old Testament Book of Lamentations come to their own during Holy Week. We apply them to the suffering of Christ. Attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, the book is a series of five poems lamenting the invasion of Jerusalem and the destruction of Solomon's temple by the Babylonians in 586 BC. The suffering of the civilian population is graphically described. The grief and torment of the people is compared to that of a bereaved widow. The people of Israel interpret death, defeat and disgrace as punishment for their infidelities. Ironically, the raw emotion expressed in these passages applies equally to the harrowing scenes being played out in Gaza.

As the feast of New Life, it's no co-incidence that Easter coincides with the start of Spring. And this year it corresponds exactly with the introduction of summer time. We had a glimpse of spring the other day, a break from the rain. I'm hoping for sunshine on Easter day itself. Yes, we meet God in the liturgy in church. But as American writer Barbara Brown Taylor tells us he's also there in the world around us:

People encounter God under shady oak trees, on riverbanks, at the tops of mountains, and in long stretches of barren wilderness. God shows up in whirlwinds, starry skies, burning bushes, and perfect strangers. When people want to know more about God, the son of God tells them to pay attention to the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, to women kneading bread and workers lining up for their pay.

According to the Talmud, every blade of grass has its own angel bending over it, whispering, "Grow, grow." How does one learn to see and hear such angels?

If there is a switch to flip, I have never found it. As with Jacob, most of my visions of the divine have happened while I was busy doing something else. I did nothing to make them happen.... I play no apparent part in their genesis. My only part is to decide how I will respond, since there is plenty I can do to make them go away, namely: 1) I can figure that I have had too much caffeine again; 2) I can remind myself that visions are not true in the same way that taxes and the evening news are true; or 3) I can return my attention to everything I need to get done today. These are only a few of the things I can do to talk myself out of living in the House of God.

Or I can set a little altar, in the world or in my heart. I can stop what I am doing long enough to see where I am, who I am there with, and how awesome the place is. I can flag one more gate to heaven - one more patch of ordinary earth with ladder marks on it - where the divine traffic is heavy when I notice it and even when I do not. I can see it for once, instead of walking right past it, maybe even setting a stone or saying a blessing before I move on to wherever I am due next.

Human beings may separate things into as many piles as we wish - separating spirit from flesh, sacred from secular, church from world. But we should not be surprised when God does not recognize the distinctions we make between the two. Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars.

On Wednesday evening in Holy Week I travelled across to the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King for the annual Chrism Mass. Each year the Archbishop, the assistant bishops and the priests of the Archdiocese gather for the blessing of the Holy Oils to be used in every parish of the Archdiocese in the celebration of the Sacraments throughout the coming year. The Archbishop spoke of how the touch of the sacred oil on those being Baptised, Confirmed, Ordained to the Priesthood or receiving the Sacrament of the Sick represents the loving touch of Christ himself.

On this day priests are also invited to renew the promises they made on the day of their Ordination. Joining in the celebration of the Mass was Bishop Gregory Komar, auxiliary bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy (diocese) of

Sambir-Drohobych, Ukraine. He spoke movingly about the suffering of the Ukrainian people and asked for the continued support of our prayers.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed in any way to our Holy Week and Easter ceremonies: church cleaners, those who serve hot drinks after Mass, choirs, flower arrangers, readers, eucharistic ministers, stewards, catechists, altar servers and all those hidden helpers who give their time to our parishes throughout the year. Many of you will be visiting family and friends off-Island over Easter. Others will be welcoming family members to the Island. I wish you all a Happy Easter wherever you spend it. A big thank you to those who have sent me Easter good wishes and gifts.
Fr John

- **T and Chat** will meet on **Tuesday 2nd April** from **10.30 - 12noon**. Win Kewley has kindly agreed to join the group for a card making and craft session. Do come along. Everyone will be warmly welcomed, refreshments served. The T and Chat group is supported by the SVP who help people throughout our parishes. Please contact Josie on 406063.
- A **Quiz Night** is being held for **Lourdes Youth Group** on **Friday 12th April** in the **Columba Club**. Doors open at 6.30pm. **Quiz will begin at 7pm**. Tea, coffee and soft drinks will be served. If you wish to drink alcohol, please bring your own. Tickets are £8 each including a light supper. Raffle prizes greatly appreciated. Please contact Brian Murphy, Sheila Signorio or Richard Coase for tickets. Please support the young people going to Lourdes this July.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Mary and St Joseph £1,285. St Anthony's £570. 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 next two weeks

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

Saturday 30th March HOLY SATURDAY Easter Vigil Mass	7.30pm	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Sunday 31st March EASTER SUNDAY	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Peter Lees, 2 nd anniversary Maria & John Johnson, 60 th wedding anniv
Monday 1st April	12.10pm	St Mary's	Damon Johnson
Tuesday 2nd April	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Tommy Lawlor, deceased
Wednesday 3rd April	12.10pm	St Mary's	Thanksgiving for family blessings
Thursday 4th April	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	Cesare Leonetti, birthday anniversary The Roney family
Friday 5th April	12.10pm	St Mary's	Mark M ^c Carrick intentions
Saturday 6th April 2 nd Sunday of Easter <i>Day of Divine Mercy</i>	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions Ann Fox, deceased
Sunday 7th April 2 nd Sunday of Easter <i>Day of Divine Mercy</i>	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Simon Mellon & Eilish Mellon, deceased People of our Parishes
Monday 8th April <i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i>	12.10pm	St Mary's	Tommy Kelly, recently died & deceased family members
Tuesday 9th April	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> James O'Neill
Wednesday 10th April	12.10pm	St Mary's	Tommy Flynn
Thursday 11th April St Stanislaus	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	REQUIEM MASS: Norma Callaghan Josie Williams
Friday 12th April	10.00am 12.10pm	St Mary's St Mary's	FUNERAL SERVICE: Jordan Thomas Jim Barry, deceased
Saturday 13th April 3 rd Sunday of Easter	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions Trevor Doyle, recently died
Sunday 14th April 3 rd Sunday of Easter	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	People of our Parishes Nuala & Tony, Golden Anniversary