

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



2nd Sunday of Advent, 8th December 2024

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

(Page 449 in Missal for Order of the Mass)

(Page 768 for Mass readings)

Dear Parishioners

In 2019 the UK government appointed a Secretary of State for 'Levelling Up' with responsibility for addressing the gaps between North and South.

We live in a world of inequalities, extremes and fluctuations. We're used to rises and falls, progress and failure; growing gaps between rich and poor. Graphs are used to show the highs and the lows, the peaks and the troughs. The lines go up and down. Comparisons are made with previous months and years. Graphs plot rises in immigration, inflation, unemployment, crime, homelessness and global warming. Usually, these graphs illustrate bad news. But sometimes it's good news – such as rises in life expectancy, and educational attainment, the eradication of infectious diseases.

The message of Advent hope is reinforced by these images of mountain peaks and valleys. Our world is one of winners and losers. The winners blame the losers for their own plight, absolving them from any responsibility. The world longs for stability, security and equality, for an end to injustice and unfairness. On the Second Sunday of Advent the prophet Baruch promises the same: that *'every high mountain will be laid low' and 'every valley filled up to make level ground'*. In Luke's gospel we also hear John the Baptist's cry that *'every valley shall be filled, every mountain and hill laid low'*. The promised Messiah will right wrongs, restore, rebalance and bring stability and contentment.

The Messiah came but the inequalities persist. Far from solving the world's problems Jesus was born in a stable and died on the cross. At the start of his mission Jesus promised to bring good news to the poor. He reached out to the suffering and they flocked to him. He didn't eradicate suffering and injustice but he identified with its victims. And he identifies with them today. That's the Advent promise: to fill every valley and level every mountain. We live in hope. We put our trust in him.

Sunday December 29th marks the beginning of the 2025 Jubilee Year, a worldwide year of renewal and reconciliation. Archbishop Malcolm will inaugurate the Jubilee Year in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King in Liverpool. Simultaneously **Bishop Tom Neylon**, the Auxiliary Bishop of Liverpool, is travelling to the Island to **celebrate a special Mass at 11.00am on Sunday 29th December at our own Cathedral Church of Saint Mary of the Isle.**

Article in this week's 'The Tablet':

The celebrated wordsmith, lecturer and broadcaster David Crystal is one of the casualties of the bishops' decision to drop the Jerusalem Bible translation from the Lectionary. Thanks to one of his sons, the actor and director Ben Crystal, David has performed on the Globe stage in London in Ben's productions of *Macbeth* and *Henry V*. Back in the first days of Covid he was asked by a parish in the Isle of Man to record the Easter readings, to help save the voice of the parish priest.

He eventually recorded the entire lectionary and put it all up on a freely accessible website:

www.lectionaryreadings.co.uk A goodly number of places used it in lockdown, and it has had an interesting afterlife. Some listen to the daily readings through their headphones while cooking, jogging or walking to work. Crystal's crisp and clear recording of the lectionary is no longer a public option in Masses in Britain, but the Jerusalem Bible is still used in Ireland and some other parts of the English-speaking world, and it will continue to hold a beloved place in private study and reflection. 'I'm going to keep the site going,' David tells us, 'at least for now. I'd be sad to see the result of six months in my audio studio go down the drain.'

Fr John

To help us prepare for Christmas, there will be an **Advent Service on Wednesday 18 December at 7.00pm in St Mary's Church**. We will reflect with **Mary Untier of Knots** on the coming birthday of her Son, accompanied by our choir.

- The **Tynwald Carol Service** will take place in **St Mary's** at **1pm** on **Thursday 12 December**. We welcome our new Bishop of Sodor and Man, Tricia Hillas; also the President of Tynwald, Members and Officers of Tynwald. The Tynwald Choir and IOM Arts Council Community Choir will be leading the singing. Everyone welcome.
- The **Tallis Consort** will present '**O Magnum Mysterium**', a programme exploring the mystery of Christmas through music and poetry, on **Saturday 14 December at 7.30pm** at **St Mary's**. Admission is free. Everyone welcome.
- **Hosanna Rock**: We look forward to welcoming to St Mary's church the pupils, teachers and staff from **St Mary's School** on **Thursday 19 December at 10.30am** when the children will perform their Christmas celebration "**Hosanna Rock**". Thanks to the teachers, school staff, parents and pupils who together put a lot of work into this performance. "**Hosanna Rock**" will be livestreamed for family members who are unable to attend.
- **Columba Club**: Due to structural damage the Columba Club will be closed until further notice. Regrettably this means the Knights have to postpone the 'Warm and Cosy Hub'.
- **CAFOD Advent 2024**: As well as providing **ongoing humanitarian support in Gaza**, CAFOD is asking for **help for families in Ukraine** threatened by the cold and loss of power. Church partners are rebuilding walls and fixing windows to keep out the cold as well as providing fuel so families can cook and keep warm. See www.cafod.org.uk
- **Offertory Collections**: St Mary and St Joseph £980, St Anthony's £590. 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 7th December 2 nd Sunday of Advent	5.00pm	St Mary's	John Byrne, deceased
Sunday 8th December 2 nd Sunday of Advent	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Bob & Josie Lees, anniversary People of our Parishes
Monday 9th December <i>Immaculate Conception of Mary</i>	12.10pm	St Mary's	Carlo Signorio, recently died
Tuesday 10th December Our Lady of Loreto	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Ruiz family, anniversary
Wednesday 11th December	12.10pm	St Mary's	Stefania Burinskene, 1 st anniv
Thursday 12th December Our Lady of Guadalupe	10.00am 12.10pm 1.00pm	St Anthony's St Mary's St Mary's	Benny Maginn, recently died Thelma Vequizo, recently died <i>Tynwald Carol Service</i>
Friday 13th December St Lucy	12.10pm	St Mary's	Laurier St. Onge, recently died
Saturday 14th December 3 rd Sunday of Advent	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions Margaret Sherry, 1 st anniversary
Sunday 15th December <i>Gaudete Sunday</i> 3 rd Sunday of Advent	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Rosa Leonetti, anniversary People of our Parishes

Archdiocese of Liverpool Lourdes Youth Pilgrimage 2025: Thank you to those young people who got in touch to say they have been successful in obtaining a place on next year's Lourdes pilgrimage. If any other young people would like to go to Lourdes next summer please email directly St Mary's parish office at saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk.

Pope Francis renewed his appeal for peace in the world at the first General Audience of the 2024 Advent season. 'War is a human defeat', he said. 'War does not solve problems.' Amid ongoing conflicts around the world, the Pope specifically prayed for 'martyred Ukraine', Palestine, Israel and Myanmar. He lamented how in each of these countries there are many children dead, many innocent people dead. 'War is evil; War destroys', warned Pope Francis.