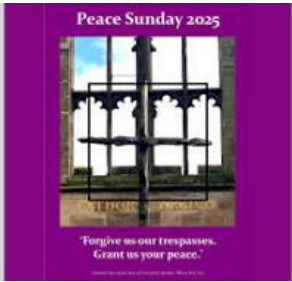


NEWSLETTER

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 in Ordinary Time, 19th January 2025

Peace Day

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

(Page 449 in Missal for Order of the Mass)

(Page 783 for Mass readings)

Dear Parishioners

Last week we celebrated the **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord**. We renewed our Baptismal promises, the promises our parents and godparents made on behalf of those of us baptised as babies. Last Sunday many of you took a small bottle of **Holy Baptismal Water** home with you as a reminder of the promises you renewed. This week we invite **Eucharistic Ministers** who take Holy Communion to the **Sick and Housebound** to take one of the remaining bottles to each of them. Parishioners are encouraged to save their Holy Water bottle so that if they seek Holy Water in the future they can fill their own bottle with water at home and bring it to the priest to bless after Mass.

Today's Gospel reading tells the story of the **Marriage Feast at Cana**. This event is only recorded in John's Gospel. He describes how Jesus changed the water into wine as a **sign**. John tells us that Jesus 'manifested his glory' and 'his disciples believed in him'. It's the first of seven signs in John's Gospel. These include the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the Raising of Lazarus. The response to each of these events is always the same: his followers believe. The final sign was the Resurrection, an event Thomas the Apostle had difficulty in believing. But when the Risen Jesus shows him his wounds Thomas says: **'My Lord and my God'**, words we can make our own. John explains: 'These words are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.'

This year, the Holy Year, we **celebrate 1,700 years** since the **Council of Nicea**. It's another opportunity to look afresh at our faith. Over 200 bishops were called together in 325 AD by the Emperor Constantine. The ancient city of Nicea is the modern city of Iznik in Turkey. This Council was convened to determine the relationship between Jesus and the Father. The resulting **Nicene Creed** was agreed by the bishops in response to those who questioned the divinity of Christ. It's one of two creeds that we recite at Mass each Sunday.

Jesus Christ is described in the Nicene Creed as **"Light from Light, true God from true God"**, proclaiming his divinity. Jesus Christ is said to be **"begotten, not made"**, asserting that he was not a mere creature, brought into being out of nothing, but the true Son of God, brought into being "from the substance of the Father". Jesus Christ is said to be "of one substance with the Father", proclaiming that although Jesus Christ is "true God" and God the Father is also "true God", they are "of one substance" – **"consubstantial with the Father"**. The Nicene Creed is recognised by the Catholic, Orthodox and major Protestant churches. It is a profession of faith that unites us.

It is suggested that we look at this foundational creed as we begin the **annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** from this Saturday, January 18th to Saturday, January 25th. Whatever divides the mainstream Christian denominations, we are united in our commitment to the core truth of our faith, that **Jesus is the Son of God**.

Today is also **PEACE SUNDAY**. Our prayers are focussed on an end to the violence, loss of life and destruction in GAZA and UKRAINE. Together with the inauguration of the new President of the United States, these are critical days in world affairs. Today **Pope Francis** has a special message for all people of goodwill:

*"At the dawn of this New Year given to us by our heavenly Father, a year of Jubilee in the spirit of hope, I offer heartfelt good wishes of peace to every man and woman.... At the beginning of this Year of Grace, I would like to offer **three proposals** capable of restoring dignity to the lives of entire peoples and enabling them to set them out anew on the journey of hope....*

- *First, I renew the appeal launched by Saint John Paul II on the occasion of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 to consider **"reducing substantially, if not cancelling outright, the international debt** which seriously threatens the future of many nations".*
- *I would like once more to propose a concrete gesture that can help foster the culture of life, namely **the elimination of the death penalty in all nations**.*

- *In addition, following in the footsteps of Saint Paul VI and Benedict XVI...In this time marked by wars, let us use at least a fixed percentage of the money earmarked for armaments to establish a Global Fund to eradicate hunger and facilitate in the poorer countries educational activities aimed at promoting sustainable development and combating climate change.....The future is a gift meant to enable us to go beyond past failures and to pave new paths of peace."*

Prayer for Peace

God of mercy and compassion, where I have not loved my neighbour as I love myself, or done to others what I would have them do to me, held grudges, or tried to get even after I have been hurt: Father forgive.

Grant us your peace, that I might know peace within myself, seek to be a peacemaker in my daily life, grow in my conviction that we are all made in your image, love those I find it hard to love, forgive injuries and refuse to retaliate, and follow in the footsteps of the non-violent Jesus. **Amen.** (Pax Christi, 2025)

There will be a retiring collection this weekend at all Masses for the work of Pax Christi. *Fr John*

- We regularly receive enquiries from adults (over 18) who wish to become Catholics or from those who, although Baptised in the Catholic church, have never been Confirmed or made their First Holy Communion. In a few weeks' time we will be reconvening our '**Come and See**' group which meets to explore our Catholic faith. Please get in touch with us at saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk if you wish to be part of the group.
- **First Holy Communion 2025 Preparation:** Thanks to Parents and Guardians of Year 4 children attending non-Catholic schools who wish to make their First Holy Communion in 2025 for registering their names with the parish office saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk. Those parents will receive an application form in the next few weeks followed by an invitation to attend evening classes at St Anthony's, Onchan. Six sessions of preparation are required, taking place during the spring months. Thank you to our parish catechists who lead the preparation course.
- Following Sister Asmaret's talk in our churches in November, the **Comboni Missionary Sisters** have sent a letter of thanks to our parishes for raising the marvellous sum of **£1,785.44** towards their missionary work. Thank you!
- **The Warm and Cosy Hub** is open in the meeting room at the back of St Mary's Church **every Monday and Friday** from **10am to 2pm** until further notice. Hot soup with bread and butter will be served – tea, coffee and biscuits with a warm welcome. Thanks to the volunteers who help.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

Saturday 18th January 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time <i>Peace Day</i>	5.00pm	St Mary's	Wendy Reed, anniversary
Sunday 19th January 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time <i>Peace Day</i>	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Rosa & Cesare Leonetti, anniversary People of our Parishes
Monday 20th January	12.10pm	St Mary's	Herminio Rosal, 1 st anniversary
Tuesday 21st January St Agnes	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Cyrus MT, sick
Wednesday 22nd January	12.10pm	St Mary's	Nicola Shields, recently died
Thursday 23rd January	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Martin Biddulph, anniversary
Friday 24th January St Francis de Sales	12.10pm	St Mary's	Stephen Simpson, anniversary
Saturday 25th January 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions John Byrne, 1 st anniversary
Sunday 26th January <i>Sunday of the Word of God</i> 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	9.30am 11.00am 3.00pm	St Anthony's St Mary's St Mary's	People of our Parishes Colm Garrity, anniversary <i>Holocaust Memorial Service</i>

We remember in our prayers **Victoria Hook, Margaret Shimmin** and **Vitalijs Potapovs** who died recently. We think of their grieving families and friends.