**St. Mary’s & St. Columba’s Parish Newsletter**

**The Presentation of Our Lord**

**Email:** stmarycastletown@rcaol.org.uk **Phone:** 01624 822272

**Website:** [www.manxcatholic.org](http://www.manxcatholic.org/)

**Parish Priest:** Father Joseph Kiganda, CSSp

Fr Dennis T. Ortese-Yiye CSSp (Asst. P/P St Mary’s Douglas)

**Deacons:** Rev. Alan Molloy a.molloy@rcaol.org.uk

Rev. Graeme Easton [g.easton@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:g.easton@rcaol.org.uk)

**Three Feasts in one**

The official name for today is the Presentation of our Lord and today’s Gospel gives the account of the Presentation. Putting it simply, Joseph and Mary were obeying the Jewish law. The book of Exodus says that the first-born belonged to the Lord. However, the book of Numbers says the first-born could be redeemed or bought back by paying five shekels. Clearly Jesus didn’t need to be bought back, but Joseph and Mary were doing as the law required.

The second name is the Purification of Our Lady. Our Lady didn’t need purifying. She was and remains pure. However, it was the Jewish law and custom and according to Leviticus, purification of the mother should take place 40 days after birth for a male child. So here we are 40 days after Christmas.

As we saw with the wedding at Cana a couple of weeks ago, many of the key players in the ceremony such as the Priest aren’t mentioned. Instead, we have Simeon and Anna, two people not mentioned elsewhere. They remind us of what really matters in life. Not an occupation or family life. What set Simeon apart from many others, including the religious leaders at the temple (none of whom are named), was that he was a man who trusted in God, who obeyed His Word, who looked for His kingdom, and was led by the Holy Spirit. What mattered in Anna’s life was faithfulness to God. The seemingly unproductive activities of prayer and fasting, proclamation and praise were, and still are, most important.

Like many Christian festivals, today’s has built on a pagan background. We are now about halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, and at this time there would be a pagan festival of light to celebrate the lengthening days. Christianity took this over inspired by Simeon’s words of "a light to the revelation of the gentiles" and by the 11th century, the custom of blessing candles on the Feast of the Presentation had developed. The candles were then lit, and a procession took place through the church and the feast also became known as Candlemas.

May we be the light that takes the message of salvation to our neighbours.

May we follow the example of Simeon and Anna in setting our priorities in life.

May we follow the example of Mary and Joseph in following the law.

**Deacon Graeme**

Please find below details of this week’s Mass intentions and other services in our Parish of St. Mary’s, Castletown (C/T), and St. Columba’s, Port Erin (P/E).

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| **Week commencing 26th January** | | | |
| Sunday 2nd February  **The Presentation of The Lord** | C/T  P/E | 9 am  11 am | People of the Parish  David Radcliffe (RIP) |
| Monday 3rd February  **Weekday in Ordinary Time** |  |  | No Mass |
| Tuesday 4th February  **Weekday in Ordinary Time** | P/E | 10 am | **Service of Word**  **and Communion** |
| Wednesday 5th February  **Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr** | C/T | 10 am |  |
| Thursday 6th February  **Saints Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs** | P/E | 10 am | Elaine Morley (RIP) |
| Friday 7th February  **Weekday in Ordinary Time** | Pa | 10 am  11 am | Funeral Service for David Radcliffe |
| Saturday 8th February  **Weekday in Ordinary Time** | C/T | 10 am  10.45 am | Intentions to Our Lady of Rushen  Adoration and Confession |
| Sunday 9th February  **5th Sunday in Ordinary Time** | C/T  P/E | 9 am  11 am | People of the Parish  Vera Holden (25th Ann) |

**Responsorial Psalm:**

The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory!

**Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia, alleluia**

A light for revelation to the Gentiles,

And for glory to your people Israel.

**Alleluia**

**Communion Antiphon**:

My eyes have seen your salvation,

Which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.

**Offering Collection**: Last week’s offertory collection was £158.40

**Jubilee Year 2025**: During the year of the Jubilee the parish motto will be “Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer” (Rom 12:12).

**Fr Joseph:**  Fr Joseph is away until 16th February. Fr Dennis will be covering for him in his absence. As Fr. Dennis does not drive, we are looking for volunteers to bring him to and from Castletown in this period. This help would be greatly appreciated.

**Jubilee Year:** On Saturday, 26th April, as part of the parish activities commemorating the Jubilee year, a talk titled “PILGRIMS OF HOPE” will be given by Rev. Fr. Eamonn Mulcahy, CSSP, an esteemed theologian, lecturer. This event will take place at St. Columba’s Hall, commencing at 10 am. The agenda for the program is outlined as follows:

* 10.00 Morning Prayer
* 10.30 Talk 1
* 12.30 Lunch
* 1.30 Talk 2
* 3.30 Evening Prayer
* 4.00 Close

**Margaret Currie:** We offer our sympathy and prayers to Helen Quirk on the death of her mother, Margaret, during the week. May she rest in peace.

**Mass Intentions**: Elaine Morley, David Radcliffe, Vera Holden, Joan Hook, and Brian Gresty.

**Parish Diary**

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| **8th February**  **10 am to 1 pm** | Island Spirituality Network at St Johns’s Mill. The theme is “Setting Sail” with Rt Rev Patrica Hillas. |
| **16th February** | Annual Mission Appeal for The Spiritans. |
| **8th March**  **10 am to 1 pm** | Island Spirituality Network at St Johns’s Mill. The theme is “The Spirituality of Taize” with Rev Chis Howson. |
| **26th April**  **10 am** | Talk “Pilgrims of Hope” by Rev. Fr. Eamonn Mulcahy, CSSP, in St Columba’s Hall. |
| **11th May**  **11 am** | Crowning of Our Lady during Mass at St Columba’s. |
| **18th May**  **11 am** | First Communion Mass. |
| **26th July**  **Time to be announced** | Concert at St. Columba’s with Rushen Silver Band and Castleford Young Musicians. |
| **14th December**  **3pm** | Parish Nativity Service at St. Columba’s |

If you have any thoughts on how we can celebrate the Jubilee Year as a parish, please talk to Deacon Alan or Graeme

If you are aware of future events, please let us know so we may add them to the diary. **Social Club Committee contact details:** Susan 460514, Nick 431606, Dee 437487, or Lynn 472867.