**NEWSLETTER**

 **Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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 **4th Sunday of Lent, 30th March 2025**

**Laetare Sunday**

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

 *(Page 449 in Missal for Order of the Mass) (Page 834 for Mass readings)*

Dear Parishioners

A survey published this week by the Pew Research Center shows that, although Christianity remains the largest religious group worldwide, the number of people who profess ‘no religion’ is growing, especially in the USA and Europe. Furthermore, an increasing number of those identifying as ‘non-religious’ were actually brought up as Christians but now profess no faith. This trend is perhaps reflected last week on the Island in the passage of the **Assisted Dying Bill** through Tynwald. In the publicity, campaigning and consultations on this issue over the last few years, the Island’s Churches have been unanimous in opposition to the proposed legislation – a remarkable achievement in itself and a tribute to the growing mutual trust and understanding that has developed between our church leaders – CAIM (Churches Alive in Mann). **Our opposition to the new law is based on** **both moral and pastoral grounds.** The Assisted Dying Bill is now passing into law on the Isle of Man. This is not the end of the process. Secondary legislation is still required regarding details of the Bill’s implementation. However, once Royal Assent is received, and it is signed off by the Lieutenant Governor on Tynwald Day, it is likely that the availability of assisted dying on the Island will become a reality within a couple of years. **I print in full a press release issued by Churches Alive in Mann:**

***Statement on the Assisted Dying Bill****With sadness and deep concern, we note that the Assisted Dying Bill will now pass into law. Churches Alive in Mann, representing all the main Christian denominations on the Island, has worked over the last three years to raise our strong misgivings. Mindful of the strength of feeling on all sides we have sought to work carefully and constructively, including through contributions to the debates made by Bishop Tricia Hillas, and before her, Bishop Peter Eagles. Through numerous public meetings, engagement with our MHKs and MLCs and through lobbying, we have spoken as Church leaders with one voice against the Bill, for both pastoral and moral reasons.*

***Pastoral Concerns****The Tynwald debate as this Bill progressed towards law has done nothing to lessen our pastoral concerns, particularly for the most vulnerable members of Manx society. The very existence of this legislation will inevitably cause some of our elderly, disabled or vulnerable people to feel more of a burden. More worrying still, and despite legislative amendments, we believe there is very little effective provision to guard against coercion.*

*While we recognise the intent to provide training for the medical professionals involved, we believe that the involvement of a person trained in spotting coercion, such as a social worker or advocate, would provide greater safeguards. We very much hope and request that opportunities to include this be pursued in the implementation of this legislation.*

***Moral Concerns****For thousands of years, ‘Do not kill’ has been an ethical foundation for many civilisations. We believe that all human life is a sacred gift from God. The value of any member of our society is not determined by variable measures of the quality of life. The premature ending of individual lives will inevitably diminish the high value we place on all lives.*

***Working for our Common Good****We are grateful for the members of our Churches and people of goodwill across the Island who have stood against the Bill. We also recognise that many, in good conscience, take a different view. Our hope is that, in this divisive area, we can all recognise that our disagreements are over issues, rather than between people.*

*As secondary legislation, regulations and codes of practice are now developed, we will do all we can to work for the protection and care of all in Manx society, and especially the voiceless and the vulnerable. We urge the members of Tynwald to follow through with their expressed intent to ensure these protections are addressed and enshrined in practice.*

*As a group of Christian Churches on the Isle of Man, we seek to work together and support each other in mission wherever we can. Churches Alive in Mann represents the following Churches: Church of England, Methodist Church, Catholic Church, United Reformed Church, Living Hope, Elim Onchan, Salvation Army, Broadway Baptist. Further information at* [*www.churchesalive.i*m](http://www.churchesalive.im)  *(27 March 2025)*

**Jubilee Year 2025**This week Archbishop’s House has been able to confirm that **Archbishop Malcolm will be visiting our Cathedral Church of Saint Mary of the Isle to mark the Jubilee Year.** The visit is to take place on the weekend of 26th/27th April. You will recall that Bishop Tim Neylon had intended to visit the Island on 29th December last year to inaugurate the Jubilee year at St Mary’s. Ill health led to the last-minute cancellation of his visit. It is good to hear that Bishop Tom has made a good recovery. April 27th is **LOW SUNDAY**, the first Sunday after Easter Sunday. Easter has an OCTAVE. The eighth and final day of the Octave is celebrated as if it were still Easter Sunday itself. Masses celebrated that weekend by the Archbishop with have an explicit Easter Jubilee Year theme and provide a further opportunity to renew our commitment to our faith.

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**St Mary’s School Presentation** of **Resurrection Rock,** a musical setting of the Passion story, took place on Friday afternoon. The children sang, read and acted magnificently. Our cathedral Church was buzzing with vitality as proud parents and grandparents crowded in to support them. The reputation of the school continues to spread. It is now oversubscribed as increasing numbers of parents seek a place for their children. This is a tribute to the leadership of the school by Mrs Donna Martin and her dedicated team. The school flourishes because of their dedication and the high standards they set. Thanks are also due to the school governors led by Mrs Adrienne Burnett. St Mary’s school is a welcoming community of which the parish can be proud. The friendliness and behaviour of the children is exemplary.

*Fr John*

* **T & Chat** will meet on **Tuesday 1 April** at **10.30am - 12noon.** Graeme Jolly from the Family Library will join the group. Everyone will be warmly welcomed. Refreshments will be served.
* **Stations of the Cross** will take place at **7pm in St Anthony’s** for the remaining Wednesdays in Lent.
* **St Peter’s Parish Church, Onchan** are running a Lent course each Tuesday at 7pm based on the film ‘Les Misérables’. The next session takes place on Tuesday 1 April at 7pm**.** All are welcome.
* **Lenten Soup Lunches** will be served on Wednesdays during Lent from 12noon - 2pm until Wednesday 16 April at St Anthony’s Pastoral Centre. £8 or donation. Proceeds to Hospice. All welcome.
* **The Warm and Cosy Hub** will be held in the meeting room at the back of St Mary’s Churchfrom **10am to 2pm** on **Monday 31 March** which will be the **final day of the Hub**. A Big Thanks to the volunteers who not only provided a warm welcome but prepared and served homemade soups, cakes and other goodies.

**Masses and Services for the coming week**

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

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| **Saturday 29th March***Laetare Sunday*4th Sunday of Lent | 5.00pm | St Mary’s | People of our Parishes |
| **Sunday 30th March***Laetare Sunday*4th Sunday of Lent | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Attracta & Paul McKeever, anniv Mary McCarthy-Glynn anniversary |
| **Monday 31st March** | 12.10pm  | St Mary’s | Deceased Clergy |
| **Tuesday 1st April** | *10.00am*12.10pm | *St Anthony’s*St Mary’s | *Eucharistic Service*Dave Oliver, 1st anniversary |
| **Wednesday 2nd April** | 12.10pm***7.00pm*** | St Mary’s***St Anthony’s*** | Vincent Gillespie, recently died***Stations of the Cross*** |
| **Thursday 3rd April** | 10.00am12.10pm | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | John & Kit Thompson, deceasedPaddy & Bridget Gaffey, deceased |
| **Friday 4th April** | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | James O’Neill |
| **Saturday 5th April**5th Sunday of Lent | 11.00am to 12noon5.00pm | St Mary’sSt Mary’s | Exposition and Confessions Ann Fox, birthday anniversary |
| **Sunday 6th April**5th Sunday of Lent | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | People of our ParishesMargaret Stack, anniversary |

*“Let us recall with gratitude and affection all Mothers, those who are still with us and those who have gone to Heaven. Let us entrust them to Mary, the mother of Jesus.”* Pope Francis