

The Liturgical Year 2020-21 in St. Brendan's.

Year of St. Joseph and Pastoral Letter of Bishop Joseph Toal: last week we published the first part of the Commentary on St. Joseph and this week we present the second part together with a Pastoral Letter for Christmas issued by our bishop which he has asked all priests to circulate to parishioners. Both items are included with this bulletin.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote this about the liturgical season of Advent: "The beautiful task of Advent is to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open the doors of hope."

This weekend we enter the fourth week of the Season of Advent. We light the last purple candle from among the four candles in the circle in our wreath.

Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Lord of all ages, the source of all wisdom, the Glory of God.

All is light within and around the child. In him there is no darkness.

He is "God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God."

The Council of Nicea [year 325]

What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Gospel of John 1:3-5.

It is so easy to get caught up with the trappings of wealth in this life. Lord through your light let me see that the best things in life are free - love, laughter, caring and sharing. Let me be free from greed and selfishness.

Do not let me live always as "Johnnie McTak and never as Johnnie McGhie."

Advent and the Sacrament of Reconciliation: last week we reported that bishop Toal had instructed priests to provide the maximum opportunity for individual Confessions in the lead up to Christmas. The Sacrament of Reconciliation was made available here for three hours on three evenings and this was to continue into this coming week. Stewards attended to provide for the safety of all who came to the church for the Sacrament but very few people came over the three nights. The changed arrangements for this coming week are shown on the first page of this bulletin. On the evidence of our parish, a review of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will need to be carried out in the Diocese and elsewhere too as this Sacrament has largely fallen into disuse.

Advent Colloquy [conversation between friends] with God: knowing that God loves me unconditionally I can afford to be honest about how I am. Lord Jesus you became human to communicate with me. You walked and worked on this earth. All this time on this earth was spent by you in caring for humanity. Sometimes I wonder what I might say if I was to meet you in person, Lord. I think I might say - **Thank you.**

A Message from SPRED this Advent looking into 2021: Around this time of year (maybe closer to the start of the new year), I send a letter to all clergy who have members of SPRED in their parish requesting a small financial contribution towards the SPRED books, training for catechists and the replenishment of activities. However, this has been a strange, challenging year for SPRED and in fact our groups have not met since March. I therefore have no real basis to ask for such a financial contribution. I am hopeful that I will be able to begin the process of getting our evening groups back early next year, but it will be difficult. Sadly, it will be some months before Mavisbank and Firpark Schools will be able to return to SPRED. Instead of a financial contribution, please pray for SPRED as it has been weakened by this pandemic and it will take considerable time and work to get it back to what it was pre-Covid.

I wish you all a happy, blessed and peaceful Christmas.

Lorraine Cunningham, Director, SPRED, Motherwell.

Advent Generosity AND fundraising by parishioners: Pauline Douglas has knitted and donated the large colourful joiner man toy which is on display at the Main Entrance. Inside this bulletin is an envelope which can be used to take one or more chances to win the knitted doll at £1 per chance in the draw. *£1 in an envelope will get you one chance but £5 in one envelope will get you five chances marked up in your name and put in before the draw will be made on Christmas morning. William Brown has donated a 750ml bottle in a box of Auchentoshan Single Malt Whisky as a runner up prize. The sum we raise will be added to by half as much again and the total set against the Parish debt. If we raise £200 then a further £100 will be donated [subject to a maximum of an additional £200] and the overall sum paid by 31st December to reduce the Parish Debt.*

St. Brendan's - Tier 3 Protocols - now in place for North Lanarkshire.

Fifty persons can once again participate at Mass although the signs are that this will be short lived. Until we are told otherwise, these arrangements will apply here:

Mass at Christmas: Bishop Toal has authorized priests to celebrate five Masses over this period and 50 people can attend each Mass. Our Stewards will support Masses on Christmas Eve at 5PM, 7PM and 9PM AND on Christmas Day at 9.30 AM and 11.30AM. Those wishing to attend Mass at Christmas have either made arrangements with Lynne or Kathleen or are being held on a waiting list for the Mass of their choice.

Mass on Boxing Day: Fr. Ness in accordance with the protocols for travel over Christmas, intends to visit his son and his son's family in Aberdeen from late on Christmas Day until late on Sunday 27th December. Mass therefore on Saturday 26th December will be celebrated online from his son's house at 12 noon just as it was in the days over the summer when Fr. Ness was there. **There will not be Mass in the church.**

Mass on Sunday 27th December: Fr. Ness will return in time for Mass at 4.30 in the church. This will be live streamed and those who normally attend this Mass will have the first opportunity through Lynne or Kathleen to arrange to re-attend.

NOTE: First Holy Communion children of P5 and P6/5 may not have been able to secure a place here at any of the Masses for Christmas. They are therefore invited to Mass at 2pm on Monday 28th December accompanied by one other person - parent or brother/sister or other relative. This will allow all thirty two children to share the Eucharist as one community with the grandeur of Christmas.

FAMILIES OF CHILDREN IN P3, P4 OR P6 OR P7, WHO WISH TO CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENTS IN 2021 ARE ASKED TO NOTE THIS IS THE LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PARISH THAT WILL BE ASKED OF THEM.

On Wednesday 30th December at 7pm Mass will again be celebrated to allow parishioners additional opportunity to participate at a Mass before the end of 2020.

The final Mass for 2020 will be celebrated by candlelight and by the lights of the Christmas Tree at 11PM on Thursday 31st December, with provision for social distancing and sanitizing of seating on and around the Sanctuary.

Lynne Kellas and Kathleen Cosgrove record the identity of parishioners for the purpose of "Track & Trace". Contact Lynne on 07803-314555 or by email: lynnekellas@icloud.com or Kathleen on 07585-225837 or at: Kathleencosgrove@btopenworld.com

Midweek Morning Mass: simply attend at the church without needing to ask in advance for a place on the specific day[s] you wish. **The exceptions are - 3 Masses for Christmas Eve and the 2 on Christmas Day**

On Facebook: Daily Mass at 9.30am and every Requiem Mass will be live streamed. AND ALSO the Mass at 6PM on Saturday and (during the Season of Christmas) also at 10.30AM and 4.30pm on

Sunday. The Bishops of Scotland have issued a Live Streaming Policy to be followed everywhere for the live streaming of Mass. A sign is now displayed at the main entrance to the church on the matter of taking part in a streamed Mass. Anyone wanting to view the protocols or to obtain a copy of them should ask to speak with Jim O'Hare as our parish coordinator.

STEWARDING - renewal of service: the community invited each steward to step down from this service with effect from 31st December. Many parishioners have personally thanked the stewards for their generosity of spirit which has helped the community so much. Since July when the church re-opened for personal prayer, we have constantly developed our systems to take account of changing situations and have been able to celebrate all of the Sacraments and funerals and two weddings. The stewards wish to remain in post as servants of the community in the way of Jesus who washed the feet of the disciples at the Last Supper. Thank you. **If under 70 years of age, are YOU willing to serve in 2021? Kathleen Cosgrove will provide an ID Form for completion and return as the first step to serving as a steward if you decide to do so.** Four parishioners have enquired about this ministry within the community.

those who have died recently: Robert Lees; Gerry O'Donnell [jun].

those whose Month Mind or Anniversary occurs about now: Cathie Kerr; William & Bridget Cogan; Michael McAlinden;

Christmas Remembrance: James Cavanagh.

This year we will repeat the booklet for Mass at Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in which we included the names of families in the parish who wished their loved ones remembered and prayed for. We have been given some requests already. Please hand these to Fr. Ness as soon as possible but in any event before Tuesday at 9pm. Only the names are needed. Please make no offering with your requests.

Points in summary:

Ecumenical Call to Prayer: For the 41st. consecutive week Christians can pray together at **7 pm, today Sunday 20th December.** The internet link to the pandemic prayer is: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/join-in-prayer-this-sunday-with-Scottish-Christians>.

The Piety Stall: will be open after each Mass this Saturday and Sunday. *Please support the effort members of the parish community makes to serve you there.* The Revised New Jerusalem Bible, the Redemptorist *through the Year with Mary* Diary for 2021 and the My Day by Day pocket sized diary for 2021 are available there. Every home should have the Bible. Either diary will help those who wish to know more about Sacred Scripture.

From the Xmas Brochure of SCIAF we can help our neighbour by choosing from these items:
a goat £32; two pigs £70; warm blankets £18; to train a health worker £132; water filter £37. These “alternative” gifts can be made by the Order Forms available at our exits or from Fr. Ness for SCIAF.

Our Lady's High School Fundraising: Walkathon: raised over £3000, more than double the target sum, for three charities: - *St Andrew's Hospice, St. Margaret's Children and Family Care Society and SCIAF.* The school has a [JustGiving page](#) – still open for donations:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/olhsnorthpolewalkathon>.

Gift Aid [number 13 envelope]: will the parishioner using this number please meet with Evelyn or Fr. Ness.

Christmas Tree: we immediately posted on our social media a photograph of the lovely tree now decorated for Christmas and ready to be illuminated on the sanctuary. We thank the ladies who gave their time on Saturday morning to complete the tree in readiness for the community and our children. As last year we will open the church in the week between Christmas and New Year in the early evening to provide parishioners the opportunity to pray in the silence and peace of the tree illuminated sanctuary in St. Brendan's Muirhouse. Deo Gratias - thanks be to God.

Christmas Bauble for your tree at home: the parish offers each family a symbol of our common goal - sense of togetherness. Please take one bauble [to hang on your tree at home if you didn't get one last weekend.](#)

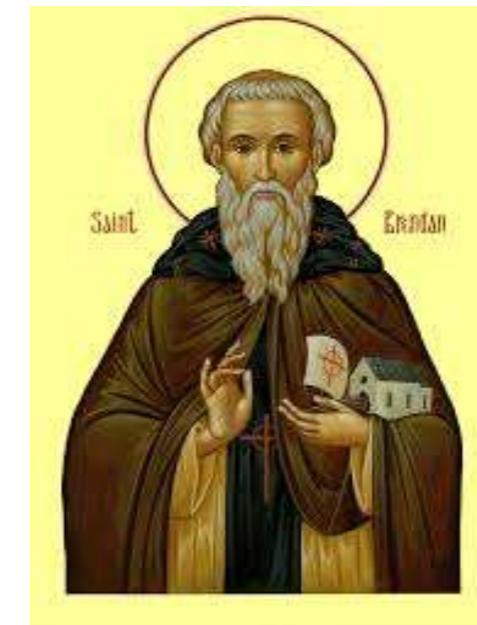
Thoughts from a thought filled friend of Fr. Ness: “Curiously what has remained as my most vivid memory of that morning is the image of the children’s [art & craft] feet approaching the altar, coming forward, returning, finding their way back. Old words, old memories are stirred in a place which reminded me so much of my childhood in another similar locality in industrial Motherwell in the e1950’s. I truly felt approaching that altar coming in the way of these simple cardboard feet, a joy on hearing how a community had brought back under one roof a body of belonging.”

St. Brendan's the Navigator Parish

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Twentieth December 2020, the fourth Sunday of Advent.

Liturgies in the Parish during this week leading to Christmas:

Monday to Wednesday: Mass at 9.30AM

Thursday, the morning of Christmas Eve: Mass at 9.30AM

Thursday, the evening of Christmas Eve: Mass at 5pm, at 7pm and at 9pm.

Friday, Christmas Day: Mass at 9.30am AND 11.30am.

Saturday at 12 Noon: Vigil Mass for Sunday - *live streamed from Aberdeen*

Sunday: Mass at 4.30pm - *live streamed from St. Brendan's*

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Tuesday and Wednesday: by request after morning Mass and from 6pm until 7pm.

The parish's Facebook page and Twitter feed show any changes to the schedule.