

The first week of the Church's Liturgical Year 2020-21 in St. Brendan's.

The Season of Advent opens today. Robert Louis Stevenson as a child sat watching a lamplighter working his way along the street, lighting each gas filled streetlamp on his route. Robert shouted out suddenly - there's a man poking holes in the darkness. We can adapt and use this image for ourselves as we make our journey through the four weeks of Advent which is our enduring proclamation that in Jesus and through him, light overcomes the deepest darkness.

Changes in the Sanctuary: the green banners and the green covers for the altar and on the two lecterns have been replaced by purple ones. The priest's green vestments will be put away until the end of January and are replaced by purple vestments during Advent and white vestments during the Christmas Season. The candle sticks which sat on top of the altar have been replaced by candle holders at the side of the altar which carry large candles. Nothing should be placed on the altar because it is the symbol of Jesus. The shrine which held the November Lists has been removed and a new display in the form of a wreath with four coloured candles and one white candle has been laid out on the top level in front of the altar. This is to mark the start of the new year of the Church - our New Year's Day. The wreath and the candles are to be blessed and the first candle will be lit.

Blessing of the Water: this Sunday and at the two Vigil Masses on Saturday we will first bless and then sprinkle [Asperges] Advent water on the Assembly to mark the new year of the Church. A supply of the blessed water will be available at the Main Entrance to the church to take home.

The Gloria: is omitted during the Season of Advent and for the first three Sundays the readings are about waiting in expectation of the second coming of Jesus and not a celebration of his birth in Bethlehem. That celebration begins only on 18th December, the week leading to Christmas Day.

Advent means: "coming towards us." It is the four week long period of time when we direct both our thoughts and our hearts to Jesus who will "come again to judge the living and the dead" and whose Incarnation through the power of the Holy Spirit and the "Fiat - consent" of the young virgin, Mary of Nazareth, daughter of Joachim and Anna, we remember and celebrate on Christmas Day.

Images of Advent: the wreath formed by a circle of greenery from the pine tree. It is an image of the eternity of God. It has no beginning and no end. It is surrounded by four candles in various colours which support the virgin white Christmas Candle in the centre. The gradual illumination Sunday after Sunday of the four candles "pokes holes in the darkness". Each week as the winter grows more intense in the darkness and the cold, the candles lead Christians deeper into light. The pink coloured candle which is lit on Gaudete [Rejoice] Sunday [the third] is the image of our Joy which deepens as we approach Christmas Day and the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Advent - enduring proclamation: that in Jesus and through him light overcomes the deepest darkness of our lives - personal, family, parish, Church and world. Hope will overcome despair, peace will overcome division, love will overcome indifference and neglect.

Advent at our own homes this year: many families in our parish will not be able to attend our church to see the wreath or watch the lit candles. Please form a wreath of your own at home with small candles and gather your children with you around it to think and pray in Advent together.

Advent and Our Sacramental Life: Jamie and Tracy [Ferguson] Wanless brought Jaden Alan for baptism last Sunday. Tracy with Jaden, Josh and Jack, her dad and her uncle Pat come as a family to the Saturday Vigil Mass in fulfilment of the promise - to *bring up her children in the Catholic Christian faith*. Participation at Sunday Eucharist is the high point of that faith. We quietly affirm this and offer this example for 2021 for all to reflect on in respect of the promise each parent makes at the baptism of their child.

St. Brendan's - Tier 4 Protocols - in place for North Lanarkshire.

Participation at Mass has been reduced to twenty persons. Lynne and Kathleen have contacted everyone who had either come to Mass or said they wished to come to Mass and have confirmed to them the method we will use to provide safely for parishioners and allow the celebration of Mass: Midweek Morning Mass: parishioners and visitors have been allocated alphabetically into two groups. Each group will be given two mornings for Mass - either Monday and Thursday of each week or Tuesday and Friday. If you cannot attend Mass regularly on the appointed day, your place will be left vacant. Please act with consideration for the other parishioners. If you know you won't be able to attend Mass regularly please give up your place so that it may be allocated to another person. If you wish to attend at Mass from time to time, please telephone Lynne or Kathleen so that we can do our best to allocate a place on the specific day you wish to come.

On Facebook: Daily Mass at 9.30am and every Requiem Mass will be live streamed. AND ALSO, Mass at 6PM on Saturday and at both 10.30AM and 4.30pm on Sunday.

Wednesday: reserved for a Requiem Mass or to take the group of parishioners who were unable to participate at Mass because a Requiem Mass will/had been celebrated on one or other of their allocated days - for example on a Monday or a Friday.

From now until 30th December: Mass will be celebrated at 7pm on Wednesday. Parishioners who cannot attend morning Mass and/or cannot attend Mass on either Saturday or Sunday, will get priority to participate at this Mass. A place can be reserved in advance for any Wednesday with either Lynne or Kathleen.

Saturday and Sunday: the fifty places available at each of four Masses were being used. There was also a waiting list of parishioners for a place at each Mass. These fifty persons listed for each Mass and those in waiting for that Mass have been formed into three "weeks" of twenty participants with known family groupings being kept together in the sequence 1, 2 & 3. Please do all that you can to come to Mass on the appointed Saturday or Sunday in the week allocated to you.

To participate at any Mass in the church: 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

STEWARDS: Please help. With the passage of time some of the stewards have had to withdraw from this service. Others are needed to take their place. - contact Kathleen Cosgrove to send you an ID Form if you wish to help. More than ever since July the stewards have an urgent need for help.

Matters distinct from the effect on us of Tier 4 Status:

Facebook: A "live" statement by Fr. Ness will be broadcast regularly to highlight information about the parish in a very fast changing situation such as to answer: What is the opportunity for Mass on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day? Bishop Toal has limited all priests to celebrate five Masses over this period. That instruction won't change but the numbers able to attend each Mass may change. The Stewards will be asked what can they commit in terms of their time. Even with their willingness to serve there may not be enough stewards to provide five Masses. If you wish to attend Mass at Christmas: email Lynne or Kathleen to make this known. Those who have participated regularly at Mass or been on the waiting list to do so since July, will be assured of an opportunity to participate at one of the Masses at Christmas if they confirm before 12th December that they want to do so and if the permitted number in attendance is restored to fifty.

Our annual Memorial Mass was celebrated today, Saturday 28th November for those parishioners whose Requiem Mass or funeral was celebrated in this parish in the period 1st November 2019 to 15th October 2020. One sister of a parishioner was included although from outwith our parish. We thank all who participated and those who served us in the Music, floral and Eucharistic ministry, as a steward, as sacristan or as reader. **The November Lists** will be kept to provide the fire at the 2021 Easter Vigil.

Generosity of parishioners through love of St. Brendan's: this week the ladies who lead the Wednesday morning Mass Coffee Group made a donation of £400 from the reserve on group funds this week to support the ongoing improvement work in the church and the group. John Holborne made a bequest of £5000 from an Investment Bond to the parish now payable to us on his death. **What do you feel about this generosity?**

PRAYER INTENTION REQUESTS FROM PARISHIONERS:

those who have died recently: Josie Smith, Winnie Garrity and Frank Duffy [all Netherton Court Care Home]; Georgina Hadden; Paula Currie; John Grainger [Dublin];

those whose Month Mind Remembrance or Anniversary occurs now: Gerry Lynch; Tom McFeely [6yrs]; John Collins [9yrs];

Next Saturday marriage celebration: 'Tricia Timmons and Stephen Leary, the parents of Olivia and Michael and Jude will celebrate their wedding here with family and friends. We share their joy as they complete all preparations.

Points of Information in summary form:

Letter by Bishop Toal as President of SCIAF: writing on the intention of the Government declared on Wednesday to restrict overseas aid - copy of two letters by the bishop published in the Daily Telegraph included with this bulletin together with List of Gifts available from SCIAF as an alternative Gift to family and friends at Christmas.

Our Lady's High School War Memorial Mass for those members of staff and former pupils killed in the two Global Wars of 20th Century: was celebrated last Thursday evening here in St. Brendan's. The Trustees asked that their fulsome thanks and praise be expressed to our community for all that we did to accommodate and welcome them here to preserve this year the unbroken continuity of this Memorial Liturgy. We thank Lucy [1st Year] and Leo [2nd Year] for their ministry as readers at this Mass representing not only the Parish but also the School itself.

Caritas students from 6th Year at OLHS: have designed, printed, laminated and distributed imaginative Prayer Cards as part of their planning for spiritual growth and development during this year at the School when they will participate in the Caritas Award Scheme. A number of the cards are available to parishioners from the Stewards.

Mass last Tuesday with Class 5C at OLHS: led by Mr. McKendrick, Head of the Science Department. The level of participation by these young people [as in the case of Class 5S] was both inspiring and encouraging, as were the comments of Mr. Kendrick to the young people at the end of Mass speaking from his 27years of experience at OLHS.

The Piety Stall has been relocated to the Hall; it will be open after each of the Masses this Saturday and Sunday for the sale of cards for Christmas. *All protocols for your safety are being observed in the Hall as in the church. Please support the effort the community makes to serve you. A special mention is made of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible. Prints are available in the Stall for sale. In this year of the Word of God every home should have a copy of the Bible in modern translation.*

Spirituality: 18 copies of *the Magnificat* booklet are now taken each month. More can be ordered through the Stall. This marks our developing thirst for spiritual guidance. **My Day by Day** booklets for Advent for both adults and children and also infants are available from the Stall as are copies of the *Sacred Heart Messenger* for Christmas.

Ecumenical Call to Prayer: For the 38th consecutive week Christians can pray together at 7 pm, today Sunday 29th November. 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 Ramp at the side Entrance to the church and floor tiling at two locations: DBM Consulting Engineers, Motherwell, through Craig Mathewman have provided the plans detailing the gradient of the ramp. A building warrant will be required with this full specification of work. The tiling at the Barons Road entrance to the church and to the chapel house is a separate matter which doesn't need a warrant. That work has been instructed.

St. Brendan's the Navigator Parish

51 Barons Road Motherwell. ML1 2NB.

[01698] 264448

**Twitter: [stbrendanrcdom](https://twitter.com/stbrendanrcdom).
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saintbrenrc**



Twenty ninth November 2020, the Month of Prayers offered at each Mass for those named in the November Lists

The First Sunday of Advent - New Year's Day in the Church and the start of the Liturgical Year - Year B, Mark's Gospel.

**Mass in the Parish during this first week of the Liturgical Year:
Monday [St. Andrew's Day], Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: at 9.30 AM.**

Wednesday at 7pm [our hope is for 20 parishioners each week to resume at Mass from those who have not returned to Mass since March.]

Saturday at 12 Noon: the first of two Vigil Masses for Sunday - not streamed

Saturday at 6pm: the second Vigil Mass for Sunday - live streamed

Sunday: Mass at 10.30am and at 4.30pm - both live streamed

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