

# NEWSLETTER

Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Joseph, Willaston; St Mary of the Isle, Douglas

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**23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time** (Year A for Sundays) (Cycle II for weekdays)

**6<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

Dear Parishioners

My parents often spoke of the way things were 'before the war'. It wasn't that the war of itself had changed things. It was as if, from the time that war was declared, a line was drawn and that life as they knew it would never be the same again. I got a sense that the sun shone every day before 1939.

I wonder if we will soon be talking about life 'before the coronavirus' and contrasting it with life after. That life before the coronavirus was a life when we took things for granted: freedom to travel and freedom to associate without fear or anxiety. Those carefree days may never return. We got a taste of this with the Twin Tower atrocity of 9/11. Security checks ate away at the innocent freedoms we took for granted. Anxiety now takes a on a new form with the Coronavirus. It has further eroded our freedom. We've been robbed of another layer of innocence.

And it has changed the way we experience church; not just what goes on in church buildings but what it feels like to be a Catholic Christian. We have a choice. We can see that as loss or we can recognise the Holy Spirit calling us to respond in new ways to a new situation.

I'm reminded of words spoken by Pope Francis last autumn when he urged Catholics not to waste time worrying about the past but to find ways to take their faith out into the world. He was speaking within the context of a Synod of Bishops on the Amazon region of South America. Deliberations focussed on how the Church could better serve a region suffering from environmental devastation and where communities go for months without sacraments due to a lack of priests.

He warned against having a '**sacristy faith**' which can keep our faith confined within the walls of church buildings. This year, with our churches closed for several months, many of us discovered that, far from being shut down, our faith had revealed itself to have a life of its own that wasn't defined by church buildings.

Pope Francis went on to say that the Church needs to become a community of believers which is "**on the go**". "**A Church on the go, a missionary Church is a Church that does not waste time lamenting things that go wrong, the loss of faithful, the values of the time now in the past.**" He added that the Church should not "seek safe oases to dwell in peace", but instead look to become "salt of the earth and a leaven in the world."

"We sin against mission when we complain and keep saying that everything is going from bad to worse, in the world and in the Church," the Pope said. "We sin against mission when we become slaves to the fears that immobilise us when we let ourselves be paralysed by thinking that 'things will never change'."

Francis stressed that the "secret for possessing life is to give it away", adding that "whoever stands with Jesus knows that we keep what we give away; we possess what we give to others.....The Lord is asking you to be a gift wherever you are, and just as you are, with everyone around you. He is asking you not simply to go through life, but to give life; not to complain about life, but to share in the tears of all who suffer. Courage! The Lord expects great things from you." *Fr John*

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## **Prayer for 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Laudato Si**

*Loving God, Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them,*

*you created us in your own image and made us stewards of creation.*

*You blessed us with the sun, water and bountiful land so that all might be nourished.*

*Open our minds and touch our hearts, so that we may attend to your gift of creation.*

*Help us to be conscious that our common home belongs not only to us,*

*but to all of your creatures and to all future generations, and that it is our responsibility to preserve it.*

*May we help each person secure the food and resources that they need.*

*Be present to those in need in these trying times, especially the poorest and those most at risk of being left behind.*

*Transform our fear and feelings of isolation into hope and fraternity,*

*so that we may experience a true conversion of the heart.*

*Help us to show creative solidarity in addressing the consequences of this global pandemic.*

*Make us courageous to embrace the changes that are needed in search of the common good.*

*Now more than ever may we feel that we are all interconnected and interdependent.*

*Enable us to listen and respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.*

*May the present sufferings be the birth pangs of a more fraternal and sustainable world.*

*Under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians, we make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

- We remember **Linda Walmsley** who died this week and we pray for her grieving family and friends.

## Live Streamed Masses and Services for the coming week

<b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September</b> 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time	5.00pm St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	People of our Parishes
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September</b> 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.30am St Anthony's <i>Public Mass (not online)</i> 11.00am St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	Rita Williams, deceased  Mary Jennings
<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September</b>	12.10 noon St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	Mrs Tehani Ayupan, recently died
<b>Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September</b> Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary	10.00am St Anthony's <i>Public Mass (not online)</i> 12.10 noon St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	<i>For young people returning to school, college and university</i> Donna Butler, sick
<b>Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September</b> St Peter Claver	12.10 noon St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	Francis Masterson, recently died
<b>Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September</b> St Ambrose Barlow	12.10 noon St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	Maurice Hayes, sick
<b>Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September</b>	12.10 noon St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	Eli Grewe, birthday
<b>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September</b> 24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time	5.00pm St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	People of our Parishes
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September</b> 24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time <i>Education Day</i>	9.30am St Anthony's <i>Public Mass (not online)</i> 11.00am St Mary's <i>Public Mass</i>	Leonard Neale, anniversary  Thara Joseph, deceased

Last week the Isle of Man passed 100 Covid-free days which is great news. I announced at masses last weekend that we are looking at the restrictions and controls within our churches. Life in our 'Manx Bubble' may appear as normal but life is far from normal in our surrounding islands – including the rest of the Liverpool Archdiocese. Together with health professionals from within our parishes, we are reviewing whether measures currently in place can be modified to realistically reflect the risk of infection to our congregations on the Island and make recommendations to the Archdiocese accordingly.

Meanwhile the cap on numbers at Masses continues – 100 at both St Mary's and St Anthony's.

When attending public Mass at both St Mary's and St Anthony's please be aware of the following:

- The Sunday obligation is still suspended.
- Please adhere to social distancing guidelines. Any children accompanying you must do the same.
- There will be no hymn books, Mass books or newsletters.
- Please sanitise your hands when you enter and leave the church. Holy water fonts are not in use.
- You will be guided to a bench by a volunteer steward. It may not be where you usually sit.
- Toilets will remain closed at all times except for a genuine emergency.
- Only the priest will be on the sanctuary – without deacons, servers, readers etc.
- There will be no children's liturgy or choir and no live singing.
- There will be no Sign of Peace.
- Holy Communion will be distributed **after the final dismissal of the Mass**.
- The words "The Body of Christ" and the reply "Amen" will only be said once at the beginning of distribution. These words will not be repeated for each person receiving Holy Communion.
- The priest will wear a visor during Holy Communion.
- The volunteer stewards will direct you to approach the altar to receive Holy Communion.
- People receiving Communion are instructed to approach the altar with their arms outstretched so as to maintain a reasonable distance from the minister.
- You may only receive the Sacred Host in your hand and not on your tongue. Communicants must avoid skin to skin contact with the minister's hands.
- Please then step to one side, place the Sacred Host in your mouth and follow directions to leave the church immediately.
- Please do not gather at the back of church to chat.
- Baskets will be available at the entrance (and exit) for your weekly Offertory collection.
- The doors will be closed immediately after Mass to allow the stewards to sanitise all surfaces.

We are really grateful to all our volunteer stewards who help to make our churches safe places.