

NEWSLETTER

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

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4th Sunday of Easter 8th May 2022

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

(Year C for Sundays) (Cycle 2 for weekdays)

Dear Parishioners

I find myself thinking that we should take a firmer stance over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Should we go beyond supplying arms and join the fight? Is it worth running the risk of triggering a nuclear war? How does that square with my commitment to the message of Jesus in the Gospels? Does 'living in the real world' require me to abandon Gospel values of peace and reconciliation? Should I leave the words of Jesus to heroic idealists such as Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa and even Pope Francis and lend my support to those pushing to give Vladimir Putin what he deserves? Is the concept of a 'Just War' another name for compromise? Does that put me in the same camp as Russian Patriarch Kirill ("Putin's altar boy")?

Father Richard Rohr sets out the difficulty of reconciling the teachings of Jesus and the life of the Holy Spirit with the tough choices of daily living:

*'Once we squelch spiritual energy in the name of hard-headed intellect and will, three not-so-obvious demons will move in to take the place of the Holy Spirit: **expedience, law, and propriety**. I see many well-meaning Christians living out of this mindset, unaware that they have abandoned the marrow of the gospel of peace and love and put their hope in "enlightened" self-interest. And we have grown used to it for so long that we think it is the teaching of Jesus!*

*Let's take **expedience**. It is an early stage of moral development, but it finds no support in the words of Jesus. It is reflected in moral Christian parents who are righteously concerned about the evils of premarital sex but, when questioned, reveal that their real concern is for family embarrassment, future marriage prospects, or setbacks caused by an unplanned pregnancy. Understandable concerns, but hardly dealing with real moral evil or Christian spirituality.*

*This brings us to the second false saviour: **law**. For many people, this is what religion is all about: **law and order, control, doing what we're told, and obeying the commandments**. Paul clearly taught the opposite in his whole Letter to the Romans: "a person is justified by faith and not by doing works prescribed by the law" (3:28). But the church got itself into the business of prioritizing good behaviour instead of doing what Jesus did: **proclaiming and living the new reality of the Reign of God**.*

*Finally, **propriety**. Being proper like everybody else on the block seems always to have been a substitute for real transformation. Middle-class religion loves to bless "the way everybody thinks." It makes **the Sermon on the Mount** into a tidy lesson while the poor remain oppressed, the hungry unfed, and illusions maintained. From this perspective, the human spirit remains without compassion—especially among nice, proper, churchgoing folks. Self-serving behaviour takes the place of other-serving love.*

***What does this have to do with nuclear bombs and nuclear deterrence?** I am convinced, with Pope Francis, that even owning nuclear weapons is a spiritual problem. The way forward will depend on spiritual transformation at a corporate level. Yet now Ukraine and the whole world are held hostage because Russia and the United States, the UK and France own nuclear weapons.'*

Our joint St Mary & St Joseph's and St Anthony's **Parish Council** will meet in a couple of weeks. We will be considering the implementation of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan – the Archbishop's response to the findings of Synod 2020. Each of the 13 deaneries in the Archdiocese is being encouraged to establish '**Families of Parishes**'. Our two parishes of St Mary & St Joseph and St Anthony already form such a natural unit. We will be exploring how we can better share our resources in the years ahead. *Fr John*

Congratulations to these couples from our parishes who were married recently. We wish them every blessing for the future:

Bethany Konarski & Matheu Marshall
Ellen Hearn & Dayle Collister
Selena Joughin & David Shimmin
Rebecca Marran & Orry Creane
Elora Lipio & Luke Geneza
Melissa Bryan & Paul Leivers

Congratulations also to the families of the following children who were baptised recently:

Albert Connor, Finley Ashton, Freddie Scarffe, Violet Campbell, Dakota Galovics, Matthew Baga, Marcus Cortina, Nephelie Murphy, Holly Wright, Oscar Andrews, Marcel Mwangi, Hailey Higgins, Reece Gonsalves, Jenson Hills, Liliana Przybyszewska, Theodore Goosen-Dillera, Michael Atkinson, Harriet Hodskinson, Mylo Ogle, Alexander Thomson, Ralph Watney, Fraser Watney, James O'Connor, Xander Callister, Kye Zaplan, Darcie Downey.

Covid Protocols: Following the recent meeting of the Archbishop's Council which I attended, the following guidelines were agreed:

- Face-coverings are now optional for people who attend a service in church.
- Sanitiser should still be available for people to use on entering the building.
- The priest or eucharistic minister should sanitise their hands and wear a face-mask before distributing Holy Communion.
- Communion under both kinds is not to be offered.

Please respect those who choose to continue to wear masks. Thank you to all our stewards who ensure our buildings are safe places for those who are vulnerable.

- **St Anthony's Bingo** takes place on **Thursday 12th May at 7.30pm**. Everyone is welcome.
- The next meeting of the **Island Spirituality Network (ISN)** will take place on **Saturday 14th May at St John's Mill between 10.00am-1.00pm**. The speaker will be Dr David Smith whose theme will be "The costly loss of lament in contemporary Christianity". All welcome.
- **Thank you** to all who attended, gave prizes and helped with the Quiz Night on Saturday which raised £532 for St Mary's Lourdes Youth. A great result!
- **Offertory Collections:** St Anthony's: £305, St Mary & St Joseph: £600. Thank you for your continued generosity.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

Saturday 7th May Fourth Sunday of Easter	5.00pm	St Mary's	Tim O'Hanlon, 1 st anniversary
Sunday 8th May Fourth Sunday of Easter	9.30am	St Anthony's	George Corrin, birthday anniversary
World Day of Prayer for Vocations	11.00am	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Monday 9th May	12.10 noon	St Mary's	Dympna Lynch & the O'Dwyer family
Tuesday 10th May	10.00am 12.10 noon	St Anthony's St Mary's	Peter Chemaly, recently died Frank Hunter and Selina Hunter deceased
Wednesday 11th May	12.10 noon	St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i>
Thursday 12th May	10.00am 12.10 noon	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Elizabeth Ellis, recently died
Friday 13th May Dedication of Liverpool Cathedral of Christ the King	12.10 noon 1.15pm Douglas Crematorium	St Mary's	Eleanor Hollywood, recently died Funeral Service: Ian Dacre
Saturday 14th May Fifth Sunday of Easter	11.00am 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Confessions and Exposition Kevin Manning, recently died
Sunday 15th May Fifth Sunday of Easter	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	People of our Parishes Rita Glynn, recently died

We remember our parishioner **Ian Dacre** who died last week. We think of his wife Pat and their family and friends.

A prayer for Mental Health Awareness Week 9 – 15 May

Loving God, we pray for those confronted by the sadness and confusion of mental illness; and for those upon whom they depend for attention and compassionate care. Look with mercy on all whose illness bring them distress, confusion and isolation. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give to them understanding helpers and the willingness to accept help. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen