

NEWSLETTER

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

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22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time, 1st September 2024

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

(Page 126 in Mass book)

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

Dear Parishioners

My friend **Monsignor Michael McKenna** died last Friday. He was 87 and a priest for 61 years. Since 1983 he has been a good friend to the church on the Island. In his role as Episcopal Vicar for Finance and Development he became an indispensable supporter and adviser to Archbishop Derek Worlock and a close friend to Albert and Carmel Gubay. Albert paid for the construction of the new church at St Anthony's Onchan and before his death he promised Michael that he would bequeath his wealth to the Catholic church in England and Wales. After Albert's death in 2016, St Anthony's Pastoral Centre was the first beneficiary of that generosity. It means that parishioners of St Anthony's, unlike any other parish in the Archdiocese, enjoys first class liturgical and pastoral facilities with no debt and at no cost to themselves. With Monsignor McKenna's continuing support, the Albert Gubay Foundation has financed the refurbishment and restoration of many listed heritage churches in dioceses in England and Wales, as well as many church-based projects for the disadvantaged. For some years they paid a maintenance grant to students from the Isle of Man studying at Liverpool Hope University. A recent beneficiary of Albert's generosity has been St Vincent's School for children with visual impairment in Liverpool, the only church school of its kind in the UK.

I was assigned to Skelmersdale as a deacon in 1972, the final year of my training for the priesthood. It was there I got to know Michael. On ordination the following year, I served alongside him for a further eight years. We have been close friends since. Six of us served in a Team Ministry covering the whole town. We had a ball. Only Fr Bernard Higham and I survive. An enthusiastic Liverpool fan and an accomplished goalie in his own right, Michael despaired of my ignorance of the beautiful game. In later years Michael was appointed parish priest in Saint Gregory's Chorley, retiring in 2016. Since my arrival on the Island he has been a regular visitor, filling in for me in my absence. In later years Michael's sight began to fail. Successively, he could no longer drive, read or watch TV. Celebrating Mass at Saint Mary's in my absence required the use of an iPad with massively enlarged texts. Never once did he complain. His last visit to the Island was in November as a guest at the Inauguration of St Mary's as a cathedral. He loved to recall our times together, usually with a glass in his hand. Diagnosed with cancer some months ago and intending to tell me himself, he hoped to visit the Island one more time on the Manxman. But the disease caught up with him. When I visited him the week before he died he told me 'I'm ready to die. I've had a good life.' May he rest in peace.

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Last week we celebrated the feast of **St Augustine of Hippo**. He was born in the mid-4th century on the Mediterranean coast of present-day Algeria. We're used to North Africa being Muslim but in those early centuries it was Christian. Augustine's influence on the development of Christianity as we know it is second only to the work and teaching of St Paul. We owe him the notion of '**original sin**'. In the past we sometimes saw Infant Baptism as a means of removing it and avoiding an eternity in Limbo, rather than seeing Baptism as a celebration of the unique status each person has as a child loved by God. But original sin has a positive side. Perhaps it's best described as 'human nature': our tendency to make destructive choices, even self-destructive ones and to hurt those we love most in spite of our good intentions. But it is through the grace of God that lives within us that we can choose to act out of our better selves. The day before Augustine's feast day we celebrated the feast of St Monica, his mother. It was through her prayers that he embraced the Christian faith. The story of his faith journey is recorded in his book 'Confessions'. He searched for God in the attractions of the world around him before he met the love of God within:

'Late have I loved you, beauty so old and so new: late have I loved you. And see, you were within and I was in the external world and sought you there, and in my unlovely state I plunged into those lovely created things which you made. You were with me, and I was not with you. The lovely things kept me far from you, though if they did not have their existence in you, they had no existence at all. You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness. You were fragrant, and I drew in my breath and now pant after you. I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours.'

(Confessions of Saint Augustine, 397 AD)

Fr John

- **T and Chat group** will meet on **3rd September 2024** from **10.30am -12noon** in St Anthony's Pastoral Centre. Brian Murphy will be the Quizmaster for a "Name that Tune" competition. Everyone will be warmly welcomed. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Josie on 406063 for further information.
- The **Columba Club** is open and ready for business with a **Coffee Morning on Saturday 7th September from 10.00am to 12.00 noon**. Admission £2.00. This will provide an opportunity to have a look around if you don't know what the venue is like. We look forward to meeting you all. There will be a **Cake Stall** and **Raffle**. We would be grateful if all budding Mary Berrys could donate a cake or two, or even a small raffle prize. If you wish to donate, please see Sandra or Sheila or email the parish office.
- **Offertory Collections:** St Mary and St Joseph £788, St Anthony's £622. This does not include standing orders or the tap and pay machine at the back of St Mary's church. Sincere thanks for your generosity.

Adoremus Eucharistic Pilgrimages are taking place on **Saturday 21st September** at both the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King and the Cathedral Church of Saint Mary of the Isle Douglas. **Our day of Eucharistic Adoration starts at 10.00am at St Mary's and finishes with the usual 5.00pm Saturday evening Mass.** The pilgrimage is for parishioners from all our Catholic churches on the Island. St Anthony's Onchan and St Mary of the Isle parishes will take care of the period from 10.00am to 12noon; St Patrick's Peel and Our Lady Star of the Sea & St Maughold Ramsey from 12.00 to 2.00pm; and St Mary's Castletown and St Columba's Port Erin from 2.00pm until 4.00pm. St Mary of the Isle and St Anthony's will also take care of the final hour until Mass at 5.00pm.

This year's **Novena to Mary Untier of Knots** will take place from **Sunday 13th October to Monday 21st October**. More details later.

Eucharistic Ministers are required to have their ministry periodically renewed. This involves a formal training session and recommissioning ceremony with the presentation to each minister of a *pagella* or certificate signed by the Archbishop authorising their ministry. This is required if they wish to continue in their role. A day of renewal was last held in November 2019. **Elizabeth Parsons**, Director of the Pastoral Development Department and **Mark Robson** are travelling to the Island to conduct a **Training and Recommissioning event on Saturday 5th October**. Further details will be announced after the holiday period. Please record this date in your diaries. All Eucharistic Ministers are requested to attend.

Masses and Services for the coming week

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

Saturday 31st August 22 nd Sunday of Ordinary Time <i>Day of Prayer for Care of Creation</i>	5.00pm	St Mary's	People of our Parishes
Sunday 1st September 22 nd Sunday of Ordinary Time <i>Day of Prayer for Care of Creation</i>	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Eileen & John Jawczak, anniversary Angela Dean, anniversary
Monday 2nd September	12.10pm	St Mary's	Mgr Michael McKenna, recently died
Tuesday 3rd September St Gregory the Great	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	<i>Eucharistic Service</i> Prem Joseph, Thara Joseph & Selvaraj, anniversaries
Wednesday 4th September St Cuthbert	12.10pm	St Mary's	Natalina, sick
Thursday 5th September	10.00am 12.10pm	St Anthony's St Mary's	John Myles, 33 rd anniversary Special Intention
Friday 6th September	12.10pm	St Mary's	Frances Loader, sick
Saturday 7th September 23 rd Sunday of Ordinary Time	11.00am to 12noon 5.00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Exposition and Confessions Leo M ^c Caffrey, 4 th anniversary
Sunday 8th September <i>Education Day</i> 23 rd Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.30am 11.00am	St Anthony's St Mary's	Kathleen Thompson, 1 st anniversary People of our Parishes