**NEWSLETTER**

 **Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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 **20th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 17th August 2025 (***Readings: Page 944)*

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 **21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, 24th August 2025**  *(Readings: Page 948)*

  **(**Year C for Sundays; Cycle 1 for weekdays)  *(Page 449 for Order of the Mass)*

Dear Parishioners,

I had fondly imagined that August would provide a gentle winding down period before I eventually depart on 31st of the month. It has not been the case. St Mary’s church heating sprang a leak and within a week one of the boilers for the Presbytery and St Mary of the Isle died. Of course, it was obsolete as with the pipe work in the church. The prospect of a total system failure is the stuff of nightmares. Fortunately, we have been able to replace the boiler with a much more efficient condenser boiler which can still run in tandem with the surviving boiler when the weather gets severe. Beyond the scope of our regular reliable plumber, a parishioner with an engineering background was able to expedite the repair to the existing heating pipe work in the church. This has all been achieved at very short notice and reasonable cost. And it happened in the summer, another blessing. A cold church in winter is a curse. Warmth equals welcome. Replacement of the entire heating system would have required a six-figure sum. The next calamity was the failure of WiFi at St Anthony’s. This affects our ability to play music at weddings and funerals. Tracing the fault took time and patience. It wasn’t the broadband signal itself that had failed but the power supply to which it was connected. The ageing hot water heater hidden in church for the toilets had failed and tripped the circuit breaker. On top of this, I’ve had several meetings with contractors to expedite work at St Mary’s. The rear wall of the church has dried out sufficiently in the summer months to progress to the next stage. There has also been a security incident in St Mary’s church requiring prolonged investigation by the police. They don’t teach you about these things in the seminary, yet such distractions take up most of the priest’s time. There are things about being parish priest that I will miss terribly but these events are not among them.

I continue to be showered by cards, gifts and good wishes. It is so touching that people have gone to the trouble of getting in touch and expressing their thanks. Thank you. When I leave, I’ll be taking a mounting number of cards with me to go through at leisure.

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This week saw Carmelite Catholic priest **Fr John McGowan** from St Joseph's Parish, Gerrards Cross, arrested for his support of Palestine Action. He writes:

I set out from my parish determined to get arrested at the demonstration in Parliament Square. I was nervous, with butterflies in my stomach, but I knew I would do it. What made me this way was what was happening in Gaza and the West Bank. I had lived in Jerusalem for almost five years and had come to love the country, and its people, both Jews and Palestinians. I was upset that our government is not doing enough to stop the massacre of the people in Gaza: 60,000 dead one third of whom were children. The last straw was when the Home Secretary called 'Palestine Action' a terrorist group. I could not understand why. **I do not believe that this group are terrorists.**

In Parliament Square there is a statue of Millicent Fawcett, the leader of the Suffragettes, who did far more damage to property than Palestine Action, for the cause of women's rights. There is also a statue of Nelson Mandela who also committed material damage to draw attention to the immorality of the Apartheid Regime. I remember in the mid-1990's when Britain was sending fighter jets to Indonesia, for them to go on a bomb East Timor; a Christian country. People broke into British Aerospace in Warton, Lancashire, but they weren't called terrorists.

I took with me a piece of paper on which I had written**: "I support Palestine Action".** I arrived at Parliament Square and showed my piece of paper, expecting the police to jump on me. I had never seen so many police at a demonstration. But there were so many people there holding up similar messages that I had the chance to look around.

One man asked me "where is the Church? Where are the Church leaders? Why aren't they saying anything?" I had no answer, except to say I was representing the Church. At the same time another man told me I shouldn't mix politics with religion. Others, more sympathetic wanted a photo and told me they were proud of me. I almost wept. Most who got arrested were carried to a police van with a crowd of supporters shouting "shame! shame! at the police. I didn't want to make a scene.

I realised that the police were only doing their job and couldn't forget my brother was a policeman. In the end I quietly asked a policeman to arrest me, which he duly did. I was taken to a police van, where I was searched and everything in my pockets was put into a bag, even my watch was taken. By this time a crowd of people had gathered around me, all filming this with their mobile phones.

God knows what the people on the tourist bus thought as they passed by. As we left the Square people gathered around the van an applauded, some banged on the windows, others gave the heart gesture with their fingers. I had been arrested for the first time in my life, yet I felt calm, even serene.

I was taken away with two others to a place off Whitehall where we were processed. It took four hours. The police were polite. They even brought us water. I was proud of all the people I saw there, people of all ages and backgrounds, some you would expect to see others not. In the end I saw one female wearing a roman collar; she was a Baptist minister. I was charged under section 13 of the Terrorism Act and given what is called "street bail". I am due to appear at Poplar Police Station in late September when I shall have to wait to see what they will decide to do. I am prepared for anything, even going to prison. As soon as I could I contacted a friend in the West Bank who is helping Palestinians; I felt I could now look him in the eye. I have no regrets about what I did. My conscience is clear. Indeed, when I told the people at Mass the following day what I had done, they applauded me. **It wasn't easy to do this, but I am happy I did.**

*Fr John*

**Masses and Services for the next two weeks**

*All Masses and Services from St Mary’s are live-streamed*1

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| **Saturday 16th August**20th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 5.00pm | St Mary’s | Norah Cullinane, anniversary |
| **Sunday 17th August**20th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | People of our ParishesFr John’s intentions |
| **Monday 18th August**St Helen | *No Mass today* |  | *No Mass or Service today* |
| **Tuesday 19th August**St John Eudes | *10.00am*12.10pm | *St Anthony’s*St Mary’s | *Eucharistic Service*Mary Jane Watson, special intention |
| **Wednesday 20th August**St Bernard | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Maureen Metcalfe, anniversary |
| **Thursday 21st August**St Pius X | 10.00am12.10pm | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Conor Harte, recently diedCarmel Seeldrayers, anniversary |
| **Friday 22nd August**Queenship of Blessed Virgin Mary | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Paul McNulty, recently died |
| **Saturday 23rd August**Feast of the Dedication of Saint Mary of the Isle (consecrated 23 August 1910); St Rose of Lima21st Sunday in Ordinary Time | 11.00am to 12noon5.00pm | St Mary’sSt Mary’s | Exposition and Confessions Brian Cocker, 6th anniversary |
| **Sunday 24th August**21st Sunday in Ordinary Time | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | People of our ParishesPaul Wilson, 6th anniversary |
| **Monday 25th August**St Edmund Arrowsmith | *No Mass today* |  | *No Mass or Service today* |
| **Tuesday 26th August**Blessed Dominic Barberi  | *10.00am*12.10pm | *St Anthony’s*St Mary’s | *Eucharistic Service*Angela Dean, anniversary |
| **Wednesday 27th August**St Monica | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Mary McNally & Caiti Kelly, anniversary |
| **Thursday 28th August**St Augustine | 10.00am12.10pm | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Healy & Tobin families, intentionsQuintin Diaz, recently died |
| **Friday 29th August**Passion of St John the Baptist | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Roy Nixon, 6th anniversary |
| **Saturday 30th August**St Margaret Clitherow, St Anne Line & St Margaret Ward22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time | 11.00am to 12noon5.00pm | St Mary’sSt Mary’s | Exposition and Confessions Alan Lynch, 8th anniversary |
| **Sunday 31st August**22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Special IntentionPeople of our Parishes |