

**Welcome to
St Andrew's Cathedral
& St Mary's, Forebank
& Our Lady of Good Counsel**

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**32nd Sunday
in Ordinary Time
7 November 2021**

Next Sunday: 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

Our Sunday Mass each week brings us together as God's family - to strengthen us in our faith, forming us as disciples of Jesus, and enabling us to take up our Christian vocation in the week ahead.

The Gospel episode of the poor widow who gives everything she has, is a powerful reminder that it is the quality of our witness and not just the quantity of things we do for the Kingdom that really matters. The Holy Father in his writings and exhortation to the church continually reminds us that our Christianity is an *affaire du coeur*, a thing of the heart. The scriptures this Sunday will really edify us if we take them to heart, and hopefully the homily will break the Word open so we go away truly nourished on divine wisdom and well as the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

We will sing the great hymn *To be a Pilgrim* at our Masses this Sunday, for of course pilgrims are what we are. November is a month when we recall that while we have our feet planted firmly on the earth, our eyes are on heaven, and that is the goal of our life's journey. The hymn, which begins *He who would valiant be* is taken from a larger work, *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, who was born near Bedford in 1628. To say he

had a colourful life would be an understatement, I think, I'm sure you could find his story on the internet if interested and I have a summary of it in the work *Every hymn has a story* by John Large. The original song titled *Who would true valour see* was converted into a hymn and was first published in *The English Hymnal* in 1906.

Speaking of hymns, I continue to be fascinated by them, and not least by the variations in hymn tunes in different places and how slight variations on the same melody have been embedded in parish communities over the years.

As a random example, the hymn *Great St Andrew, friend of Jesus* has traditionally been sung to a different tune in the Cathedral and in St Mary's Forebank, and another melody entirely is provided for it in the St Andrew Hymnal! The slight but significant variations in melody of *Hail, glorious St Patrick* are said to be according to what is sung in the east and the west of Scotland. We used to sing a version of *O Turn to Jesus, Mother turn*, during the month of November in St Mary's when I was a child, the music of which I only ever saw handwritten on an ancient piece of manuscript paper, a delightful melody, and I can't think of anyone who would still remember it, but would be glad to be proved wrong!

There are alternatives in some notes of *Ave Maria, O Maiden, O Mother*, depending on where you sing it, and myriad different tunes for *O Salutaris* and *Tantum ergo* according to different parishes and thanks to the treasury of music in the *Benediction Manual* and another very interesting volume of choral Benediction music which I had not seen in decades and recently came across in St Mary's; and who remembers *We stand for God, Rose of the cross, My God I love thee, not because....?* The list is lengthy, and the tunes now found nowhere except in some memories and perhaps in dusty old books; so many of the old handwritten manuscripts have been disposed of. Myself and Michael McBride once had a project in mind to compile a volume with all the forgotten tunes and words in it....alas it didn't happen.

Our Prayers

for the sick: Heather Moffit, Hilda McGinness, Steven Hackney, Jane Budge, Alan McKenzie, Joyce Scott, John McCarry, Margaret McMenemy, Tony Beck, Isobel Blackmore, Karen Dammer, Mel Caullay, Allison Matthew, Jackey Forrest-Moore, Catherine Gallacher, Baby Ben Welsh, Thinley Chodron, Natalia Lucka, Benedict Stephens, Steven Kennedy, Aubrey McMullan, Sonya Rostan, Lily Jane Douglas, Alexander McNeil, Sheila McCallum, Marie Manunga;

for those who have died recently: Silvia Delnevo, Alex Markie, Sharon McNally, Vivienne Kenneth;

those whose anniversaries occur at this time: John McNally, Gertrude Dignan, Rina Freedman, Stewart McDade, Mary Jamieson, Palmina Bordulak, Joyce Burnett, James Henderson, John Johnston, Thomas Anthony Livesey, Helen Lowrie, John McGreal, Charles Harrison, Alfred McCann, Teresita Macatangay, John Joseph Hoey, Winnie Miller, Joseph Brogan, Herbert Horn, Daniel Craig, Peter Smith, George Starkey, Derek Conway, John Lynch.

Our Sunday Masses

Vigil Masses: 4pm in the Cathedral

5.30pm in Our Lady of Good Counsel

Day Masses: 9.45am in Our Lady of Good Counsel
11am & 6pm in Cathedral 11.15am in St Mary's

Weekday Mass this week

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday at 10am

Monday & Thursday at 9.30am

– Please note time

Morning Prayer precedes Mass

St Mary's, Forebank

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday at 11.30am

The Mass on Monday will be the Funeral Mass for Beryl Gormley RIP, With her reception of remains taking place at 5pm on Sunday evening.

Thursday at 10.30am – please note

St Andrew's Cathedral

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday at 1pm

Mass for deceased Bishops, Priests &

Deacons on Thursday at 12noon

Saturday Mass at 10am (& Novena to Our Lady)

CONFESSIONS on request before any Mass

The **Annual Mass for deceased Bishops, Priests and Deacons of the Diocese of Dunkeld** takes place in the Cathedral this Thursday 11 November at 12noon. Please come and join the priests of the Diocese if you can on that day.

Priests' Retreat and Meeting

The Bishop has requested the presence of all the priests in the Diocese with him for a Recollection and Meeting on the day Tuesday 15 until Thursday 17 November and I shall attend.

On **Tuesday 15th**, Masses will be at **9.30am** in Our Lady of Good Counsel, **10.30am** in St Mary's, Forebank and **11.30am** in the Cathedral.

On **Wednesday 16th** there will Mass **only** in the Cathedral at 1pm celebrated by Fr Paul Capaldi.

On **Thursday 17th** there will be Mass in the Cathedral at **1pm** celebrated by Father Paul Capaldi.

There will also be Mass on **Thursday 17th** in St Mary's, Forebank at 12noon and in Our Lady of Good Counsel at 1pm.

Renewed thanks to all the **stewards, welcomers, church cleaners and everyone** who helps in any way to keep the churches open, welcoming, sanitised, safe and clean for our gatherings and liturgies: we would not be able to function with such generous provision if it weren't for your time, and dedication. Thank you.



Elijah Smith, President of the **Universities' Catholic Society** (CatSoc) invites all students to Mass at 7pm this Monday at St. Joseph's, Wilkie's Lane, then to a talk from Father Mark Cassidy.



Our November lists remain on the altar during the month of November, and we pray for all our beloved dead at each Mass especially during this month.

Thank you for the generosity of your offerings along with your November lists: I share these with priests who do not otherwise receive many Mass offerings during the year.

Finance matters

Thank you for your offertory contributions last Sunday of £713 in the Cathedral, £330 in St Mary's and £405 in Our Lady of Good Counsel.



St Mary's Book of Remembrance

There have been a number of very interesting and informative contributions for the Our Lady of Victories' Book of Remembrance. Thanks to all who have so far submitted names and memories.

By chance, a family from Glasgow were passing the church on All Souls' Day when Mass was being celebrated and they had a list of their grandparents and family members who were baptised and married at St Mary's, dating from the 1870s! They had come by on the off chance the church would be open and they could visit.



We shall celebrate the milestone of the 170th anniversary of the opening of Our Lady of Victories Church on Sunday 28 November at 11.15am.

Please, spread the word of this celebration and invite former parishioners, friends and all those with an association to St Mary, Our Lady of Victories to join us for Mass on that special day.

SCIAF Real Gifts

Real Gifts are beautiful, ethical charity gifts for your friends, family and loved ones which also make a difference to people's lives around the world. Order for Christmas via the SCIAF website.

Livestream

The 11am Solemn Mass at the Cathedral will hopefully be livestreamed this Sunday.



If you enjoy a bit of history.....then the First Book of Kings in the Old Testament is a great read! It begins with the last days of old King David, and the anointing of his son Solomon as King. Solomon's reign started off in a blaze of glory, but as the story progresses it

seems that for all his wisdom (and power and wealth) he never really understood the lives of his people. He did increase trade and achieved great building projects like the temple in Jerusalem, but there were also increased taxes and forced labour which contributed to a rift between Israel and Judah. And so a great period for Israel began to come to an end, and after the death of Solomon the kingdom was divided into two separate kingdoms — *Israel* in the North and *Judah* in the south.

Jeroboam, the first king of the northern part established shrines of his own, to discourage people from going to Solomon's temple in Judah. The north fell back into pagan ways and even in Judah the kings adopted pagan worship. But at intervals, God raised up prophets to call his people and the kings to repentance. And the prophetic ministry was vital for Israel's faith and growth. Two of these prophets were Elijah and Elisha. They were *God's men* in the north. They were called to speak to a society that seemed to be steadily unravelling.



This Sunday's Old Testament reading takes us to the very beginning of Elijah's vocation story. The word of God comes to him, and as is usual in

biblical "call" stories, the hearer is instructed to move from one place to another. Elijah, in a time of drought, which was experienced as God's punishment, is told to go "eastwards" where he could drink from the river and ravens would food

him. After a while he is called to go to Zarephath, a Sidonian town. Elijah obeys immediately and encounters a poor widow, who despite her desperate poverty shares the little she has with the prophet. Her generosity is rewarded by the Lord.

In scripture, widows (along with orphans and strangers) are seen as the epitome of powerlessness and destitution. No doubt the Church gives us this little vignette of the widow as a preparation for hearing in the Gospel of the poor widow at the Jerusalem temple who put into the treasury "all she had to live on".

Jesus had now entered the Holy City for his passion week, had scattered the money changers' tables, "cleansed the Temple" and then set himself to teach the people at length in the Temple precincts; this was the context of the scribe asking him what is the greatest commandment of the law, last Sunday. The feast of Passover was at hand and wealthy worshippers would have been numerous, and they would be giving large sums "from what they had over". By contrast, the widow is solitary, alone, but is singled out by Jesus. He points to her as one who has given more than all the others.



Surely if we believe that the riches of the Church are the gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to each person - according to the Spirit's free choice - then these are the resources needed by the Holy Spirit for the work of the church. Each of us has something only we can give to the work of building the Kingdom of God. Only when we believe this we will start to look and see what we have within us. If we assume we have nothing to offer, we will not look into our hearts, our talents, our diaries, our wallets, our interests. The mission of the church is surely to hasten the coming of God's Kingdom. None of us is without a part to play in its furtherance.

So... please take time to read the following page!



Listening
Seeking
Following

What's this "synodal path" *really* about?, I was asked during the week by a genuinely interested person. Other thoughts expressed to me have been: *It all sounds a bit woolly to me, Kevin, is it just going to be more talking?*; and *It'll all pass and we'll get back to normal*;....some of the reactions to my synodal piece in last week's newsletter. As someone said, "at least it proves I read the newsletter!"

And there were other responses too: "*This sounds really exciting*" and "*Are we to have a voice at last?*" and "*Thanks for being so inclusive in the newsletter recently*".

I can't deny it: for me, this is a real challenge, but it is being given to us by the Holy Father whom we surely cannot ignore, not only because he is our Pope but because he oozes love and wisdom for the People of God and for the world. His preparatory document on the synodal process causes me to ask: *How can we actually reach out and listen to the lapsed or "resting" Catholics, the disaffected, the wounded? How can we reach out to the many who have just faded out (if I can use that expression) of our parish life, and not just invite them back in, but give them a voice to express their stories....*

We all – Parishioners, Priests, Bishops - have our own initial reactions to the news of this synodal process being proposed to the whole Church at this time. But, whatever else, I don't think it is going to go away; it is not being presented to us as another "programme" which dioceses and parishes can either *opt into* or *opt out of*. It is being proposed by the Holy Father himself, and as even a cursory reading of the basic synod texts reveal, it is a *way of being the church* which is very much in the spirit of his own approach to his pontificate.

I have no doubt that it will be a challenging experience, but it will also be rewarding. It will truly open us to the power of the Holy Spirit; it will

teach us that being part of the faith community of the Church is indeed a journey of faith, a process; it will remind us that we are bound up together in community, but that we are not called to be a *closed circle* that's very difficult to break into. The bible urges us to welcome the stranger and the newcomer, but are our parish communities truly inviting and welcoming spaces? Priests can feel challenged too – and I speak for myself, principally; it is easy for us to revert to taking refuge in the same reliable groups of parishioners, instead of widening the circle, opening up the ministries, *singing the new song*, as the Psalmist would put it.

I well know the experience of feeling challenged by people with different ideas, different experiences and how this can cause me to retreat rather than engage, to take refuge in the old certainties instead of being open to the reality of other people's experiences and stories. But this only reveals to me my spiritual immaturity. All are made in the image and likeness of God: all have a story to share. The art of Christian listening is a true virtue to be cultivated and **LISTENING** is key to the synodal path: listening to the word of God, giving scripture its proper and revered place in our lives, (and what an opportunity we have, with the Year of Luke's Gospel beginning in Advent!), and listening to one another.

At times, we priests have perhaps a lot to relearn in this regard: so we shall spend some time together at Kinnoull in November and hopefully we will learn afresh how to listen to each other and to our people, how to listen to the Holy Father and listen to the Holy Spirit. All this so that we might **SEEK**....seek the will of God afresh, discern what God is saying to us today, now, here in this place. Sometimes we sing that hymn *Here in this place new light is streaming*, but perhaps we don't always want that light to stream in too powerfully, and we can flinch from it. But if we sing the words we can't expect God not to answer the prayer! He is indeed shining his light, shedding light on our path, like the pillar of fire leading the Israelites through the desert, like the Paschal Candle leading us each Holy Saturday night into the light of the resurrection and new life. We are invited to **FOLLOW** the light and live in its brightness.

Join us to gently enter the new year of Luke's Gospel at

**An Advent Day for Parish People
 in St. Mary's, Forebank, Hall & Church
 on Saturday 4 December - 10am until 3pm**