

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

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Solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe 21 November 2021

Next Sunday: First Sunday of Advent - Year of Luke (C)

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

We all want to support and further the ministry of our Holy Father Pope Francis as he shepherds the Church in our time: he is always so inclusive in his outreach to God's people; we can respond to him, and at the same time be strengthened in faith as we try to embrace the Synodal Process which he is putting before the church as a model of faith and discernment.

As a starting point, I hope you will consider coming to our Advent Day on Saturday 4 December. It is open to everyone. Please come along to St Mary's that day and invite a friend to come with you. It will be a very gentle experience. I'm sure you'll go home uplifted by it, and feeling strengthened in your faith and as a disciple of Jesus. The programme is below.



Hearing the Word of God in the joy of your heart

An Advent Day open to everyone

Join us for a gentle introduction to the new Liturgical year with the Gospel of Luke and an opportunity to hear the vision of our beloved Holy Father Pope Francis for our Church at this time.

It will take place at the new Pastoral Centre, the hall of St Mary's, Forebank, Church, Forebank Road, on **Saturday 4 December at 10am**. You are invited. There is a list at the back of the church for names.

Programme for the day

10am: Morning Prayer and praise

10.20am: Coffee and social time

10.50am: Scene setting and a short input from Kevin:

God's people on the journey through Advent;
silence, prayer, scripture, listening, sharing.

12.30pm: Refreshments and lunch – please bring a packed lunch.

1pm: Celebration of Mass then departures.

“Dialogue is our method, not as a shrewd strategy but out of fidelity to the One who never wearies of visiting the marketplace, even at the eleventh hour, to propose his offer of love (Matthew 20:1-16).

Pope Francis

Extra copies of the *Advent Day by day* booklets are available at the back of the Church today, also the latest edition of “The Scottish Catholic”.

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

Monday – Friday at 12noon - Please note time
Morning Prayer precedes Mass

St Mary's, Forebank

Monday – Friday at 11am - Please note time

St Andrew's Cathedral

Monday - Friday at 1pm;

Saturday Mass at 10am & Novena to Our Lady)

CONFESSIONS on request before any Mass

I shall take a short break this coming week. My very grateful thanks to Bishop Stephen Robson, Fathers Mark Cassidy, Ken McCaffrey and Greg Murphy who will celebrate the parish Masses in my absence.

This Sunday marks **Catholic Education Week** and the Headteacher of Our Lady's Primary school, Mrs Lorna Dashwood will offer us a few words during Mass at St Mary's. We welcome her. It is a privilege as a priest to be involved in the Primary School, a lovely community of education, care and faith. **There will be a special collection next Sunday for the work of the Church in the field of Catholic education.**

I am looking forward immensely to celebrating the **170th anniversary of the opening of St. Mary's, Forebank,** next **Sunday 28 November** at the 11.15am Mass. **All are welcome to attend.** 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 the Mass. Refreshments afterwards in the Church Hall.

Priests' Recollection and Meetings

The priests had a very fruitful meeting at Kinnoull, with the recollection being lead by Father Mark Cassidy, who skillfully opened up the scriptures and guided us with reflections on the persons of Abraham, Moses and Elijah and their responses to God's call.

Finance matters

Thank you for your offertory contributions last Sunday of £870 in the Cathedral, £320 in St Mary's, and £398 in Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Our Prayers for the sick: Dawn Wood, Heather Moffit, Hilda McGinness, Steven Hackney, Jane Budge, Alan McKenzie, Joyce Scott, John McCarry, Margaret McMenemy, Tony Beck, Isobel Blackmore, Karen Dammer, 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: Harry Gillan, Sister Delores, Mel Caullay;

those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Patricia Stratton, Hugh Lynch, Raymond Martin, Norah Black, John Markie, Keith Tomlin, Peter Crossan Doris Williams, Emilie Elliot, Peggy Duffy, Lidia Provido Charlie Zanre, Jean Cashley, Josephine Harris, Dan Cassidy, Jack Cashley, Allyson Cashley, Francis John Brett, Willie Lynch, Canon Andrew Rooney, Leonie Stanton.

Tayside Opera Christmas Music

On Friday 10th December at 7.30pm in Roseangle Church, opposite the University Design Faculty (formerly Duncan of Jordanstone) there will be a concert involving choruses, solos, duets by members of Tayside Opera, and invited guest singers. Refreshments in the hall at the interval. No entry fee (but donations will be accepted). If you wish to attend you need to contact Tayside Opera in advance with names and contact details. Call Phil Kearns of OLGC on 01382 774681 and leave a message with your details, calls will be returned to confirm. or Tayside Opera Box Office – 07591 010179 or Email - taysideopera@hotmail.com. T.O. Charity number SC004938.

Sunday afternoon Services in Advent

On the First three Sundays of Advent, beginning next Sunday there will be a 4pm Afternoon service and Benediction in one of our Churches: next Sunday 28 November, the First Sunday of Advent, at 4pm in St Andrew's Cathedral.

Cecilian Choir Festival of Carols will take place in the Cathedral on the 4th Sunday of Advent at 3pm.

Uni Catholic Society continues to meet on Mondays 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 games night. Social at the pub may follow.

Preparing for the Advent Day

On Sunday 10 October, our Holy Father inaugurated the “synodal path for the Catholic Church” at Mass in St Peter’s. He preached on the Gospel of the Day, the story of the rich young man who approaches Jesus. The whole text is in Mark Chapter 10. Very skillfully, the Holy Father related the story to the process he is inviting us to share in as Catholics in 2021. He spoke of “synodality” in simple terms as a kind of “walking together” on a common path. He has also said that this synodal journey is NOT a church convention nor a study group, nor a political congress, nor a parliament but it IS a grace filled event, a process of healing, guided by the Holy Spirit.

His homily that day was most powerful and I want to share some of it with you in this column. He focused on three verbs: to **encounter**, to listen and to discern.

The Holy Father said:

A certain rich man came up to Jesus “as he was setting out on his journey” (Mark 10:17). The Gospels frequently show us Jesus “on a journey”; he walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts. He shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side. He meets us where we are, on the often rocky roads of life. Today, as we begin this synodal process, let us begin by asking ourselves – all of us, Pope, bishops, priests, religious and laity – whether we, the Christian community, embody this “style” of God, who travels the paths of history and shares in the life of humanity. Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey?

Or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses: “It’s useless” or “We’ve always done it this way”?

Celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together. Let us look at Jesus. First, he *encounters* the rich man on the road; he then *listens* to his questions, and finally he helps him *discern* what he must do to inherit eternal life. *Encounter, listen and discern*. I would like to reflect on these three verbs that characterise the Synod.



The first is *encounter*. The Gospel passage begins by speaking of an encounter. A man comes up to Jesus and kneels down before him, asking him a crucial question: “Good Teacher,

what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (verse 17). So important a question requires attention, time, willingness to encounter others and sensitivity to what troubles them. The Lord does not stand aloof; he does not appear annoyed or disturbed. Instead, he is completely present to this person. He is open to encounter. Nothing leaves Jesus indifferent; everything is of concern to him. Encountering faces, meeting eyes, sharing each individual’s history. That is the closeness that Jesus embodies. He knows that someone’s life can be changed by a single encounter. The Gospel is full of such encounters with Christ, encounters that uplift and bring healing. Jesus did not hurry along, or keep looking at his watch to get the meeting over. He was always at the service of the person he was with, listening to what he or she had to say.

As we initiate this process, we too are called to become experts in the *art of encounter*. Not so much by organising events or theorising about problems, as in taking time to encounter the Lord and one another. Time to devote to prayer and to adoration – that form of prayer that we so often neglect – devoting time to adoration, and to hearing what the Spirit wants to say to the Church. Time to look others in the eye and listen to what they have to say, to build rapport, to be sensitive to the questions of our sisters and brothers, to let ourselves be enriched by the variety of charisms, vocations and ministries. Every encounter – as we know – calls for openness, courage and a willingness to let ourselves be challenged by the presence and the stories of others. If at times we would rather take refuge in formality or presenting the proper image – the clerical and courtly spirit, where I am more *Monsieur l’abbé* than *Father* – the experience of encounter changes us; frequently it opens up new and unexpected possibilities.

Following today’s Angelus, I will meet with a group of street people who came together simply because a group of people made an effort to listen to them, sometimes just to listen to them. And from that listening they succeeded in setting out on a new path. So often God points out new paths in just this way. He invites us to leave our old habits behind. Everything changes once we are capable of genuine encounters with him and with one another, without formalism or pretense, but simply as we are.





The Lion's den

I have a well annotated copy of the score of *The Daniel Jazz*, with my name on it and the year of purchase, 1978. I was in primary seven at the time and our class at Our Lady's Primary performed it at the end of term, with music teacher Carol Lemon accompanying and Elsie Hoey, our class teacher, directing. I attempted to play the score at home but in those days it proved far too difficult, full of syncopated rhythms and complex, fast-changing harmonies. When I came across it recently I couldn't at first recall how it came to have the more mature *scrawl* of my handwriting all over the score as an *aide memoire* but then remembered that some years later I was called on from Blairs to accompany a school production of the same Cantata in Aberdeen, at (I think) St Joseph's Primary, when they performed it, probably around 1983. *Daniel* is worth a listen on youtube.

On this Sunday, the Solemnity of Christ the King, we enjoy the Gospel proclamation of Jesus as the crucified Lord and King, and we learn again that the monarchy of his Kingdom usually bears little or no resemblance or relevance to our notions of earthly monarchies and kingdoms. Indeed, we know in our world of so many peoples who have been ruled and governed by evil regimes and powers which have brought misery to people, while the Kingdom of God brings dignity, joy, mercy and understanding.

We turn to the prophecy of Daniel in the liturgy this Sunday because Daniel and his contemporaries suffered under an evil regime. Although our reading this Sunday has only one part of Daniel's vision, the setting is actually an earlier experience of his people. In the fuller description of his vision, he tells of four beasts who emerged from the sea, that is, from the realm of evil and chaos. First to emerge from the deep was a **lion** with eagle's wings and a human heart; this beast represented the Babylonian empire which had conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem and exiled its people, an event the effects of which we read of so often in the Old Testament narratives and poetry. After the lion came a **bear**, symbolising the Medes who followed the Babylonians in ruling the ancient near east. The third beast, a leopard, soon replaced the bear, symbolising the Person rule. You can read of the gruesome details in the book of Daniel. The **fourth beast** had iron teeth and huge feet and trampled over and ate everything that remained. The ten horns of this fourth beast stood for the successive kings of Seleucid dynasty. This was the evil regime under which Daniel and his people suffered and about which he writes next, aiming his *literary arrows* to nail the evil empire!

This next part of Daniel's vision is expressed in the verses we hear this Sunday. "*As the vision continued, I saw one like a Son of Man coming....*" This **fifth figure** to emerge is not an evil earthly king, but the glorious Son of Man, who *comes on the clouds of heaven*. Unlike the tyrant figures who emerged from the realms of chaos and evil, the Son of Man would come from heaven, from God and from God's goodness. The Son of Man would be the person on whom the *Ancient One* - God - would confer the dominion and glory and sovereignty which had been abused by the beasts. They had used to power to oppress and trample people; the Son of Man would lift people up in hope, with tenderness and truth. The evil oppressors ruled for a time, but the Son of Man would rule over all people and for all ages.

And this Sunday, in the poignant and glorious passion scene of the Beloved John's Gospel account, this Son of Man stands before Pilate with dignity, proclaiming his reign, the reign of truth. John the Beloved, having distilled the wisdom he has experienced in Jesus, along with the fraternal love they shared, pens his passion account with the deep conviction that the one who took off his outer garment and donned instead a towel, and who was expressing definitely in that act, the essential nature of his Kingdom and rule as one of humility and service - is in truth the Divine One and the Son of Man who reigns gloriously from the tree on Calvary, the one whose kingdom is *not of this world* but which is given as a gift, blessing and promise to the people of this world. Our Holy Father Francis is continually proclaiming this Kingdom as joy and steadfast hope, as service and justice for all God's people, as mercy and hope for all those - especially the broken, the disenfranchised, those for whom life and relationships have gone wrong and whose hopes have been dashed - this kingdom and rule is a gift primarily for them, and the cost of it - the self-offering in death of the Messiah - has all been worth it in God's eyes.

The early believers of course saw Jesus as that Son of Man who was foretold by Daniel. Jesus referred to himself as Son of Man; when he was walking on the Sea of Galilee, calming the storm, and bringing peace to the troubled and frightened disciples, was he not the one who came to conquer the realms of chaos and evil? The liturgy this Sunday proclaims Christ as *King of Love on Calvary*, the Son of Man who came to save us. In the end, Daniel was not consumed by the lions - he survived and flourished by the power of God, in whom he put his trust. Daniel's vision helps us recognise this Christ and his Servant Kingdom.