

THE PARISHES OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST AND ST MARY MAGDALENE

35 Brighton Place, Edinburgh EH15 1LL

Bingham Avenue, Edinburgh EH15 3HY

Parish Priest: Fr. Jock Dalrymple:

0131 669 5447

Deacon – Revd Eddie White:

07986 015772

Pastoral Team: Alice Codling, Jennifer Morris, and Chris Vinestock

Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, EH15 1LP

Parish Administrator: Enrico Fertini

(Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am to 3pm & Friday 11am-4pm)

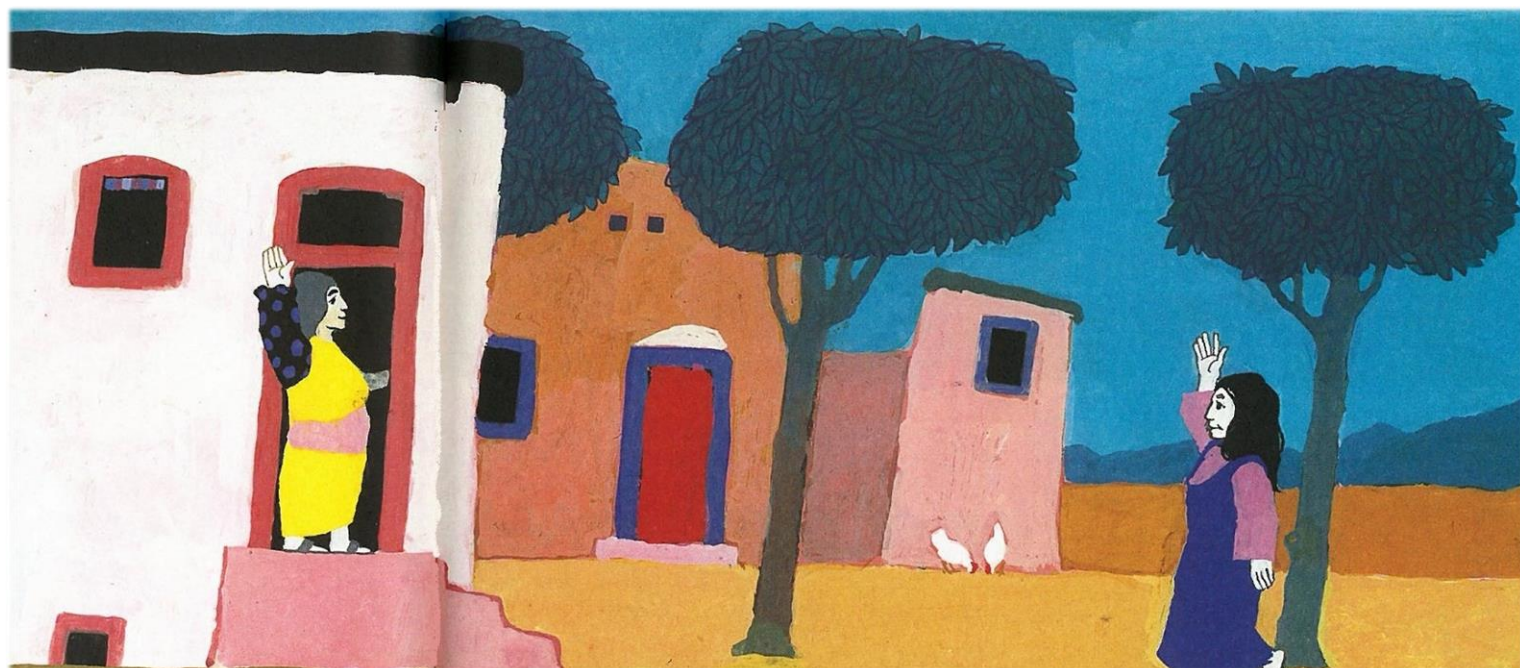
Web address: www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk

Web address: www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk

Joint Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/StJohnsandStMaryMagdalenes>

Joint e-mail address for our sister parishes: stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com

19 December 2021 - Fourth Sunday of Advent



“Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb” (Luke 1:42)

(Illustration by Kees de Kort, taken from “Grains de Bible”, by Tineke Wieringa, 1993)

REVISION OF CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve – 4.15pm [Additional Mass] – St Mary Magdalene’s – Children’s Mass, open to everybody

Christmas Eve - 6pm – St John’s – Mass for Children and Families [FULLY BOOKED]

Christmas Eve - **9pm** – [NB CHANGE OF TIME] St John’s – Christmas Vigil Mass

Christmas Day - 10.30am – St Mary Magdalene’s – Christmas Children’s Mass, open to everybody

ALL MASSES CAN BE BOOKED

either by ringing 0131 669 5618 (during parish office hours).

(This is the correct number – apologies for giving the wrong number in last week’s newsletter)

or by emailing stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com

We encourage you to book and if you do not book in advance, we cannot guarantee that a place will be available.

It has been difficult to decide on exactly when to have, and how to organise, our Christmas Masses because of the ever-changing situation in which we find ourselves – and we simply do not know yet whether we will be able to fulfil our plans. Part of the reason for now encouraging people to book is to ensure that we can let you know if these plans have to change.

The postponed Tower Tombola Draw for December will take place after the 9.30am Mass at St John's this Sunday.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION – Fr Jock will be **available in church after all Masses till Thursday lunchtime, and at any time by appointment (ring 07765 692884).**

OPEN CHURCH AT ST JOHN'S - MONDAY 20 TO FRIDAY 24 DECEMBER from 9.15am to 3.45pm....do come and wait for the Lord.....

Keeping Safe at Mass in our Churches

With the spread of the Omicron Variant, and a further Coronavirus Wave, the Scottish Government is recommending we take frequent lateral flow tests...in order to keep each other safe, can we gently suggest that we take a test before we come out to Mass....?

- *1 metre distance should be maintained at all times*
- *Hand sanitizers to be used on entry and exit*
- *QR codes (for Track and Trace purposes) to be used where possible (available at the front doorway and on each bench), or welcomers will record details*
- *Please try to avoid queues at the front door as much as possible*
- *Ventilation is essential in our effort to contain the spread of the virus*
- *The Church doors will remain open during Mass*
- *The heating system will be switched off prior to commencement of Mass, as it circulates warm air (and carries the risk of spreading the virus)*
- *Sanitizing of the seats is advised after each Mass (**helpers greatly appreciated for this task**- please please can we have some new volunteers....)*

TOGETHER LET'S CELEBRATE OUR LORD'S BIRTH – SAFELY...

ON-LINE PRAYER AT NIGHT – 9.15pm Each Evening

The prayer will start at 9.15pm each evening and last for less than 15 minutes.
For ease, the Zoom link will be the same each evening:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9129622900?pwd=b1F1THhtY3NVeGptOWY0VGw2K2xBQT09>

Meeting ID: 912 962 2900 Passcode: Prayer

We include the link in the *parish Newsletter each week* and it will also be on the *parish website and Facebook page*.

For those who wish, every day at 9pm we will send an email out with the link for you to click and join. It is the same link every night but getting the email and 15 mins to organise ourselves will hopefully make it easier for all to join. Please email stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com to ask to be added to the email group.

This Week

Saturday 18 December

6.00pm – Prayer Room – **Mass** - pre-recorded, premiered on YouTube

6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Sunday 19 December – FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9.30am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Monday 20 December

10.00am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

7pm – Zoom – **Gospel Sharing**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89572492381?pwd=Tk5YWwQ0Y0FPQ1dyMnVHMTR0NmQ0dz09>

Meeting ID: 895 7249 2381 Passcode: 561294

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Tuesday 21 December

6.30pm – St John's - **Rebecca Fonseca's First Reconciliation**

7.00pm – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

7.30pm – St John's Hall – **RCIA Enquiry Session 4**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Wednesday 22 December

10.00am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

5pm – Skype – **PEP Meeting**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Thursday 23 December

10.00am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass** – livestreamed

11.00am – **An Advent/Christmas Ecumenical Pilgrimage Walk around the Churches of Portobello**
starting at St John's

3.00pm – Seafeld Crematorium – **Funeral Service for Ann Emsley**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Friday 24 December

4.15pm – St Mary Magdalene's - **Christmas Vigil Mass for Children and Families**
6.00pm – St John's – **Christmas Vigil Mass for Children and Families** – livestreamed
9.00pm – St John's – **Christmas Vigil Mass** - livestreamed

Saturday 25 December – SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

10.30am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Christmas Children's Mass** - livestreamed
9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Sunday 26 December – FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

9.30am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed
11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass**
9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

From Archbishop Leo's Weekly 'Ad Clerum'

Diploma in Catechetics 2022 - Get ready to explore the richness and depth of the Catholic faith with course leader Sr Anna Marie McGuan from the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh. She and a range of guest speakers bring you online lectures each Thursday, guided reading, one-to-one support, retreats and supplementary courses on Zoom and YouTube. The Diploma in Catechetics lasts one year, begins in January 2022 and costs £200. Students £150. Other concessions are available. Email sranna.marie@staned.org.uk for more information. Register at bit.ly/DiplomaCatechetics2022

40 Hours' Devotion - The 40 Hours' Devotion takes place in parishes across the Archdiocese throughout this new liturgical year. It is on Fri 17 to Sun 19 December at Ss John Cantius, 34 West Main Street, Broxburn. Details at broxburncatholicchurch.co.uk. There is no 40 Hours' Devotion over the Christmas period. It restarts on the weekend of 9 January at Our Lady of Loretto & St Michael's, Musselburgh. Come and pray before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Full schedule for parishes: bit.ly/40hoursschedule

Advent talks: Faith, Hope & Love - Find out more about the season of Advent and the virtues of Faith, Hope and Love in a series of online talks held each Monday in Advent. Hosted by the Archdiocese, **the final talk is on Monday 20 December 7:30pm-8:00pm, with Sr Anna Marie McGuan**. No registration required, simply use this link each week to join: bit.ly/AdventTalk (or webinar ID: 891 8951 4801). All talks are recorded and available to watch on YouTube: bit.ly/ArchYouTube

Advent: Rosary for Life - Parishioners and clergy from across the Archdiocese having been praying the Rosary online each Tuesday throughout Advent for unborn children, their mothers and all Pro-Life intentions. **The final Rosary is at 7:45pm this Tuesday (21 December) and includes a reflection from Archbishop Cushley**. Event on Zoom, register at bit.ly/21DecRosary

Feast of the Holy Innocents - Archbishop Cushley will celebrate Mass for the Feast of the Holy Innocents in St Margaret's Chapel, Gillis Centre, 100 Strathearn Road, Edinburgh, at midday on Tuesday 28 December. The Mass has been organised by our Pro-Life Office and will be followed by refreshments, covid guidelines permitting. Register at bit.ly/InnocentsMass21

Save the date - *Amoris Laetitia - The Joy of Love*. There will be three talks explaining this important document, an apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis, **beginning 10 January** and led by Sr Anna Marie, the Archdiocese's Catechetics Advisor, and Fr Nick Welsh, vice rector of the Scots College in Rome. Details to follow soon.

Save the date - *Music Day*. This takes place on **Saturday 22 January** at the Gillis Centre, Strathearn Road, Edinburgh, 10:00am-3:30pm. The theme is ***Liturgical Music Making in a Post-Pandemic World***. The day is open to everyone, especially those involved in leading and playing music, as well as singers. Details to follow soon

NOTICE BOARD

Bethany Care Van Urgent Appeal

Jim Roarty writes: ‘Urgent request: We are due to staff the Bethany Care Van at lunchtime on Sunday 26 December but at present can't find a driver. The team of three - driver and two servers - meet at Bethany's premises in Leith at 11.50, load up the van with sandwiches and flasks of hot water then stop at five distribution points in the city centre where the servers hand out sandwiches and hot drinks from a hatch at the side of the van. Generally, the team is finished by 2pm or shortly after.

If you have a clean driving licence and are under 70 (this is an insurance requirement) and would be willing to help, please contact Jim Roarty (jimroarty4@gmail.com; tel 07719952472) who can give you more information.’



*The scaffolders at work
unfolding the restored Tower
at St John's....*



DO YOU WISH YOUR CHILD TO BE ENROLLED FOR CONFIRMATION?

Bronagh Power, co-ordinator of our Confirmation programme, writes: ‘The date for the Confirmation Ceremony celebrated by Archbishop Cushley has been set for Tuesday 24 May 2022. We are due to start our programme of preparation in January. Parents of pupils at St John's Primary School have already signalled their intentions to participate. We'd like to warmly invite any other parents from our two parishes who would like to present their children for Confirmation in 2022 to contact either Fr Jock (stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com) or Bronagh Power (bronaghpower11@gmail.com)

Holy Rood High School Christmas Learning and Teaching Newsletter

Joan Daly, Head Teacher, writes: ‘Click the link: [Holy Rood RC High School | Winter 2021 \(office.com\)](https://www.holyroodrc.com/). Follow the links in the newsletter to the Christmas concert and to the Drama Club's production of “A Christmas Carol” – both well worth a watch’!

A Prayer for the Last Week of Advent

*God of hope
be with us in the final days
of our Advent journey
to the stable and beyond,
be with us in our meeting
and in our travelling together,*

*be with us in our worship
and our praying together,
be with us in our Advent journey
to the stable and beyond,
our God of hope.
Amen*



Please pray for those who have died recently:

**Una Johnston
Adam Fraser
Denis Davidson**

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time:

**George Smith - Margaret Knowles – Mary McClory- Jim Marin – Mary McNally –
Eddie Kerr – Julie Forbes -
Gerald de Freitas
Sandy MacKay –Nan Rostant**

Anniversaries:

St John's

Dec.18: Nan Rostant (2020); Robert Devine (2001); Pauline Iannarelli (1968); Agostino Nicora (1964);

Dec.19: Michael O'Brien (2017); Margaret Knowles (1998); William Rafferty (1989); Derek Aitken (1987); Robert Greenan;

Dec.20: Paddy Breen (1988); Frances Welby (1949);

Dec.21: Eileen Flannigan (2012); Alexander Paton (2001); Jean Malcolm (1998); Mary Gallagher (1992); Francis O'Connor (1969);

Dec.22: Gytha Somervell (2014); Joseph Desmond (1990); Francis Rooney;

Dec.23: Cecelia McIntyre (2011); Alice Taylor (2006); Francis Rooney Snr.; George & Esther Waters; the Clyne, Harrison, Laurie & Lynch families;

Dec.24: Mary McClory (2010); Tom Brennan (1985); Elizabeth Welby (1964); Anne B Gallagher (1948); James McGravie; John Scally;

St Mary Magdalene's

Dec.19: Mary McNally (2006); Joseph J McKenzie (1979);

Dec.20: Jim Marin (2010);

Dec.21: Elizabeth McEwan (1996);

Dec.22: Sally Murphy (2002); John Shaw (2000); Thomas Heaney (1989);

Dec.23: Eddie Kerr (2009); Roseanne Barclay (1992); Michael Boyle (1970);

Please pray for those Parishioners who are sick:

St. John's: Margaret MacKenzie, Donna Buchan, David Dowie, Fiona Connel, Inge Downey, John Freeman, John Waugh, May Thomson, Sheila and George Service, Margaret Campbell, Ann Dobie, Kim O'Neill, Frank Logan, Sheelagh Dobson, Ernie Moran, Bob Kelly, Jean Bonnar, Mike Iannarelli, Chloe Sutherland, Norah Bruce, Mike and Patricia Lawler, Ruth Viso, Mary Grady, Pauli Walker, Anna Butler, May Flynn, Vincent Knowles, John Cregan, young Saoirse Golden, John Whyte, Frances Cunningham, David Reid, Charlotte McGregor, Betty Dougal, Anne Thomson, Mike Noonan, Sarah McManus, Mike Burns, Sr Jennifer Lindsay, Maureen Low, Mary Slight, Rose Thornton, Kitty Dykes, Norman Telfer, Alf MacNamara, Maureen Lawrie, Kathie Gallagher, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme.

St Mary Magdalene's:

Sam Burns, Jacqueline Marinello, Anne Tolson, Sandra Watt, Mary Cole, Chris English, Andrew Farmer, Ray Donnelly, Clive Davis, Isobel Phillips, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Ann Dockrell, John Newall, Michael McPhillips, Bridget Malone, Charles Malcolm, Margaret Ryan, Jacqueline Hannan, Julie Keegan, Rose McKay, Laurie Wallace, Annie Watson, David O'Donnell, Andrew Banks, Jude Ferguson, and Mary and James Muir.

Please pray for sick friends and relatives of our Parishioners:

Michael Moran, Bridget Bonner, John Slaven, Evelyn Tibbs, Helen Briton, Robert Daly, Mary Thomson, Fr Raymond OCSO, Tony Rigg, Caitlin McGillivray, Jozefine O'Connell, Robin Butler, Caroline Minto, Henrietta Fraser, Pat Mulvenna, Stuart Falconer, Nan Doig, Ant Ridge, Claire Johnston, Emma Bromet, Elizabeth, Baby Percy Keiran McShane, Colin Sandham, Lewis White, Baby Alfie McDevitt, Elizabeth and Gordon Marron, Dawn Clarke, William Kinsley, Katie McAnenny, John Kellagher, Niamh McDougall, Joy Allan, Colin Raasch, Annie Ross, Christopher MacKinnon, Jaroslav Icina, Annabelle Cervantes, Emily Buchanan, Ann Thorp, baby Josh Simpson, Helen McCann, Rhoda Tumboli, Dani Miniette., Peter Millar, Leo Stone, Sr May Lewis, Joan Murray Hamilton, Sr Margaret Mary, Jean Nelson, Margaret Anne Marton, Betty Blyth, Lauren Fitzpatrick, Fr Christy Fox, Joe Greenan, Michael Igoe, Robert Shaw, baby Kinsley McMillan, Margaret and Victoria Roddam, Clare Richardson, Karen MacKay, Laura Anderson, Richard Reid, James O'Rourke, Tommy Muir, James Shepherd, Peter Hanley, Andrew Franklin, Ellen Green, Jamie Mitchell, Eunice Macdonald, Peter Bromley, Edward Caulfield, Igor Rekowski, Diana Hibbert, Joan Brooks, Mary Turnbull and young Ray Donovan Syme



Offertory Collections – 12 December 2021

St Mary Magdalene	St John the Evangelist
£385.00 total including Offertory of £124.00 and Gift Aid of £261.00	£1415.10 total including Offertory of £197.70, Gift Aid of £437.40 and £780.00 Online Donations



Please save your used stamps for the collection box at the back of St John's church... thank you.



A REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Luke 1: 39-44

(The author of these reflections is a friend of Fr Jock living in Northumberland)

There is an old love song dating from the 17th century and probably Scottish in origin. It's called 'Barbara Allen' – it may be familiar to you. I think it's probably quite high in my all-time top 10 of favourites. It tells how Barbara Allen denies a dying man's love (William). He is lying on his death bed and has sent one of his servants to call her to his bedside. He wants to be reconciled but she will have none of it. After she has spurned him, *he turns his face unto the wall, he turns his back upon her....* His death quickly follows and as he is buried Barbara hears the death bell knelling; *And every stroke, to her did say 'hard hearted Barbara Allen'*. Her death follows quickly. William dies of a broken heart, Barbara the victim of a hard heart. Buried side by side a rose grows from William's grave while a briar grows from Barbara's. *They grew and grew in the old churchyard, till they could grow no higher. And at the end formed a true lover's knot and the rose grew round the briar.* William's love is the ultimate victor. Joan Baez and Art Garfunkel, of Simon and Garfunkel fame, have recorded two of my two favourite versions (I possess many). When I am feeling maudlin, I play them over and over enjoying the mood that has overtaken me – I really know how to party!

I often remember this love song when I spend some time reflecting on the mystery that is love – and, in particular, at this time of year, the mystery of love that is God made Man. The Word was made flesh. God, who is Love, chooses to be one like us. This bald simple statement never fails to enrich our lives to the degree in which we are prepared to imitate Him and copy that love. This is the challenge. There are times when we are like William – and sometimes there are occasions when we take our lead from Barbara. Having an open and generous heart demands effort and isn't always easy

Mary had no such difficulty. In this weekend's Gospel reading we learn how Mary put herself and her own needs last. When most of us would be shell-shocked at the dramatic news delivered by Gabriel, *Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah* to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Elizabeth is her elder cousin; her needs would be the greater. Mary's outpouring of selfless love is recognised even by the child growing in Elizabeth's womb: *For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy! Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.* Love has that effect. The dying man's spirit is lifted when we stroke the back of his hand, the teenager's pulse quickens and his heart floats when he sees his girlfriend stepping off the train or coming through the arrivals gate at the airport. Love always lifts the soul – and the absence of love dries the heart, it suffocates, it kills that same soul. The absence of love makes us bitter.

Why did William turn to face the wall? Was it because he couldn't cope with the rejection of love and his need to be reconciled with Barbara? Was it his way of coping? When I was a very small child, I went to sleep with the light from the landing lifting the growing gloom of the bedroom. The light was comforting, but sometimes from out of nowhere a shadow or a perceived shape would disconcert and frighten me. I would call out and my Mam or my Dad would come up and reassure me, encouraging me to turn and face the wall, there was nothing there. In life, facing the wall means we can avoid reality. Every addict whilst in the grip of addiction will always prefer facing the wall to confronting the addictive behaviour. I can quicken my pace and look the other way when I see a homeless person living in a shop doorway, I can get up to make a cup of tea when Jo Brand appeals for help for the Crisis charity, or the Salvation Army for their work. I can always choose to turn and face the wall.

It would have been much easier for Mary to stay at home, and I'm sure if there had been telephones in those days, Elizabeth might well have told her not to bother, for the journey would be difficult and arduous. Mary doesn't think twice about putting herself last. When I can love freely and without consideration of the cost, two things will happen: the recipient of my love will grow and become the person God always intended, and my heart, like the child in Elizabeth's womb, will leap for joy. I will walk with a spring in my step: I will be living the way God wants me to live... and love. I won't be looking inwards at the wall; I will be looking outwards at the world.

FINDING THE HIDDEN TREASURE by Benignus O'Rourke

Chapter 49 – Living In The Present Moment



One of the first fruits of silence is that we find ourselves able to accept the reality of the present moment. More than that, we feel glad to be at ease in it. As we sit quietly in the Lord's presence our whole attention is focused on just this instant of time.

As we rest in the present moment and our mind becomes quiet, we are freed from the pressures of our past life. They no longer cast their dark shadow over us. In the stillness the heavy clouds pass away, and the burden of the past is

lightened. The future, we feel, can be left in God's hands. It can be left out there, to be dealt with when the time comes.

Even though we may be dealing with problems and be deeply troubled when we begin our time of silence, gradually as our mind comes to rest, we look at our difficulties in a less anxious way. We see them, but find we are able to look without judging. We are no longer tempted to sort things out, to plan our future action. Just for this present moment we sit in calm acceptance. As our anxious surface self is lulled to sleep, we think only of our calm, quiet resting with God and in God.

Being in the present, freed from all the baggage we carry around, is one of the fruits of sitting still, of praying this way. It helps us to be wiser about life, more compassionate, more alert to what needs to be done. Our prayer of silence helps us to see deep into the reality of the present moment and into the life of everything around. We are freed from the muddle in our minds.

To live in the present is to be guided by the Holy Spirit. When we reach that moment, we are free, carefree, like the birds of the air, like the lilies of the field. '*Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow,*' Jesus told his disciples. '*They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say to you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these*' (**Matthew 6:28-29**).

Such outcomes are wonderful. Yet we cannot strive for them or make them happen. All we can do is prepare a way for the Lord and leave ourselves in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

