

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

Sacrament of Reconciliation: after every Mass or any time by appointment

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

Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, EH15 1LP

Parish Administrator: Mr Enrico Fertini

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

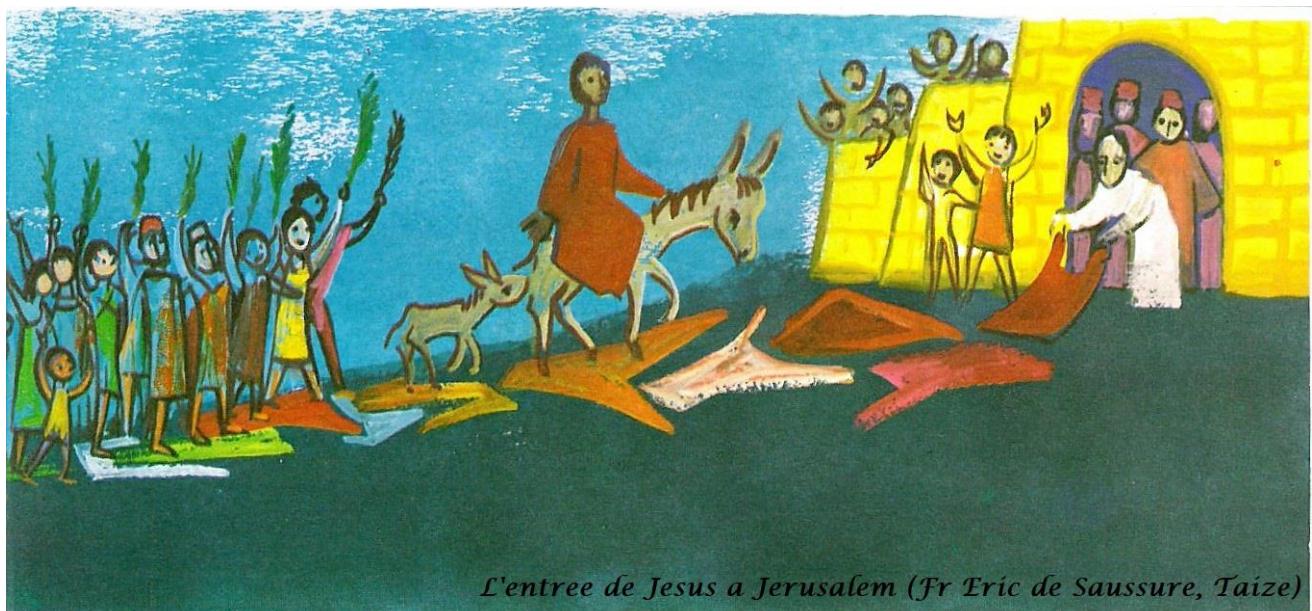
Web address: www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk

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

Palm Sunday - 10 April 2022



L'entree de Jesus a Jerusalem (Fr Eric de Saussure, Taize)

*"Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens!" (Luke 19:38)*

We Continue to pray for Peace – ‘Dear Lord, please grant the people of Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, Your Peace, Your Justice, Your Reconciliation, Your Forgiveness, Your Love. Amen.’

Fifty years ago, last Sunday, on 2 April 1972 (Easter Sunday that year), Frances McDevitt (then, as she often says, in short trousers!) **began to play the organ at St John's.** Since then, she has been present and playing almost every week. We give thanks for her skill, her faithfulness, her loyalty and her generosity of spirit. At some point in future weeks, we will hope to mark this extraordinary achievement.

This Sunday is Palm Sunday ... and our Lenten journey culminates in the services during Holy Week. It is the most important week in the year for every Christian. Please follow Jesus from Palm Sunday through to Easter Sunday...and please continue to pray for our 8 RCIA catechumens and candidates - for our four catechumens **Shannon McCaughey, Simon Brown, James Sutherland and Scott Craig**, who will be baptised at the Easter Vigil; and for our four candidates, **Agnes Aitken, Jenna Ciancia, Louise Holden and Michelle Dunleavy**.

Agnes, Jenna and Louise will all be received into the Catholic Church; and then they, Michelle and the four catechumens will receive the other sacraments of initiation at the same Vigil service. We remember also **Ethan Scott** who has been part of the RCIA group but will be baptised in his own parish of St Ninian's.

'For the followers of Jesus to celebrate the passion and death of the Lord is a demonstration of heartfelt gratitude to, and joyful worship of, the incredible love of God, and a call to live like Jesus in solidarity with all crucified victims' – Jose Pagola

[WEE BOX] Please remember to return your SCIAF 'wee boxes' during Holy Week – ideally before Holy Thursday so they can be included in that evening's Offertory Procession.

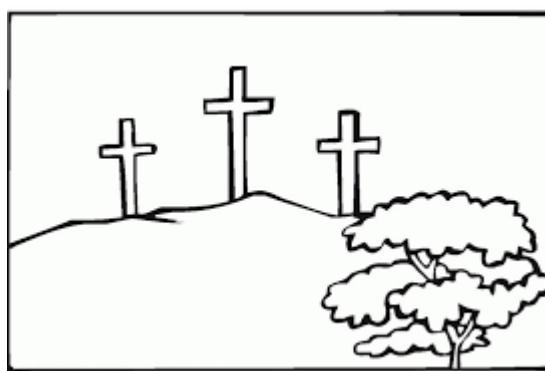
Fr Jock is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation after 10am Mass on Wednesday 13 April at St Mary Magdalene's and any time by appointment. (**Fr Jim Smith** will be celebrating Mass on Monday 11 April at 10am at St John's as Fr Jock is at a funeral and **will also be available after Mass.**)

Those attending the Ecumenical Stations of the Cross (on Monday night at 7.30pm) **and the Easter Vigil** are encouraged to bring **small torches/mobile phones** (on silent...!) in order to be able to participate while the Church is in darkness.

Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord's Supper: those attending are asked to consider the possibility of participating in the footwashing that takes place after the Gospel. There'll also be the opportunity of handwashing, for those who prefer.

Watching with Jesus in Gethsemane (till 11pm) – The Altar of Repose will be in St John's Hall.

GOOD FRIDAY



At the Good Friday Solemn Liturgy (3pm – St Mary Magdalene's), as you enter you will be offered a stone. Later in the service, when process to venerate the Cross you will have the opportunity of leaving 'your' stone in one of the baskets at the foot of the Cross – **a symbolic way to leave our cares and worries at the feet of our Saviour, crucified out of love for us.**

A Plea for Child Readers at the Good Friday Children's Service:

(Friday 15 April: 9.30am: St John's Church - Julie O'Hanlon writes: 'The Good Friday Children's Service is a lovely take on the story of Good Friday but at the children's level. There are 14 Stations and 2 Readings for which we are looking for readers. They are simple and short - therefore we would welcome participation from children of any age. It may be of particular interest to the Sacramental children in P3, 4 and 7. The service should last no longer than 1 hour. Should your child be available to read, please contact: Juliecprior@hotmail.com'

**THIS IS THE LAST WEEK OF 9.15PM ON-LINE NIGHT PRAYER
It will conclude on Easter Sunday evening**

The prayer, led very gently by parishioners Donald Scott and Lesley Reid, will start at 9.15pm each evening and last for 10 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

With this newsletter, there is the script of Gary Zoltie's Final Tower Update – which he gave at last weekend's Vigil and 9.30am Masses at St John's.

THIS WEEK



Holy Week & Easter

Sunday 10 April (Palm Sunday)	Masses as normal – but preceded by a Palm Sunday procession 9.30am St John's 11.15am St Mary Magdalene's	Mass - livestreamed Mass
Monday 11 April	10.00am St John's 10.35am St John's 7.30pm St John's	Mass – livestreamed April Charity Coffee Morning – all donations will go to Aid to the Church in Need. Ecumenical Stations of the Cross - livestreamed
Tuesday 12 April	9.30am –3pm St Mark's 9.45am St John's 7.00pm St Mary's Cathedral	Labyrinth Requiem Mass for Alfie MacNamara - livestreamed Chrism Mass
Wednesday 13 April	10.00am St Mary Magdalene's	Mass - livestreamed
Thursday 14 April (Maundy Thursday)	7.30pm St John's	Mass of the Lord's Supper and Watching in Gethsemane – livestreamed – concluding with Night Prayer at 11pm
Friday 15 April (Good Friday)	9.30am St John's 10.00am PJPC 10.30am From St John's 10.45am St John's 3.00pm St Mary Magdalene's 7.30pm St John's	Stations of the Cross especially for children Service of all the churches starting at PJPC, Abercorn Terrace, concluding with a walk to St John's Walk to meet up with PJPC walkers... Ecumenical Service Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion - livestreamed Stations of the Cross - livestreamed
Saturday 16 April (Holy Saturday)	10.00am St John's 8.30pm St John's	Morning Prayer and Office of Readings Easter Vigil with Baptisms and Confirmations - livestreamed
Sunday 17 April (Easter Sunday)	7.00 am Beach at Joppa 9.30am St John's 11.15am St Mary Magdalene's	Ecumenical Service Easter Morning Children's Mass with Baptisms of Anna and Harry Aitchison – livestreamed Easter Morning Children's Mass

From Archbishop Leo's Weekly 'Ad Clerum'

SCIAF Ukraine Appeal- As well as your prayers, please consider supporting SCIAF's emergency appeal for Ukraine, if you are able. Donations can be made at <https://www.sciaf.org.uk/> To find out how the Catholic Church is helping those in Ukraine see <https://www.caritas.org/>

Confession - The Archdiocese has put together a helpful guide about returning to confession if you haven't been for a while. Holy Week is the ideal time to receive the sacrament of penance to help you prepare for Easter. Watch it on YouTube: bit.ly/archconfessionvideo

Holy Week - Want to explore Holy Week more closely? Check out the two videos from Canon Hugh White, of Bathgate, which take an in-depth look at this important time in the Church's calendar to help us focus in mind and heart on the Passion of Christ. Find them on the YouTube channel of the Archdiocese: bit.ly/ArchYouTube

Vacancy- St Paul's bookshop, run by the Society of St Paul, is set to open next to St Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh and is looking for a manager to run it. The job is full-time and the role holder will have experience working in retail/customer service. To apply, submit your CV and a covering letter to morag@forthhr.co.uk by 5pm, Monday 18 April. Search 'bookshop manager' at www.goodmoves.com for a full job description.

Message from SSVP - "Thanks for all donations to the *World Day of the Poor* collection which took place in November. The money you donated will go a long way to helping people in need. It is being split evenly between two initiatives run by the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in the Archdiocese: *Furniture Project* – helps furnish homes of those who cannot afford basic commodities; *Caravan Project* – provides a caravan break for families who often do not have a holiday. Special thanks to the Archdiocesan Caritas, Justice & Peace Commission which kindly earmarked the donations for these projects." - Richard Steinbach, president of SSVP in our Archdiocese.

Lent – Stations of the Cross - The Archdiocesan Pro-Life Stations of the Cross concludes online at 7:45pm on Tuesday 12 April and will feature a reflection from Mgr Gerry Hand of Holy Cross Parish in Edinburgh. Pray with clergy and parishioners for mothers, unborn children and all pro-life intentions. Register at bit.ly/prolifeevents (30 min event)

Pro-Life Rosary with Archbishop Cushley - Join Archbishop Cushley to pray the Rosary for unborn children, their mothers and all pro-life intentions at 10am on Saturday 23 April at Sacred Heart Church, 26 Lauriston Street, Edinburgh. This event precedes Scotland's national Pro-Life Chain which takes place on nearby Lothian Road at 11am. Register at bit.ly/prolifeevents

NOTICEBOARD

The **April Charity Coffee Morning** will be held in St John's Parish Hall after Mass on **Monday 11 April**. All donations will be given to Aid to the Church in Need, which supports the Church in so many parts of the world where the Church is suffering. Please come along and support this.

Joan Daly (Holy Rood RC High School Head Teacher) writes: 'A warm welcome to our Spring newsletter where we offer a summary of what's been going on in school and what's coming up next term. We hope you find this allows you to gain an insight to the many opportunities on offer for our young people. Happy Easter to all our families and to parishioners in our local Parishes. You can download our Easter Newsletter here: <https://tinyurl.com/4bknthb8>'

A Note from **the Bishops' Conference of Scotland** - '*From Monday 4 April the legal requirement to wear face coverings in churches in Scotland will be removed There is no need to wear a face covering in church from this date (though you can continue to wear one if you wish). Please continue to respect the space of fellow parishioners and remember to sanitise your hands upon entering and leaving church.'*

A REFLECTION ON THE READINGS FOR PALM SUNDAY

(Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15, 47)

I wonder if, in a couple of hundred years' time, historians will look back with incredulity at our obsession with 'focus groups'. I do not know any member of such a group but these groups are largely responsible for the reduction of political discourse and debate in the UK to soundbites. They have given us 'Get Brexit Done' and 'Build Back Better'. I hope you are appreciative of their efforts! Focus Groups have also given us 'world-beating'. So, again here in the UK, we have a world beating vaccination programme, a world-beating furlough scheme, world beating genome sequencing. Speaking for myself, I don't need to know that we are world-beating – just that we are good and that we are efficient. In particular, I would prefer it if we were good at eradicating child poverty. A heavyweight world beating boxer will become champion of the world. Once a sportsman or woman becomes world beating there is little else to achieve – except a repeat of their feat. They don't need to keep reminding us (though some do) of how brilliant they are. A humble sportsman or woman is invariably more endearing (to this observer, at least) than a Mohammad Ali type-character, over endowed with a streak of narcissism who needs to keep reminding us: 'I am the Greatest'. Narcissism is an unappealing character trait. Some might say, it denotes a character defect.

When we become full of self-importance, we can see ourselves as little gods. When that happens, we have less room for the God of all Creation. This weekend, Paul writes: "*His state was divine, yet Christ did not cling to his equality with God, but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave and became as men are.*" This emptying of self is, I believe, one of the essential building blocks if we are to become individuals of genuine humility and holiness. Bad things happen. Just look at Ukraine. Not that we needed any reminding, badness is never far away from the human spirit, and it accompanies us on our journey through life. We don't set out to be personally bad, but at least once in our lives, we will face a personal tragedy: a diagnosis of cancer, the premature death of a younger member of the family. Hopefully we will never be forced to cram our belongings into a couple of Lidl carrier bags and flee a war zone, but we know that misfortune will come our way – as surely as night follows day. When those things occur in our life, we find ourselves in the uncomfortable place of no longer being in control. "My husband has died – it wasn't meant to happen this way. I always thought I would be the first to go. My heart is breaking. The tears won't stop. I can't think straight. I don't know what to do." You want to scream – but above all else you want to be back in control of events and life. Things won't be the same again because things can't be the same again. My husband has gone – only for a short while. I learnt to let go, because I had to let go.

Bad things happened to Jesus, too. For the first three years of his public ministry, he went where he pleased. He was in control of his own life. He freely set out for Jerusalem; it was the done thing for a good Jew to be there for the celebration of the Passover. Once he had been betrayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was no longer in control of events. Events were in control of him. He would learn at first hand that bad things happen.

His response is one of love and acceptance. "Father, let this cup pass me by; nevertheless, let your will not mine be done". He leaves an example that we might follow. More importantly he gives us the recipe for peace of mind and contentment. First, we recognise that bad things happen. Second, we learn that there are two possible responses - we can respond with bitterness or hatred and prolong the badness and become its prisoner. Or we can respond with love and acceptance. We can let go. I used to be addicted to alcohol; I am now addicted to chocolate but there is another addiction that is looming. A week past Thursday I underwent another general anaesthetic. A nice Iranian anaesthetist reassured me with the usual spiel – "a sharp scratch [it never is!], I'm sorry I'll have to try another vein. We're in now. You'll feel a slight burning sensation. Take some more deep breaths." Then the amazing sensation of drifting and floating. I could easily become addicted to this! If this is akin to death, what is there to be fearful of? Letting go is not scary. Jesus let go and emptied himself and assumed the condition of a slave. He wants us to follow his example. We don't need to be world beating - it's enough that we are good.

(The author of this reflection lives in Northumberland)

Parish Register

Warm birthday greetings to Maureen Lawrie, 90 last week, 29 March.

Many thanks to Maura and John Spence for their wonderful work in the garden outside the Parish House in recent weeks - and over many years....

Please pray for those who have died recently:

Fr Jim Dean

*Ernestina Chiriva - Celeste Crolla
Patricia McCormach*

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time:

Pino Cerasi - Pat McInally

Jim McGovern - Christine Allan

George Mackay Brown

Margaret Wagenbichler

James Igoe - Patrick Green

Please pray for those Parishioners who are sick:

St. John's: Baby Archie Williams, John Whyte, Maureen Lawrie, Maria Pacitti, Kim O'Neill, Sheila Service, Frances Connelly, Nessie Cairns, Fiona Connel, Inge Downey, John Freeman, May Thomson, Ann Dobie, Frank Logan, Sheelagh Dobson, Ernie Moran, Bob Kelly, Jean Bonar, 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, 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, Kathie Gallagher, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme.

St Mary Magdalene's:

Ray Donnelly, Alec Carruthers, Carolynne McCann, Maureen Forsyth, Tom Bauld, Sam Burns, Jacqueline Marinello, Sandra Watt, Mary Cole, Chris English, Andrew Farmer, Clive Davis, Isobel Phillips, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Ann Dockrell, 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.

Anniversaries:

St John's - Apr.8: John Haddow (2006); Elizabeth Gibson (1999); Aaron Duffus (1997); Catherine McAllister (1986); Elizabeth Dyer (1926); **Apr.9:** Bob Grierson (1997); Agnes Christie (1995); Hugh Lynch; **Apr.10:** Patrick Cafferkie (2014); Anna Maria Nicholson (1999); George Lawler (1994); Gino Nicora (1981); Mary (Hazlett) Thorburn (1979); William Finn (1945); **Apr.11:** George Peddeson (1998); **Apr.12:** Mary Quadbeck (2006); Alexander Holligan (1998); Elizabeth Meagher (1998); Janet Clark (1990); **Apr.13:** Bert Tow (2020); John Heron (2000); Michael Gilmartin (1994); John Burns (1945); **Apr.14:** Bunny Scoular (2016); Charles McCann (1998); Edmund Francis Flannigan (1992); Kathleen Scott (1986); **Apr.15:** Josephine Day (2018); James P Igoe (2007); Richard Thompson (2001); Alexandrina R Mackay (2000); Mary Rae (1985); James Ward Sen. (1956); Andrew Mannerling; **Apr.16:** Elizabeth Delaney (2000); Veronica Rowley (1995); Elizabeth F Demarco (1985); Catherine O'Brien (1958); Mrs Duffy (1956);

St Mary Magdalene's - Apr.8: Jean King (1993); **Apr.10:** Elizabeth Moohan (1983); **Apr.12:** Jean Newlands (1972); **Apr.13:** Margaret Mills (2014); Janet Christie (1998); **Apr.14:** Teresa Vivien (1980); **April 16:** Pat McInally

Please pray for sick friends and relatives of our Parishioners:

Christine Burns, Bill Henderson, Kit McCormick, Anne Rose, Jennifer Kay, Margaret Troupe, Anne Lauder, Seval Kazimoglu, Veronica Telfer, Ann Watt (Mgr Rae's sister) Jan Meise, Margaret Thompson, Melanie Ford, Jaroslav Icina, Mary Taygarth, young Niamh McDougall, Bridget Bonner, Roger Bromley, Bernard Traynor, Evelyn Tibbs, Helen Briton, Mary Thomson, Fr Raymond OCSO, Tony Rigg, Jozefine O'Connell, Robin Butler, Caroline Minto, Henrietta Fraser, Stuart Falconer, Nan Doig, 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, Joy Allan, Colin Raasch, Annie Ross, Christopher MacKinnon, Annabelle Cervantes, Emily Buchanan, Ann Thorp, baby Josh Simpson, Helen McCann, Dani Miniette, Peter Millar, Sr May Lewis, Joan Murray Hamilton, Sr Margaret Mary, Jean Nelson, Betty Blyth, Lauren Fitzpatrick, 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 3 April 2022

St Mary Magdalene

£430.65 total including Offertory of £339.65 and Gift Aid of £91.00

St John the Evangelist

£1241.10 total including Offertory of £220.60, Gift Aid of £295.50 and online donations of £725.00

Pamoja fashion raised a fantastic £428.00 for Tanzania last weekend; many thanks to all who supports this charity ([link here](#)).

FINDING THE HIDDEN TREASURE by Benignus O'Rourke

(The Way of Silent Prayer, Darton, Longman & Todd)

Chapter 63 – A Heart full of Love



'We shall see, and we shall love, we shall love, and we shall praise,' said Augustine. When we reach this stage on our journey, once we truly love, we are well on the road that leads to praise. Of course, God does not need or want our praise.

Still less does he demand it. The need for praise is very human. We need praise, and we need to give praise. So how and when do we praise God?

Most of us sing God's praises whenever we pray. There are times when we are comforted and inspired by well-known prayers, times when the words of the Psalms open our eyes to the beauty and immensity of God's creation and to our place in it. We sing the hymns and psalms which others have been inspired to write, feeling the joy of those who wrote them. And our hearts want to join in, giving praise and thanks to God for his works, for his providence.

But there is a world of difference between praise which is a repetition of other people's feelings of joy, and praise that comes from a heart full of love for God. When we catch even the tiniest glimpse of God we are filled with joy. To be aware of his presence, even for a split second, so fills our hearts with love that we must break into praise.

We shall praise God spontaneously when we have caught a glimpse of how lovable he is, how beautiful he is. Patrick Kavanagh (Irish poet and novelist) must have had such a glimpse when he wrote the line, *'Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful God'*.

As we have heard, Augustine believed that the main task in life is to heal the eye of the heart so that God may be seen. When the eye of the heart is healed and opened we see God, and once we see, we instinctively love. We shall love others, and God, and his creation. We shall find the whole world aglow with the presence of God. Once we truly love we shall truly praise. Our whole life, the way we live, will become a song of praise.

As Augustine preaches in one of his sermons: *'Let us praise him not only with voices, but also with our behaviour. Let our tongues praise him, our lives praise him'* (**Sermon 254**).

A truly love-filled life is the best praise we can give God.

(NB A note from Enrico – 'This is the second last chapter from Benignus' book, I hope you have enjoyed this journey of the faith as much as I have'. - "The most important journey in life is the journey inward to the depths of our own being. It is a journey we are all invited to make. It takes us beyond words and images into silence. The silence allows the restless mind to become still and in the stillness we enter a new world. We return to our hearts. Here we find our true selves. We discover an ancient way of finding God that has almost become lost. Slowly, we realize that we are in union with the source of life and love itself. Our whole life changes. Our goal now is to take God's love to others in our everyday lives")

PAT DISHON - VIEW FROM THE PEW - ON GIVING

Alms giving is one of the key elements of Lent but as Christians we know that giving is an all year round thing. St. John's and St. Mary Magdalene's parishes have a long tradition of generous giving. At this time it seems that there is so much need in the world. The humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, famine again threatening Ethiopia, war creating a crisis in Yemen, millions of people in the world existing without access to clean water, homeless people still living on the streets in our cities and the growing cost of living crisis leaving families in our own country reliant on Food Banks. There is a danger that we will be overwhelmed by it all, become frozen into inaction, and as a result do nothing.

Yet, we are many, in the Faith, and together we can do great things. The first thing we can do is pray. Prayer is never a last resort – it is always the first. The Lord never asks more of us than we are able to give. Many people in our parish communities, in our towns, and in our country, have literally nothing to spare - but prayer is free.

When I was a child my granny had a saying – “Give small, give to all” - she was a mother, with a large family, and there was not a lot to spare. I am reminded of her every time we hear the parable of the 'widow's mite.' The point I am trying to make is that it is never about the amount. Some will be able to give more others less. I have come to understand that the blessing is in the giving, and those who give and those who receive both obtain a blessing.

SCIAF's Wee Box initiative is a great example of how -"Many a mickle maks a muckle" - all our loose change adds up and can make a huge difference to the poor in the world. The charity WaterAid's campaign slogan is - “ Worried £2 a month won't make a difference? - 28.1 million people would disagree”. The number of people the charity has been able to help. Tragically, over 800 children still die from drinking dirty water every single day - if we can afford to set up a Direct Debit for £2 a month, it could change the lives of 771 million people still living without clean water. In our own country thousands of people are having to rely on Food Banks to feed their families. It shouldn't be like that but it is sadly a fact. Many supermarkets now have a collection point for local food banks. Could we afford to put in a couple of tins of soup when we do our shopping?

And what about the homeless begging on our streets? The charity, Bethany's, Winter Shelter Scheme is well supported in our parishes but sometimes they have to turn people away because there is just not enough room in the Shelter. And what about the rest of the year? People are sometimes reluctant to give to people begging on the streets fearing they will spend the money on drink or drugs. But the biggest survey, in ten years, on street homelessness, was carried out in Edinburgh, just before the pandemic struck. It found that only a tiny percentage of people were living on the streets because of addiction problems. Most were as a result of mental health issues or family breakdown. The Church of Scotland minister, who started the 'Fresh Start' charity, was asked if people should give money to street homeless. He replied, yes, because although many kind people gave them cups of coffee, he pointed out that there was a limit to how many cups they could drink, and they had other needs, including getting enough money to spend the night in a hostel instead of rough sleeping in a graveyard.

But we should not despair about our efforts. I always find comfort in the following lines of what is sometimes called -'The Romero Prayer'.

*“We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something and do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
An opportunity for The Lord's grace to enter in and do the rest.”*

(Pat Dishon has been a Parishioner for many years in both St John's and St Mary Magdalene's)