

# 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 the Vigil Mass (7.30pm on Saturday) 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*

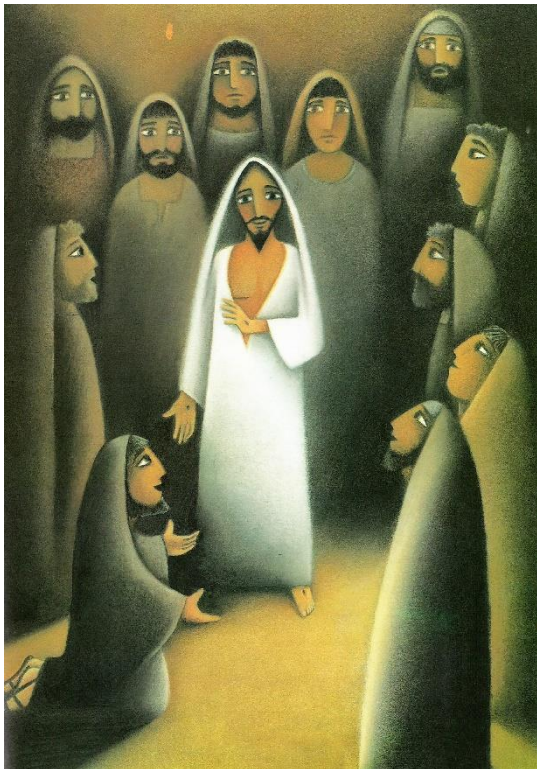
*(Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am to 3pm & Friday 11am-4pm)*

*Web address: [www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk](http://www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk)*

*Web address: [www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk](http://www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk)*

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

*Joint e-mail address for our sister parishes: [stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com)*



## *Second Sunday of Easter - Divine Mercy Sunday*

*24 April 2022*

*Jesus came [into the upper room] and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you," and showed them his hands and his side. "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you."*

**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.’ (Geoff Dobson’s prayer)

**Today is Divine Mercy Sunday – see the reflection on the back page of the newsletter.**

### **Our Next Synodality Steps – and a date for your diary – SUNDAY 15 MAY**

**Donald Scott writes:** ‘We now have a wealth of ideas, reflections and heartfelt responses as a result of the tremendous engagement in the synod process from both parishes. This came in different forms including the 268 questionnaires that folk completed on paper or online, and the post-it notes filled in at the 11 synodality meetings. We also have comments from friends in other churches in Portobello as well as the results of a questionnaire to senior pupils at Holyrood High School.

#### **What is the next step?**

Pope Francis has emphasised the contribution of all members of the Church in shaping our direction in the future. We want to continue that emphasis as we reflect on the significance for our life locally of what has come to the surface so far – this is about the whole community’s engagement.

On Sunday 15 May we have booked the St John’s church hall for a 2-Parish Event from 7 to 9.30 pm. All the material from questionnaires and meetings will be on display in the hall, along with information about what is already going on in the parishes. The event will be organised so that people are able to

look at and absorb the range of thoughts, feelings, hopes and visions that have been expressed. We will give time to reflection, listening and sharing in small groups along with prayerful silence. By the end of the evening, we hope that together we will have ‘discerned’ a way forward for our parishes as we look to the future. And by then we will deserve the refreshments/synodal party that will wind up the event!

**The experience so far has confirmed that everyone has something important to say. Please do plan to be with us on 15 May.’**

**Enormous thanks to Donald, and to Lesley Reid,** for their offering us all four and a half months of On-Line Night Prayer EVERY NIGHT from the beginning of Advent to Easter Sunday night – an act of great generosity, creativity and selflessness, from which many people in our parishes and much further afield have benefited greatly. ....

### **THE TOWER PROJECT**

**The Tower Tombola Draw takes place this Sunday** after the 9.30am Mass at St John’s. The prize will be £287.50.

**Gary Zoltie,** St Johns Treasurer writes: - Following the Tower Update presentation after the Masses three weeks ago, I write to clarify a couple of things that we have received enquiries about:

1. Those parishioners who have made donations to the Tower Project directly to our bank account through monthly standing orders should now cancel these with their banks.
2. As several parishioners have paid for the Tower Tombola in advance, **we will end the Tower Tombola at the July draw** This means that for those taking part in the monthly draw you should cancel your standing order with the bank by 30 June.

These donations have made a huge positive impact on our fundraising efforts, and we thank you again for your generosity towards the St John’s Tower Project.’

### **A WELCOME FOR REFUGEES/COUSINS FROM UKRAINE**

**Veronica Kinane** writes: ‘Mike and I would like to ask for your prayers as we await the arrival this week of our relatives from Ukraine - Zinia, Taras, Olha, and children Marta (6) and Daryia (4). They will be staying with us in Portobello as they flee the war in their home country. We hope they will be helped as they settle by the warmth of the welcome from our community of St John’s and St Mary Magdalene’s, and also from the wider Portobello community.’

**Our next Baptismal Preparation course takes place this Thursday** and next Thursday at 7.30pm in the Parish House – if anyone would like to register for the course, please make contact with Fr Jock asap.

**READING AT MASS** – we are looking for new readers at all our Masses but **in particular at the 6.30pm Saturday Vigil Mass** – if anyone would like to enquire further, please make contact with Fr Jock.

### **We’re also looking... for people willing to help with LIVESTREAMING**

**Deacon Eddie** writes: ‘Holy Week was quite a full-on week for livestreaming, and we would like to thank the whole team again, as ever. We streamed eleven services and Masses through the week (with one or two issues as we are at the moment having to use a laptop that was already deemed as “old” 2 years ago) A special thanks to Enrico for streaming the epic 2 Hours and 35 minutes of the Easter Vigil, and to Emily for the technically challenging Stations of the Cross on Monday - as well as Fergus and Jayden for bringing our first ever outside broadcast from Brighton Park on Palm Sunday. We are always seeking to push the boundaries...

Livestreaming was borne out of necessity and yet has offered some very fruitful interactions with our local and wider community. The concerns of some, across the world, that livestreaming would mean people would never return to the Church has proven not to be the case. Instead, we see more housebound parishioners – and many others, here and from much further afield - being able to engage with Mass daily and also with the Stations

of the Cross and other Prayer Services. For this reason, we are keen to keep offering Livestreams whenever we can.....

However, this requires a bigger team to be prepared to offer these experiences to all those who need it. Three of our squad, Jayden, Ashkin and Fergus, are all in High School and so they are all at school during the day – as am I – and the rest of the team have jobs as well, meaning weekday Masses are very much in need of extra support.

We do sometimes get online comments about sound quality etc – all we would wish people to know is that we are all doing our best and often dealing with difficulties beyond our control.

We, therefore, are in need of 2 different types of help:

- We are in need of one or two people who would be willing to set up the equipment in the morning before Mass and set it streaming (ie plug in 2 USB plugs and open up the one software program) and point the camera in the correct location.
- To make this more manageable and less unpredictable, we will also need two new laptops (one for each parish) which will enable us to provide more reliable streaming for the next few years too. **If anyone is in a position to help with a donation towards these, it would be gratefully received too.**

...and if you would like to discuss how you might possibly help, do feel free to email me [ewhite@outlook.com](mailto:ewhite@outlook.com) or call me on 07986015772. Thank you....'

## THIS WEEK

### **Saturday 23 April**

2pm – St John's – **Wedding of Stuart McClelland and Sarah Cauldwell** - livestreamed

6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass** - livestreamed

### **Sunday 24 April – SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (DIVINE MERCY)**

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

10.40am – St John's – **Tower Tombola April Draw (£287.50)**

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

### **Monday 25 April – FEAST OF ST MARK**

10am - St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

7.00pm – St John's Hall – **P4 Parents' Meeting**

8.00pm - 9.15pm – Zoom – **Gospel sharing**, just click below for a gentle chat on this Sunday's readings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82762659246?pwd=UkRTc2tCbkl4UmVka3l5RkZiVE9rZz09>

### **Tuesday 26 April**

7.00pm – Parish House 'Upper Room' – **Mass** - livestreamed

7.45pm – St John's Hall – **RCIA group meeting**

**Wednesday 27 April** - 10.00am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

### **Thursday 28 April**

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

5.15pm – Zoom – **Synod Co-ordinating Group Meeting**

7.30pm -Parish House Meeting Room – **Baptism Preparation Group I**

**7.30-9.30pm** - Mayfield Salisbury Church – A Meeting of the Edinburgh Newman Society - '**Experiencing being Synodal** ' with Canon Kenneth Owens – '**Join us in a mini synod, 5 questions which we will look at as a group.**'

### **Friday 29 April – FEAST OF ST CATHERINE OF SIENA**

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

**Saturday 30 April** -6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass** - livestreamed

### **Sunday 1 May – THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

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

11.15 – St John's – **Baptism of Natascia Pacitti (Deacon Eddie)**

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

# IN THE COMING WEEKS

Monday 2 May – 2.30pm – St John’s – **Healing Mass**

Tuesday 3 May – 7pm – **A FILM EVENING FOCUSING - in aid of STEKASkills (see below)**

Sunday 15 May – 7pm – **OPEN PARISHES’ MEETING**

## NOTICEBOARD

### **A message from the Justice & Peace Group – Wilson Memorial Food Bank**

**Jim Roarty writes:** ‘Recognising the increasing problems of the less well-off in our own country, the J&P Group recently sent a donation of £250 to the Foodbank at the Wilson Memorial Church in Moira Terrace. The minister, Rev Mike Marsden, sent us a letter of thanks which we thought we would like to share with you.

*“First, may I apologise for taking so long to express the sincere appreciation of the Food Bank (formerly known as the Basics Bank) for the incredible kindness of the St John’s & St Mary Magdalene’s Justice & Peace Group. You will not be surprised to learn that since the beginning of the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis, we have seen an increase in the use of our Food Bank. We have all been impacted by the lockdown restrictions, but those who were already vulnerable within our society have perhaps experienced an even greater hardship. Your very generous gift will go a long way to helping us maintain not just our supplies, but also across the network of Food Bank+. As you are probably aware, we partner with Edinburgh City Mission and are part of a network of about 6 basics Banks. This partnership helps maintain a continuity of service across all the Food Bank and also provides a means of resourcing items across the network.”*

Please remember in your prayers – not to mention tangible support – the work of the Wilson Memorial Food Bank as well as the smaller scale operation in St Teresa’s in Craigmillar, which we have supported for a number of years.’

### **A message from SCIAF**

**Louise MacCleod, from SCIAF Engagement Office, writes:** ‘With the most holy period of Lent and the Easter Octave now passed, I wanted to write to you to thank you and your parishioners for supporting our **annual WEE BOX appeal**. The kind donations over the Lenten period ensures that we can reach our sisters and brothers around the world whenever they need us and we are extremely grateful for the kindness shown by parishes across Scotland.

We asked Archbishop Cushley and SCIAF’s Bishop President Bishop Joe Toal to stress that support for the Lenten WEE BOX appeal is especially important this year. Parishes have been extremely generous by giving to our [Ukraine Emergency Appeal](#) and, whilst the need is huge, we cannot forsake our sisters and brothers around the world. Watch our video to listen to their message. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogGYg2JIka4>

**We are delighted to announce that you have donated over one million pounds to our Ukraine Emergency appeal.** So far, our Caritas partners have helped over 500,000 people with food, shelter and psychological counselling. They have also been providing extensive humanitarian assistance, including sorting and distributing aid.

Thank you for all your support. We couldn’t help our sisters and brothers around the world without the help of priests and parishes across Scotland. God Bless’

### **THE EDINBURGH NEWMAN SOCIETY - 'Experiencing being Synodal'**

**Join us in a mini synod, 5 questions which we will look at as a group.**

**Fr Kenneth Owens**

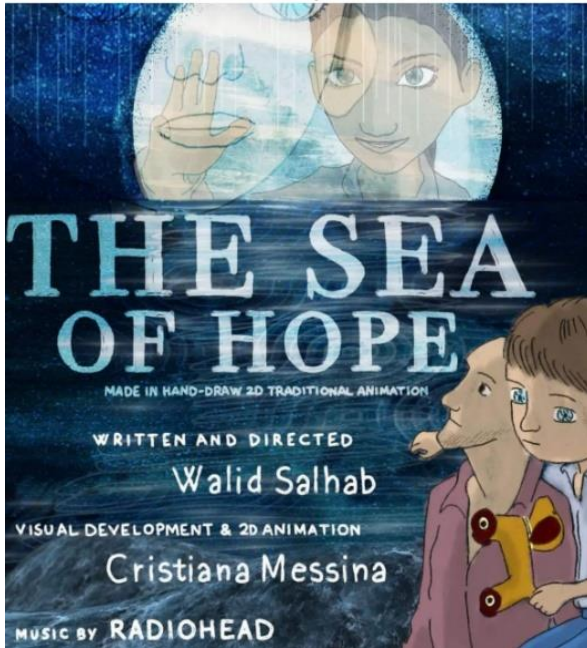
All are warmly invited to attend.

Mayfield Salisbury Church, [18, West Mayfield, Edinburgh EH9 1TQ](#)

**This Thursday 28th April 7.30 - 9.30pm**

## A FILM NIGHT FOCUSING ON REFUGEES (with proceeds to STEKASkills in Malawi) – ST JOHN’S – 7PM – TUESDAY 3 MAY

Venue: St. John's Portobello Date: May 3, 2022  
Time: 7pm



**Emma Wood writes:** ‘We are delighted to be hosting the first public screening of award-winning filmmaker, Walid Salhab’s latest short film, **The Sea of Hope** (already shortlisted at this year’s Venice Film festival - the ‘Biennale’) as a fundraiser for the charity STEKASkills. It will be shown along with two of his other multi award-winning films (each around 7 minutes long) in a film festival style event with a panel of speakers who will question Walid about his film/s and comment on the key themes (in particular the representation of displaced people and refugees). STEKASkills will also update us on the progress made by the charity over recent years.

The Sea of Hope focuses on a Middle Eastern refugee father and son’s dangerous sea journey trying to escape their war-torn country. The film highlights the fears and the peril and the risks the refugees take just to have a chance of a semi normal life. <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/661266501>

It is a 2D animation and we will also showcase the work of the artist who has contributed to the film Cristiana Messina <https://cristianamessina.com/> who will demonstrate how to make animations during the 30-minute interval.

**Tickets - £10 - are limited but can be purchased both in St John’s and St Mary Magdalene’s after Mass this weekend** or via Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/award-winning-filmmaker-screens-new-short-refugee-film-with-expert-panel-tickets-317627942727>

### 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/>

**Event for Married Couples -** The Archdiocese is hosting an afternoon retreat for married couples at **3pm Sunday 8 May** at the Gillis Centre, 100 Strathearn Road, Edinburgh. It will be led by Brian & Maureen Devine, a Catholic couple from England renowned throughout the UK for hosting inspiring retreats. Register for this free event at [bit.ly/ArchEvenbrite](http://bit.ly/ArchEvenbrite) or register by phone at 07833 208 211.

**Wedding Anniversaries - Archbishop Leo will celebrate a Mass for Married & Engaged Couples on Wednesday 18 May** at 7pm at St Mary’s Cathedral in Edinburgh. All married and engaged couples are welcome on the night but if you are celebrating a significant anniversary this year, or know couples who are, the Archbishop would like to send a personal invitation. Please submit the names, address and number of years being celebrated to Fr Jeremy Milne: [vemarriage@staned.org.uk](mailto:vemarriage@staned.org.uk), 0131 334 1693.

**Xavier Society for the Blind -** Do you know someone who would benefit from having readings, prayers and responses to Mass in Braille or large print? Visit Xavier Society for the Blind online at [xaviersocietyfortheblind.org](http://xaviersocietyfortheblind.org). It has provided free braille and audio materials to blind and visually impaired people worldwide since 1900. Email [info@xaviersocietyfortheblind.org](mailto:info@xaviersocietyfortheblind.org)



# A REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER – JOHN 20:19-31

*(The author of this reflection lives in Northumberland)*

Living in a part of Northumberland where there is very little light pollution, the night-sky on a clear evening is something to behold. Over 30 years ago, I spent a few days in the Kielder area on what might have been loosely termed as an outward-bound event. We slept outdoors, a plastic ‘tarpaulin’ over the top of a feather and down sleeping bag. We were not allowed within 20 metres of each other. Hearing became accentuated as the night creatures went about their survival business inches from my head. It was the stars, however, that stole the show. Lying on my back, I stared up into the inky blackness. The more I looked, the more stars and planets I saw. I was a time-traveller, staring back into time - for the light I was seeing had started heading towards my tiny brain millions of years before. It will continue to shine long after my permission to stay on this earth has expired. I felt very humble and privileged to be in that space and touching eternity

This week I have learned a great deal about Boötes Void. The first thing I learned is that it’s pronounced ‘Boytes’ Void. (The umlaut make all the difference!). It is a huge area of emptiness, lying some 700 million light years from earth and its diameter is estimated at 165 million light years. Given its size, the area should house thousands of galaxies but contains only a few, a mere handful. Predominantly, it is nothingness., an empty void defying comprehension. It’s difficult for us to get our heads around the concept of a light year. We are 93 million miles from the Sun, and this is referred to as an ‘astronomical unit’. There are just over 63,000 Astronomical Units in a light year and by comparison, and quite spookily, there are just over 63,000 inches in a mile. (I loved Maths at school, and I continue to marvel at how much of an influence maths has on everything around us.) A light year is a huge distance. 700 million light years leaves us feeling even more insignificant. I love information like this; I love trying to visualise nothingness. I love the sheer vastness of the creation that surrounds little old me. I first learned to pray, by trying to visualise nothingness, because once I was able to go there, then there was room for God to come in. It’s easy for me to believe and accept the findings of science. Not everyone shares my faith in this area. My closest friend does not believe that Neil Armstrong ever stepped onto the surface of the moon. He genuinely believes that we are victims of a great confidence trick, dreamed up in Hollywood. Like Thatcher he is not for turning – and so my frustration grows. He will share the view through my telescope, but he will not be tricked into a belief in lunar colonisation. I have met a few people who firmly believe in the time frame suggested by the Bible and that creation is just a few thousand years old. I will never be able to interest them in Boötes Void – let alone convince them of its existence.

This weekend we meet Thomas, doubting Thomas, whose first cry was: *Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands, and until I can put my finger into those holes, then I refuse to believe.* In a short space of time – and much less than a light year – Thomas has changed his cry. This time he is present as Jesus appears in their midst. His initial scepticism has changed into five simple words: *My Lord and my God.* Faith is a journey; our journey, though similar in many ways to that of Thomas is as unique as we are. Sometimes our faith is strong, sometimes weak. From time to time, it seems that the bottom has fallen out of our world: a personal disaster, the death of someone we love, a betrayal. We flounder and struggle. The word ‘why’ is never too far away in our hearts and minds. We search for God – but he doesn’t seem to hear our cries. We cannot get even a glimpse. On occasion we struggle to find God amid the evil that threatens to swamp us and overwhelm us. We turn on the news and we see Satan, and only manage glimpses of God. It seems that we’re hanging on by our fingertips. Then there are moments of intense joy; our heart is light, our spirits lifted, it may be a piece of music or prose, or an unexpected kindness shown to us. We feel the nearness of God and we can say *My Lord and my God.* Sometimes our view of the night sky is spoiled by the presence of low cloud. ‘Last night everything was so clear. Tonight, there’s no view at all’. The stars haven’t gone just because we cannot see them. They are there. God is there, too. Seek the emptiness, search for the void and he will come flooding in. Look up at the sky. Look at the black space between the stars and planets. Somewhere in that blackness sits Boötes Void. Stare and marvel for you are travelling back in time, back to the heart of God.

# Parish Register

Welcome to the world... Ezra Peter Kane, born on (Holy) Thursday, 14 April, a son for Natalie and Michael, and a young brother for Max.

## Please pray for those who have died recently:

Nessie Cairns - Hugh Johnstone - Paddy Crowe - Fr John Morrison - Michael Hunter - Emma Bromet

## Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time:

Fr Tom Hennessey - Mollie Brogan  
William Sellar - Teresa Cannon - Charles McLauchlan - Margot Tweedie - Owen Connarty - Nicola Murray

## Anniversaries:

**St John's: Apr.22:** Ina McNama (2017); Mary Quigley (2014); Helen Dignan (1998); Kathleen Dykes Main (1991); **Apr.23:** James McMillan (2010); Margaret Gilhooley (2005); Charles McLauchlan (1972); Frank Irvine; **Apr.24:** Harry McGroarty (2005); Helen Loftus (1972); John Bell; **Apr.25:** Beatrice Lawler (1993); Alice Ashburner; Peggie Desmond; **Apr.26:** Tanya Simpson (2020); Margaret Connelly (2003); **Apr.27:** Mary Robertson (1983); James Passmore (1978); William Corrigan; Hans Janik; **Apr.28:** Teresa Cannon (2018); Margot Tweedie (2013); Christopher Rourke (1995); **Apr.29:** Iain Wilson (2008); Marion Holligan (2002); Keith Rostant (2010); Jean Flucker (1995); Alexander Hunter (1968); **May 1:** Mollie Brogan (2002); Catherine Tracy (1992); Owen Connarty (1973); Patrick Taylor (1952);

**St Mary Magdalene's: Apr.24:** Fr. Thomas Hennessey (2015); **Apr.28:** Stan Brown (2000); **Apr.29:** George Cockburn (1995); **May 1:** John Spence (1995);

## Please pray for those Parishioners who are sick:

**St. John's:** Mike and Maria Noonan, Baby Archie Williams, John Whyte, Maureen Lawrie, Susan Cammack, Maria Pacitti, Kim O'Neill, Sheila Service, Frances Connelly, 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, 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:**

Mary McGovern (jnr), Ray Donnelly, 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.

## Please pray for sick friends and relatives of our Parishioners:

Len Kirkland, John Francis Harewood, Jaroslav Icina, Young Martha Moyes (aged 5), 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, 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, 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, Dani Miniette, Peter Millar, Sr May Lewis, Joan Murray Hamilton, Sr Margaret Mary, Jean Nelson, Betty Blyth, Lauren Fitzpatrick, Michael Igoe, baby Kinsley McMillan, 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 17 April 2022

### St Mary Magdalene

£662.74 total including Offertory of £382.74 and Gift Aid of £280.00

### St John the Evangelist

£4725.73 total including Offertory of £759.23, Gift Aid of £3226.50 and online donations of £740.00

Thank You ↑ ↵

## A REFLECTION FOR DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY BY MGR JOSEPH PRIOR

*“The Lord is Risen, Alleluia, Alleluia!” “He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia, Alleluia!”*

Our celebration of the Lord’s resurrection continues today as we observe Divine Mercy Sunday. The celebration recalls the great love that the Lord of Life pours out on us in his resurrection. God created us in love, has redeemed us in love and sustains us in his love. Today we are reminded that the gift of divine mercy is showered upon us, delivering us from sin and fear. The Gospel passage for today’s liturgy recalls one of Jesus’ encounters with the disciples following his resurrection. The disciples are gathered in a locked room filled with fear. They are distraught as what has happened to Jesus.

So much has happened in a few short days. Jesus had been welcomed to such acclaim in Jerusalem in the beginning of the week. Then he was betrayed and arrested while at prayer in the garden. Most of the disciples fled at this point. Peter stayed but caved in fear when he denied the Lord three times. Then came the trial, scourging and cross. Now the tomb is empty. Fear and confusion are intermingled with a glimpse of hope. Jesus enters the locked room and immediately greets them with “Peace be with you!” Sensing their state of shock, he shows them his hands and side. Again, he offers them peace, this time saying: “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

The peace Jesus offers is a sign of mercy and reconciliation. He forgives them but also forgives all. This message of mercy is to be carried far and wide by the apostles and disciples. The first reading recalls an early stage of the spread of the Gospel. Peter has heard the call of Jesus and is bringing the message of mercy to many in Jerusalem. Soon that same message will be carried throughout the world. The message continues to be spread today.

**St John Paul II, recognizing the need for the message of mercy to be highlighted, designated this “Second Sunday of Easter” as “Divine Mercy Sunday.”** We live in a fragile, broken world. This year we are witnessing the horrors of an unprovoked aggressive war in Ukraine. Millions of people are directly affected. In addition to the death of brave soldiers, civilians, including the children and babies, are mercilessly killed.

Perhaps this is the most vivid example today of the fragile state of humanity. The last century with its epoch of wars and destruction were a distant memory until the recent events forced us to remember. The fragility of mankind is seen in the precursors to war such as fear, greed, lack of trust, broken relationships, pride and power. This coupled with the ever-growing discrepancy between the ultra-wealthy and the rest of the population seem to help spread those precursors to other parts of the world.

It is into this world, fragile as it is, that Jesus sends his message of mercy: “Peace be with you.”

**St. Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), a young Polish nun, had several visions of Jesus who asked her to be a messenger of mercy.** In one of those visions St. Faustina saw the image of Christ with two rays, one of red and one of white, coming forth from his risen body. The image recalls the pouring forth of divine mercy. Paintings of the image have circulated throughout the world coupled with the recitation of the chaplet as a message of mercy for a broken world.

Jesus’ victory over sin and death comes with his resurrection. He took upon himself the worst of human suffering and affliction. In doing so, he gives the greatest witness of love: “to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” The resurrection breaks the power of sin and death. Nothing has the power to destroy God’s love for us. It is in that love that he continues to pour out his mercy — the mercy that heals, strengthens, restores and enlivens hope. We celebrate that mercy today.

The mercy that God pours out in his Son is for the whole of humanity as well as for each human being. He knows each one of us by name just as he knew Peter, Thomas, John Paul and Faustina. Today we celebrate that love that sees us through fear to peace, death to life, suffering to relief, sorrow to consolation, grief to joy, and confusion to understanding.

As we recognize his mercy in our lives, we also hear the call to go forth and share the message of mercy, and the most effective way is to live mercy, to forgive as we have been forgiven, to love as we have been loved.

*“The Lord is Risen, Alleluia, Alleluia!” “He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia, Alleluia!”*