

# 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: Jennifer Morris and Chris Vinestock*

*Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, Edinburgh, EH15 1LP*

*Parish Administrator: Enrico Fertini*

*(Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10.00am to 3.00pm & Friday 11.00am to 4.00pm)*

*Web address:*

<https://www.stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes.com>

*Joint Facebook page:*

<https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsandStMaryMagdalenes>

*Joint e-mail address for our sister parishes:*

[stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com)



## 19 MARCH 2023 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.....  
(John 9:1.6-7)



**Special collection - "This weekend there will be a special collection for Papal & Episcopal Charities (including SCIAF). The money you donate is used to support much needed projects for people in need across the world... Thank you for your generosity in almsgiving during Lent." – Archbishop Leo.** With this newsletter, there is a **Pastoral Letter from Bishop McGee**, which explains how your donations help SCIAF support those in need across the world.

### 40 Hours Adoration/Quarant'Ore - Sunday 19 March until Tuesday 21 March

*Deacon Eddie writes:* One of the particularly powerful ways we can prepare for Easter is by finding some time in Lent to be with the Lord in Adoration. Can you find time to dedicate to being in front of the Lord for 30mins, an hour or longer? **We have our 40 Hours of Adoration running from after Mass this Sunday until 9.30pm on Tuesday evening.**

We will have time in adoration in both Parishes and also in the Parish House, after the 7pm Mass on Tuesday.

We really encourage everyone who possibly can to join us. Please sign up, either by yourself or with another person to help us ensure we have enough people to cover all the 40 hours. Please be as generous with your time as you can, the more people who sign up, the easier it will be to offer 40 hours of

adoration. (NB even if circumstances mean you don't feel able to commit to signing up for a specific time, everyone is welcome to come in at any time for as short or as long as you wish.

**Adoration will run from 11am on Sunday until 9pm on Sunday and then 5.30am until 9pm on Monday and 5.30am until 9.30pm on Tuesday.** Hopefully these times will allow plenty of opportunities for those of us who have a daytime job to join in as well. Everyone is particularly welcome to join me at the 5.30am slots!

**The adoration will take place in St John's – except on Tuesday afternoon between 1pm and 4pm, when it will be in St Mary Magdalene's, and 7.30pm to 9.30pm, when it will be in the Prayer Room in the Parish House.**

## **AN APPEAL FOR CYCLONE-HIT BLANTYRE IN MALAWI**

**Recently, Malawi has suffered a double hit from Tropical Cyclone Freddy:** *'The Tropical Cyclone Freddy weather system brought torrential rains, with the equivalent of six months of rain falling in just six days, causing devastating floods and mudslides in Southern Malawi. Phalombe recorded 458 millimetres (mm) of rainfall in 24 hours, while other several districts reported more than 300mm. The record-breaking weather system hit Malawi at the end of the rainy season when rivers and water bodies were already at high levels'*

[https://reliefweb.int/country/mwi?fbclid=IwAR3TgRrBvF1p\\_NpOhISe8wsmOJLey0DjCKUNH6yio2A3SzCl0iW0BNs6umA](https://reliefweb.int/country/mwi?fbclid=IwAR3TgRrBvF1p_NpOhISe8wsmOJLey0DjCKUNH6yio2A3SzCl0iW0BNs6umA)

**The STEKA Children's Home in Blantyre has received extensive damage from the flooding** but its founder, Godknows Maseko, is more concerned with the impact on some of their destitute neighbours. On Thursday he wrote: *'Please, the situation here is very bad. For the first four days we weren't able to go out because we needed to make sure our own children are safe – we have received three new children from the same family whose mother has been hospitalised and whose house has fallen down. But having now gone out to make an impact assessment, we can see that there are many children now in camps in similar situations. We are hoping to do all we can to help those living locally – with clothes from our containers, and if possible with financial support from our donors overseas. Please help us...'*

**Emma Wood of STEKA Skills writes:** 'Although we know that big charities will be able to make an important impact in the medium and long-term, right now, grassroots organisations such as STEKA with strong links to local communities, are well placed to help street children and others whose parents have been hospitalised or killed. Many of these children have already made their way to the STEKA home – although there isn't room to house them all, if the home can be repaired, and with money, these children could be given both physical, spiritual and psycho-social support. And this could also be spread to parentless children in nearby camps which Godknows is already visiting. In the longer term, with enough money, we could create safe spaces at our vocational skills centres and help people rebuild their lives there. Donate here <https://www.justgiving.com/skekaskills> and find out more about the cyclone [here](#)

**Fr Jock writes:** 'As parishes we need to focus this week on SCIAF, since so much of their work relies on the annual special collection, but we hope individuals might support the STEKA appeal – and that everybody might be open to **a leaving collection next Sunday for the STEKA fund**'.

**There are two important Feasts this week – on Monday we celebrate the Feast of St Joseph, while Saturday is the Feast of the Annunciation...** on Monday, Mass will be as normal – at 10am in St John's, while **on Saturday, there will be an extra Mass** – for the Feast – also at 10am at St John's.

**Our next Baptismal Preparation Course** will take place on **Thursday 27 April** and **Thursday 4 May** at 7.30pm in the Parish House at 7.30pm. If you would like to participate, please make contact with Fr Jock

## **ALSO, THIS SUNDAY - A SYNODAL FOLLOW-UP – THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, INCLUSIVITY AND THE PLACE OF WOMEN - 7-9 PM IN ST JOHN'S HALL**

**Donald Scott, the chair of the St John's Pastoral Council and a member of our Synodal Co-Ordinating Group, writes:** The synodality conversations and the questionnaires last spring raised concerns about the place of women in the church and also how the church can become more inclusive.

A small group has been discussing what action we might take on this. We have recognised that there are two questions.

- What can we practically do in our own parishes to become more inclusive and use the gifts God has given to all people?
- How can we be more informed about and have an opportunity to discuss the position of the wider Catholic church – with input about different perspectives on tradition and theology?

To address the practical local question, we are holding an evening meeting **this Sunday 19 March, 7-9 pm in St John's Hall**. Our intention is to develop proposals that we can put into practice in our parishes. All are invited, and there will be opportunity to share ideas.

For the second question about the global church, the small group (which is very open to new members) is organising a series of four evenings with stimulating and eminent speakers. The title for the series is *East Edinburgh Conversations: Looking at inclusion in the Catholic Church*. These gatherings will take place 4-weekly **starting on Wednesday 3 May** at 7 pm in in the Bellfield small hall (16B Bellfield Street, Edinburgh, EH15 2BP). We will provide more detail in the coming weeks.

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **Saturday 18 March**

10.30am – Mount Vernon – **Burial of Baby Gary Reid (26.6.75- 3.7.75)**

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

#### **Sunday 19 March – 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

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

11.00am – St John's – **BEGINNING OF 40 HOURS ADORATION (till 9pm)**

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

7.00pm – St John's Hall - **The Catholic Church, Inclusivity and the Place of Women: An Open Meeting**

#### **Monday 20 March – FEAST OF ST JOSEPH**

5.30am-9pm – **St John's – 40 HOURS ADORATION**

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

7.00pm – Zoom - **Gospel Sharing** (click [HERE](#) or type <https://shorturl.net/UIsQD> into your browser)

7.30pm – 2 Goff Avenue - **Lenten House Group** (Host – Ros McKay, leader – Bronagh Power)

#### **Tuesday 21 March**

10.00am – Baptist Church Café – **Holy Huddle**

5.30am-9.30pm – St John's/St Mary Magdalene's/Parish House, Prayer Room - **40 HOURS ADORATION**

2.30pm – 56/1 Moira Terrace – **Lenten House Group** (Host – Pauline McInnes, leaders – Jim and Evelyn Roarty)

7.00pm – Parish House – **Mass** - livestreamed

7.00pm – Zoom – **On-line Lenten House Group** – (Leader - Tanya White)

(click [HERE](#) or type <https://shorturl.net/3J9k7N> into your browser)

7.45pm – Parish House – **RCIA Meeting**

#### **Wednesday 22 March**

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

10.35am – St John's – **Stations of the Cross**

11.00am – 5 Rosefield Street – **Lenten House Group** (Host – Pat Robertson, leader – Jennifer Morris)

2.00pm – Gillis Centre – **Meeting of Trustees with Parish Priests and Parish Finance Council Chairs**

7.00pm-8.00pm – Parish House - **An Invitation to knit a Prayer Shawl during Lent.** (Any questions please feel free to message Tracy Burgess - 07939662962).

### **Thursday 23 March**

10.00am – St Mary Magdalene’s – **Mass** - livestreamed

11am – St Mary’s Cathedral – **Mass for City Primary 7’s**

7.00pm – 16 Greenfield Park, Musselburgh – **Lenten House Group** (Hosts Penelope and Freddie MacLellan Hawkes, leader – Dave Connarty)

7.30pm – 38 Milton Rd W – **Lenten House Group** (Host – Joyce Martin, leader – Sheila Tansey)

**Friday 24 March** – 10.00am – St John’s – **Mass** – livestreamed

### **Saturday 25 March - FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD**

10.00am – St John’s – **Mass** - livestreamed

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

### **Sunday 26 March – 5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

9.30am – St John’s – **Mass** - livestreamed

11.15am – St Mary Magdalene’s – **Mass** - livestreamed

3.00pm – St Catherine’s Convent, 4 Lauriston Gardens - **The Legion of Mary Acies Ceremony of consecration to Our Lady.** ‘There will be Rosary and Legion prayers, a talk by our Spiritual Director, Fr John Peter, and Benediction in the beautiful chapel. Refreshments will be served afterwards. All members, active and auxiliary, and friends of the Legion are invited to attend this Ceremony. Please come along. You will be very welcome.’

There are **Easter cards** for sale at St John's and St Mary Magdalene's. For £2 you can buy 4 lovely cards spreading the message of Easter.

*God lives inside of you in the  
innermost hidden centre of yourself.  
Therefore, if we think of heaven as where God lives  
and if God lives in you,  
then you're God's heaven*

(James Finley – Centre for Action and Contemplation)

## **From Archbishop Leo’s Weekly ‘Ad Clerum’**

**Lent reflections** - Prepare for each Sunday in Lent with a reflection from Canon Hugh White, a retired priest of the Archdiocese. The ‘Listening in Lent’ talk is posted each Tuesday on the Archdiocesan YouTube channel: [bit.ly/ArchYouTube](https://bit.ly/ArchYouTube)

**Lent talks** - Discover Jesus Christ in the Servant Songs of Isaiah with four online talks from the Archdiocese. They are hosted by Fr Jamie McMorrin of St Margaret’s, Davidson’s Mains, and Sr Anna Marie McGuan RSM and continue at 7:30pm on **Wednesday 22 March**. Register at [bit.ly/lenttalks2023](https://bit.ly/lenttalks2023) Catch up on YouTube: [bit.ly/ArchYouTube](https://bit.ly/ArchYouTube)

**Mass - Relics of Padre Pio** - Relics of Padre Pio are touring Scotland (including his gloves and bloodstained bandages). They will be in the Archdiocese on **Friday 24 March at 7:00pm** at Ss John Cantius & Nicholas, West Main Street, Broxburn. There will be Holy Mass and a chance to receive an individual blessing with the relics. A special invitation is extended to the sick and the suffering. Teas/coffee served in church hall afterwards.

**Lent Retreat** - A retreat titled *Encountering Jesus* will take place at St Kentigern’s Church, Parkgrove Avenue, Barnton, Edinburgh. It is led by Fr Bart Parys, a Divine Word Missionary based in Ireland, and it will help you draw closer to Jesus in Lent. **Fri 24 Mar 7:30pm - 8:30pm; Sat 25 Mar 10:00am - 3:00pm; Sun 26 Mar 9:30am - 11:00am.** No registration required.

**Palm Sunday talk** - Archbishop Leo hosts a talk about Palm Sunday on **Monday 27 March at 7:30pm**. It is for those who want to better understand the background to the liturgy and prepare for the day. Register for this Zoom talk at [bit.ly/palmsundaytalk](https://bit.ly/palmsundaytalk)

## SAINT OF THE WEEK – ST PATRICK (c 390 - c 450AD)

*“You can see that we are witnesses that the gospel has been preached as far as the point where there is no one beyond.”*

The patron saint of Ireland left precious indications of his life in two surviving works from his hand, the **Confessions**, written toward the end of his life in response to apparent criticism, and the **Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus**, a protest to a British warlord at the piratical seizure of some of his Irish converts. Between them they provide a self-portrait of some depth, possibly unique to the period. Later Lives, loaded with wonder-working of a boastful nature, in competition with Druids and set against a totally unhistorical background, rather detract from the picture he himself has provided.

His origins lay in the Carlisle district of north-western Britain, in the last decades of Roman rule there. He gives a name to the village of his birth, but it has never been identified convincingly. His family was one of relatively wealthy clerics: his grandfather had been a priest, and his father was a deacon (clerical marriage being permitted at the time) as well as an alderman of Carlisle. The household seems to have been more formally than devoutly Christian. When not yet sixteen, Patrick was captured by a marauding band from Northern Ireland, together with some of his father's slaves, and spent six years there, either in the north-west or possibly herding sheep on Mount Slemis in Co. Antrim in the north-east. The experience changed his personality: in adversity he learned to cast himself on God's mercy and to rely on the power of prayer. He describes being guided by a series of vivid dreams and feeling the Spirit working within him.

He escaped and after a long trek found a ship that landed him on some desolate shore after three days. This might have been Wales or Cornwall. The crew all left the ship and wandered for many days without finding any trace of human habitation. Patrick told them that God would provide, and they came upon a herd of wild pigs and found wild honey. Patrick found his way back to his family, who begged him never again to leave them. At some stage he was ordained deacon and then priest, and he visited Gaul during the time he spent back with his family. But another guiding dream told him to go back to Ireland.

He spent some years considering this, and in the end was certainly sent by "seniors" (bishops) in the British church, who consecrated him and sent him as missionary bishop. He sold his patrimony to finance the expedition, prudently deciding not to rely on the bishop financially. It is possible that Pope Leo the Great either commissioned him directly to go to Ireland or did so through the British bishops.

He spent the rest of his life evangelizing Ireland. He was not the first to attempt this: Palladius had preceded him in 431, but his mission seems to have had little lasting impact. Tradition places Patrick's mission in the north, with Armagh as its focus, but Patrick himself provides virtually no geographical clues, and associations with Croagh Patrick and Lough Derg arose through later legend. What Patrick does provide, in the manner of St Paul, is a personal account of his character and mission. Determined yet tender, resolute yet relying entirely on God, he obviously loved his converts deeply. This led to his fury when some were kidnapped by the soldiers of Coroticus: he feared that their vows of virginity would be broken by force and excommunicated the soldiers, something he was probably not entitled to do.

What can we know about the nature of his mission? The Romans never conquered Ireland, and society there had not been urbanized, as it had in Britain. It revolved around largely nomadic tribes or clans. The people worshipped several gods and goddesses, though their religious beliefs are difficult to reconstruct. Patrick, who converted many thousands to Christianity, accused them of worshipping "*idols and filthy things*" and would have regarded them as uncivilized. He would have led a nomadic life, and he encouraged many of his converts to settle as monks or nuns, or simply to embrace celibacy in their own homes. He thus laid the foundations of the dominant influence of the monastery rather than the diocese (impossible with no settled society) in the Irish Church. This may lie behind the unknown criticism by the British bishops, who regarded activity outside a defined diocese as almost equivalent to divorce.

He preached a simple but compelling trinitarian doctrine of God's love and providence, redemption through Christ, and the dwelling of the Spirit in people's hearts. The only book he knew was the Latin Bible, and he would have passed on the basic education this gave him to sons of kings and lesser chiefs who were "*fostered*" with him as his influence grew, in accordance with custom.



We do not know where or when he died, and his burial place is unknown. Even when the monks of Armagh were propagating his cult some two centuries later, they laid no claim to his relics. He died of natural causes, not martyred as he had aspired to be. He is not mentioned in annals or chronicles until 632, but his works were certainly copied and remembered, and they tell us enough to secure his lasting title of "**Apostle to the Irish People.**" Irish missionaries have since taken his spirit, along with legends of him, all over the world.

*Paul Burns' Butler's Saint for the Day & St Patrick, Confessions, 34, trans. R. P. C. Hanson*

## NOTICEBOARD

### A MESSAGE ABOUT POSSIBLE INVIGILATORS FROM HOLYROOD HIGH SCHOOL

**Joan Daly, Headteacher, writes:** "Would you be interested in becoming an invigilator for the Scottish Qualifications Authority exams in Holy Rood RC High School? The exams run from **24 April to 31 May 2023** and we'd be looking for people who had mornings and/or afternoons to spare and would like to join the invigilation team. Invigilators are appointed by the SQA and have to go through the Disclosure Scotland process for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG), but this is handled by the SQA. The position carries an hourly rate of pay.

Get in touch with the Chief Invigilator, Hilary Stokes, on [hastokes@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:hastokes@blueyonder.co.uk) or the SQA Coordinator at Holy Rood, Derek Ferguson on [Derek.Ferguson@ea.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Derek.Ferguson@ea.edin.sch.uk) (0131 661 5871) if you would be interested in finding out more. Thank you"

### **This year's Portobello Holiday Club – WONDER ZONE - is 17-21 July from 9am to 12:45pm at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church.**

**Michelle Brown writes:** - 'After a pandemic break, our sixth Portobello Holiday Club will finally take place on 17-21 July 2023 from 9am to 12:45pm at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church and at St Mark's Scottish Episcopal Church. Our theme is Wonder Zone, and we will be exploring God's great, big, beautiful creation with science and nature activities, bible stories and more. If you would like to find out more, **or to volunteer - contact our parish representative, Lynda Kazimoglu ([lkazimoglu@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lkazimoglu@yahoo.co.uk))** - or email me at [portobelloholidayclub@gmail.com](mailto:portobelloholidayclub@gmail.com). Registration is now open for children currently in P1-P7. Pick up a form from Lynda to register your child or email [portobelloholidayclub@gmail.com](mailto:portobelloholidayclub@gmail.com) to be sent a form to register for holiday club. The cost to attend is £10 per child for the full week. If cost is prohibitive, please speak with me as some funded places are available.'

## A REQUEST FOR PRAYERFUL SUPPORT OF APACHE STRONGHOLD

**Cath Norman writes:** 'Last year in the Scottish Laity Network's *Towards Pentecost 2022* series **Sarah Augustine** - co-founder of the Suriname Indigenous Health Fund and the [Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Coalition](#) - was one of their companions and shared on the historical and current impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on Native Americans. You can view the recording at <https://youtu.be/Z4wR6KpuWVM>

**People of faith have been asked to show solidarity with the [Apache Stronghold](#) who have been campaigning against the destruction of their traditional territory by a copper mining company because it is a violation of their right to religious freedom.**

On March 21st, a Federal Appeals Court will hear a pivotal case about Apache religious freedom that centres around this proposed copper mine, which would destroy the Western Apache sacred site of **Oak Flat**.

The Apache Stronghold are rallying all people of faith and conscience under the call of "*One Drum, One Prayer, One Circle*" to seek unity in protection of Earth and in resistance to ongoing colonization. Their primary tactic is focussed prayer and there will be prayer walks and runs by communities of faith across the USA on 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March.

**On Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup> they invite people to remember them as they gather with their faith community.**

Allowing for the time scale and location could you show your solidarity with the Apache Stronghold by: Praying for them on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March please pray the [Litany for Oak Flat](#) and if it possible please offer a prayer for them in the Prayer of the Faithful at your community Eucharist.

On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March please pray the [Oak Flat Sunset Prayer](#)

As a visual expression of your support please make a sign that includes the hashtag #saveoakflat or print the attached sign, and take a photo of you, or a group of you, and send to [michaela@dismantlediscovery.org](mailto:michaela@dismantlediscovery.org)

### **Some resources:**

Apache sacred land threatened by mining in Arizona

[https://youtu.be/Zh68xOn0B\\_8](https://youtu.be/Zh68xOn0B_8)

The Apache war against copper mining: 'this is an act of desecration' - Guardian video - <https://youtu.be/9OeHDgL6tIM>

# REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – JOHN 9:1-41

I am into the third month of my new year's resolution to sort through old papers and correspondence. Progress is steady against the handicap of being a compulsive hoarder. An addictive personality, and extreme insecurity conspire against me. I keep EVERY thing. A Happiness befell me three weeks ago as I came across a hand-written letter from several years ago. I read it through two or three times. I hadn't heard anything from the author since that letter. Was he still alive? COVID has left many, me included, with a residual uncertainty. Contact with so many people were lost as we were locked away from each other. I hadn't heard that he had died – but that didn't mean that he hadn't. My uncertainty was heightened when I telephoned the number on the letter. "The number you have dialled has not been recognised, please check and try again". For some bizarre reason I checked and tried again – three times, proving Einstein correct; *The definition of insanity is to repeat the same actions over and over, and expecting different results.* Conscious of mine and your own mortality I will compress the next three weeks into a couple of sentences. To my relief he hadn't died, and we met for lunch at the Beaumont Hotel in Hexham. Since lockdown, lunch out has been something of a rarity. Generous friends had invited me and always paid on my behalf. I told Alec that lunch was on me. We both had fish and chips, he had a half of beer. me a lime and soda and two coffees. It all came to £50. As I say, it's a long time since I had paid for lunch. I'm not sure what I was expecting and later I was recounting my experience and expressing my surprise at the bill with one of Adrian's clients. Somewhat sanguinely she asked – 'Have you been to the chippie lately? You'll pay £8.50 at Paxton's (the local Fish and Chip Shop) for one portion.' It transpired I had been fortunate. Friendly staff. Well-presented food and a hot plate. And all for £50.

Alec had been the first person I met when I left home and went away to college. He was the headmaster and my maths teacher. He had a brain that seems to mark out all mathematicians and even in his mid-eighties remained sharp of wit and twinkling of eye. I pointed to his walking stick. Grinning eyes full of humour and mischief he said: 'Oh! I don't need this – it's just useful when travelling by train and seats are at a premium'. We talked of old times. He was very proud of his two new 'Specsavers Hearing Aids'. To my untrained eye, they looked powerful enough to capture a signal from the James Webb telescope but made communication across a small table fraught with difficulty. The adjustments open to the user were infinitely variable. By the end of the meal there were millions still available – but we had managed. Hand on the plough, we'd declined to look back. He had been a huge influence in my life and one day I'll maybe share more. At my bleakest moments he seemed to appear, often somewhat miraculously. His zeal for Maths enabled me to achieve a respectable grade at A Level. He taught us that mathematics is both exciting and logical – and its logicity made it easy. He carried this same attitude in his response to the Gospel. He always said to us: You only have one question to answer – 'What would Jesus do? There's no need for further nuance. It really is simple'.

Our time together passed far too quickly. He possesses a phenomenal memory and he helped unlock so much of the memory of my past. I started to remember all sorts of things. My eyes were opening. Dimly and darkly at first, then bright colours emerged and regained memory brought a subliminal peace. Alcohol has taken its toll on my brain, and I have very little long-term memory that is easily accessed. He helped me remember so much of the years 1969 to 1980. I thought I had lost them, a pain heightened by the realisation that the damage had been self-inflicted. No Gin bottle ever mugged me. I always unscrewed the top myself. Today we meet the man, blind from birth. The pharisees want to blame the blindness on the man's sinfulness – or that of his parents. This is a step too far for Jesus. An interpretation as perverse as it was illogical. God does not punish. God brings wholeness and healing. We punish and damage ourselves. I am responsible for the damage to my memory, and I am responsible for the numbing of my conscience: for those times when I kept quiet in case I cause offence; when I passed by on the other side from the street beggar or Big Issue seller; the times I opted for a quiet life, preferring to let someone else take up the slack. It's all down to me. I have numbed my conscience by diluting my principles and diluting the Gospel. Jesus opens the eyes of those who want to see. A danger we all face is involuntary blindness brought on by neglect. My addiction damaged my memory. My indifference, laziness and prejudice in its many forms stops me loving as Jesus would have me live and love. Alec often reminded us that we would only be able to see what Jesus would do in any situation, if we remained as close as possible to him. The pharisees had tied themselves in knots when life is really very simple. Their blindness and prejudice made them closed – not closer - to Jesus and his love. They were obsessed with making religion as complicated as possible. Jesus brings simplicity. In simplicity is clarity. For us, clarity brings peace of mind. It's the difference between Heston Blumenthal and Nigella Lawson. The former goes for all manner of complications and strangeness, the latter for taste and texture - and a twinkly flirtation with the cameraman – and the viewer, using the same twinkle that accompanied Alec's excuse for his walking stick.

*(The author of this reflection is a friend of Fr Jock who lives in Northumberland)*

# PARISH REGISTER

*Welcome to the world...Jacob Alexander Cranston, born on Friday 10 March, a first child for Irene and Andrew, and first grandchild for Carolann and the late Alex....*

*Please pray for those who have died recently:*

*Robert Headrick (Karen Keast's father) - Mary Assumpta Gallagher  
Winna Byers - Caro - Dinah O'Dowd*

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

*Jim Carmichael - Margaret Reid  
Bernard Vinestock - Anne Kinane  
Denis Critchley Salmonsén  
Stefan Gronkowski - Lillian Tracey  
Carol Laidlaw - Alf McNamara  
Bridie McGlinchey - Canon Joseph  
Donlevy - Stan Mackay - Helen  
Budge - Elizabeth McEwing*

*Please pray for those Parishioners who are sick:*

## St. John's:

Una Laing, John Freeman, Kim O'Neill, Mike and Patricia Lawler, Harry Allan, baby Damon McDonald, May Thomson, Bob Kelly, Carol Simpson, Pat Dickin, Charlotte and Fred McGregor, Kitty Dykes, Kenny O'Connor, Gerry Gallagher, John Cregan, Rose Thornton, Kathleen Brown, Mike Noonan, John Whyte, Maria Pacitti, Fiona Connel, Ann Dobie, Sheelagh Dobson, Chloe Sutherland, Norah Bruce, Ruth Vizor, Mary Grady, Pauli Walker, Anna Butler, May Flynn, Vincent Knowles, young Saoirse Golden, Frances Cunningham, David Reid, Betty Dougal, Anne Thomson, Sarah McManus, Mike Burns, Sr Jennifer Lindsay, Maureen Low, Mary Slight, Norman Telfer, Kathie Gallagher, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme.

## St Mary Magdalene's:

Allan Guthrie, Sara Alkahtari, John McLaughlin, Mary McGovern (jnr), Carolynne McCann, Tom Bauld, Sam Burns, Jacqueline Marinello, Sandra Watt, Mary Cole, Chris English, Andrew Farmer, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Bridget Malone, Charles Malcolm, Margaret Ryan, Jacqueline Hannan, Julie Keegan, Rose McKay, Annie Watson, David O'Donnell, Jude Ferguson and Mary and James Muir.

## *Offertory 12 March 2023*

**St Mary Magdalene's, £508.84 total, including £158.84 Offertory and £350.00 Gift Aid.**

**St John's, £1303.55 total, including £314.83 Offertory, £293.72 Gift Aid and £695.00 online donations.**

## *Anniversaries:*

### St John's:

**Mar.18:** Eva Nolans (2002); Annie Cockburn (1993); Anne Kinane (1985); Mary Loftus (1946); **Mar.19:** Margaret Reid (2015); Bernard Vinestock (2011); Gertrude Forsyth (1986); David Philp (1984); Peter Kelly (1952); **Mar.20:** Mary Kelly (2007); Sabatino Andreucci (2006); Joseph Ufnowski (2006); Daniel Ferguson (2000); Neil Reid (1992); Josephine Lawler (1966); Canon Joseph Donlevy (1924); **Mar.21:** Kathleen Main (1991); Jean Ward (1986); Patrick Coll (1985); **Mar.22:** Hilary Bell (1998); Dennis Sweeney (1955); Rose Daly; **Mar.23:** Bridie McGlinchey (2021); Nigel Tosney (2014); James White (2013); Patricia Durkin (2008); Cecilia McLaughlin (2000); Thomas Thomson (1997); John Berry (1977); Helen McCann (1974); William Clarke (1964); **Mar.24:** Alf McNamara (2022); Stanley Mackay (2021); Sarah Waugh (2010); Barbara Conlon (2009); Margaret Phair (2007); Alexander Sharp (1997); Bernard Coll (1965); **Mar.25:** Margaret McCartney (2012); Frank Connelly (1992); John Allen (1964); Maurice Brosnan; Natalie Valente; **Mar.26:** Mary Brown Fusco (2005); Angelo Young (1995);

### St Mary Magdalene's:

**Mar.18:** Joseph Patrick Foster (1969); **Mar.23:** James Owens (1968); **Mar.24:** Mary Ann McGovern (2019); **Mar.25:** Stephen Archibald (1998); James Donoghue (1983); Kathleen Edwards (1981); **Mar.26:** Elizabeth McEwing (2019); Helen Budge (2002);

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

Allan Crombie, Cath Renwick, Kieran Smart, Jim Gray, John Cudlipp, Ellen Green, Sandy Ferguson, Sophie Robinson, Louise Young, Emma Blackman, Anthony Kramers, Tricia Scott, Harriet Wingfield Digby (aged 9), Alan Proudlock, Evelyn Walsh, Kate Mackay, Grace Stuart, Stephen Norwood, Bill and Audrey Jones, Richard Johnson, John Miller, Lydia Reid, Douglas Edington, Agnes Clarke, David Fenwick, Maurice McAllister, Rita Noonan, baby Lucas McCourt, Ava Simpkin (aged 12), Ellen Dow, Chris White, members of the McGrath Family, Maureen Hutchinson, Hans Zaunbrecher, Judith Franklin, Clare Johnston, Mary and Derek Lamarque, Anne Morris, Baby Josh Simpson, Keiran Smart (aged 15), Michael Doherty, Carol Turnbull, Jean Wylie, Mary Conefrey, Angela Khan, George and Ann McDermott, Suzanne O'Callaghan, Lucille McFadden, Tara Kuppinger, Jessica Haggerty, Charlotte O'Brien, Gwen Cullimore, young Martha Moyes (aged 5), Jennifer Kay, Margaret Troupe, Seval and Kazim Kazimoglu, Ann Watt (Mgr Rae's sister), Jan Meise, Melanie Ford, Mary Taygarth Roger Bromley, Tony Rigg, Henrietta Fraser, Stuart Falconer, Elizabeth, Colin Sandham, Elizabeth and Gordon Marron, Dawn Clarke, Katie McAnenny, John Kellagher, Colin Raasch, Annabelle Cervantes, Emily Buchanan, Ann Thorp, Dani Miniette, Peter Millar, Joan Murray Hamilton, Sr Margaret Mary, Betty Blyth, Lauren Fitzpatrick, Michael Igoe, Clare Richardson, Laura Anderson, Richard Reid, James O'Rourke, Tommy Muir, James Shepherd, Peter Hanley, Andrew Franklin, Jamie Mitchell, Edward Caulfield, Igor Rekowski, Joan Brooks, Mary Turnbull and young Ray Donovan Syme.