



Sunday 14th February—Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Sunday Mass Streamed from St Mary's at 10am

We pray for those who have died recently: Maime Malkowska, Yvonne Grassie, Mary Crighton, Louise Hayes and James Black; **and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** Catherine Ravey, Helen Dailly, Jimmy Boag, Frances Sreenan, Ellen Cameron, Mary Tinney, Ellen Squire and Sadie McIntyre We also remember all those mentioned in our books of remembrance. **Prayers for the sick:** Please continue to remember in your prayers the sick, especially those mentioned on our sick lists.

Reflections on Prayer: This Tuesday's reflection will end the series of talks on prayer. As usual, it will be available on Facebook from 7pm on Tuesday. This week we will look at prayer with the saints and also touch on some of the difficulties that we can experience in our lives of prayer.

Congratulations: To Linda and John Taylor as they celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary this weekend. Another postponement of celebrations, but only a postponement, I'm sure!

Lent 2021

We will begin this Lent as we ended Lent last year—in Lockdown. However, our Lenten journey will continue and we can offer to the Lord the additional and continuing sacrifice of being isolated physically from one another. Below are some of the plans that we have for Lent. Much of it will be through Facebook and email, but we will also look to add some Lenten resources to our newsletter.

Ash Wednesday 17th February: We will stream Mass for Ash Wednesday from St Mary's at 10am on Facebook. There is also a liturgy which is being sent out for use at home. This includes a blessing of ashes. If you can safely do so, the tradition is to burn last year's palms and use the ash for this purpose.

Gospel Reflections: Throughout Lent we will stream a series of reflections on the coming Sunday's Gospels. The first will take place on Ash Wednesday at 7pm on Facebook. The series will continue after that on Tuesday evenings at 7pm.

Stations of the Cross: There will be the opportunity to meditate together on the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 7pm.

SCIAF Lenten Campaign 2021: WEE BOX, BIG CHANGE. This year's SCIAF Lent appeal focuses on South Sudan where a generation of children with disabilities are locked out of education and trapped in a cycle of poverty. When a crisis comes, be it conflict, famine or even the coronavirus, it's vulnerable children who suffer most. They may not be able to go to school or, later on, to work and earn a living. They often face stigma and exclusion. Please give to SCIAF this Lent and help change lives. (Between 12th February and 11th May all donations through the WEE BOX, BIG CHANGE appeal will be doubled by the UK Government). As many of us will not have out collection boxes for the start of Lent, once you have read your newsletter, please tear off the strip at the top of the page overleaf and tape it on to a jar to start your Lenten alms collection. Boxes can be collected at the parish house.

SCIAF 2021

WEE BOX : BIG CHANGE

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Points on Prayer: I came across an article on prayer by Fr James Martin SJ and it might be interesting to use his paragraph headings as a summary of what we have been looking at over the past weeks (and will look at in our final session this coming Tuesday). The article is in The Tablet and is entitled, 'Why Pray?' and says that prayer is a call to accept an invitation from God. He says there are nine reasons to pray:

1. **God wants to be in a relationship with us:** God has planted a desire within us to pray because his desire is to be in relationship with us. It is summed up in a phrase, "That which you seek is causing you to seek' (perhaps even better, the one we seek is already calling out to us). Our desire to pray and to know more about prayer is a sign that God is already calling us.
2. **We want to be in relationship with God:** prayer is a searching to know who God is, who God is for me and who I am before God. In prayer I acknowledge that there is someone greater than I am.
3. **We have to pray:** It is an expression of our longing for the divine. Once we start we find that it is as natural as breathing and we can't live any more without it. In our mind, our prayer might not be perfect, but still we know we need to pray.
4. **We are people in need who recognize their need:** we all face problems and challenges and we need help.
5. **Prayer helps us:** Just as exercise keeps us in good physical shape, so prayer stops us getting out of shape spiritually. Prayer helps us be more grateful and thankful, more aware of our reliance on God.
6. **Prayer allows us to unburden ourselves:** Sharing our problems, stresses, anxieties, frustrations and anger with God can allow us to feel less alone. We can end by acknowledging that 'at least God knows how I am feeling'.
7. **Prayer allows us to praise God:** we remember before God all that we are thankful for and in this way we praise God for his goodness.
8. **Connection:** Our prayer expresses our connection with all our brothers and sisters who pray. This is our communion of saints—that when we pray, we are united with all those living and dead who pray in the name of Christ.
9. **In prayer we are transformed:** In prayer we recognize that we could always be better people and that we need God's grace to be better. In prayer I can discover the person that God truly wants me to be.

The full article by Fr James Martin SJ can be found in the edition of The Tablet magazine dated 6th February 2021.

Think Vocations / Pray for Vocations

Jesus heals a leper because of his compassion and his desire to heal him. Could your compassion for people and desire to share Christ's healing love with them lead you to give yourself to them as a priest, deacon or in a religious community? Speak to Fr Mark, your local Vocations Director, or contact *Priests for Scotland*. Visit our website or Facebook pages for more: PFS or Vocation Network Scotland.