**SAINT MARY, STAR OF THE SEA**

*28 Greenock Road, Largs, KA30 8NE*

**OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR**

*College Street, Millport, KA28 0BG*

*Tel: 01475 740019.*

*Website: rclargsandmillport.com*

YouTube: [https://www.rclargsandmillport.com/livestream](file:///Users/stmarys/Documents/LM-Bulletins/https:/www.rclargsandmillport.com/livestream)

*Parish Email: largs@gallowaydiocese.org.uk*

SC010576

*Parish Priest: Mgr. Peter Canon Magee*

*PP’s email:* [*peter.magee@gallowaydiocese.org.uk*](mailto:peter.magee@gallowaydiocese.org.uk)

**Holy Mass** (*all Masses live-streamed)*

*Largs:* Saturday Vigil, 6pm; Sunday, 10am. Weekday Mass, 10am. Mon-Fri, except 2nd Thursdays. *Millport:* Sunday, 12.15pm; 2nd Thursdays, 10am.

**WEEKLY LITURGICAL CALENDAR**

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| **COMMEMORATION** | **READINGS** |
| 6/12: Advent Feria. *For the grace of Christian courage.* | Advent, Week 2  Liturgical colour: violet |
| 7/12: St. Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor (d. 397).*For the grace of divine consolation.* | Advent, Week 2  Liturgical colour: white |
| **8/12: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.** *For the grace to grasp that God has chosen me from all eternity.* | Proper  Liturgical colours: white and blue |
| 9/12: Advent Feria. *For the grace to be free from fear.* | Advent, Week 2  Liturgical colour: violet |
| 10/12: Advent Feria. *For the grace of alertness to God’s will.* | Advent, Week 2  Liturgical colour: violet |
| *11/12: Advent Ferial.* | *Advent, Week 2*  *Liturgical colour: violet* |
| **12/12: 3rd Sunday of Advent: Gaudete Sunday.** *For the grace to exult with joy in the Lord.* | Proper  Liturgical colour: rose. |

**MASS INTENTIONS**

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| **DATE & TIME** | **INTENTION** |
| Sat 4/12, 6pm | Josephine MacLean, RD |
| Sun 5/12, 10am | All Parishioners |
| Sun 5/12, 12.15pm | Ellen Grant, D |
| Mon 6/12, 10am | Special Intention |
| Tues 7/12, 10am | James McGinty, RD |
| Wed 8/12, 10am | Joseph Donaghey, D |
| Thurs 9/12, 10am, *Millport* | Mike Hoffman, RD |
| Fri 10/12, 10am | Tony O’Brien, A |
| Sat 11/12, 6pm | Rodney Macduff, RD |
| Sun 12/12, 10am | All Parishioners |
| Sun 12/12, 12.15pm | Paul Penny, RD |

*A = Anniversary of Death; RD = Recently Deceased; D = Deceased; S = Sick; SI = Special Intention; RIP = Requiem Mass*

**Sick:** Margaret Gallagher, Lidia Tracey, Helen McShane, Peter Leitch, Colette McCafferty, Sarah McDougall, Bruce McDougall, Jessie Clements, Baby Ava May Cleary, Teresa Black, Peter McConville, Claire McConville, Lizzie Park, Ness Cranston, Francis Livingstone, Lorraine McBride, Margaret Rutherford, Martin Doherty, Ben Brownlie, Sheena Lane, Roddy Galbraith, Donal Hughes, Jonny Bilchak, James Reddoch, May Holland, Richard Dorman, Eileen Walker, Cynthia McGinty, Joseph Donnelly, Alistair Murphy, Isabella McInally, Eithne Brown, Mary Lyden, Murdoch MacDougall, Ylena Green, Peter Grant, Kenneth Reader, Toni Caughey, Mary Boyce, Debbie Wallace, Hugh Millar, Anton McCann, Rena Lee, Brian Gilligan, Mima Hamilton, Mary Chalmers, Baby Michael Allison, Stephanie Fisher, Liam McDermott, Mari Richards, Jean Gregan, Frank McCarthy, Aaron Brown, Baby Ethan Ferguson, Harry Sammons, Patricia Maxwell. **Recently Deceased**: Tessa Cassidy, Frances Dougan, David McCaffrey, Anne Corrins, Vincent Bonfanti, Edoardo Gatti, Bishop John Cunningham. **Anniversary of Death**: Ronald Mitchell, Danny Fitzpatrick.

**NOTICES**

MR. EDOARDO GATTI, RIP (Skelmorlie): I am sorry to announce the death of Mr. Gatti who passed away at Spiers Care Home, Beith, on Friday 26th November at the age of 87. May he rest in peace. Our prayers and condolences go out to Mr. Gatti’s son Edward and to all the family. The funeral will consist of a brief and private Crematorium service on Monday 13th December at 12 Noon. The morning Mass at St. Mary's that day, which will not be a funeral Mass, will be offered for his eternal repose. I encourage parishioners to make an effort to come that morning and pray for Mr. Gatti and his family.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: Wednesday 8th December. This solemnity of Our Lady marks the dawn of our salvation. When a woman tells her husband that she is pregnant, the natural reaction is one of great joy. They both begin to think and wonder about the child and his or her future. Their own love is strengthened and given new life and purpose. When Mary was conceived immaculately in the womb of St. Anne, the joy and excitement would be for humanity itself. She is given the fullness of grace not just for herself, but for the sake of the Son she would bear and therefore for our sakes, too. So, I invite everyone to do what they can to come to Mass that day and to enter into the wonder and joy it still can hold for whoever opens their heart to receive it. Mary conceived without sin, pray for …

BAPTISM OF MICHAEL DYER (St. Mary’s): On Saturday 11th December at 12 Noon, we will have the joy of welcoming into the Church, through the conferral of the Sacrament of Baptism, young Michael Dyer, son of Jane and Kenneth Dyer. It would be good if parishioners could attend the baptism as a sign of welcome to the child and of support to his parents.

LITURGY THIS WEEK: Let’s press on with our prayer for and practice of the virtue of Christian hope during this Advent season. Let’s hope in Christ, hope for Christ, hope because of Christ. Let’s arouse in ourselves a holy restlessness for Him to come and, why not, for ourselves to go to Him. The Immaculate Conception associates us with what will become Mary’s own expectation of Him during her pregnancy. She still longs for Him to come to the earth and consummate his victory over death and to usher in the general resurrection of all who have longed for Him.

St. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan in the late 4th century, worked so hard in his ministry precisely because he took the reality of Christ’s coming so seriously. Let us use his feast day and the other Advent feria days to stir our longing for Christ to come, to pray deeply in our hearts, Maranatha! Come, Lord, Jesus!

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: 1) Largs Parish Hall. Saturdays, 5-5.45pm & Monday after 10am Mass. 2) Millport, after 10am Mass on second Thursdays. In an emergency, don’t hesitate to call Fr. Peter.

PENANCE SERVICES (St. Mary’s): On Tuesday 14th December at 2pm, we will have the first of two Penance Services, with at least three priests present to hear confessions. This afternoon service is intended for those who cannot come out in the dark and also for parishioners in Millport who may want to come.

On Tuesday 21st December at 7pm, there will be a second Penance Service with four priests in attendance.

I encourage everyone who is able to come and receive the ineffable grace of absolution. It is nothing less than the power of the Spirit breathed forth by the Crucified and Risen Lord directly upon our souls to cleanse them and give them new life, to reconcile them to the life of God.

CAROL SERVICE (St. Mary’s): As well as the half-hour carol service prior to the Christmas Eve vigil Mass, we will hold another one on Thursday 16th December at 7pm, followed by tea and mincemeat pies in the hall! Come along and sing out your joy to the Lord. Together let’s make marry music and sing praise to the Lord who comes to save us!

MILLPORT ROSARY GROUP: The Rosary Group meets in the church on Thursday afternoons at 2 pm. For more information, contact Linda Reynolds 01475 530 417.

PARISHES’ ROSARY INTENTION: For a swift end to the covid-19 pandemic and a swift distribution of the vaccine to everyone, beginning with the most vulnerable.

PRAYERLINE: Please ring 07930 989820.

SAFEGUARDING MOBILE PHONE NUMBERS: For direct access to our Parish Safeguarding Coordinators: 1) Largs (Gordon Sutherland) – 07707 598929; 2) Millport (…..) – 07852 753874.

SVDP PHONE NUMBER: 07950 586214. Please direct all enquiries and requests directly to this number.

THE PRO-LIFE GROUP of St. Mary’s Parish will meet in the church hall on Monday 6th December at 7.30pm. New members will be made most welcome.

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL (St. Mary’s): Next meeting is on Tuesday 7th December at 7.30pm, preceded by Exposition from 7pm.

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY: *We continue this week a series of bulletin inserts prepared by the Diocesan Synod Team, to help educate and prepare us to celebrate the Synod in our parishes*:

**Synod Topic Four - Celebration:** The celebration of the Eucharist - i.e. Mass - is at the centre of our Catholic communities, and forms the basis for our 'walking together'. How well do communal prayer and liturgical celebrations inspire and guide our sense of community? How well do we allow and enable every member of the faithful to participate? Fr. Stephen Latham has created a short video reflection, which is available on the diocesan webpage [gallowaydiocese.org.uk/synod-news](http://gallowaydiocese.org.uk/synod-news), and at <https://youtu.be/dt5LXQ2ZJAc>, to help you consider these questions. The diocesan team will be pleased to receive all feedback on these questions at [synod@gallowaydiocese.org.uk](http://synod@gallowaydiocese.org.uk), which will also be addressed during parish synod encounters in the coming weeks.

PARISH SYNOD ENCOUNTER TIMETABLE (St. Mary’s): At the recent meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council, it was agreed that we would have our first Parish Synod Encounter on Sunday 30th January 2022, arriving for tea and coffee at 2pm and starting the formal Encounter itself at 2.30pm. It will last about 2 hours, possibly slightly longer, but will end no later than 5pm. It will consist of listening to and recording your responses to the questions presented. I will explain in coming Sundays the mechanics of the meeting so that everyone knows what to expect.

To participate in the Synod Encounter, from Sunday 12th December, you are invited to provide your name and contact number in one of three ways: 1) by writing your details on a piece of paper and putting them into the large brown box we usually use for the November lists at the back of the church; 2) by phoning the mobile number 07398 109094 which we formerly used to book a place at Mass during the lockdown (it is enough to leave a message with name and contact number); or 3) by sending an email to [largs@gallowaydiocese.org.uk](http://largs@gallowaydiocese.org.uk).

We intend to publicise the Encounter using the normal parish outlets (website, Twitter, Facebook) and, where we get permission, distributing fliers across the town, using the Largs Churches Together connections, placing an advert in the local paper and, of course, St. Mary’s Primary School.

The idea is to reach as many people as possible, Catholic or not, in response to Pope Francis’ desire to reach out to everyone, especially to those who may feel they are on the margins. I encourage you, and ask you to encourage others, including your own family members who may no longer attend church or who have felt excluded for any reason, to come and participate in our Synod Encounter on an equal footing with everyone else. No-one is excluded. No-one is better than anyone else. Everyone is invited to listen. Everyone is invited to speak. Everyone’s opinion will be taken note of and passed on to the Bishop and beyond. Clearly, for the sake of order, this will all be done according to the method the Diocese has given us and using the questionnaires provide by the Vatican for the whole Church.

There will be a special Synod Encounter process for our under-18’s. We await direction from the Diocese on how that is to be done.

I have already issued a general invitation to all the Ministers of the other denominations in Largs Churches Together to come and speak to our congregation at Mass on a Sunday or Saturday evening across the months of January to April. I will issue personal invitations to them in the New Year. Very often, as is testified in the Bible, a group can hear the voice of the Spirit more clearly from those outside. It is in this sense that I invite my colleagues to speak to us in the Spirit.

If more people sign up to the first Synod Encounter than we can accommodate comfortably in our parish hall, we will organise a further Encounter, or further Encounters as necessary, on a Sunday or Sundays subsequent to 29th January. To be fair, it will function on a first come, first served basis.

Also, from Sunday 12th December, an information sheet for participants in the Encounter will be made available at the back of the church and on the parish website. Likewise, the ten Synod questions which everyone is invited to consider and answer will be made available.

In this way, everyone will have plenty of time to reflect on the questions which Pope Francis is asking us to answer. Most importantly of all, we will have time to PRAY about them, listening to the Word of God and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. The Pope wants to hear, not primarily our personal opinions, but what the Holy Spirit is saying to and through each and every one of us.

As I said in late October at the Mass launching the parish phase of the Synod, this is a truly tremendous grace we are all receiving from the Lord in the Church at this time through the agency of Pope Francis. The Spirit of God is still speaking to the Church and wishes to remind us, as Jesus promised, of everything He Himself said and so lead us to the “fullness of truth.”

I urge us all, myself first, not to be cynical or apathetic to what the Lord is seeking to do for us, for the whole Church and even for the world by means of the Synod. Let’s take courage, be positive, turn on the prayer power, listen deeply to the Spirit in our hearts and contribute our own part to this immense opportunity of grace.

PARISH SYNOD ENCOUNTER (Millport): I am pleased to announce that a member of the Diocesan Synod Team will be organising a Parish Synod Encounter for Our Lady of Perpetual Succour’s some time in January. I want to thank the Team for the support they are offering the parish and myself. Further details will be announced soon.

LARGS COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER BUFFET: Largs Churches Together is supporting this initiative which is being led by Largs Church of the Nazarene. It is for those who would be alone on Christmas Day. The meal will be on Christmas Day itself from 1.30-3pm. Volunteers will be needed to help set up, serve and clean up after the event. You can donate your skills and time on Christmas Eve and/or Christmas Day. If you want to volunteer, either phone 079263 75708 or email [christmas@largsnaz.org](http://christmas@largsnaz.org). Donations for the event will be gratefully accepted, but there is no cost. Please give any donations to Fr. Peter in an envelope marked “Christmas Dinner.”

I have placed posters in the church porch in Largs and in the church hall. You will also find them on the parish website.

ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL: A public consultation has been launched on a bill proposed by Liam McArthur MSP to legalise assisted suicide in Scotland. It is important that as many people as possible respond to this consultation. We must send a strong message to Mr. McArthur, MSPs and the Scottish Government that assisted suicide is a dangerous and unethical practice that must never be legalised in Scotland or any other part of the UK.

The consultation is running until Wednesday 22 December 2021. Please complete the questionnaire as soon as you can and encourage others to do the same. You can find resources to help you do this at <https://www.spuc.org.uk/assisteddyingscotlandconsultation> A Consultation Guide has also been prepared by the Catholic Parliamentary Office and is available on the parish website at the following link: <https://www.rclargsandmillport.com/2021/11/30/assisted-suicide-bill-and-consultation-guide/>

GALLOWAY DIOCESE NEWS: Please click the link: <https://www.rclargsandmillport.com/2021/11/29/galloway-diocesan-news-advent-edition/>

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND CALENDARS (St. Mary’s): Now on sale at the parish repository.

BOYS’ BRIGADE POST (St. Mary’s): This will be available after both Masses this weekend. Cards for Largs only, please. 25p per card. Please put both the card and the money in the post box available.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS LITURGIES

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| *Date* | Largs | Millport |
| *Tuesday 14/12* | Penitential Service, 2pm; Confessions | --- |
| *Thursday 16/12* | Carol Service, 7pm | --- |
| *Tuesday 21/12* | Penitential Service, 7pm; Confessions | --- |
| *Christmas Eve*  *Friday 24/12* | Mass, 7.30pm , Carols from 7pm | Mass, 4.15pm  Carols from 3.45pm |
| *Christmas Day Saturday 25/12* | Mass, 10am  NO evening Mass | *No Mass* |
| *Holy Family*  *Sunday 26/12* | Mass, 10am  Mass, 6pm | Mass, 12.15pm |

**Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Scotland**

On the Season of Christmas

and the Restoration of the Mass Obligation in the Dioceses of Scotland

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Christ is born for us, come let us adore him. Christmas is approaching. It is an occasion to renew our family life, to reach out to the lonely and to celebrate the core of our faith: Emmanuel, God with us.

We have all experienced the negative impact the pandemic has had on our common liturgical celebrations and our access to the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Now that more people are attending church, the Bishops of Scotland want to encourage all the Catholic faithful to renew their covenant with the Church and her worship. Christmas seems the right time to do this. We remember how the shepherds said to each other: “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing which has happened, which the Lord has made known to us” (Lk 2:15). The Child in the manger calls to us to go with them.

Christmas Day this year falls on a Saturday. It will be followed immediately by the feast of the Holy Family on the Sunday. We therefore strongly encourage you to take advantage of the celebrations of that weekend by attending Mass on both days, or at least once.

We have often been asked about reinstating the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation. In our fluid situation, this is not an easy judgment to make. Thanks, however, to the effort and good sense of so many, our churches have proven to be safe places. So, saving any serious worsening of the situation, we believe that Christmastide provides an opportune moment to restore the obligation.

The obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation will therefore be reinstated from Sunday 2nd January, the first of the new year. That Sunday coincides with the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. It will be an occasion for us to join the wise men in offering worship to the Infant Jesus.

In accordance with the common teaching of the Church this obligation does not bind those in ill health or those otherwise impeded from attending Mass. Nor, in the context of Covid, does it bind those showing symptoms of the virus or with underlying health conditions, or those with responsibilities for people in need of special care.

The obligation to keep the Lord’s Day holy by attending Mass should not be seen as a burden. It is a summons addressed to our human freedom and to the heart of every baptised member of the Church. “There is within me”, said St Ignatius of Antioch, “a murmur of living water which says, ‘Come to the Father’”. The obligation calls us to come to the Father together with our fellow-believers, to “listen to the word of God and to take part in the Eucharist, calling to mind the passion, resurrection and glory of the Lord Jesus, and giving thanks to God who ‘has begotten [us] to a living hope, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead’” (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 106; 1 Pt 1:3). Sunday Mass can reinvigorate and refresh our Christian faith, our sense of community and our desire to live as missionary disciples in the world. This is why the Church takes this obligation seriously.

It has been good to have access to the Sacred Liturgy online, and we encourage those unable to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays to continue making use of this. Of itself, though, online participation does not fulfil the obligation. Nothing can adequately replace actual presence. At the heart of our Christian life is the event of the Word becoming flesh and our incorporation through the Sacraments into his Body. It’s to experience this that we come to church. Our current reflection on synodality points us in the same direction: we are a people who meet together because we journey together.

Let us therefore use the coming Christian season to return, with purified hearts and fresh fervour, to our sacramental and liturgical life. During Advent and beyond, there will be opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. And Christmas itself is more than a Day. It is a Season. Beyond Christmas Day, it includes the beautiful feasts of the Holy Family, of Mary, Mother of God, of the Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord. In the northern hemisphere, this season falls at a dark and low time of the year. This is not by chance. It’s precisely at this time, made darker still by so many current uncertainties, that we are offered divine energy and the joy of the human birth of a divine child. Christ’s birth means the forgiveness of our sins and our rebirth as children of God. We sense how Mary’s motherhood embraces us as well and, at the Epiphany, the star of faith lights up our hearts. As the Lord is immersed in the River Jordan the waters of our own baptism can flow in our lives with new force. We are given light and strength to live a new year in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In his Letter of the 9th of November to the Catholics of Scotland, written in the midst of CoP26, the Holy Father said, “In these challenging times, may all Christ’s followers in Scotland renew their commitment to be convincing witnesses to the joy of the Gospel and its power to bring light and hope to every effort to build a future of justice, fraternity and prosperity, both material and spiritual.”

We echo these words as we seek together to follow God’s ways and open our hearts to the gift of his Son.

*Signed by all the Bishops of Scotland.*