

4th ORDINARY SUNDAY, 30th JANUARY 2022

hearts with the balm of God. Let us not forget God's style, which must help us: closeness, compassion and tender love.

Dear brothers and sisters, may this Synod be a true season of the Spirit! For we need the Spirit, the ever new breath of God, who sets us free from every form of self-absorption, revives what is moribund, loosens shackles and spreads joy. The Holy Spirit guides us where God wants us to be, not to where our own ideas and personal tastes would lead us. Father Congar, of blessed memory, once said: "There is no need to create another Church, but to create a different Church" (*True and False Reform in the Church*). That is the challenge. For a "different Church", a Church open to the newness that God wants to suggest, let us with greater fervour and frequency invoke the Holy Spirit and humbly listen to him, journeying together as he, the source of communion and mission, desires: with docility and courage.

Come, Holy Spirit! You inspire new tongues and place words of life on our lips: keep us from becoming a "museum Church", beautiful but mute, with much past and little future. Come among us, so that in this synodal experience we will not lose our enthusiasm, dilute the power of prophecy, or descend into useless and unproductive discussions. Come, Spirit of love, open our hearts to hear your voice! Come, Holy Spirit of holiness, renew the holy and faithful People of God! Come, Creator Spirit, renew the face of the earth! Amen.

"The Church is a true mother who gives us life in Christ and, in the communion of the Holy Spirit, brings us into a common life with our brothers and sisters.

"She nourishes and sustains us with the sacraments; she illuminates us with the light of the Gospel, orients us to the good, encourages us in moments of darkness and defends us from the snares of evil, exhorting us to vigilance so as not to succumb to its seductions."

Pope Francis, 3.9.2014, General Audience

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SAINT MARY, STAR OF THE SEA
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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR
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 YouTube:
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 Parish Email: largs@gallowaydiocese.org.uk
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 Parish Priest: Mgr. Peter Canon Magee
 PP's email: 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

COMMEMORATION	READINGS
31/1: St. John Bosco, Priest (d. 1888). <i>For the perseverance in adversity.</i>	Ord. Week 4 Liturgical colour: white
1/2: St. Brigid (d. 525), Virgin Religious. <i>For the grace of tears.</i>	Ord. Week 4 Liturgical colour: white
2/2: Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. <i>For the grace to be constantly purified by the Holy Spirit.</i>	Proper Liturgical colour: white
3/2: St. Blaise, Bishop & Martyr (d. 3 rd cent). <i>For the grace of loyalty to God.</i>	Ord. Week 4 Liturgical colour: red
4/2: Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart. First Friday. <i>For the grace to sing with love for our Maker.</i>	Ord. Week 4 Liturgical colour: white
5/2: St. Agatha, Martyr.	---
6/2: 5th Ordinary Sunday. <i>For the grace of readiness to obey God's will.</i>	Proper Liturgical colour: green

MASS INTENTIONS

DATE & TIME	INTENTION
Sat 29/1, 6pm	Jack Keane, A
Sun 30/1, 10am	All Parishioners
Sun 30/1, 12.15pm	Theresa Temple, D
Mon 31/1, 10am	John Boyle, D
Tues 1/2, 10am	W. Boyce & J. Fitzpatrick, A
Wed 2/2, 10am	Sadie Corr, A
Thurs 3/3, 10am	Patrick Joseph Ward, A
Fri 4/2, 10am	Pat Kelly, A
Sat 5/2, 6pm	R. & V. Galbraith, SI
Sun 6/2, 10am	All Parishioners
Sun 6/2, 12.15pm	Patricia O'Connor, D

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,

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Roddy Galbraith, Donal Hughes, Jonny Bilchak, James Reddoch, May Holland, Richard Dorman, Eileen Walker, Cynthia McGinty, Joseph Donnelly, Alistair Murphy, Isabella McNally, 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 McLaren, Mary Chalmers, Baby Michael Allison, Stephanie Fisher, Liam McDermott, Mari Richards, Jean Gregan, Frank McCarthy, Baby Ethan Ferguson, Harry Sammons, Josephine Caughey, Henry McMonagle, Kenneth Manners, Joseph Bennett, James McCamley, Margaret Dalzell, Joyce Clark. **Recently Deceased:** Norma Baptie. **Anniversary of Death:** Pat Kelly, Avril Cullis, Jane Henry.

NOTICES

BAPTISM OF LORENZO GIORGETTI (St. Mary's): On Saturday 29th January at 12 Noon, the parish had the great joy of welcoming baby Lorenzo into the Church through the Sacrament of Baptism. We assure his parents, Marino and Valentina, of our prayers for Lorenzo and for them. May he flourish and prosper in the grace of God.

LITURGY THIS WEEK: The heart of our weekday celebrations this week is the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Simeon acclaims him as the Light of All Nations on a date which is right in the middle of winter, be that the season or the condition of our hearts. His Light shines through the great John Bosco who laboured for under-privileged children and was founder of the Salesians. It also shines in the famous Irish Saint, St. Brigid, and in the equally famous St. Blaise. The former was a formidable woman of monastic life; the latter was martyred for the faith. Friday is First Friday, and we will offer a Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Confessions in the church *hall* by appointment only. Regular confession times in St. Mary's will recommence on Saturday 19th February from 5-5.45pm. In Millport, it remains as before, after the 10am Mass on 2nd Thursdays. Please telephone or email me if you are in need.

BLESSING OF THROATS: As per tradition, I will bless parishioners individually, invoking the intercession of St. Blaise, after the final hymn of 10am Mass on Thursday 3rd February.

AGAPE (St. Mary's): This Thursday, 3rd February, from 6.30-8pm. We remember the night He was betrayed for us and the agape he poured out for us in the Institution of the Eucharist and the washing of the feet. Give him some of your time on Thursday evening to bask in that love and offer some back.

SUNDAY DEVOTIONS (St. Mary's): Sunday 13th February at 7pm. Rosary & Benediction.

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between priests and laity. Why do I insist on this? Because sometimes there can be a certain elitism in the presbyteral order that detaches it from the laity; the priest ultimately becomes more a "landlord" than a pastor of a whole community as it moves forward. This will require changing certain overly vertical, distorted and partial visions of the Church, the priestly ministry, the role of the laity, ecclesial responsibilities, roles of governance and so forth.

A second risk is intellectualism. Reality turns into abstraction and we, with our reflections, end up going in the opposite direction. This would turn the Synod into a kind of study group, offering learned but abstract approaches to the problems of the Church and the evils in our world. The usual people saying the usual things, without great depth or spiritual insight, and ending up along familiar and unfruitful ideological and partisan divides, far removed from the reality of the holy People of God and the concrete life of communities around the world.

Finally, the temptation of complacency, the attitude that says: "We have always done it this way" (Evangelii Gaudium, 33) and it is better not to change. That expression – "We have always done it that way" – is poison for the life of the Church. Those who think this way, perhaps without even realizing it, make the mistake of not taking seriously the times in which we are living. The danger, in the end, is to apply old solutions to new problems. A patch of rough cloth that ends up creating a worse tear (cf. Mt 9:16). It is important that the synodal process be exactly this: a process of becoming, a process that involves the local Churches, in different phases and from the bottom up, in an exciting and engaging effort that can forge a style of communion and participation directed to mission.

And so, brothers and sisters, let us experience this moment of encounter, listening and reflection as a season of grace that, in the joy of the Gospel, allows us to recognize at least three opportunities. First, that of moving not occasionally but structurally towards a synodal Church, an open square where all can feel at home and participate. The Synod then offers us the opportunity to become a listening Church, to break out of our routine and pause from our pastoral concerns in order to stop and listen. To listen to the Spirit in adoration and prayer. Today how much we miss the prayer of adoration; so many people have lost not only the habit but also the very notion of what it means to worship God! To listen to our brothers and sisters speak of their hopes and of the crises of faith present in different parts of the world, of the need for a renewed pastoral life and of the signals we are receiving from those on the ground. Finally, it offers us the opportunity to become a Church of closeness. Let us keep going back to God's own "style", which is closeness, compassion and tender love. God has always operated that way. If we do not become this Church of closeness with attitudes of compassion and tender love, we will not be the Lord's Church. Not only with words, but by a presence that can weave greater bonds of friendship with society and the world. A Church that does not stand aloof from life, but immerses herself in today's problems and needs, bandaging wounds and healing broken

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doctrinal, theological and pastoral reflections that were part of the reception of Vatican II, Saint Paul VI sought to distil in those two words – communion and mission – “the main lines enunciated by the Council”. Commemorating the opening of the Council, he stated that its main lines were in fact “communion, that is, cohesion and interior fullness, in grace, truth and collaboration... and mission, that is, apostolic commitment to the world of today” (Angelus of 11 October 1970), which is not the same as proselytism.

In 1985, at the conclusion of the Synod marking the twentieth anniversary of the close of the Council, Saint John Paul II also reiterated that the Church’s nature is *koinonia* (= *communio*), which gives rise to her mission of serving as a sign of the human family’s intimate union with God. He went on to say: “It is most useful that the Church celebrate ordinary, and on occasion, also extraordinary synods”. These, if they are to be fruitful, must be well prepared: “it is necessary that the local Churches work at their preparation with the participation of all” (Address at the Conclusion of the II Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, 7 December 1985). And this brings us to our third word: participation. The words “communion” and “mission” can risk remaining somewhat abstract, unless we cultivate an ecclesial praxis that expresses the concreteness of synodality at every step of our journey and activity, encouraging real involvement on the part of each and all. I would say that celebrating a Synod is always a good and important thing, but it proves truly beneficial if it becomes a living expression of “being Church”, of a way of acting marked by true participation.

This is not a matter of form, but of faith. Participation is a requirement of the faith received in baptism. As the Apostle Paul says, “in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Cor 12:13). In the Church, everything starts with baptism. Baptism, the source of our life, gives rise to the equal dignity of the children of God, albeit in the diversity of ministries and charisms. Consequently, all the baptized are called to take part in the Church’s life and mission. Without real participation by the People of God, talk about communion risks remaining a devout wish. In this regard, we have taken some steps forward, but a certain difficulty remains and we must acknowledge the frustration and impatience felt by many pastoral workers, members of diocesan and parish consultative bodies and women, who frequently remain on the fringes. Enabling everyone to participate is an essential ecclesial duty! All the baptized, for baptism is our identity card.

The Synod, while offering a great opportunity for a pastoral conversion in terms of mission and ecumenism, is not exempt from certain risks. I will mention three of these. The first is formalism. The Synod could be reduced to an extraordinary event, but only externally; that would be like admiring the magnificent facade of a church without ever actually stepping inside. The Synod, on the other hand, is a process of authentic spiritual discernment that we undertake, not to project a good image of ourselves, but to cooperate more effectively with the work of God in history. If we want to speak of a synodal Church, we cannot remain satisfied with appearances alone; we need content, means and structures that can facilitate dialogue and interaction within the People of God, especially

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MILLPORT ROSARY GROUP: Thursdays at 2pm in the church. For more information, contact 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 01475 673 682.

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.

DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD: Are you thinking about being a Priest in 2022? The Diocese of Galloway is now inviting enquiries from those considering applying for seminary. For more information please contact Fr. Martin Chambers at: martin.chambers@gallowaydiocese.org.uk

REGISTRATION FORMS FOR NEW PARISHIONERS: A new registration form is available at the back of both churches. If you have recently arrived, WELCOME! Please fill in a form and hand it to Fr. Peter or send it into the parish office (details above).

ST MARY’S PRO LIFE GROUP would like to thank all those who donated gifts for a baby at the Christmas Masses. Your generosity is much appreciated and all gifts will be donated to The Cardinal’s Initiative.

ST. COLUMBA’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH CANDLEMAS SERVICE: This Sunday, 30th January at 6.30pm. All are welcome.

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY (St. Mary’s): It is my hope to move forward with our parish Synod Encounter in March. There is a meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council on 8th February at which we will firm up the date. In the meantime, even if you intend to participate in the Encounter, there are also two other options available to you.

If you would like to attend an online Encounter, please email synod@gallowaydiocese.org.uk and indicate what days and times are suitable for you.

There is also an online questionnaire which can be completed either by individuals or small groups, e.g. family members. It is available for download at <https://form.jotform.com/213292942112954> or by visiting gallowaydiocese.org.uk/synod.

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SYNOD ON SYNODALITY (Millport): Details of a parish Synod Encounter have still to be fixed in conjunction with the Diocesan Synod Team. I will inform everyone as soon as I know more. In the meantime, please see the other two options possible as described just above.

THE BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF SCOTLAND (BCOS) will host a conference called, 'Synodality in the Life & Mission of the Church', at 2pm on Saturday 12 February. The keynote speaker will be Cardinal Mario Grech, General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops. This online event will be streamed on the BCOS YouTube channel at bit.ly/BCOSYouTube

RE-OPENING OF PARISH HALL AND ACTIVITIES (St. Mary's): Taking heed of government and diocesan guidance, and after consulting the parish Covid Team, I am pleased to announce that from Sunday 20th February inclusive, normal parish hall and other activities can resume. All safety measures should still be carefully observed: ventilation, masks, hand sanitising, careful self-distancing where appropriate. I would ask all those in charge of organising activities to let me know when they wish to recommence, and I will advertise it in the bulletin.

END OF NAME-TAKING AT CHURCH: From this coming Saturday Vigil Mass in St. Mary's, and from the 12.15pm Mass this coming Sunday in Millport, a register of those in attendance will no longer be required. Diocesan advice is as follows: "The names and contact details on lists have not been requested by Test and Protect, even when a priest has been contacted to alert him of a positive Covid-19 case in church. As a result they no longer seem to be particularly useful to the contact tracing process, and may be discontinued. It is, however, important to make available the Test and Protect QR code in place of the manual collection of contact details. This also makes the work of stewards safer and easier, and lessens the risk of transmission between people standing in queues."

I therefore urge everyone to make the effort to use the NHS QR Codes displayed in St. Mary's (in the church porch and on all benches in the church) and in Our Lady of Perpetual Succour's (at the entrance).

The following brief instruction on how to use the QR code is offered by the NHS Covid-19 website: "When you visit a venue, check to see if there is an NHS COVID-19 app QR poster on display. Open your NHS COVID-19 app and tap 'Venue Check In'. Now use your smartphone camera to scan the QR code on the poster. The time and date of your visit will be stored on the app."

Should an outbreak of Covid-19 be traced back to our churches, a general announcement will be made to say what the occasion was and to advise those who were in attendance to get tested.

AFGHANISTAN AID: At all Masses on the weekends of 12/13 and 19/20 February, there will be a second collection for Afghanistan. The horrors we all saw on TV last

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August are continuing in different forms. It's just that the News cycle has lost interest in them. Let's dig deep into our pockets and show that our memory of the plight of these fellow human beings has not gone blank but is still marked with Christian love for them. Gift Aid envelopes will be available and our donations will reach the Afghans via SCIAF. This collection is separate from the usual collection for SCIAF which we will take up in Lent, during the month of March.

BULLETIN NOTICES: All notices should be submitted to the parish house by no later than **12 Noon on Wednesdays**.

SPEECH OF POPE FRANCIS **Reflecting on the Synodal Path** Rome, 9th October 2021

Dear brothers and sisters,

Thank you for being here for the opening of the Synod. You have come by many different roads and from different Churches, each bearing your own questions and hopes. I am certain the Spirit will guide us and give us the grace to move forward together, to listen to one another and to embark on a discernment of the times in which we are living, in solidarity with the struggles and aspirations of all humanity. I want to say again that the Synod is not a parliament or an opinion poll; the Synod is an ecclesial event and its protagonist is the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit is not present, there will be no Synod.

May we experience this Synod in the spirit of Jesus' fervent prayer to the Father on behalf of his disciples: "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21). This is what we are called to: unity, communion, the fraternity born of the realization that all of us are embraced by the one love of God. All of us, without distinction, and in particular those of us who are bishops. As Saint Cyprian wrote: "We must maintain and firmly uphold this unity, above all ourselves, the bishops who preside in the Church, in order to demonstrate that the episcopate is itself one and undivided" (*De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate*, 5). In the one People of God, therefore, let us journey together, in order to experience a Church that receives and lives this gift of unity, and is open to the voice of the Spirit.

The Synod has three key words: communion, participation and mission. Communion and mission are theological terms describing the mystery of the Church, which we do well to keep in mind. The Second Vatican Council clearly taught that communion expresses the very nature of the Church, while pointing out that the Church has received "the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God, and is, on earth, the seed and beginning of that kingdom" (*Lumen Gentium*, 5). With those two words, the Church contemplates and imitates the life of the Blessed Trinity, a mystery of communion *ad intra* and the source of mission *ad extra*. In the wake of the