

ST. MARK'S PARISH

12th November 2023 – 32nd Sunday of Year A

Parish Clergy: Rev Seán Bradley & Rev Nicholas Hodgson

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MASS DATES TIMES INTENTIONS

Saturday 11th November Vigil	5:00pm	Grace Cooney (RIP)
Sunday 12th November	10:00am	People of the Parish
Monday 13th November	10:00am	John Hanlon (Ann)
Tuesday 14th November	10:00am	Ryan Mutch (RIP)
Thursday 16th November	10:00am	Cathie, Alec & Jim Paterson (RIP)
Friday 17th November	10:00am	Gilbert Attard (RIP)
<i>Saturday 18th November Vigil</i>	<i>5:00pm</i>	<i>People Of The Parish</i>
<i>Sunday 19th November</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>Mary Moran</i>
CONFESSIONS available before Sat Vigil 4.15-4.45pm and before Sun Mass 9.15-9.45am or upon request after any of the weekday Masses.		
EUCARISTIC ADORATION: Every Tuesday & Friday Morning 09.15am – 09.45am Every Thursday Evening 7pm-8pm		

KEEP YOUR LAMP BURNING

A class of schoolchildren were told the story of the ten bridesmaids and then asked to comment on it. One little boy said he thought the wise ones were horrible because they should have shared their oil with the foolish ones. After all, everyone kept saying how important it is to share! When we read the parables there are traps we can easily fall into. One of the most common traps is to try and find a meaning in every little detail of the parable. This is what the little boy was doing in his own way. But he was probably too young to appreciate the wider picture. There is no lasting significance in the number five or ten for the bridesmaids. No deep meaning in the fact that it was oil which was needed. No great importance to the time, midnight, or that the bridegroom was late. So what is Jesus trying to tell us? It's actually about life and death. Each of us has been invited to a wedding feast, an everlasting one in heaven. We have to ensure that we make all the necessary preparations in life and turn up ready for the event, whenever it may be. Now the foolish bridesmaids in the story were not excluded from the wedding due to a momentary lapse of concentration. They were habitually ill-prepared, whereas the wise ones had remained alert for whenever the call might come. It is ludicrous to suggest that God would refuse heaven to a faithful person who just happened to stray the day before their death. What marked the five foolish bridesmaids out was a lifetime of half-heartedness in their preparation for the marriage feast of heaven. Like them, we too can find ourselves practising our faith out of duty or habit - which can be understood to a certain extent – but when we stop feeling the sense of joyful expectation that our religion offers us – a different mindset can begin to unveil. As Advent approaches, we are reminded that Jesus is inviting us not to a funeral but to a joyful wedding. Is it likely, having spent our lives putting oil in our spiritual lamps, that we will be excluded from the celebrations? So, let's look forward to the invitation.



WELCOME If you are just visiting our parish today or if this is the first time you have been to Mass for a while, welcome back! We hope our time together unites us in God's love.

SECOND COLLECTION next weekend (26/11) in aid of Catholic Education. There will be boxes at the back of the church for anyone wishing to donate to this cause.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION 2023/2024 for children who are not attending a catholic school and would like to enrol for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion or Confirmation in 2024, please contact the Parish Office via email or phone and request an application form.

ST MARKS CHRISTMAS PARTY Grown-ups - Join us on Saturday evening **December 9th** at 6.30pm in the hall for a wee social gathering over a Hot Buffet. **Grown-ups** - Join us on Sunday morning **December 10th** for our Children's Christmas Party at 11.30am – 1pm (ish) in the hall. Entertainment will be provided for each Shin-Dig. **Grown-ups** - tickets £10pp – please put in an envelope with your name – or names on it and give to any of the names listed below. **Grown-ups** – no charge (but need to know Name, Age and Gender – for Santa). If anyone would like to donate a prize for our Grown-ups raffle OR a wee gift for our children's party on Sunday morning please contact Jacquie George, Johnny Bhoys McDade, Fr Nick or Fr Seán.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING: November 100 club draw results and prizes are: **1st: #14 Eddie Hoy £30. 2nd: #01 Brian Monaghan £10 and 3rd: #41 Denis Boyle £10.** Numbers are still available for anyone wishing to join. Home made cloth Advent Calendars will also be on sale as we lead into the season of Advent.

CHRISTMAS CARDS and Advent Candles are now on sale at the back of the church for anyone thinking of sending Christmas wishes to a friend, family or loved ones at this very special time of the year.

WILLING HELPERS The next day for group cleaning of the church will be Tuesday 21/11/2023 after the morning Mass. All help is appreciated if only for an hour. Cleaning is typically finished well before noon. Tea and biscuits afterwards!

2nd COLLECTION in aid of St. Mark's Building Fund last weekend realised a combined donation of £2,665. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

COPPERS WEIGHING YOU DOWN? You can put them in a jar at the back of the church in aid of the building fund. All donations are gratefully received.

<i>St. Mark's</i>	<i>ATTENDANCE</i>	<i>OFFERTORY</i>	<i>Thank you, without your contributions the work of God's church would not be possible</i>
<i>VIGIL</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>£218</i>	
<i>SUNDAY</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>£427</i>	

St. Marks's, Oxfords is a parish of The Archdiocese of St Andrew's & Edinburgh, a charity registered in Scotland - Number SC008540

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: A reading from the book of Wisdom [6:12-16]

Wisdom is found by those who look for her.

Wisdom is bright, and does not grow dim. By those who love her she is readily seen, and found by those who look for her. Quick to anticipate those who desire her, she makes herself known to them. Watch for her early and you will have no trouble; you will find her sitting at your gates. Even to think about her is understanding fully grown; be on the alert for her and anxiety will quickly leave you. She herself walks about looking for those who are worthy of her and graciously shows herself to them as they go, in every thought of theirs coming to meet them.

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Responsorial Psalm [Ps 62:2-8]

Response: **For you my soul is thirsting, O God, my God.**

O God, you are my god, for you I long;
For you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you
Like a dry, weary land without water.

So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
To see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life,
My lips will speak your praise.

So I will bless you all my life,
In your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
My mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you.
On you I muse through the night
For you have been my help;
In the shadow of your wings I rejoice.



Second Reading: A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians [4:13-18]

God will bring with him those who have died in Jesus.

We want you to be quite certain, brothers, about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the other people who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him. We can tell you this from the Lord's own teaching, that any of us who are left alive until the Lord's coming will not have any advantage over those who have died. At the trumpet of God, the voice of the archangel will call out the command and the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and then those of us who are still alive will be taken up in the clouds, together with them, to meet the Lord in the air. So we shall stay with the Lord for ever. With such thoughts as these you should comfort one another.

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Alleluia, alleluia!

Stay awake and stand ready,

because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming

Alleluia!

Gospel: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew [25:1-13].

The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him.

Jesus told this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven will be like this: Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were sensible: the foolish ones did take their lamps, but they brought no oil, whereas the sensible ones took flasks of oil as well as their lamps. The bridegroom was late, and they all grew drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight there was a cry, "The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him." At this, all those bridesmaids woke up and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, "Give us some of your oil: our lamps are going out." But they replied, "There may not be enough for us and for you; you had better go to those who sell it and buy some for yourselves." They had gone off to buy it when the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding hall and the door was closed. The other bridesmaids arrived later. "Lord, Lord," they said "open the door for us." But he replied, "I tell you solemnly, I do not know you." So stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour.'

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