

ST. MARK'S PARISH

10th December 2023 – 2nd Sunday of Advent Year B

Parish Clergy: Rev Seán Bradley & Rev Nicholas Hodgson

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PARISH NEWS

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.

GOODBYE, SAFE JOURNEY, GOD BLESS AND THANK YOU to our Saturday vigil organist Bernadetta who will soon be returning home having spent the last year studying here in Edinburgh. Thank you for your time, effort and commitment to enhancing and enriching our vigil celebrations over the past year and the two beautiful stole's as a gift from your mother.

CHRISTMAS TIMETABLES for St. Mark's are now available at the back of the church to take away with you. Christmas Day and Vigil Mass times for our parish and all churches in the Archdiocese can be viewed at www.archedinburgh.org/christmas-day-mass-times/

2024 ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC DIRECTORY is now available at the back of the church for anyone interested. Price £3 each.

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.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING: December 100 club draw results and prizes are: **1st: #27 Ann Tobin** £30. **2nd: #21 Ann Allan** £10 and **3rd: #19 Aileen Hooligan** £10. Numbers are still available for anyone wishing to join. Christmas Craft items are now also on sale.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION normally held weekly on Thursday evening from 7-8pm will now be held on a monthly basis on the first Thursday of each month from 7-8pm in the evening.

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. Advent Calendars are also on sale - the proceeds of which will go to SCIAF & Mary's Meals.

2nd COLLECTION in aid of St. Mark's Building Fund last weekend realised a combined donation of £2,532. Your support is greatly needed and appreciated. Thank you.

WILLING HELPERS The next day for group cleaning of the church will be Tuesday 19/12/2023 after the morning Mass. All help is appreciated if only for an hour. Cleaning is typically finished well before noon. Tea and biscuits afterwards!

MASS DATES TIMES INTENTIONS

Saturday 9th December Vigil	5:00pm	
Sunday 10th December	10:00am	People of the Parish
Monday 11th December	10:00am	
Tuesday 12th December	10:00am	John Hanlon (Ann)
Thursday 14th December	10:00am	Funeral Maureen M'Kay
Friday 15th December (School Mass)	10:00am	James Freeman (RIP)
<i>Saturday 16th December Vigil</i>	<i>5:00pm</i>	<i>People of the Parish</i>
<i>Sunday 17th December</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>Nelly Lumanglas (Ann)</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.		
EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: Every Tuesday & Friday Morning 09.15am – 09.45am 1 st Thursday of Every Month 7pm-8pm		

HALF MEASURES?

There are some people for whom half measures just aren't good enough. We all know of people who put us to shame by their untiring commitment to the cause they have espoused. It might be someone who has been cured of cancer and now spends all their time raising funds for research. Perhaps it's a politician risking their life by opposing corruption in their country, or someone campaigning tirelessly for the voiceless. Maybe it's just an ordinary person who spends their entire life looking after a bed-ridden family member. Whatever they do, they put all their energy into it.

John the Baptist was such a person. He was no quiet preacher, not content to give his message in an unobtrusive way nor unconcerned by those who rejected it or failed to hear it. He was a disturbing character. Living on the edge of the desert, wearing strange clothes and eating a weird diet, his message struck panic into people, causing vast crowds to repent and to come and be baptised in the Jordan. The kingdom of heaven is close at hand was his rally call. When the Pharisees and Sadducees claimed to have repented he turned on them. If you really knew what this kingdom of heaven was all about then you wouldn't be so self-satisfied. They had learnt how to practise their religion half-heartedly while seeming to keep all the rules. So what about us? As Advent begins do we feel any sense of urgency about our need for continual repentance, or do we think of it as just another milestone in the calendar? Will the word of God this Advent make any difference to our attitude? Will it affect the way we behave towards God and each other? Do we most resemble the Jewish leaders taking their religion in their stride or the crowds who heard John's message and realised that there can be no half measures when it comes to changing the way we live? Advent is the time for making our choice.



<i>St. Mark's</i>	ATTENDANCE	OFFERTORY	<i>Thank you, without your contributions the work of God's church would not be possible</i>
VIGIL	70	£200	
SUNDAY	165	£460	

St. Mark's, Oxgangs 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 prophet Isaiah [40:1-5.9-11]

Prepare a way for the Lord.

Console my people, console them, says your God. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes. A voice cries, Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, Here is your God. Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

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Responsorial Psalm [Ps 84:9-14 v 8]

Response: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land.

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps.



Second Reading: A reading from the second letter of St Peter [3:8-14]

We are waiting for the new heavens and new earth.

There is one thing, my friends that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

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Alleluia, alleluia!

**Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight,
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!**

Gospel: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark [1:1-8]

Make his paths straight.

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

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