

ST. MARK'S PARISH

17th December 2023 – 3rd 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.

RIP Your prayers are asked for the repose of the souls of **Maureen McKay** whose Requiem Funeral Mass was held last Thursday 14th Dec, for **Norah White** whose Requiem Funeral Mass will be held on Tuesday 19th Dec at 10am and thereafter to Mt. Vernon Cemetery for 11.30am and for **Ian James McNaught** whose Requiem Funeral Mass will be held on Friday 29th Dec at 2pm and thereafter to Mortonhall (Pentland) for 3.30pm. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

THANK YOU to all those who worked so tirelessly ensuring the success and enjoyment of our Grown up's Christmas party on Saturday night and also our Children's Christmas Party on Sunday morning. Your time, efforts and generosity were very much appreciated by everyone who came and a really great time was had by all.

Christmas Day and Vigil Mass times for St. Mark's and all churches in the Archdiocese can be viewed at www.archedinburgh.org/christmas-day-mass-times/ Please note, Attendance at the Christmas Eve Vigil Mass will NOT fulfil the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. The Christmas Eve Vigil and the Christmas Day masses fulfil our Christmas obligation only. There will be no mass on Tuesday 26th or Wednesday 27th of December. Outside of these two changes the usual mass timetable will apply during the week, please consult your newsletter.

CAROL SERVICE will be held before the Christmas Eve Vigil Mass beginning at 4.30pm. Come and join us in this enjoyable festive preparation for Christmas Mass.

BACK CAR PARK GATE will be open for our 5pm Christmas Eve Vigil Mass and our 10am Christmas Day Mass for anyone wishing to use the back Car Park.

SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION Fr. Nick and Fr. Seán will be available to hear confession during a service of reconciliation on Thursday 21st December at 7pm.

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.

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!

<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>70</i>	<i>£200</i>	
<i>SUNDAY</i>	<i>165</i>	<i>£460</i>	

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

MASS DATES TIMES INTENTIONS

<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>
Monday 18th December	10:00am	David Kiltie (RIP)
Tuesday 19th December	10:00am	Funeral Norah White
Thursday 21st December	10:00am	Thomas Sheridan (Ann)
Thursday 21st December	7:00pm	Reconciliation Service
Friday 22nd December	10:00am	Mary Burns (RIP)
<i>Saturday 23rd December Vigil</i>	<i>5:00pm</i>	<i>People of the Parish</i>
<i>Sunday 24th December</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>Gordon McGhee (Ann)</i>
<i>Sunday 24th Christmas Eve Vigil</i>	<i>5:00pm</i>	<i>Deceased parishioners of St. Mark's</i>
<i>Monday 25th Christmas Day</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>People of the Parish</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 1 st Thursday of Every Month 7pm-8pm		

POINTING BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

It's good to recognise that it's OK to be Number Two. The whole purpose of John the Baptist's life was to play second fiddle to his cousin, Jesus. His preaching and his ministry pointed to someone whose shoes he wasn't even worthy to undo. He was a witness to someone greater than himself. Yet his own work prepared the way for the Lamb of God. John the Baptist knew who he wasn't. He made it clear that he was not the Messiah. He also knew who he was. When they asked him who he was, he could have built himself up, but he simply said that he was just a passing voice that points to the "Word". Voices come and go, and some of them are never heard. Jesus is described as the "Word", the "message" of God that has existed from all eternity, the fullness of God's plan for humanity. In the run-up to Christmas, we are called to bear witness to the fact that behind all the shallow glossiness of the season and the one-dimensional celebration of indulgence there lies a reality that shocks some and thrills others: our God has taken flesh and become one of us so that he might teach us how to be like him. This is what we prepare for during Advent and celebrate at Christmas. And while we do so we point beyond the obvious to someone and something that only faith can see.



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LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: A reading from the prophet Isaiah [61:1-2.10-11]

I exult for joy in the Lord.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.

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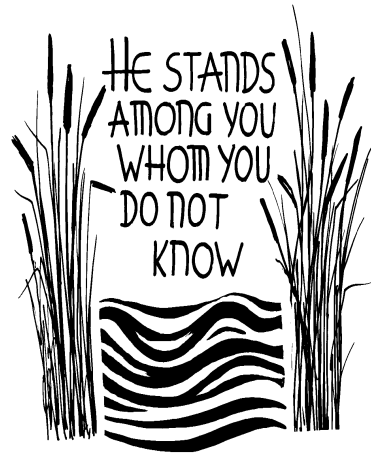
Responsorial Psalm [Lk 1:46-50. 53-54]

Response: My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy.



Second Reading: A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the

Thessalonians [5:16-24] *May you all be kept safe, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of the Lord.*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus. Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything - hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil. May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

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**The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.
Alleluia!**

Gospel: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John [1:6-8. 19-28]

There stands among you - unknown to you - the one who is coming after me.

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light. This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.' Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you - unknown to you - the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

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