



*Drawing by John R Hume,
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St Mary Magdalene's Church

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PARISH MOTTO - 'THE BEST IS YET TO COME'

2nd Sunday of the Year 14th of January 2024

Dear Parishioners and Friends of our parish, we are so happy that you could join us today to celebrate the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Today's Gospel reading presents the calling of the apostles, Andrew and his brother Simon, whom Jesus later names Peter. We find in scripture two different descriptions of the calling of the first apostles. In the Gospel of John, Andrew is a disciple of John the Baptist. He is present when the Baptist points to Jesus and says, "There is the Lamb of God." Andrew stays with Jesus for the rest of the day, then he goes to inform his brother, Simon, who goes with Andrew to meet this Jesus. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mark, Matthew and Luke, Jesus sees Simon and Andrew fishing. He calls them, and they drop everything to follow Him. He then calls James and John who are in their boat mending their nets. They also follow Him. So which account is correct? How did the call to the first apostles really take place? We do not know.

Actually, how the story of the call of the first apostles is framed is not as important as this: Jesus decided to call people, common everyday people, to follow Him and then to continue his mission to the end of the earth. The call to the disciples was the first step in the formation of the Church. The Church would not be fully formed until it received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, but the initial call was the beginning. It is a great miracle of faith that twelve ordinary people should be able to spread the New Way of Jesus Christ throughout the world. Fishermen, a tax collector, a political zealot and just plain everyday people who seldom traveled, literally went to the end of the earth. They spoke about

For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

Here I am, Lord!

I come to do your will.

Gospel Acclamation

Speak, Lord, y

our servant is listening:

you have the message of eternal life.



Jesus and people listened, and pressed them to hear more about the Christ. The deaths of the apostles, all martyred with the possible exception of John, did not slow down the movement.

If anything, the blood of the martyrs strengthened the New Way. Andrew and Peter, James and John, and all the rest listened to the call and gave witness to Jesus with their lives. Jesus chose ordinary, everyday people to continue His work. He still does. He chooses you and me to testify with our lives that the Kingdom of God is at hand. To do this we have to be the very best version of ourselves. It would be wonderful if we were always the same, but we are not, at least those of us who have not attained saintliness are not always the same. We behave one way with one group of people, but another way with another group of people. We have the church persona, the work persona, the school persona, the hanging out with friends persona, and many other versions of ourselves, including those we think no one knows about, except the millions of people who can easily find evidence of the websites we visit.

Because we often attempt to allow various versions of ourselves to exist together, we often feel disjointed and unhinged. We are. But when we are our best selves, and we allow our best selves to dominate our lives, then we feel at peace, no matter what challenge we may face. We have been chosen to continue the work of Jesus Christ. First, though, we must know the Lord. Andrew first spent the

afternoon with Jesus before he called his brother, Simon. Simon and the other disciples who would become apostles, spent three years with the Lord. They experienced His healing and other miracles. They heard his preaching to all the people and his particular teaching for them.

They knew Him. We need to respond to the call of the Lord by first dedicating ourselves to knowing Him. We do this by having a strong prayer life and a consistent prayer life. We need to be serious about our morning and evening prayers. More than this, we have the Sacred Scriptures, the Bible, which are always new to each of us. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God, reaches out to each of us in unique ways. We need to be consistent in our prayer life. We need to make a prayer schedule and keep it. There is a wonderful upward spiral in the spiritual life. The more we pray, the more spiritual we become. The more spiritual we become, then the more we pray. Our very union with God will be evident in the way we reach out to others, care for others, and in the way we live our lives. Others will come to the Lord because they can sense the presence of His Spirit within us. We have been called like the first disciples to know Jesus and proclaim the Good News that God is ultimately in control. We have been called to be Church.

Have a wonderful week – stay well. Please keep me in your prayers as you all are always in mine.

Fr Bogdan SDS

PRAYERS

Please prayer for the repose of the souls of all whose anniversaries occur about this time.

Eternal rest grant unto their souls, O Lord. May they rest in peace. Amen.

Thank You!!!

We thank you for your spectacular generosity. Your generous support of our Parish and your help with the needs of our community is greatly appreciated!

Collections

Sunday 7th January 2024 – £703.50.

Second Collection for Justice & Peace – £283.50.

Votive Candles – £46..

Priest's Musing

After suffering a heart attack and having quadruple bypass surgery, a man woke up to find himself in a Catholic hospital with nuns taking care of him. As they nursed him back to health, one of the nuns asked him if he had health insurance. "No," he replied. "No health insurance." "Do you have any money in the bank?" asked the nun. "No. No money in the bank." The nun asked, "Do you have any relatives you could ask for help?" The man replied, "I only have a spinster sister, who is a nun." At this, the nun became irritated. "Nuns are not spinsters. Nuns are married to God!" "Okay then," said the man. "Send the bill to my brother-in-law."

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

"You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbour as yourself." (Lk 10: 27) The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2024 was taken from the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke, reflects the connection between love of God and love of neighbor with a particular concern for challenging the boundaries of who is considered "neighbour". In this pericope, Jesus is questioned as to the path to eternal life. His answer is not to only observe the commandments, but to also imitate the love of God in the giving of self for another. It is a call for charity, mercy, justice, and unity.

Healing Service / Blessing of the Sick

It was proposed that a quarterly Blessing of the Sick should be held during the 10am Sunday Mass. The next blessing will take place during Mass on 21st January 2024.



The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

"Is anyone among you sick? They should call for the priests of the church, and he will pray over them and anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise them up. If they have committed any sins, they will be forgiven" — Letter of St. James 5:14-15.

Suffering and illness affect us in body and spirit. If one member suffers in the Body of Christ, which is the Church, all the members suffer with that member. In times of frailty, sickness, treatment, or surgeries the parish family assures the infirmed of our care and support through our prayer, personal visits and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is for all who face a serious illness or surgery or who are impaired by old age. It is distinct from the "Last Rites," or Viaticum, in which the Church offers Holy Communion as food for the journey to life eternal. One may celebrate the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick many times if needed for strength and healing in mind, body and spirit. In this sacrament of anointing, Christ strengthens our faith and bestows God's grace in a time of anxiety and pain.

SAINTS DAYS THIS WEEK

Monday 15th January
2nd Week of the Year

Tuesday 16th January
2nd Week of the Year

Wednesday 17th January
2nd Week of the Year

Thursday 18th January
2nd Week of the Year

Friday 19th January
2nd Week of the Year

Saturday 20th January
2nd Week of the Year



ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN HOSPITAL? DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS IN HOSPITAL?

Name _____ Hospital _____ Ward _____

Please complete/ tear off and hand it to Fr Bogdan after Mass