

*Drawing by John R Hume,  
courtesy of Scotland's Churches Trust*

# St Mary Magdalene's Church

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Rev. Bogdan Palka S.D.S. - Parish Administrator

Rev. Krzysztof Jablonski (07851 735590) - Permanent Deacon

**PARISH MOTTO - 'THE BEST IS YET TO COME'**

## 3rd Sunday of the Year 21st of January 2024

Dear Parishioners and Friends of our parish, we are so happy that you could join us today to celebrate the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Today's first reading is taken from the middle of the story of Jonah. God had told Jonah to go to Nineveh and condemn them for their immorality. Nineveh was to the East of Israel. Jonah went to the West. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, one of Israel's enemies. Jonah was sure they wouldn't listen to him. They'd probably kill him. So Jonah went as far west as he could until he came to the sea. There he embarked on a boat to get even further away from Nineveh. You know the rest of this part of the story. A storm came up and the boat was about to sink. The sailors were sure that the storm had a divine origin. They wanted to know who had offended God.

Then Jonah told them about God's call for him to go to Nineveh. They threw him overboard and a fish gobbled him up—a whale, most likely. Perhaps it was meant to be humorous, but nasty old Jonah was sour even to the whale's stomach. The whale spit him out on the land. So Jonah, now showing the result of being in the whale for three days, probably all grey and hairless, went onto to Nineveh. He prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed because the sins of the people. After only a day, the people from King to slave repented, fasting, putting on sack clothe and ashes. God saw their repentance and forgave them.

Jonah became quite angry not that God was merciful, but that he, Jonah, had looked like a fool telling them that they were all going to die. The message here is that God is more concerned about the people's repentance than he is concerned about judging



them for their sin. Jesus Christ came to forgive sins. He did this through the sacrifice of the cross. He died for you and for me. He continues to forgive sins through the sacrifice of his Body, the Church.

The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. This Body heals and strengthens us when we are in the pain of sin. Just as the entire body hurts when one part is injured, stub your toe and you can feel the pain all the way up to your head, so also the entire body mobilizes itself to heal the injured part. We lie down when we have a physical pain so all our body's energy can be directed to healing. At this time of year, many people will be joining pilgrimages to support life. We continue to pray for an end to abortion. We also need to remember that there are people who come to Church who are reminded that they themselves were involved with an abortion.

Some of them think that it is too late for them to be forgiven, or that the sin was too much to forgive. They think that they do not belong in Church. They think that other parishioners really would not want them there if they knew what they did. They are wrong. God wants them in Church. We need them in Church. God wants them because he wants them to receive healing from the community. We need them because we need people who will proclaim to the world that there is only one choice a Christian can make and that is the choice of life. We need them because they are hurting, and we, the Body of Christ,

cannot bear to see any of our members in pain. Some people come to Church battling sin and frequently losing that battle. They might have gotten through a week or two, but then they succumb again. Once in Church they see so many around them living a moral life that they feel that they don't belong there.

But they are wrong. They need to be there because they need to be in the presence of compassion and love, compassion and love emanating from Christ and reflected by the Catholic community. We need them there because we need to provide the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. They need to hear from us that it is not too late for them. They need to hear us recognize our own sins and proclaim that the Mercy of God is far more powerful than any of our sins. It is not too late for any of us. Today's Gospel sums up all of Jesus' teaching. His message was simple: repent and believe in the Gospel, the Good News. The Good News is that if we are willing to fight against sin and turn to the Lord, happiness and peace will be ours. No one, no situation in life, nothing can destroy the joy that we have in being united to the Lord. The Good News is the wonder of God's merciful love.

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

### For today's Mass

#### Responsorial Psalm

Lord, make me know your ways.

#### Gospel Acclamation

The kingdom of God  
is close at hand;  
believe the Good News.

Fr Bogdan SDS

## PRAYERS

Please prayer for the repose of the souls of Gerry Kelly and Anne Doogan, who died recently, and for all our departed parishioners, friends, and family members.

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

## Funeral - Requiem Mass

With deep sorrow, I announce the death of our long time parishioner +Anne Doogan, on 16th January 2024. The reception of her body will be held on Tuesday 23th January 2024 at 7pm, and the Requiem Mass on Wednesday 24th January 2024, at St Mary Magdalene's Church. Please, keep +Anne and her Family in your prayers.

**Fr Bogdan SDS**

## 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 14th January 2024 – £648.00.

Next Sunday (28th January) our Second Collection will be for the Organ Fund.

## Priest's Musing

*Three ladies were discussing the travails of getting older. One said "Sometimes I catch myself with a jar of mayonnaise in my hand, while standing in front of the refrigerator, and I can't remember whether I need to put it away, or start making a sandwich." The second lady chimed in with, "Yes, sometimes I find myself on the landing of the stairs and can't remember whether I was on my way up or on my way down." The third one responded, "Well, ladies, I'm glad I don't have that problem. Knock on wood," as she rapped her knuckles on the table, and then said, "That must be the door, I'll get it!"*

## Healing Service / Blessing of the Sick

The Sacrament of the Anointing of Sick will take place today during the Mass at 10am.



## The Conversion of St Paul on 25th January

Christmas was exactly one month ago, and now, we celebrate another birth, or should I say, a new birth: the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, once fierce persecutor of the followers of Christ, now a formidable soldier for Christ.

We can say with certainty that ignorance of St. Paul is ignorance of Christ, especially since much of the New Testament is comprised of his epistles, fourteen in all. Preacher, missionary, and theologian—these activities sum up his post-conversion life. This is a conversion that moved the world.

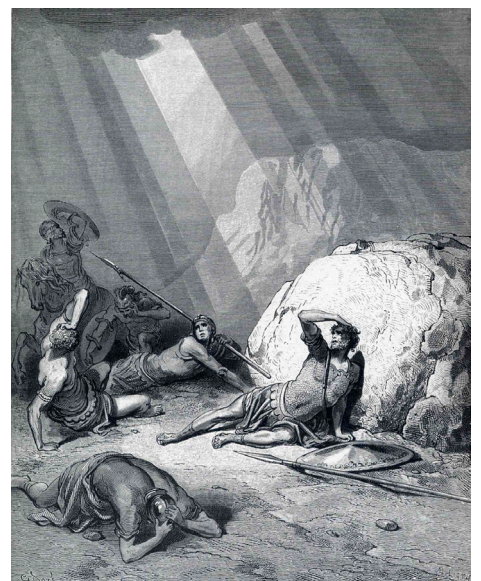
St. Augustine picks up on Paul's conversion from a persecutor of Christ's flock to its greatest apostle. We are told today in the lesson from the Acts of the Apostles, how Paul the Apostle, from being the persecutor of Christians, became the messenger of Christ.

For Christ smote down his persecutor to make him his Doctor of the Church. He strikes him and heals him; he is dying, and behold, he lives. The Lamb was slain by the wolves, and behold, he makes the wolves into lambs.

Before his conversion he was ravenous; afterwards, he divided the spoil. This is the fierce wolf: Saul went unto the high priest and desired of him letters, that if he found any of this way, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. He went, breathing out threatenings and slaughter: this is his morning devouring the prey. Now when Stephen was stoned, he became the first martyr to lay down his life in Christ's name. In

fact, he was so confederate with those who were stoning that it was not enough for him to stone Stephen with his own hands.

For it was as though his will moved the hands of all those who were casting the stones, while he held their clothes. He raged more fiercely by helping all of them, than by stoning with his own hands. Thus we see how in the morning he was ravenous. Now let us see how to the same degree in the evening he divided the spoil. The voice of Christ from heaven felled him to the earth, and at that decree from on high the ravenous wolf fell on his face, and he who was first smitten down was afterwards lifted up; he was first stricken, and then healed.



## SAINTS DAYS THIS WEEK

**Monday 22nd January**  
3rd Week of the Year

**Tuesday 23rd January**  
3rd Week of the Year

**Wednesday: 24th January**  
Memorial of St Francis De Sales  
Bishop

**Thursday: 25th January**  
Feast of the Conversion of St Paul

**Friday 26th January**  
Memorial of St Timothy and St Titus  
Bishops

**Saturday 27th January**  
3rd 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