



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

# St Mary Magdalene's Church

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

## 6th Sunday of the Year 11th of February 2024

**Dear Parishioners and Friends of our parish, we are so happy that you could join us today to celebrate the 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

This Sunday's first reading from the Book of Leviticus gives just a few of the horrible rules established by the Mosaic community to protect itself from leprosy. In the ancient times leprosy was believed to be deforming, incurable and contagious. Leprosy included most skin disorders: Hanson's disease which is leprosy proper, psoriasis, skin cancer, impetigo, boils and even serious acne. Lepers were ostracized by their families and neighbors, and forced to live outside the villages and towns.

They were referred to as the Living Dead. Lepers had to wear ragged clothes. They had to let their hair go uncombed and uncut. As today's reading says, they had to cover their mouths with one hand and call out "Unclean, unclean" as they walked. Anyone who came into any contact whatsoever with a leper was considered to be unclean like the leper.

And Jesus, moved with pity, stretched out his hand, touched the leper, and said to him, "Be made clean." Jesus did not see the unclean leper, or his disease. He was not concerned with the strict prohibitions of Jewish society. Jesus did not see a leper at all; he saw a human soul in

### For today's Mass

#### Responsorial Psalm

You are my refuge, O Lord;  
you fill me with the joy of salvation.

#### Gospel Acclamation

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
enlighten the eyes of our mind,  
so that we can see what hope his call  
holds for us.

desperate need. He stretched out his hand and touched him. He healed him with his touch. Jesus gave this power to his disciples. At the conclusion of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus proclaims the signs of the members of his people. We possess the wonderful capacity to be instruments of the healing power of Christ. Therefore, we have the duty to pray for the sick and to help them get effective medical help. In the second reading for today Paul challenges us to imitate Christ. We are to be ministers of healing. We are to touch not just the physically sick, but all those whose lives are hurting and need healing in any way possible. It is simply not Christian to ostracize anyone for any reason whatsoever. In the Christian society, even those with the most contagious diseases are cared for in a way that gives them dignity and love.

How about those who are spiritually sick? How about those who have left the Church, left Christianity? Are they to be cared for as those who are very sick? Absolutely. Those who have left Christian society are always welcomed back into the society when they seek to return.

For example, even in the extremely rare cases of excommunication, such as when someone performs or assists in abortions, that person can always seek forgiveness and re-entry into the community. And yet, many people throw children or relatives out of their lives. "You are no longer my son, my daughter," a parent hisses. Is there ever a situation where there is no longer any possibility of healing, of mercy, of extending the hand of Christ to those who seek reconciliation?

Not in Christianity. The Forgiving Father may not have been able to give his Prodigal Son the remainder of the farm. That belonged to the Elder Brother. But he was able to welcome the prodigal back into the family. The person who has hurt his or her spouse and children may not be able to resume his or her place in the marriage, but that person still can receive the forgiveness, the healing he or she longs for. The



convicted murderer may never be able to re-assume a place in free society, but he can be forgiven and given an opportunity to turn to God while incarcerated. When we allow ourselves to be so overcome by hurt and hatred that we refuse to extend the healing hand of the Lord to others, we take upon ourselves the sickness of the other person. Hatred kills. When we allow hatred to be part of our lives, we commit spiritual suicide. We cannot allow hatred to destroy us. Yes, we have to take measures to protect ourselves from those who would destroy us.

Still, we do not have the right to hate anyone or any people and at the same time call ourselves Christian. The Gospels often note that Jesus was moved with pity for the people as he preached the Kingdom of God. When he faced the troubled, the abandoned, the sick, when stirred by the blind, when crossing paths with the widow of Nain, and today, when face to face with a leper, Jesus was moved not by disgust, not by antagonism, but by compassion. Having compassion and showing mercy are the Christian qualities of great minds and large hearts. Today we are called to allow our hearts to be enlarged by Christianity.

Have a great week—Stay safe and well and enjoy the gifts and blessings God has given us. May God bless you always,

**Fr Bogdan SDS**

## PRAYERS

For our departed parishioners,  
friends, and family members,  
and for all who died recently  
and 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 collection 4th February 2024 – 799.84.  
Next Sunday (18th February) - Second Collection  
for the Ecclesiastical Students Fund

## Priest's Musing

*A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup to come out of the bottle. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her four-year-old daughter to answer the phone. "It's the priest, Mommy," the child said to her mother. "Tell him I'm busy, dear," her mother said. "Mommy can't come to the phone right now," the girl told the minister. She's hitting the bottle.*

## Parish Lenten Retreat

The Parish of St Mary Magdalene will celebrate a Parish Lenten Retreat from 25th February (Second Sunday of Lent) to 28th February 2024, a special event in the life of our parish. It is an opportunity to slow down and look at your life; at your relationship with God, with others around you and with yourself. There are many reasons why people stop going to church or don't go very often. Sometimes people just get out of the habit of going; perhaps they are divorced and remarried and feel unwelcome; maybe they are still afraid about their health condition. Whatever the reason, this retreat will give you the chance to do something about your faith in God. You are cordially invited to come along for this very special time God is giving us at the beginning of Lent. The parish retreat will be led by Fr Pio Idowu (Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate Heart & St Francis). Please come and refresh your spirit. **Fr Bogdan SDS**

## Ash Wednesday - 14th February 2024

Ash Wednesday is one of the most popular and important holy days in the liturgical calendar. Ash Wednesday opens Lent, a season of fasting and prayer and comes from the ancient Jewish tradition of penance and fasting. The practice includes the wearing of ashes on the head. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. As the priest applies the ashes to a person's forehead, he speaks the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Alternatively, the priest may speak the words, "Repent and believe in the Gospel." Ashes also symbolize grief, in this case, grief that we have sinned and caused division from God. Writings from the Second-century Church refer to the wearing of ashes as a sign of penance. Priests administer ashes during Mass and all are invited to accept the ashes as a visible symbol of penance.

The ashes are made from blessed palm branches, taken from the previous year's palm Sunday Mass. It is important to remember that Ash Wednesday is a day of penitential prayer and fasting. Some faithful take the rest of the day off work and remain home. It is generally inappropriate to dine out, to shop, or to go about in public after receiving the ashes. Feasting is highly inappropriate. Small children, the elderly and sick are exempt from this observance. It is not required that a person wear the ashes for the rest of the day, and they may be washed off after Mass. However, many people keep the ashes as a reminder until the evening. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption. Ashes are a symbol of penance made sacramental by the blessing of the Church, and they help us develop a spirit of humility and sacrifice. Have a fruitful Lenten time.

## Ash Wednesday Masses and Stations of the Cross

Ash Wednesday Masses  
10am (English) and 7pm (Polish).

Station of the Cross during Lent  
every Friday at 9:30am  
after morning Mass.

## SAINTS DAYS THIS WEEK

**Monday 12th February**  
6th Week of the Year

**Tuesday 13th February**  
6th Week of the Year

**Wednesday 14th February**  
**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
(Day of Fasting and Abstinence)

**Thursday 15th February**  
Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Friday  
**16th February**  
Friday after Ash Wednesday

**Saturday 17th February**  
Saturday after Ash Wednesday

## World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer, which is held annually, will take place in St John the Baptist Church, Melville Street, Perth on Friday 1st March 2024 at 11.30am.

This year the theme is "Bear With One Another in Love" and has been prepared by a group of Palestinian Christian Women. The call to bear with each other in love, despite all difficulties and oppression, is particularly meaningful in view of the current war in Gaza. All are very welcome to attend.

## New Bishop appointed for Dunkeld

On Friday last, 2 February, in Rome it was announced, that Pope Francis had nominated Fr. Martin Chambers as the new Bishop of the Diocese of Dunkeld. He will succeed Bishop Stephen Robson who was Bishop of Dunkeld from 2013 to 2022 when he retired on health grounds, since when it has been administered by Fr. Kevin Golden.

Please welcome Fr Martin and pray for him and for us all as we enter a new chapter in the history of the Diocese of Dunkeld. His episcopal ordination will take place after Easter in the Cathedral of St Andrew in Dundee.

**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