



*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'

1st Sunday of Lent 18th of February 2024

Welcome to Saint Mary Magdalene's — we are happy to have you join us today to celebrate the First Sunday of Lent.

The First Sunday of Lent always presents the temptation of the Lord. This is because the Lord fasted for 40 days, rebuffed the temptations of the devil and then began His public ministry. The number forty is used many times in the Bible, 146 to be exact, and represents a period of testing, trial, probation and preparation. At the time of Noah, it rained for forty days and forty nights as Noah was prepared to begin the human race anew. Moses lived forty years in Egypt being prepared to experience God in the Burning Bush. He spent forty nights on Mt. Sinai before receiving the Covenant of the Commandments, and then led the people for forty years through the desert until they were ready to receive the Promised Land.

Elijah spent forty days traveling to Mt. Horeb, Sinai actually, being prepared to receive a message from God for a new world order. Jesus fasted for forty days, and then began his public ministry. After his death, resurrection and ascension the apostles spent forty days in prayer before they received the Holy Spirit. And so we have the forty days of Lent. We spend forty days fasting, in self denial, forty days doing everything we can to come closer to God so we can make our baptisms, our sharing in the Easter

For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love for those who keep your covenant.

Gospel Acclamation

Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Life of the Lord, a reality in the world. Usually on this Sunday we hear about three different temptations the Lord endured: turn rocks into bread, demand that your Father work a miracle to save you, and trade His love for all the power of the world. We do not come upon these this year because they are in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

Today's reading is from the Gospel of Mark. Mark just states that Jesus went into the desert for 40 days, was confronted with temptations, beat off the devil and then began his mission. To prepare for Easter we spend forty days confronting temptation. I want to speak about temptations today. Sometimes people think that they must be very sinful because they have all sorts of temptations. People who are tempted are not sinful. They are alive. If any of us stops having temptations in our lives, we should check our pulse, we are probably dead. Temptations are difficult to overcome. If they were easy to fight off, then there would be no sin in the world, and we would be living in Utopia. No, temptations are difficult.

Every temptation contains elements of attractiveness, and has deep within it an aspect of goodness. Here is what I mean by that. All of God's creation contains beauty. However, we can pervert that beauty and turn something that is good into something that is bad. For example, the human body is beautiful; pornography is a perversion of this beauty. Another, example, there are wonderful medications to help people who suffer from anxiety attacks, depression, etc.

The same medications can be used by some for the pleasure they bring, the euphoria for some, resulting in them destroying their lives as well as the lives of those around them. Pain medication is good. But seeking euphoria is bad. All sin is attractive. If it were not attractive, we would not be tempted by it. Some people live by the saying, "If it feels good, do it." That is the way of the world. It is the way of selfishness, not the way of love. That is not the way of Jesus. Nor



can it be our way. Jesus is the conqueror of sin. But His battle was not a simple task. Jesus was tempted to save His own life, give up and not go along with the Father's plan. This plan would lead to His suffering and death.

Why shouldn't he instead reject this and choose a life of riches? But Jesus' love for the Father and His love for us were more powerful than anything the devil or the world could muster up. He beat off temptation, and then told us: "entrust your pain, your temptation and even your sin to me. I have conquered evil and will continue to conquer evil."

We are told to fight temptation with the Lord. When we choose Christ, the devil really does not stand a chance. In the battle for the Kingdom, Jesus fights with us, finding a way for us to win. We fight off temptation with Him. We give Him our sins in confession. We unite ourselves to Him through the Eucharist and many other method of praying.

We do everything possible to allow His grace into our lives. With Jesus as the center of our lives, nothing that the world throws at us will defeat us. He is the conqueror of temptation. He is the Victor over sin. We are His. And He is ours.

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...

**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 11th February 2024 – £775.50.

Today's Second Collection is for the Ecclesiastical Students Fund

Priest's Musing

A troop of Boy Scouts was being used as "guinea pigs" in a test of emergency systems. A mock earthquake was staged, and the scouts impersonated wounded persons who were to be picked up and cared for by the emergency units. One scout was supposed to lie on the ground and await his rescuers, but the first-aid people got behind schedule, and the scout lay "wounded" for several hours. When the first-aid squad arrived where the casualty was supposed to be, they found nothing but a brief note: "Have bled to death and gone home."

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

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross, also known as the Way of the Cross and the Way of Sorrow (Via Crucis in Latin), detail fourteen different moments on the day Jesus died. This prayer pilgrimage is a powerful way to grow closer to Jesus at any time of the year, though it is most popular during the Lenten season. Station of the Cross during Lent every Friday at 9:30am after morning Mass. Come and join us!

"O Jesus Christ, my Lord, with what great love you traveled the painful road which led to your death – and how often have I abandoned you. But now I love you with my whole soul, and because I love you, I am sincerely sorry for having offended you. My Jesus, pardon me, and permit me to accompany you on this journey. You died for love of me, and it is my wish, O my dearest Redeemer, to be willing to die for love of you. O my beloved Jesus, in your love I wish to live, and in your love I wish to die. Amen" (Saint Alphonsus Liguori).

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.

Episcopal Ordination

Dear Parishioners! - The date has now been confirmed for the Episcopal Ordination of our Bishop Elect Martin Chambers. It will take place in St. Andrew's Cathedral on Saturday, 27th April, 2024 at 11.00 a.m. Please keep Bishop-Elect in your prayers.

SAINTS DAYS THIS WEEK

Monday 19th February
1st Week of Lent

Tuesday: 20th February
1st Week of Lent

Wednesday: 21st February
1st Week of Lent

Thursday 22nd February
Feast of the Chair
of St Peter the Apostle

Friday 23rd February
1st Week of Lent

Saturday 24th February
1st Week of Lent

Do you want to fast this Lent?

Fasting is one of the three pillars of Lent. Linked together with prayer and almsgiving (charity) they are expressions of the central purpose of Lent, which is a turning to God and a conversion of heart.

*Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
Fast from anger and be filled with patience
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
Fast from worries and trust in God.
Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.
Fast from selfishness
and be compassionate to others.
Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.*

CHARACTER

A simple judge of my character is how I treat a person who can do absolutely nothing for me.

- Anonymous

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