



*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'

5th Sunday of Lent 17th of March 2024

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

“The days are coming when I will write my law deep within their hearts. All of them, from the least to the greatest will know that I am their God.” In the first reading, the Prophet Jeremiah spoke about a time when God’s people would be so united to God that they would know within themselves how to serve Him. That time is now. God’s law is written deep within each of our hearts. We don’t need anyone to tell us what we should do.

Deep within ourselves we know if we are true to God or not. Some people will argue with that. They will say, “It’s OK to get drunk, to try this, to do that.” They will argue that all the bad things that people of all ages get into is really normal behavior. We know that is a lie. Everything within us, deep within us, tells us that this is a lie. We know that we cannot behave immorally and face our God. So much of what the world tells us to do conflicts with the life deep within us. We have to recognize that what some call normal behavior is for us Christians, abnormal behavior. This is our time. This is our hour.

We have the choice to stand for Christ and live in peace with God and with ourselves, or to turn towards that which is popular and sinful and

live in turmoil. See, that is what sin does to us. It puts us in turmoil. We make believe that we are OK with whatever is happening, but we aren’t. Sometimes we even have a hard time looking into the mirror. We can’t stand looking at ourselves because we can’t stand the person we are becoming when our actions contradict all that is within us. Jesus spoke about time in today’s Gospel. He called it His Hour. When Andrew and Philip told him that people were asking Him to go to the Passover Festival in Jerusalem, Jesus knew what was going to happen. He did not run from it. He embraced it. This was His Time. It was what He was put on earth to do. He would stand against evil. We all have hours, and we have our hour.

We have many times in our lives when we have to stand up for God and be whom we are. All during Lent we have been asking ourselves, “Am I the person that God wants me to be? Do I try to reflect the image of God within me, or am I untrue to my very self. There are many temptations, many ways that we are tempted to hedge on our commitment to Christ. The cost of being true to the law written within our hearts can sometimes be quite heavy. We might find ourselves excluded from that society, that sport, or those people with whom we really want to belong. It hurts to have someone say, “What, are you too good to join us?”

But the peace of Christ surpasses all things. Nothing is more important than living in this peace, then living united to the Lord. We all have our hours, and we have our hour. There are continual choices for God that we make throughout our lives. Those are our hours. There is also that one choice that is the reason why God placed us on earth. That is our hour. Our hour is the action that expresses whom we are deep within ourselves. It is the fundamental expression of our Christian life. For some people that hour is a public affirmation of Christ in the face of death. Little St. Agnes was probably only 12 when she refused to embrace paganism and was



tortured to death. Old St. Ignatius of Antioch was probably in his 80’s when he would not let his friends bribe the Romans to save him from being thrown to the wild animals in the Roman Colosseum.

When we read about the saints, we learn about people who chose to suffer rather than deny Christ. But these are people about whom we read or heard. There are others whom we do not know. There is that girl with the unexpected pregnancy. It is her hour. Does she stand for Christ and bring this baby into the world regardless of what would happen to the plans she had for her future, or does she walk away from her hour and walk into that abortion clinic? There is that elderly man who chooses to care for his slowly dying wife because he could and because she wanted to stay at home. It is his hour.

We know many others who are confronted with the choice of their lives, their hour, and embrace the law written within their hearts. The big question is: Are we ready to embrace the moment of our lives when all of our existence proclaims our union with Christ? Now, listen again to the conclusion of today’s Gospel: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. We are called to live and die for Christ. This is our time. This is our hour.

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

For today’s Mass

Responsorial Psalm

A pure heart create for me, O God.

Gospel Acclamation

If a man serves me, says the Lord,
he must follow me;
wherever I am, my servant will be there
too.

PRAYERS

We pray for our departed parishioners, friends, and family members and for 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 10th March 2024 – £792.50.

Second Collection: Papal & Episcopal Charities (including SCIAF) – £272.00.

Priest's Musing

A local priest and a pastor were fishing on the side of the road. They thoughtfully made a sign saying, "The End is Near! Turn yourself around now before it's too late!" and showed it to each passing car. One driver who drove by didn't appreciate the sign and shouted at them, "Leave us alone, you religious nuts!" All of a sudden they heard a big splash, looked at each other, and the priest said to the pastor, "You think maybe we should have just said 'Bridge Out' instead?"

SAINTS DAYS THIS WEEK

Monday 18th March
5th Week of Lent

Tuesday 19th March
The Solemnity of St Joseph,
Spouse of the Virgin Mary

Wednesday 20th March
5th Week of Lent

Thursday 21st March
5th Week of Lent

Friday 22nd March
5th Week of Lent

Saturday 23rd March

The Solemnity of St Joseph

On March 19th each year Catholics celebrate the Solemnity of St. Joseph, protector of the family and patron of the universal Church and of workers. St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster-father of Jesus, was born in Bethlehem and probably died in Nazareth. His important mission in God's plan of salvation was "to legally insert Jesus Christ into the line of David" from whom, according to the prophets, the Messiah would be born, and to act as his father. Most of our information about St. Joseph comes from the opening two chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel. No words of his are recorded in the Gospels; he was the "silent" man. We find no devotion to St. Joseph in the early Church. He was later venerated by the great saints of the Middle Ages.

St Joseph was an ordinary manual laborer although descended from the royal house of David. In the designs of Providence he was destined to become the spouse of the Mother of God. His high privilege is expressed in a single phrase, "Foster-father of Jesus." About him Sacred Scripture has little more to say than that he was a just man—an expression which indicates how faithfully he fulfilled his high trust of protecting and guarding God's greatest treasures upon earth, Jesus and Mary.

The darkest hours of his life may well have been those when he first learned of Mary's pregnancy; but precisely in this time of trial Joseph showed himself great. His suffering, which likewise formed a part of the work of the redemption, was not without great providential import: Joseph was to be, for all times, the trustworthy witness of the Messiah's virgin birth. After this, he modestly retires into the background of holy Scripture. Of St. Joseph's death the Bible tells us nothing. There are indications, however, that he died before the beginning of Christ's public life. His was the most beautiful death that one could have, in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

Humbly and unknown, he passed his years at Nazareth, silent and almost forgotten he remained in the background through centuries of Church history. Only in more recent times has he been accorded greater honor. Liturgical veneration of St. Joseph began in the fifteenth century, fostered by Sts. Brigid of Sweden and Bernadine of Siena. St. Teresa, too, did much to further his cult. St. Joseph is invoked as patron for many causes. He is the patron of the Universal Church. He is the patron of the dying because Jesus and Mary were at his death-bed. He is also the patron of fathers, of carpenters, and of social justice. St Joseph – pray for us!

Fr Bogdan SDS

HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2024

– St Mary Magdalene's Church

Sunday 24th March

PALM SUNDAY

8:30am (Polish),
10am (English), 12pm (Polish)

Monday 25th March

9am (English)

Tuesday 26th March

9am (English)

Wednesday 27th March

9am (English)

Thursday 28th March

HOLY THURSDAY

7pm, Mass of the Lord's Last Supper
(English),
Watching ends at 9pm.

Friday 29th March

GOOD FRIDAY

3pm, Celebration of the Lord's Passion
7pm, Celebration of the Lord's Passion (Polish)

Saturday 30th March

**HOLY SATURDAY AT
THE TOMB OF CHRIST**

10am, Blessing of the Food (Polish)
11am, Blessing of the Food (Polish)
12am, Blessing of the Food (Polish)

7pm, Vigil of the Lord's Resurrection
(English)

Sunday 31st March

EASTER SUNDAY

7am (Polish), 10am (English),
12pm (Polish)

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