

St Mary's Lanark

A Parish of the Diocese of Motherwell (founded 1859) Charity No - SC011041

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Parish Priest

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St Mary's Clubrooms Bookings: 07300857616

Saint Vincent de Paul Helpline: 07565396878

1st Sunday of Advent

30th November 2025

A Grumpy Old Catholic Starts Advent

When it comes to observing the Church's liturgical calendar in an increasingly secular world, I often think of myself as a "Grumpy Old Catholic." My eyes roll when Easter eggs appear in January. I sigh when hot-cross buns are sold all year round. I mutter when Lent passes unnoticed. I despair when the fifty-day season of Eastertide is reduced to one chocolate-fuelled Sunday. And when Christians abandon the Catholic roots of Hallowe'en in favour of "Hallelujah Parties", I can feel my blood pressure rise. By September, when the first Christmas displays go up, I'm practically incandescent.

Advent is no exception. Like Lent, it's a penitential season, yet also one of longing and joyful expectation. But in practice, it is often swept aside by novelty calendars, wall-to-wall Christmas music, and adverts insisting that anything but Christ is the "true meaning of Christmas," usually accompanied by a strong nudge toward a spending spree. I'll leave the economics of gift-giving to The Money Saving Expert (search: "Martin Lewis: Is it time to ban unnecessary Christmas presents?"), but the spiritual consequences are worth our attention.

In my grumpiness, what am I do to? Today's first reading offers a helpful starting point for Advent: "The mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills." This striking image invites a spiritual stock-take. What are the "hills" in our lives - job, family, friends, or even the demands of parish life? And what stands as our "highest mountain"? Is it truly Christ, or have the hills quietly taken His place on our horizon?

The invitation is simple but challenging: order everything - our hills - around Christ. The hills themselves aren't bad; they are often the very places where God works most powerfully. But when they dominate the landscape, we lose sight of the One who gives them purpose. Our lives become disordered, and the streams of grace that should flow from Christ are diverted or blocked. When Christ is again our highest mountain, our lives regain clarity and balance.

As for gift giving, at the risk of contradicting my own complaints about premature Christmas music, I'm reminded of Christina Rossetti's line: "What can I give Him, poor as I am? ... Yet what I can I give Him, give my heart." Rossetti captures a Biblical truth: the only gift God truly desires is the gift of ourselves.

But this gift is never merely individual. God gives each of us charisms, spiritual gifts, for the building up of His Body, the Church. Whether your charism lies in pastoral care, organisation, creativity, communication, healing, or contemplation, discerning it takes patience, prayer, and trust. This process is part of placing our lives under Christ's lordship, our highest mountain, not only for our personal growth but for the Church's good, so that "all nations shall stream toward it." When our gifts are offered to Christ, the true beauty of the Church's seasons can shine more brightly in the world.

So this Advent, before reaching for the tinsel or the to-do list, perhaps we might pause and ask: Is Christ still my highest mountain? And what charism can I offer Him and His Church this season



Ian Maxfield (A Grumpy Old Catholic)

Weekly Parish Schedule

Daily Mass & Devotions from St Mary's are broadcast on the parish YouTube Channel.

Sunday 30th November St Mary's Church will close after the 5pm Mass

10.30am **Holy Mass for the 1st Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)**

12noon **Holy Mass for the 1st Sunday of Advent (Holy Trinity)**

5.00pm **Holy Mass for the 1st Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)**

Monday 1st December St Mary's Church will be opened Monday - Friday from 8am until 3pm

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary

9.30am **Requiem Mass for the Repose of the Soul of Patricia Kelly**

Tuesday 2nd December

10.00am Holy Mass (St Catherine's)

11.30am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 11.55am

11.30am Confessions until 11.55am

11.40am Recitation of the Holy Rosary

12noon Angelus & Holy Mass

Wednesday 3rd December

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass & Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help

10.15am **Advent Prayer Circle (St Catherine's)**

Thursday 4th December

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass

10.30am **Rite of Committal for the Repose of the Soul of Waltraud Nowomieski (Douglas Cemetery)**

7.30pm **St Mary's Choir Weekly Rehearsal (St Mary's Clubrooms)**

Friday 5th December

9.10am Recitation of the Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass

Saturday 6th December St Mary's Church will open at 8am and close after the 5pm Mass

9.00am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 9.25am

9.00am Confessions until 9.25am

9.30am Holy Mass

4.30pm Confessions until 4.50pm

4.30am Recitation of the Holy Rosary

5.00pm **Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)**

Sunday 7th December St Mary's Church will close after the 5pm Mass

10.30am **Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)**

12noon **Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (Holy Trinity)**

12.35pm **Light Bite (Holy Trinity)**

5.00pm **Holy Mass for the 2nd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)**



Holy Trinity Light Bite Charity Support

Last month's Light Bite, for St Andrew's Hospice, raised £140. Thank you for your generosity to such a worthwhile cause. Our next Light Bite will support The Rock Trust Charity. Rock Trust works with young people between the ages of 16 – 25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Our role is to advise, educate and support young people. We want to enable them to build the personal skills and resources required to make a positive and healthy transition to adulthood, while avoiding or moving on from homelessness. We think that resilience and positive social networks are key in successfully moving on from homelessness and we work with professionals across Scotland to support individuals affected by loneliness and isolation. Help us End Youth Homelessness in Scotland.

Clydesdale Foodbank Collection

Our Monthly Foodbank Collection will take place **this weekend**. Bags of groceries can be handed in to the sacristy or to a passkeeper, and any monetary donations can be placed in the collection basket in an enveloped cleared clearly marked 'FOODBANK'.

*Thank you for your continued support and generosity towards helping those in need.
Over 60% of all donations to Clydesdale Foodbank are reissued in the Lanark area.*



Coffee Morning/Christmas Raffle

The next coffee morning will take place on **Sunday 21st December** after 10.30 Mass. The Christmas Raffle Draw will also take place at this event.

Raffle tickets will be available from weekend 15th/16th November.

Donations for raffle prizes will be gratefully received.

Thank you for your continued support!!

Mass with Sacrament of the Sick

St Mary's St Vincent de Paul Society have arranged for Mass to be celebrated with the Sacrament of the Sick. The Mass will be celebrated on Monday 8th December at 12noon. This day is also the Immaculate Conception, the day we celebrate Our Lady being conceived without original sin.

All are welcome to attend this Mass and those who are sick or housebound are encouraged to attend and receive the Sacrament of the Sick, and be supported, and uplifted, by the prayers of our community.

If you know of anyone who would like to attend this Mass and has no transport, please speak to a Member of the St Vincent de Paul or contact 07565396878.

St Mary's Flower Fund

As we enter the season of Advent you will notice the lack of flowers which normally adorn our beautiful Church. I feel it is an appropriate time to thank everyone who has contributed to our Flower Fund this year. Without ever being asked, you so willingly fill your tubs and give your donations. Mari has some wonderful ideas for Christmas this year so we can look forward to that as we prepare ourselves throughout Advent. If you would like to join the Flower Fund please just ask Pauline, Mari or myself for a FF tub. If you would prefer just to give a one off donation, that too would be a great help. Your contributions enable us to have flowers all around our Church throughout the year and we are deeply grateful for your continued support. Thank you. Grace.

Choir of St Mary's Christmas Joy

You are warmly invited to *An Afternoon of Christmas Joy* in St Mary's Clubrooms on Saturday 13th December at 3pm.

Tickets cost £7 and all proceeds go to the Wayside Club in Glasgow.

Tickets are available from members of the choir. The bar will be open and there will be a raffle.

Justice & Peace Scotland

St Andrew's Day Dignity Not Detention Solidarity Gathering – Dungavel IRC, Strathaven, ML10 6RF – Sunday 30th, November, 1pm

The UK is the only country in Europe that does not have a statutory time limit on detention, meaning people can be held in prison-like conditions indefinitely with no idea when they will be released.

Donations

Fr John-Paul would like to thank all those who have given donations to St Mary's over the last few months. Your continued generosity has been reinvested in the church building.

Donations received over the last few months have helped cover part of the cost of the new radiator covers that have been installed in the narthex and sanctuary. Constructed from MDF they retain heat and look good.

300 Club: October Winners

Week 5th Oct: **6**

Week 12th Oct: **55**

Week 19th Oct: **120**

Week 26th Oct: **25**

St Mary's Lanark 80-12-97 10246763

If you would like to join the 300 Club you can set up a Standing Order using the details above and email Kathleen who will then supply you with a lucky number: stmarylanark@rcdom.org.uk



Please Pray For The Following



Recently Dead: Patricia Kelly Tinto Court
Waltraud Nowomiejski Douglas

Fr Paddy Gaffney CSSp; Patrick Leonard; Eric Jones (Liverpool); Malissa Bell; Neil Rielly; Therese Adrian (France);

Months Minds & Anniversaries: Bishop Francis Thomson; Monsignor Thomas Taylor; Fr Martin O'Keefe; Fr John Breslin; Fr Joseph Brannigan; Monteith Family; Thomas Bowie; Jim McShane; Andrew Sharkey; Kate Campbell; Moira & Michael Healy; Joe McGarrigle; Betty Woods; Bridget Brady;

Funeral Arrangements: Patricia Kelly Requiem Mass: Monday 1st December, 9.30am
Waltraud Nowomiejski Rite of Committal: Thursday 4th December, 10.30am, Douglas

Catholic Education Collection

Celebrating the importance of Catholic Education will run for two weeks this year, from Sunday 16th November—Sunday 30th November. The Diocesan Education Mass will take place on Monday 24th November at 7pm in the Cathedral.

**A Special Collection will be taken up at all Masses on 29th/30th November
to support the work of the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES).**

Liturgical Calendar

Monday 1st December, St Andrew, Apostle and Patron of Scotland - Born at Bethsaida (Galilee). A fisherman and perhaps a disciple of John the Baptist. Introduced his brother, Simon Peter, to Jesus and became one of the first to follow Christ. Mentioned a number of times in the gospels, for example, in introducing some Gentiles to Jesus (John 12:20ff.). Widely venerated since ancient times and remembered as one of the twelve who bore witness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Wednesday 3rd December, St Francis Xavier, Priest & Missionary - Born in 1506 in Navarre (Spain); died on this day in 1552 off the coast of China. Francis Xavier met Ignatius of Loyola while both were studying in Paris and became one of the first Jesuits. At Ignatius' request, Francis went to Goa (India) as a missionary and travelled extensively through southeast Asia to Japan, winning converts and organising Christian communities. Francis Xavier was noted for the simplicity of his lifestyle and for his tireless missionary zeal.

Parish Weekly Finances

Offertory Collection & Donations: £ 1,358.00
Standing Orders: £ 250.00
Votives: £ 148.00
Stall: £ 124.00

St Marys Mission RCDM
80-17-02 00265809
Thank you for your
continued generosity

St Mary's Ministry Rota

Readers:

29th/30th November		13th/14th December	
5.00pm	G. Abernethy	5.00pm	F. Chung
10.30am	E. McCabe	10.30am	M. McCusker
5.00pm	M. Davis	5.00pm	N. Donnelly
6th/7th December		20th/21st December	
5.00pm	J. McBride	5.00pm	R. McConnell
10.30am	A. Servers	10.30am	J. Russell
5.00pm	S. Casserly	5.00pm	M. Davis

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:

29th/30th November		13th/14th December	
5.00pm	A. Dempsey	5.00pm	K. Bryce
	J. McBride		A. McGowan
10.30am	J. Littlejohn	10.30am	V. Hilland
	A. O'Neill		M. Thompson
	N. Keenan		B. Farrell
6th/7th December		20th/21st December	
5.00pm	C. Scott	5.00pm	M. Keenan
	S. Callaghan		C. Callaghan
10.30am	J. Littlejohn	10.30am	C. Duddy
	A. O'Neill		I. Maxfield
	N. Keenan		M. Russell