



## Saint Mary's Parish Lanark & Saint Isidore's Parish Biggar



**2nd Sunday of Advent  
10th December 2023**

### **Darkness and Light**

For many Christians, Advent wreaths are a favourite way to celebrate the month of December leading up to Christmas Day. Although Advent Wreaths are very popular, many are not aware of the rich meaning and symbolism embedded in this tradition. If we learn this meaning, we can appreciate it all the more!

Advent candles readily demonstrate the strong contrast between darkness and light, which is an important biblical image. Jesus referred to himself as the "Light of the World" that dispels the darkness of sin: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).



Human history spanned long ages shrouded in the darkness of sin before our prophesied Saviour would finally make his appearance to free us from its dominion. As the Messiah's "Advent" (or "coming") draws nearer another candle is lit, with each candle dispelling the darkness a little more. Thus, the Advent wreath helps us to spiritually contemplate the great drama of salvation history that surrounds the birth of God Incarnate, who comes to redeem the human race and make all things new (Rev. 21:5). It also reminds us that, as Christians, we're meant to shine the light of Christ in this world. As Jesus tells us, You are the light of the world ... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)

The circular shape of the wreath, without beginning or end, symbolises God's complete and unending love for us—a love that sent his Son into the world to redeem us from the curse of sin. It also represents eternal life which becomes ours through faith in Jesus Christ. The Advent Wreath traditionally holds four candles which are lit, one at a time, on each of the four Sundays of the Advent season. Each candle represents 1,000 years. Added together, the four candles symbolise the 4,000 years that humanity waited for the world's Savior—from Adam and Eve to Jesus, whose birth was foretold in the Old Testament.

Some Advent wreath traditions also include a fifth white "Christ" candle, symbolising purity, that is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas day. Many circular wreaths can incorporate a white candle by adding a pillar candle to the wreath center. Violet is a liturgical colour that is used to signify a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice and is used during Advent and Lent. Advent, also called "little Lent," is the season where we spiritually wait in our "darkness" with hopeful expectation for our promised redemption, just as the whole world did before Christ's birth, and just as the whole world does now as we eagerly await his promised return.

During the first two weeks of Advent we light the first two purple candles. The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday. On this day we celebrate that our waiting for the birth of Jesus on Christmas day is almost over. Rose is a liturgical colour that is used to signify joy, so we light the single pink candle on the third Sunday of Advent. Then on the fourth Sunday of Advent, the final purple candle is lit to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait expectantly for the soon-coming birth of the King of Kings.

Traditionally, each of the four Advent candles have a deeper meaning. The 1st Sunday of Advent symbolises Hope with the "Prophet's Candle" reminding us that Jesus is coming. The 2nd Sunday of Advent symbolises Faith with the "Bethlehem Candle" reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. The 3rd Sunday of Advent symbolises Joy with the "Shepherd's Candle" reminding us of the Joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus. The 4th Sunday of Advent symbolises Peace with the "Angel's Candle" reminding us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

# Weekly Parish Schedule

*Daily Mass & Devotions from St Mary's are Livestreamed on the parish Facebook Page and broadcast on the parish YouTube Channel.*

**Sunday 10th December** *St Mary's Church will close after 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)

**3.00pm** **Choir of St Mary's Christmas Concert - Ticketed Event (St Mary's Clubrooms)**

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

**Monday 11th December** *St Mary's Church will be opened Monday - Friday from 8am until 4pm*

**9.10am** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**9.30am** Holy Mass & Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (St Mary's)

**Tuesday 12th December**

**10.00am** Holy Mass (St Catherine's)

**11.30am** Confessions until 11.55am (St Mary's)

**11.40am** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**12noon** Angelus, Holy Mass & Novena to St Anthony (St Mary's)

**Wednesday 13th December**

**9.10am** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**9.30am** Holy Mass (St Mary's)

**7.00pm** **Online Zoom Rosary (Meeting ID: 832 0468 2198 Passcode: 746256)**

**7.00pm** **School Carol Concert - all welcome (St Mary's Church)**

**Thursday 14th December**

**9.10am** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**9.30am** Holy Mass & Novena to St Joseph (St Mary's)

**Friday 15th December**

**9.10am** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**9.30am** Holy Mass (St Mary's)

**Saturday 16th December** *St Mary's Church will close after 5pm Mass*

**9.00am** Confessions until 9.25am (St Mary's)

**9.10am** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**9.30am** Holy Mass (St Mary's)

**4.30pm** Confessions until 4.50pm (St Mary's)

**4.30pm** Recitation of the Holy Rosary (St Mary's)

**5.00pm** Holy Mass for the 3rd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

**Sunday 17th December** *St Mary's Church will close after 5pm Mass*

**10.30am** Holy Mass for the 3rd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

**11.15am** **Christmas Coffee Morning & Raffle (St Mary's Clubrooms)**

**12noon** Holy Mass for the 3rd Sunday of Advent (Holy Trinity)

**5.00pm** Holy Mass for the 3rd Sunday of Advent (St Mary's)

## Parish Finances

**St Mary's**  
Offertory Collection: £ 1,456.00  
Standing Orders: £ 1,004.00

**St Isidore's**  
Offertory Collection: £ 129.00  
Standing Orders: £ 25.00

**St Marys Mission RCDM**  
80-17-02 00265809

**Parish of St Isidore's**  
83-16-11 00235026

## Children Carol Concert

St Mary's Primary School will perform their Christmas Carol Concert on Wednesday 13th December at 7pm in the Church. All parishioners are welcome to attend. The children will also perform Carols after 9.30am Mass on Friday 15th December for those who wish to attend.

## Parish Pilgrimage to Fatima & Lisbon 2nd-9th July 2024

Thank you to those who have returned completed forms and deposits for our parish pilgrimage to Fatima and Lisbon. Very soon we will make contact with everyone, and hold a meeting to supply more information.



## Please Pray For The Following:



**Recently Dead:** Moira Healey Main Street, Forth  
Cathie Gallagher (Mrs Allen's Mum); Mary Burns (Uddingston); Margaret Burns.

**Months Minds & Anniversaries:** John Maxfield; Agnes McQuade; Florence Kennedy; Marion (Fox) McGonagle.

**Christmas Remembrance Masses:** If you would like Holy Mass offered for your beloved dead and their names recorded in the Christmas Bulletin, please hand in their names before **FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER**. Names can be handed into the sacristy, posted through the chapel house door or placed in the basket with your weekly collection, but please write on the envelope CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCE, and please print the names clearly to avoid typing errors.

## Bishop Toal's Visit

It was lovely to have Bishop Toal with us in our parishes last weekend, and he wishes to convey his thanks to those who made his visit so special. In a particular way Bishop Toal would like to thank The Choir of St Mary's for their beautiful singing, in particular Pie Jesu after Holy Communion. Bishop Toal would also like to express his thanks to Mrs Allen, Mrs Sharkey and the Children from St Mary's Primary School for their angelic singing, and lovely reading. The Bishop was very touched by the attendance, and the effort that was put in for making the day so special. Thank you to everyone who attended Mass and made Bishop Toal's visit so special! The Bishop noted that Sunday was the busiest Mass he had been to in Lanark in the 10 years he has been our bishop...

Bishop Toal would also like to express his gratitude and closeness to the people of St Isidore's Parish for their very warm welcome, and their attendance at the meeting after Mass. The Bishop took great encouragement by the number of people who attended the meeting, and appreciated the views shared by everyone. The Bishop would like to publicly thank the Trustees from Biggar Museum for their cooperation and willingness to allow us to use their beautiful church. The Bishop will be in contact soon after he has had a period of prayer, reflection and consultation.

## St Mary's Ministry Rota

### Readers:

<b>9th/10th December</b> 5.00pm A. Haetzman 10.30am M. McCusker 5.00pm N. Donnelly	<b>23rd/24th December</b> 5.00pm R. McConnell 10.30am P. Roberts
---	--

<b>16th/17th December</b> 5.00pm R. Kane 10.30am R. Colpitts 5.00pm S. Casserly	<b>30th/31st December</b> 5.00pm G. Abernethy 10.30am E. McCabe 5.00pm N. Donnelly
--	---

### Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:

<b>9th/10th December</b> 5.00pm A. Dempsey C. Scott 10.30am G. Duddy T. Mullen	<b>23rd/24th December</b> 5.00pm T. Mullen C. McClafferty 10.30am J. McAlavey J. Wilson
--	---

<b>16th/17th December</b> 5.00pm M. Keenan P. Stewart 10.30am P. Cunningham A. Cruikshank	<b>30th/31st December</b> 5.00pm J. McClafferty J. McAlavey 10.30am C. Duddy V. Hilland
---	---



### **Holy Trinity Chapel**

Lamington  
Biggar  
ML12 6HW



### **Parish Priest**

### **Father John-Paul McShane**

St Mary's Church  
70 Bannatyne Street  
Lanark ML11 7JS  
01555 662234  
frmcshane@rcdom.org.uk



### **St Mary's**

70 Bannatyne Street  
Lanark  
ML11 7JS  
stmarylanark@rcdom.org.uk  
Charity No - SC011041

## **From Andrew Highton**

The Bene Merenti medal was originally established as an award for soldiers within the Papal Army, translated as 'Well deserving'. However, it has now become to be seen as recognition of meritorious service to the Church, be it at either Papal or Diocesan level. I was very taken aback, and humbled, when I was informed that I was to be the recipient of the medal for services to the parish of St Isidore the Farmer in Biggar, being a mere cog in a parish family. I would like to put on record that I am grateful to Bishop Toal for coming to the new home of the St Isidore's community, now re-located from Biggar to the Holy Trinity Chapel in Lamington, and to present me with this medal.

Now for an indulgence! My Christian journey began in 1964 with the arrival of Fr John Butchard (now Monseigneur) in the Parish of St Luke the Evangelist, Whiston, in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. He arrived fresh out of the Upholland Seminary, as a curate in what was a large parish. He took me under his wing as an 8 year old boy as his first altar server. He was a good listener, asking questions and supporting the development of my faith.

Fast forward to 1970, and my third year in secondary school. This marked the arrival of Brother Damian Lundy at the De La Salle West Park Grammar School in St Helens, Lancashire. He was a total breath of fresh air, both as my English and RE teacher. Br Damian was a charismatic, larger than life character. We always knew when a new hymn had reached gestation, as the whole school would be summoned to the assembly hall! There, Br Damian would bounce around the stage wrapped up in joyous Christian enthusiasm. A memorable sight! You will have sung many of his works, and those of his collaborator Christine McCann, an English teacher at the adjacent Notre Dame High School, St Helens. To his memory I made a request of Fr John Paul to include the hymn 'Walk in the Light' in the Mass last Sunday, which he kindly included. Br Damian was a huge talent from our Christian community, taken home too soon by his untimely passing. Br Damian inspired my Christian life by showing me the happiness and joy that can be found in words and music. Although he introduced me to a diverse world of literature, from Ibsen to Pinter, English Literature as an academic subject was not for me, as I pursued a life in science!

My wife, Joan, and I joined the St Isidore's community in 1991, after ten years at The Sacred Heart in Penicuik, within the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh. St Isidore's in Biggar has been one of the most welcoming and inclusive Christian communities that I have ever experienced within the Catholic Church. Championing such causes such as SCIAF, and the likes of the Rock Trust, in its early days, with our young people sleeping out on the cold streets of Edinburgh (including our daughter Jennifer) to raise funds. Getting involved in parish life was effortless. It just happened naturally. St Isidore's has always been about the bigger spiritual picture, guided by another inspirational preacher and teacher in our long serving Parish Priest.

The Bene Merenti Medal is recognition by the Diocese of a personal service to the Parish of St Isidore's in Biggar. However, I must take this opportunity to thank those that have inspired my faith. I wish also to share my medal, in the memory of those who have both gone before me in this role of service, Ian Robertson and Ian O'Brien, and to those who continue to be the 'doers' within the community of St Isidore's. I thank everyone who has helped me support our parish over the years.

Although we are now re-located to the Holy Trinity Chapel in Lamington, the spirit that is St Isidore's endures.

Thank You and God Bless!

## **From Françoise Chung**

Philip & Françoise Chung would like to thank Fr John-Paul and the parishioners of St Mary's for their prayerful support during the recent illness of Philip - Holy Mass will be offered for your intentions.