

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 Advent 3rd of December 2023

Dear Parishioners and Friends of our parish, we are so happy that you could join us today to celebrate the 1st Sunday of Advent.

Who or what is getting our attention? No one can give equal attention to all things that come his or her way in the course of a day or a week. We choose those people or things on which we will spend our attention. And then others get what's left over. Who or what gets the leftovers? Our wives or husbands, our children, our time for prayer and spiritual renewal, those who need us in a special way? How do we make such choices? This is a deeply spiritual question. As we begin our Advent season, we hear the familiar words of Jesus, "Stay awake". Pay attention. Paying attention is a spiritual duty. It is only through paying attention that we can bring our love to others in a way which will be effective. Perhaps the first thing we need to do is discover those areas where we do not pay attention.

In our quest to stay awake and alert, we need to identify the sleepy areas in our lives. These are areas we constantly avoid. We don't want to be awakened to their reality and so we keep them under cover. We'd rather not think about them. They make us too uncomfortable, and the reason they make us uncomfortable is that they demand some change within ourselves. The change demanded might be in the way we see ourselves. Sometimes we have an inflated sense of who we are. We only see ourselves in a good light, and we try to hide anything that would make us look bad. Often, we keep parts of our lives asleep by simply not paying attention to

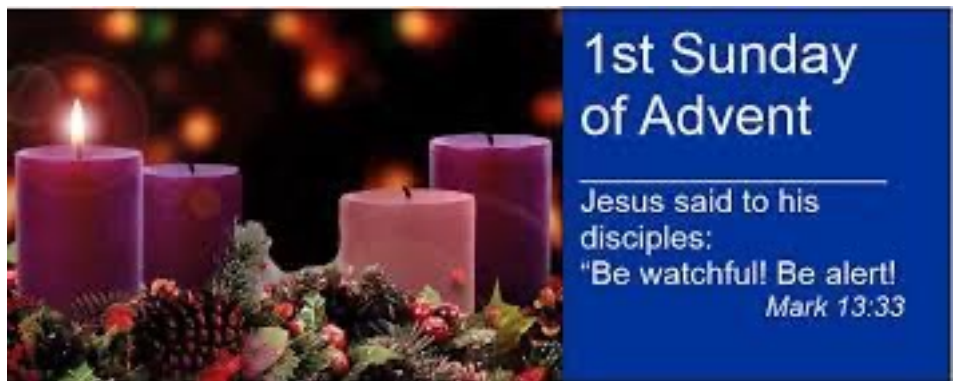
For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

God of hosts, bring us back;
let your face shine on us
and we shall be saved.

Gospel Acclamation

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.



them. How many times have you ended an argument by shouting, "I just don't want to talk about it anymore"? Now, there's a give-away if you ever heard one. Some things are too hard to even talk about. We can't stand to bring them to light. It's just too uncomfortable or painful. And yet, I'm sure you would agree, that it is exactly those things which need to be brought out into the light. Perhaps the most important part of paying attention is paying attention to how the Lord wants to shape us into his own children. In our reading from the prophet Isaiah we are given these words: "And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand. See, see, we are all your people."

What does it mean to be clay in the hand of God? We use the expression, "I'm like putty in your hands". It means that whatever you want me to do, I'll do it. I have given up my own will to do your will. This captures some of what being clay in God's hands mean, but there is more. When God forms us, it is not just about doing what God wants, but also being who God wants us to be. It refers to being shaped in the deepest possible way into God's image. Who or what is moulding us? We are often controlled by our compulsions.

These keep us captive to our desires. Instead of being like clay in the hands of God, we become like clay in the hands of our compulsions. Compulsions can take many forms and it requires a high degree of alertness to discover them in our own lives. We can be controlled by compulsions to succeed, to have more than our neighbours, to have the clean-

est house on the block, to control our husband or wife, and so on. Anything can turn into a compulsion and when it does, it takes away our freedom in a certain area of life. Instead of becoming the liberated daughters and sons of God, we can all too easily become the slaves of our compulsions. Advent is calling us to silence. I

It is in silence that we will have the chance to become aware of our compulsions. And it is in silence, that we will be able to allow God to mould us into free human persons, unshackled by the need to fill all our desires. When we enter into silence, we are helping to create an atmosphere where we will be able to allow God to enter into our heart. Silence often allows our own thoughts and feelings to come to the surface. Silence can help those needy areas come to the surface.

When this happens, we can then bring those areas of need before God in our prayer. May we allow the silence of prayer to have an important part in our lives. The more we enter the silence of prayer, the more we will be able to allow God to form us into loving followers of Jesus Christ.

Have a great week—stay well and be happy—God bless you all!

Fr Bogdan SDS

PRAYERS

Please prayer for the repose of the soul of Claire Duncan 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!

Sunday collection

26th November 2023 – £694.00.

2nd collection (last Sunday)

Scottish Catholic Education Services – £166.00.

Today Second Collection: for The Poor Mission Fund.

Christmas Dinner and Dance

Perth Italian Association Christmas Dinner Dance will be at Salutation Hotel on Monday, 18th December at 6:30pm. Music will provide Roberto Enzo. Price £30. If you ready to celebrate please enter your name and the phone number on the list in the porch of the church or phone directly to Norma at 01738 622661.

Priest's Musing

A minister was walking down the street when he came upon a group of about a dozen boys, all of them between 10 and 12 years of age. The group had surrounded a dog. Concerned if the boys were hurting the dog, he went over and asked, "What are you doing with that dog?" One of the boys replied, "This dog is just an old neighbourhood stray. We all want him, but only one of us can take him home. So we've decided that whichever one of us can tell the biggest lie will get to keep the dog." Of course, the minister was taken aback. "You boys shouldn't be having a contest telling lies!" he exclaimed. He then launched into a ten-minute sermon against lying. He preached, "Don't you boys know it's a sin to lie. When I was your age, I never told a lie." There was dead silence for about a minute. Just as the minister was beginning to think he'd gotten through to them, the smallest boy gave a deep sigh and said, "All right, give him the dog."

8th December The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Nine months before the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (8 September), the Church celebrates the Solemnity of her Immaculate Conception. The Feast was approved in 1476 by Pope Sixtus IV. It was extended to the universal Church by Pope Clement XI in 1708. Acknowledging the belief held for centuries by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, of councils and his predecessors, Pope Pius IX solemnly proclaimed the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854: "We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin" (Ineffabilis Deus, 1854).

Christmas Masses

St Mary Magdalene, Perth

Christmas Eve (Sunday 24th)

7pm – English
9pm – Polish

Christmas Day (Monday 25th)

Nativity of the Lord
Holy Day of Obligation
8:30am – Polish
10am – English
12pm – Polish

Feast of St Stephen (Tuesday 26th)

9am – English
11am – Polish

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Sunday 31st)

8:30am – Polish
10am – English
12pm – Polish

New Year 2024 (Monday)

Solemnity of Mary,
the Holy Mother of God
9am – English
11pm – Polish

Epiphany of the Lord (Sunday 7th)

8:30am – Polish
10am – English
12pm – Polish

NORMAL MASS SCHEDULES

Monday
No public Mass

Tuesday – Saturday
9am

Friday
7pm (Polish)

Sunday
8.30am (Polish)
10am (English)
12noon (Polish)

CONFESSIONS

Saturday
9:30am (after Mass)
or call to make an appointment.

"Be On Your Guard..." Advent Reconciliation Service

There will be a Service of Reconciliation on Tuesday 19th December 2023, at 6pm in St Mary Magdalene's Church. „Stay awake..." and plan a time to attend this important part of the preparation before the Christmas. Fr Piotr Rytel, parish priest from Banff, will lead us through this service and priests will be available for the individual confessions.

As we begin the new liturgical year in the Church we invite all to begin anew with souls nourished from the gift of the divine mercy and forgiveness God has for everyone. „There are people who are afraid to go to confession, forgetting that they will not encounter a severe judge there, but the immensely merciful Father" (Pope Francis).

SAINTS DAYS

Monday 4th December
1st Week of Advent

Tuesday 5th December
1st Week of Advent

Wednesday 6th December
1st Week of Advent

Thursday 7th December
The memorial of St Ambrose,
Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Friday 8th December
The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Saturday 9th December
1st Week of Advent

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