

# ST MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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*Priests: Fr James Boyle MHM: Fr. John Nevin MHM: Fr. Gerald Doyle MHM*

Registered Charity N0: 103983

## Fourth Sunday of Lent (Cycle B) 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### MASSES FOR THE WEEK:

6pm Sat: 10/3: Intentions of Kathleen Hanlin  
10am Sun: 11/3: Thanksgiving Mass for Eileen Mc Manus  
9am Mon: 12/3: Intentions of Fr Gerry Mc Closkey (birthday)  
1pm Mon: 12/3: Intentions of Neha Maria Abey  
9am Tues: 13/3: Francis Mullan RIP  
1pm Tues: 13/3: Catherine Mary Flynn RIP  
9am Wed: 14/3: Kevin Clancey RIP  
1pm Wed: 14/3: Benny Devenny RIP  
9am Thurs: 15/3: Deceased Mambbers Fallon Family RIP  
1pm Thurs: 15/3: Dan Breen RIP  
9am Fri : 16/3: Mass for the Homeless  
1pm Fri: 16/3: Cully Family RIP  
6pm Fri: 16/3: Vigil Mass Wellbeing of Annie Dempsey  
9am Sat: 17/3: Johanna O' Connor RIP  
12 noon Sat: 17/3: Wellbeing of Annie Dempsey  
1pm Sat: 17/3: Intentions of Donor  
6pm Sat: 17/3: Gerry & Colm Anderson RIP

*Let us remember the SICK in our Prayers: Paddy Gilliland, Michael Ryan, Peter Monaghan, Joe Faszczka & Betty, Jack Burns, Jan & Malachy, Martin Donaghy, James, Clare, Terry Fullerton, Elsie Cooney, Eileen Delaney, Anne Lambe, Donna Carey, , Danny Mc Kee, David, Dolores Kelly, Dinny Murphy, Sinead Ward, Colette Kearney, Sarah Keyland, Cian Travers, P McCloskey, Mary O' Neill, Maria Antonia Peres, Shannah Smyth, Pat Carville, Sheila Smith, Barry Mulholland, Paul Connolly, Joan Smith, Briega, Kumacho, Nora Mc Mahon, Marie Mc Guigan, Paul Kelly, Annie Crawford, Nuala Mailey, Paul Mc Larnon, Patsy Mullan, Larry Mc Gurk, Bernadette Boswell, Seán & Phyliss Smyth, , Linda McDonald, Christopher Browne, Kevin Heaney, Louise Green, Marian Hunter, Colm Gallagher, Margaret Mc Cafferty, Anna, Kohl Thelis, Deirdre O'Neill, Bridie Mc Crossan, Brenda McKervey, Margaret McCriskin, Margaret Mc Kenna, Jean Kelly, Joseph Duffy, Elizabeth Magee, Joel Rivera, Nora McDonagh, Maire Mc Kenna, Eddie O' Neill, Billy Houston, Mick Hughes, Annie Mc Nally. Patrick McAnulty; Tony Lindsay, Paddy McGeogh; Alex Vernon, Kathleen McMullan, Sean Mc Donnell, Eadie Staton, Gretta Whyte, Eileen Foley, Betty O'Rawe, Maureen Read, Michael O' Neill (Canada), Irene Lee, Philomena Lee; Anne Marie, Martin Jones; Jeannette Lee.*

### TWO COLLECTIONS THIS WEEK

**LAST WEEK COLLECTIONS:** 1 £245; 2. £466

**THIS WEEK COLLECTION:** Heat and Electricity

**NEXT WEEK COLLECTION:** 1. Up Keep of Church 2. Diocesan for Needy parishes

**FRIDAY BUILDING FUND COLLECTION:** £231.

**SILVER CIRCLE:** : Nora McMahan; Joe Mathers

**EACH SUNDAY DURING LENT:** 5pm – 6.30pm in St Paul's Pastoral centre (in the grounds of St Paul's Church) there will be a Reflection on “How to Pray”. Please do come and join in this journey of prayer. This Reflection on prayer is for all the communities of the Falls Pastoral area. St Mary's is in the Falls Pastoral Area. I request that Parishioners of St Mary's avail of these evenenings of Reflection on prayer. (Fr. James)

**DIVINE MERCY AND ROSARY** on Friday's during lent at 3pm in St Mary's church.

## SUNDAY READINGS

### **First Reading**

*2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23*: The causes for the Israelites' captivity in Babylon are described.

### **Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 137:1-2,3,4-5,6*: A lament from exile for the loss of Jerusalem

### **Second Reading**

*Ephesians 2:4-10*: In grace we have been saved, so that we may do the work of the Lord.

### **Gospel Reading**

*John 3:14-21*: Jesus tells Nicodemus that the Son of Man will be raised up so that those who believe in him will have eternal life.

**Background on the Gospel Reading** The fourth Sunday of Lent is sometimes called *Laetare* Sunday. *Laetare* is a Latin word that means "rejoice." Traditionally, Sundays are named after the first word of the liturgy's opening antiphon. On this Sunday, the antiphon is taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 66:10-11). Even as we observe our Lenten sacrifices, we rejoice in anticipation of the joy that will be ours at Easter.

Today's Gospel reading is taken from John's Gospel. It consists of two parts. The first part is the final sentence of Jesus' reply to Nicodemus, the Pharisee who approached Jesus at night. Nicodemus acknowledged Jesus as someone who had come from God and seemed to want to be a follower of Jesus. Jesus greeted Nicodemus with the observation that one must be born from above to see the Kingdom of God. The dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus that followed was about the meaning of this phrase. Nicodemus misunderstood Jesus at every point, but there was no animosity in the questions he posed to Jesus.

In the part of the conversation with Nicodemus in today's Gospel, Jesus referred to an incident reported in the Old Testament. When the Israelites grumbled against the Lord during their sojourn in the desert, God sent venomous serpents to punish them for their complaints. The Israelites repented and asked Moses to pray for them. The Lord heard Moses' prayer and instructed him to make a bronze serpent and mount it on a pole. All who had been bitten by a serpent and then looked upon the bronze serpent were cured. By recalling this story, Jesus alludes to the salvation that would be accomplished through his death and Resurrection.

The second part of today's Gospel is a theological reflection on Jesus' words to Nicodemus. The Gospel of John is known for this kind of reflection offered within the narrative. The words of the Evangelist are in continuity with the words of the prologue to John's Gospel. In these reflections, John elaborates on a number of themes that are found in his Gospel: light and darkness, belief and unbelief, good and evil, salvation and condemnation.

In John's reflection, we find an observation about human sinfulness. Jesus is the light that has come into the world, but people preferred the darkness. We wish to keep our sins hidden, even from God. Jesus has come into the world to reveal our sins so that they may be forgiven. This is the Good News; it is the reason for our rejoicing in this season of Lent and throughout our lives.

*Loyola Press*

**THE SCRUTINIES:** Bishop Noel was with us on the Saturday after Ash Wednesday to Celebrate the Rite of Election of the non-baptized participating in the RCIA. After the Rite of Election, Catechumens, that is those who are not baptized, **are called THE ELECT.**

**The Scrutinies are significant liturgies that THE ELECT are taken through in the context of the local parish community at Sunday liturgy on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent.** There are 3 Scrutinies and the Rite presumes that all 3 Scrutinies will be celebrated — there is a progression across the weeks, intended to gradually uncover the deepest thirst (**3rd Sunday, Woman at the Well**), any remaining areas of darkness (**4th Sunday, the Man born blind**), and anything that continues to ‘hold’ them in a binding grip (**5th Sunday, raising of Lazarus**), in order to heal all that is weak or ‘sinful’ in the hearts of the elect, and to bring out and strengthen all that is strong and good. **Note that where Scrutinies are celebrated the Gospel of Year A is read.**

**The scrutinies** are celebrated in order to free the elect from the power of sin, and protect them from temptations, and at the same time, give them strength in Christ, ‘the way, the truth and the life’. The experience of the scrutinies helps to complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their desire to trust and hold fast to Christ.

The language of the Rite (Scrutiny, Exorcism) can be challenging to some. *It reflects that this is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their consciences and do penance.*

**“THE FINAL BATTLE BETWEEN THE LORD AND THE REIGN OF SATAN WILL BE OVER MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY.** (*”Sister Lucy of Fatima*). Voice of the Family event: **VOF** is a coalition working to defend and promote Catholic teaching on the family. The event will discuss the current threats to life and family in Ireland, north and south, especially the upcoming referendum on the Eighth Amendment, and what we can do to overcome them. Come along, everyone welcome on Tuesday the 13th of March at 7pm in St Pauls, Falls road Belfast Parish Hall. Sarah Haire **VOF**

**A PRAYER FOR THE UNBORN** Heavenly Father, in your love for us, protect against the wickedness of the devil, those helpless little ones to whom you have given the gift of life. Touch with pity the hearts of those women pregnant in our world today who are not thinking of motherhood. Help them to see the child they carry is made in your image, as well as theirs, made for eternal life. Dispel their fear and selfishness and give them true womanly hearts to love their babies and give them birth and all the needed care that a mother can give. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen

**WE PRAY FOR EVERY BLESSING:**

***ON ALL MOTHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS WHO ARE PARISHONERS  
OR WHO COME TO WORSHIP AT ST MARYS.***

