

PARISH BULLETIN

**St Kieran's, the
Catholic
Church** *in*
Campbeltown and Islay
Ceann Loch Chille
Chiarain

March 8, 2026

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

8th March 2026

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Tuesday: **Holy Mass, 10.00am**

Wednesday: Adoration and mid-morning prayer,
9.30am; **Holy Mass, 10.00am**

Friday: Mid-morning Prayer, 9.50am; **Mass,
10.00am.**

Discussion Group: the scriptures during Lent,
10.30am in the Chapel House

Next weekend:

Saturday: *Vigil Mass*, 6.00pm

***4th Sunday of Lent*: Holy Mass, 10.00am**

Sacrament of Reconciliation Saturday 5.15pm-5.45pm or

anytime on request.

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

Sunday, 15th March, Confession, 3.30pm; Holy Mass, 4pm

Psalm response

*O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts.'*

Gospel acclamation

*Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.
Lord, you are indeed the Saviour of the world;
give me living water, so that I will not be thirsty.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.*

Communion Antiphon

*For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord,
the water I shall give will become in him
a spring welling up to eternal life.*

Hymns/Music for Sunday

Processional (Sunday only)

Sheet Spirit of God, come dwell within
me

Offertory

34 Almighty Father, take this bread

Post Communion

Sheet As the deer longs for running
streams

Recessional

579 Vaster far than any ocean

Take Five

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow – a day at a time.

MONDAY OF THE 3RD WEEK OF LENT

9 MARCH 2026

This Lent's to-do list

Wondering what the talk of "giving alms" is all about during Lent? The corporal works of mercy are a good place to start when looking for examples. Those include: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned. "Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God," says the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Make the corporal works of mercy your to-do list this Lent.

Today's readings: 2 Kings 5:1-15b; Luke 4:24-30. *"If the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it?"*

TUESDAY: FEAST OF SAINT JOHN OGILVIE, PRIEST, MARTYR

10 MARCH 2026

It bears much fruit

To truly embrace the new life that Jesus offers us, we need to let go of our old, flawed selves. Think of Baptism as a fresh start—our sinful nature is buried with Christ, and we rise as a completely new creation. This transformation isn't just a one-off; it's a journey, a daily commitment where God invites us to die to our old selves so we can fully experience resurrection and purpose in Him.

Here's the kicker: out of death comes life. When we let go of our selfish desires and say "yes" to God's will, we open ourselves up to incredible possibilities. It's like a beautiful paradox—dying to ourselves leads to a vibrant new life in Jesus. Jesus talked about self-denial strongly for a reason. When He said we must "hate" ourselves, it wasn't about self-loathing; it's about prioritising Him above all else.

Let's hold onto the hope that Paul reminds us of: what dies can also rise in glory! So, are you ready to trust in the Lord and joyfully walk the path He's laid out for you?

Today's readings: Isaiah 50:5-9a; John 12:24-26. *"If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also."*

WEDNESDAY: OPTIONAL

COMMEMORATION OF SAINT CONSTANTINE, MARTYR

11 MARCH 2026

School is in

In his sixth-century Rule, Saint Benedict, one of the founders of monasticism, described a monastery to be a "school of the Lord's service." Now, schools are not everyone's favourite places. In the best sense of the term, however, a school is a good place to learn, and the Catholic Christian tradition offers a number of them. The liturgy, for example, is a school for prayer—think of all the different kinds of prayer in the Mass—and also for life: You learn to make yourself a living sacrifice in communion with Jesus. Scripture, the saints, and the church's moral teachings also offer "learning opportunities" to explore. It's time to get up and go to school

Today's readings: Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9; Matthew 5:17-19. *"Hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe."*

THURSDAY OF THE 3RD WEEK OF LENT

12 MARCH 2026

How to be more prophet-able

Many think of biblical prophets as people whom God gave the mysterious power to see into the future. Prophets, however, were not crystal-ball-gazers who "predicted" what was to come. Most of the time they talked about the present—their present—and sometimes about the past as well. They focused on what the people of God were doing—or not doing—in their relationship with God. In bringing God's word to a situation, they called people back to God and showed them that God was still a guiding force in their lives. God summoned a long line of prophets to serve the Israelites, and there have been Christian prophets, too—just read 1 Corinthians 12:28 or Ephesians 4:11. A few prophets might even be around today.

Today's readings: Jeremiah 7:23-28; Luke 11:14-23. *"I have sent you untiringly all my servants the prophets."*

FRIDAY OF THE 3RD WEEK OF LENT

13 MARCH 2026

When will we forgive?

Nobody likes a traitor. From Brutus to John Wilkes Booth to Judas, those who betray ultimate loyalties like patriotism or friendship seem beyond redemption. A still deeper bond exists within families that can be trespassed or broken. In times of infidelity, mistreatment, severed trust, or divorce, it can seem that the idea of family itself has been lost. While people often don't feel the capacity to pardon such violations, emotion plays only a part in the task of forgiveness. Forgiving is also an act of will, not only of feelings. God models the decision of forgiveness for us, allowing the healing to begin. Abstain from meat today—and from withholding the healing power of forgiveness.

Today's readings: Hosea 14:2-10; Mark 12:28-34. *"I will heal their defection . . . I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them."*

SATURDAY OF THE 3RD WEEK OF LENT

14 MARCH 2026

Lent, here and now

How's Lent going for you? Has it been easy to enter into this year, or has it not even been on your radar screen? Wherever you are, it's okay. Today is a new day. If you're having difficulty, look to the prophet Hosea. Hosea gives us two things on which to focus our attention and efforts. First, he calls us to be persons of steadfast love. We can express steadfast love by attending a Lenten celebration with our parish community, reaching out to someone in need, or doing something especially considerate for our loved ones. Second, Hosea calls us to knowledge of God; not simply to know about God but to know God, to be in relationship with God. We can do that by being aware, right now, that we are in God's presence.

Today's readings: Hosea 6:1-6; Luke 18:9-14. *"For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings."*

Readings for the Third Sunday of Lent

Exodus 17:3-7

Thirst drives the people against Moses and his authority.

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

Hardened hearts cannot hear the word of the Lord with its saving power.

Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

Jesus dies for a world of sinners that cannot merit the gift they receive.

John 4:5-42 or 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

Two kinds of thirst bring together a Samaritan woman and the Messiah she awaits.

Words on Word

*

A mother and her little boy stepped into the church; it was dimly lit, with sunlight filtering through a colourful stained-glass window depicting a holy figure. The little boy looked up at his mother and asked, "Mama, who is that?" She replied, "That's Saint Martin." Much later, during religion class, when the priest posed the question, "Who is a saint?" the boy eagerly raised his hand. "A saint," he said, "is someone through whom the sun shines." What a beautiful thought!

* *

Today, in the Gospel, we read of the Samaritan woman meeting Christ at a well—a meeting that changed her life forever. And even now, if you find yourself travelling from Galilee to Jerusalem, you can stop at the base of Ebal and Gerizim and visit that very well dug by Jacob, the patriarch

who journeyed from Mesopotamia to Canaan. You could sip fresh, spring water—“living water”—that flows from deep within the earth, reminding us of the grace that flows through every encounter with Jesus.

The Gospel tells us, “[Jesus] therefore came to a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. There was Jacob’s well. Jesus, tired from the journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour” (Jn 4:5-6). It's one of those special places in the Holy Land tied directly to Jesus Himself. Imagine drinking from that well and being able to say, "I've drunk the same water from which Jesus drank."

Jesus, our Lord, truly became “in every respect like us—except sin” (Heb 4:15). He knew the weariness of the journey, yet He never tires in seeking each of us out. Pope Francis reminded us of this when speaking to prisoners in Philadelphia back in 2015: “In faith we know that Jesus is seeking us. He wants to heal our wounds, to soothe our feet bruised by the lonely journey, to cleanse each of us from the dust of our path. He asks not where we have been, nor what we have done.”

The Samaritan woman had her struggles; she had been married several times and was living with a man who was not her husband. Society labelled her as a sinner, but deep down, she carried a yearning for something more. When she saw in Jesus someone extraordinary—perhaps even a prophet—she asked Him a question that exposed her heart's longing. Her inquiry revealed a desire to glorify God, despite her past.

Breaking through social barriers, Jesus asked her for a drink, entering into a conversation that showed her she was far from insignificant in His eyes. Just as the Samaritan woman mattered to Him, so do each of us. Lent is our opportunity to recognise and live this truth, thanking God for His loving choice of us.

Even with her flawed life, the Samaritan woman thirsted for God’s presence. That encounter with Christ transformed her. “The woman then left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, ‘Come see a man who told me everything I ever did; could he be the Messiah?’” (Jn 4:28-30). As the townspeople flocked to see Him, she unknowingly stepped into the essence of Christianity and became a beacon—showing others the light of God.

Here’s the thing: We haven’t grasped the heart of Christianity if we see it merely as a set of rules or customs to follow. It’s not about rituals that shield us from life’s struggles. It’s not just a list of commandments to avoid condemnation or the pious practices we perform. While these elements can guide us, they are merely tools. True Christianity is a relationship—a vibrant encounter with the living God, who reveals Himself in Jesus Christ, for He is love.

As Pope Benedict XVI pointed out, saints exemplify what it means to follow Christ. They inspire us with hope and show us what’s possible. One person shared, “Since I started believing in Jesus Christ, my life has become richer. New possibilities have opened up, and I finally know what I'm living for!” Many more of us could echo something similar, drawn by the transformative power of faith.

As we gather for the Eucharist today, let’s remember that we might come out of habit, but Jesus is present—wanting to tell each of us, “Friend, if you only knew what I truly offer you, and if you were ready to accept this gift, wonderful things could happen.”

So remember the Samaritan woman, flawed though she was—God spoke through her, and He’s ready to speak through each of us too! Let's open our hearts and listen.

* * *

I believe that the evangelist did not write without deeper meaning that the Samaritan woman left her water jar and went away to the town. This sentence points to the great hurry of the Samaritan woman, who abandons the jar and places

less importance on her natural, poor duty than on the benefit of people: she was driven by love for people, when she wanted to proclaim to citizens the good news about Christ and bear witness to Him who had told her “all that I ever did”. She calls them to see the man who possesses teaching greater than human teaching (Origen).

In Christ's love,
Fr Anthony

THE MOTHER OF GOD IN ICONS: 20. IMAGES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Both the Eastern and Western Churches celebrate a fascinating richness in the imagery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, reflecting her pivotal role in the Christian faith. This devotion is not just about admiration; it's steeped in history and has inspired countless miracles throughout the ages.

In Eastern iconography, three main types of images stand out. First up is the Mother of God with the Child—a classic that can be seen in both half-length and full-length representations. Then there's the Mother of God on her own, often depicted as an orant, or one who prays with arms raised, symbolising her intercessory power. Lastly, we have the more symbolic depictions that capture the essence of her motherhood in unique ways. One particularly striking representation features Christ Emmanuel, showing the young Jesus within a medallion resting on Mary's breast—a beautiful image of their deep connection.

Among these, the half-length portraits of Mary with the Child are especially beloved, with two notable styles rising to prominence: Hodegetria and Eleusa (often referred to as Umilenije). Each of these styles not only tells a story but also comes with variations that keep the tradition fresh and alive.

Now, let's talk about Mary's attire—there's a reason this aspect is steeped in a rich tradition of its own. Mary is typically depicted with a blue veil covering her head, representing her purity. Underneath it, she wears a purple maphorion, a long robe that beautifully drapes down to her knees. What's particularly striking is the adornment of the maphorion with stars at the forehead and shoulders; these stars are symbols of her unwavering virginity and the unique role she plays in salvation history.



The Byzantine School: *Virgin of Vladimir*. First half of the 12th century, Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow

Overall, these images serve as more than mere art; they encapsulate the deep reverence Catholic tradition holds for Mary, inviting the faithful to reflect on her virtues and intercessions as they engage with these powerful symbols of faith.

Wounded Light

Commentaries on the Gospel of St John

Saint John's Gospel is used in the lectionary for Sundays on particular occasions, feasts and solemnities, and in certain seasons, e.g. Easter, Christmas.

Chapter 13

The Spurned Host

John 6:41-51

The Eucharist really is something special—it's like a powerful secret that can even beat death. Jesus made it super clear when He said, "Whoever eats this bread will not die." That bread, which is actually His Body, is packed with eternal life! Nowadays, we might not bat an eyelid at this idea, but think about the surprise it caused back then; it was a total game-changer, almost scandalous! People were talking about it everywhere.

To help us see what eternal life looks like in our everyday world—something that can feel a bit fuzzy—God decided to become one of us. And just to make sure we didn't miss the point, He turned into bread that we can actually eat. But here's the twist: the more God tried to connect with people, the more confused they seemed to get. They grumbled in the desert, they questioned Jesus, and honestly, people are still doing that today, caught up in cold logic that often overlooks the miraculous.

Can you imagine how disheartening it must've been for Jesus? He gave Himself completely—put His heart right out there—only to be met with doubt and suspicion. Remember when the Israelites were wandering around for forty years, eating manna, that miraculous food? Even they weren't happy with it! It's a bit like spoilt kids—always wanting more. When we're comfortable, we might start taking things for granted. Take a look at this: the Israelites complained to God and Moses, "Why'd you bring us out here just to die? There's no food, no water, and we can't stand this miserable food!" (Numbers 21:5). They reminisced about the tasty food back in Egypt, craving the things they used to have.

Recently, I was at a dinner with an amazing spread—meat, cucumbers, leeks, onions, you name it. But the lack of melons got me thinking. It reminded me of that endless longing of the Israelites that led to a chaotic craving. The Israelites even called the manna "miserable food"—a pretty harsh label, right? Why was that? Because when we chase after the 'meaty' pleasures of life, we can totally miss out on the miracle that is the Eucharist. Our craving for worldly delights can overshadow the incredible gift of having the presence of Christ right in front of us. The Eucharist is our chance to step into eternal life and genuinely worship God—and that is truly freeing!

As the Catechism points out in paragraph 2097: "Adoration of the one God frees man from being closed in on himself, from sin and from the idolatry of the world." Yet, many still find the Eucharist—a taste of heaven—insufficient. We end up craving the distractions and excesses of life—like good food, fun parties, and all those little indulgences. Sometimes, we might even pick the thrill of a new romance over the true love of God. Those temptations can quickly drown out our faith.

But here's the thing: real worship means putting aside anything that might pull us away from God. Just the other day, I was chatting with someone who was feeling down and confessed to craving sweets. It got me thinking—maybe when we feel lost, we try to fill that void with

excess. It's like asking if someone smokes because they're not on fire with passion for life. I want that passion for God to fuel me instead!

I spent a whole day thinking about the significance of the Eucharist. When I receive communion, it's not just about me receiving Him, but also about Him embracing me. That's a humbling thought! I realised that I am communion for God. So what kind of host am I? Am I sweet and innocent, lovely and humble, or just lukewarm? In His presence, I should be either hot or cold; yet, often, I end up being taken for granted. Despite my shortcomings, He's never pushed me away, even when I've let Him down. So many times, I've turned my back on Him, but He still bent down to wash my feet.

Saint John Vianney once said, "I pity those who feel absolutely nothing after Communion." It's true—if you're lacking love, indifference is way worse. It's better to feel something, even sorrow, than to feel nothing at all. So as we get ready to approach the Eucharist, let's truly make it count. Let's aim to really receive this incredible gift and allow it to transform us, lifting our hearts and minds to the One who loves us more than we can imagine.

Fr Anthony



Around the World

CRIMEA

They Are Destroying the Tatars

The plight of the Crimean Tatars, the Indigenous inhabitants of Crimea, stands out as a deeply troubling aspect of the region's ongoing occupation by Russia, which began in 2014. Olha Kuryshko, the representative of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, outlines the serious nature of their situation. Initially, the repression against them seemed selective and symbolic, but it has since escalated into a more systemic form of persecution. Any kind of dissent against the occupying forces is met with harsh retaliation, often employing laws related to terrorism, extremism, treason, and espionage in ways that are clearly disproportionate and unjust.

Physical violence and torture during interrogations have become unfortunately commonplace, aimed at forcing false confessions from those accused, she explains. Moreover, maintaining any connection with Ukraine—whether financially or through family ties—can be construed as an act of betrayal, showcasing the oppressive environment in which these individuals must navigate their lives. One notable case is that of 31-year-old Kyryl Kostygov, whose experience underscores the immense risks involved for the Crimean Tatars. Kuryshko estimates that hundreds of Crimean Tatars have received lengthy prison sentences simply for participating in religious gatherings, highlighting the severe restrictions on their freedoms.

The situation is further exacerbated by reports of forced conscription. Kuryshko points out that

at least 53,000 Tatars have been illegally drafted into military service, with a year-round draft system scheduled to commence in 2026. Alarmingly, over 30% of those convicted of evading conscription are Crimean Tatars, illustrating the targeted nature of the military's approach towards this group.

Beyond the immediate violence and legal repercussions, there's a concerted effort to erase the Tatars' cultural identity, largely through changes in the education system. Textbooks in the Crimean Tatar language have been removed, and there's a push for mandatory "military-patriotic education" that aims to reshape the narratives taught to the youth. This is indicative of a broader strategy to undermine and systematically dismantle the identity of the Crimean Tatar people.

Moreover, the demographic landscape of Crimea is undergoing significant change as Russia favours the influx of settlers from the mainland while displacing Indigenous residents. Since the occupation began, the population of Crimea has swelled by approximately 300,000 due to these new arrivals. This demographic shift, alongside the exodus of Crimean Tatars and others opposing the occupation, raises questions about the long-term implications for the region's cultural and ethnic diversity—a process that many observers might consider tantamount to ethnic cleansing.

In essence, the situation for the Crimean Tatars is dire and complex, emerging as a clear violation of human rights under the guise of occupation and governance. The community continues to face multifaceted challenges, from systematic repression and cultural erasure to forced military service, shedding light on the broader implications of the ongoing conflict in the region.

KABUL – ISLAMABAD

Open war

Pakistan has officially declared an "open war" on the Afghan Taliban, a move that marks a significant escalation in ongoing tensions. Recently, the border has seen a series of retaliatory strikes, culminating in Pakistani air force bombings of key locations such as Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, and Kandahar, the Taliban's heartland. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif stated, "Our patience has run out," signifying a shift in Pakistan's approach, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif asserted that his military is fully equipped to deal with any aggressive actions from Afghanistan.

However, following this aggressive stance, it remains uncertain how matters will unfold. In the wake of these developments, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has offered to mediate, expressing willingness to assist in facilitating dialogue. This could be crucial, as further hostilities risk destabilising the already volatile South Asian region, which grapples with political unrest and the influence of various militant groups.

Pakistan has accused the Taliban of allowing armed groups to launch attacks on its territory, while the Taliban has retaliated, accusing Pakistan of breaching Afghanistan's sovereignty through military incursions. This back-and-forth only deepens the already complicated relationship between the two nations and highlights the urgent need for diplomatic solutions.

As tensions continue to rise, one can't help but wonder how this conflict could reshape the dynamics in South Asia, a region already fraught with complexities. The potential for escalation into wider conflict looms ominously, and it raises a pressing question: Can dialogue prevail over aggression in the quest for stability?

UNDERGROUND TUNNELS

Traces of Hamas

Recent reports emerging from the Polish-Belarusian border have thrown up some unexpected findings. According to the Border Guard, a suspicious tunnel has been uncovered that could be linked to Hamas and Hezbollah. This tunnel, the largest of four uncovered this year, was found near the village of Narewka, where, in mid-December last year, around 180 migrants—primarily from Afghanistan and Pakistan—made their way into Poland. Most of these individuals were apprehended shortly after emerging from this narrow passage.

The tunnel itself was around 1.5 metres high, stretching roughly 50 metres on the Belarusian side and 10 metres into Polish territory. Its entrance was cleverly hidden within the forest, suggesting a level of planning and intent beyond that of a simple dig. Reports from The Telegraph indicate that this isn't just a hasty excavation; it's likely a well-constructed structure, bolstered by concrete supports.

What's particularly intriguing is the possibility that both Russia and Belarus may have enlisted the help of specialists from the Middle East for this construction. Military experts noted in the article suggest that the methods used—particularly the reinforced walls and camouflaged entrances—are reminiscent of tactics employed by groups operating in the Gaza Strip and southern Lebanon. Naturally, this leads to speculation about the potential involvement of Hamas and Hezbollah in the tunnel's creation.

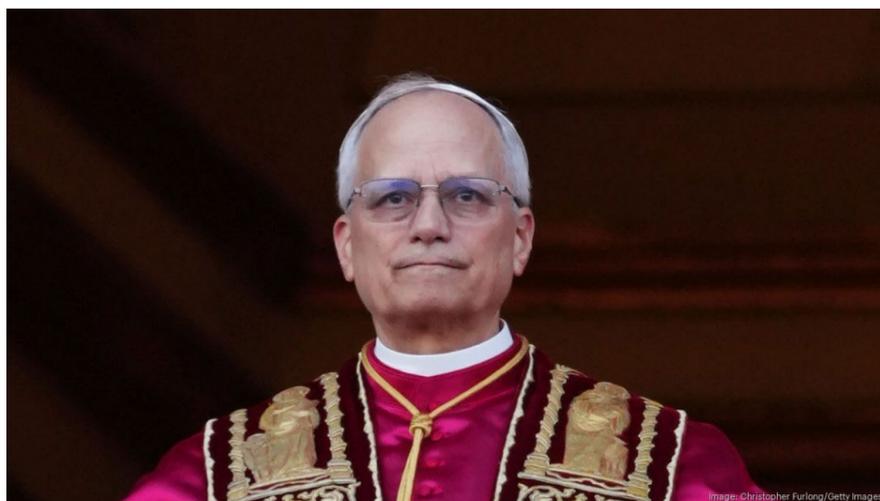
This situation raises significant questions about security and the geopolitical dynamics at play in the region. Not only does it highlight the complex networks that facilitate migration, but it also points to the potential for international actors to influence border activities in Europe. As we piece together the details, it's clear that this tunnel's discovery is a stark reminder of the interconnectedness of global issues—migrants seeking safety, potential terrorist networks, and the geopolitical strategies of nations.

We Read Pope Leo

We must pray much for peace and strive to live in unity, rejecting the temptation to harm others.

The Transfiguration foretells the light of Easter, the event of death and resurrection, darkness and new light which Christ pours out on all bodies scourged by violence, on bodies crucified by pain, on bodies abandoned in destitution. Indeed, while evil

reduces our body to a replaceable commodity or an anonymous mass, it is that very body which glows with God's glory. The Redeemer in this way transforms the wounds of history, illuminating our mind and heart: His revelation is a wondrous gift of salvation! Do we remain under its spell? Does the true face of God find in us a gaze full of awe and love? To the despair of atheism the Father responds with the gift of the Son-Saviour; from agnostic solitude the Holy Spirit delivers us, offering us eternal communion of life and grace; in the face of our weak faith stands the promise of future resurrection – this is what the disciples saw in the radiance of Christ, but to understand it requires time. Time of silence to listen to the Word; time of repentance to taste the Lord's companionship.



The Angelus, 1 March 2026.

With deep concern I follow what in these dramatic hours is unfolding in the Middle East and in Iran. Stability and peace are not built with mutual threats or by using weapons, which sow destruction, pain, and death, but only through reasonable, authentic, and responsible dialogue. In view of the threat of a tragedy of immense proportions I address a fervent appeal to the parties involved to take moral responsibility for stopping the spiral of violence before it becomes an irreversible chasm! Let diplomacy once again regain its role and let the good of peoples be promoted, those who long for peaceful coexistence founded on justice. And let us continue to pray for peace.

After the Angelus, 1 March 2026.

We must be heralds of the peace of Jesus, the peace which God desires for all. So we must pray much for peace and strive to live in unity, rejecting the temptation to harm others. Violence is never the right choice. Always choose good. (...) You, children, can do this with words, obedience to your mother and father, good deeds. All that you do should be a choice of goodness, peace, reconciliation, friendship and building communion. Yes, together with Jesus, as Catholics and His disciples, we can build peace in our world.

Words to the youth of the Parish of the Ascension of the Lord in the Roman district of Quarticciolo, 1 March 2026.

In my opinion

Living Many Lives

Nothing captivates our minds quite like the act of reading, especially when it intertwines with our imagination and sensitivity. Many of us have experienced dreams that whisk us away to vibrant and emotional realms, leaving us pondering their significance upon waking. We all know that some dreams can be nightmarish, leaving us relieved to return to reality. However, it is precisely in these moments of awakening that we experience a sense of clarity, escaping from the fog of illusion into the warmth of our genuine lives.

Dreams undoubtedly stir something deep within us, prompting curiosity and reflection. However, let me reassure you: I am not advocating for any dubious philosophies suggesting that dreams allow us to relive past lives. God forbid! Instead, I want to highlight something quite poignant in this digital age we inhabit: the unmatched joy of visiting libraries and curating personal collections of books offers us the extraordinary opportunity to inhabit multiple worlds simultaneously.

When we immerse ourselves in a novel, we transcend our physical boundaries, living through the eyes of characters and experiencing events we might never encounter in our everyday lives. A wise scholar once noted, "Whoever reads, lives many times over," and there's truth in that statement. In a world inundated with visual stories, video games, and modern technology, the art of focused reading remains uniquely engaging. It sparks our imagination and allows us to truly connect with narratives, far beyond what films or audiobooks can provide.

When we read, we don't merely consume a story; we absorb the essence of the writer's craft, experiencing something deeply personal and resonant. Yet, I can already hear the murmurs of those concerned about accumulating books: "But where will all these books go, when the shelves are bowing under the weight and dust gathers?" For me, a home devoid of bookshelves feels lacking in spirit. There's nothing quite like the sound of turning pages, the anticipation of delving into a fresh story, or the warmth of touching familiar covers.

Perhaps my perspective is somewhat old-fashioned, but I find solace in a world that is enriched by books in every corner. I cherish the opportunity to trade these treasures and am grateful that I am graced to be write though in a very limited manner. A life without the tactile presence of printed books, without their distinctive scent and the allure of their covers, would be truly bleak—cold and devoid of hope. I may not be Robinson Crusoe adrift on a vast sea, but I long to encounter fellow bibliophiles, each carrying well-loved stacks of aged pages waiting to be opened and enjoyed. So, let us celebrate libraries, cherish old bookstores, and honour the writers who enrich our lives, one story at a time.

Tony Wood

Prayer



Please remember to pray for those who are unwell, in need, or have requested our prayers: Andrew McLaughlin, Claire Wiggins, Russell Carroll, Lucy Cunningham, Tommy McGrory Senior, Sarah Carmichael, and Doleen Durnin.

Please keep in your prayers John Savage (2019) and all those whose anniversaries fall around this time.

Please continue to pray for the innocent people of Iran, that they be protected, courageous and retain hope.

News and Events

Tea and coffee this Sunday after Mass in the parish hall, all welcome.

The bishop's visit: Bishop Brian will be making his parish visit to Campbeltown on 7/8th March. There will a **Second Collection** to support SCIAF's work.

The Deanery Meeting will be in Campbeltown on the 10th March. Mass on that Tuesday will be at 10am with the priests of the Deanery.



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