

FRANCIS, BISHOP OF ROME, SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD. ON MERCY. TO ALL WHO READ THIS LETTER GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE

8. With our eyes fixed on Jesus and his merciful gaze, we experience the love of the Most Holy Trinity. The mission Jesus received from the Father was that of revealing the mystery of divine love in its fullness. "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8,16). John affirms for the first and only time in all of Holy Scripture. This love has now been made visible and tangible in Jesus' entire life. His person is nothing but love, a love given gratuitously. The relationships he forms with the people who approach him manifest something entirely unique and unrepeatable. The signs he works, especially in favour of sinners, the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy. Everything in him speaks of mercy. Nothing in him is devoid of compassion.

Jesus, seeing the crowds of people who followed him, realized that they were tired and exhausted, lost and without a guide, and he felt deep compassion for them (cf. Mt 9:36). On the basis of this compassionate love he healed the sick who were presented to him (cf. Mt 14:14), and with just a few loaves of bread and fish he satisfied the enormous crowd (cf. Mt 15:37). What moved Jesus in all of these situations was nothing other than mercy, with which he read the hearts of those he encountered and responded to their deepest need. When he came upon the widow of Nain taking her son out for burial, he felt great compassion for the immense suffering of this grieving mother, and he gave back her son by raising him from the dead (cf. Lk 7:15). After freeing the demoniac in the country of the Gerasenes, Jesus entrusted him with this mission: "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you" (Mk 5:19). The calling of Matthew is also presented within the context of mercy. Passing by the tax collector's booth, Jesus looked intently at Matthew. It was a look full of mercy that forgave the sins of that man, a sinner and a tax collector, whom Jesus chose – against the hesitation of the disciples – to become one of the Twelve. Saint Bede the Venerable, commenting on this Gospel passage, wrote that Jesus looked upon Matthew with merciful love and chose him: miserando atque eligendo.[7] This expression impressed me so much that I chose it for my episcopal motto. To be continued....

Parish Priest: Fr. Gregory E. Umunna Ph.D.

Phone: 01250872171. **Email:** ststephen@dunkelddioecese.org.uk

Address: 8, Bank Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE.

Hall Reservations: Contact no: 01250872171.

Hospital Chaplains: Please call: N/wells Direct line: 07821624124,

Hospital Pager 01382660111; P.R.I: 01738259371. *Pls let the priest know if you are on a long stay at the hospital and would like a visit.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals: Please make appointment with Priest before any arrangements are made.

Diocese of Dunkeld Scottish Charity No:SC00810

Parish Ministries, Volunteers and Contact Persons: (May God bless these & others for their selfless service)

H/T: St. Steph's Primary School: Mrs. Lindsey Smith. Ph: 871950.

Catechists: Ms. Elizabeth Bush: Catechism Classes for 1st Holy Comm & Confirmation everyin the Hall. Email: alzbeta.krajcikova@gmail.com Ph:07934884759

Parish Safeguarding Coordinator: Mrs. Maureen Jackson. 07952376985; Email: ststephenpsc@dunkelddioecese.org.uk

Parish Webmaster: Mr. Irek Kawalinski. Email: irekkowalinski@gmail.com

Music Directors: Mr. Tom Buckham and Mrs. Gail McIntyre.

Responsible Person for Eucharistic Ministers: Mr. Alan Scott.

Responsible Person for Children's Liturgy: Mrs. Mary Wojtowicz

Responsible Person for Lectors:

Responsible Group for Parish Social Justice Issues: SSVDP

Responsible Person for Church Flowers: Mrs. Jean Scott (Blair), Mrs. Elma Sharp (Alyth)

Resp. Person: Altar Servers: Mr. Rolly Colanese

Grounds Flowers: Mrs. Jennifer FitzPatrick

Adviser on Finance: Mr. Mike Coyle

Adviser on Fabric: Mr. Jim Graham

Wishing you and your loved ones a lovely Sunday—Fr. Gregory

Tear this off please:... Are you going into the hospital? Do you have someone going into the hospital? Would you like him/her/you to be visited with communion, please fill the form below and return to Fr. Gregory.

Name:.....

Hospital:.....

Date:.....

Please submit all items for the parish bulletin by 6.00 p.m. on Thursday each week.

Email: peacegreg2002@yahoo.com

Phone: 01250 872171



St. Stephen's RC Church Blairgowrie

St. Luan's R C Church Alyth

St. Mary's Coupar Angus

4th Sunday of Easter: Good Shepherd Sunday Year B 21/4/24

Parish website: <https://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk/>

E-mail: ststephen@dunkelddioecese.org.uk

Address: 8 Bank Street Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE



Warm Welcome
to all our Parishioners and visitors.
Whether you are visiting our parish or just moved into the area, please feel very welcome ... thanks.

Father Gregory E. Umunna Ph.D.
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Contact Address: 8 Bank Street Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE
01250872171

Parish diary: Week beginning from 21/4/24.

Saturday 20th April - 5.30pm: Vigil mass St Stephen's

Sunday 21st April - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth

Sunday 21st April - 11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's. (With Baptisms of Micah and Johannes)

Tuesday 2nd April - 10.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's:

Wednesday 24th April - 6.00pm adoration, 7pm: Holy mass at St. Stephen's

Thursday 25th April - 10am: mass at St. Luan's;

Friday 26th April - Funeral Mass at St. Joseph's Burntisland, Fife for Late Theresa Thomson, 10.15am. No morning mass in the parish please.

Saturday 27th April - 5.30pm: Vigil mass St Stephen's

Sunday 28th April - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth

Sunday 28th April - 11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

This Sunday, ... "The stone that was rejected by the builders; it has become the cornerstone." There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved but the name of Jesus" See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.

Prayer: O God, you never cease to call even those far away, for it is your will that all be drawn into one fold. Attune our ears to the voice of the Good Shepherd, who leads us always to you, that we may find under your tender protection life in all its fullness. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen

Mass intentions for the week:

Jim Warden, Monsignor Vincent Mba, Bishop Gregory Ochiagha, Anita Donald (Thanksgiving to God)

Other Devotional Programmes of the Parish.

Family Rosary and adoration. Every Wednesday 6.00pm - 7.00pm. -Mass for the sick every Wed 7.00pm, -Sacrament of Reconciliation: 5.00pm every Saturday and 9am every Sunday, -Divine Mercy Devotion: Tues after morning mass. -Mass with St. Stephen's Primary School: 1st Fri. of the month; end of terms and core events masses.

In your prayers, kindly remember those on our prayer list:

Michael Rolls, Neil McDowall, Pam McKenna, Val Naughton, Dr. Paul Kinnear, Mary and George Flockhart, Snooky Marshall, Maud McGinn, Alex Forrester, Cipriano and Carmelita, Tom O'Malley, Roy Sweeney, Diana Richardson, Pamela —

You are never alone:

For a shared a prayer, or just have someone listen to you, a candle lit for you or yours, have a mass offered for your intention or that of a loved one living or dead, please speak to the priest. Thanks.

Warm Welcome:

Tea/Coffee, biscuits and a warm welcoming space in the Lower Hall after the 11.00am mass every Sunday to May 2024. Please feel free to pop in. More volunteers to help with serving please. Thanks.

Take time today to contemplate ...what captures your attention the most. Don't let the multitude of voices in the world drown out God's voice. Instead, ready yourself for when He chooses to communicate with you. When He does speak, allow His voice to seize your focus so that you can follow His guidance.

Let us Pray:

God of life, source of all faith, through the waters of baptism you have raised us up in Jesus and given us life that endures. Day by day refine our faith, that we who have not seen the Christ may truly confess him as our Lord and God and share the blessedness of those who believe. Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.



-Children's Liturgy: Many thanks to Mary Wojtowicz and her team of the Liturgists for the wonderful work they do for us and I encourage the parents to please support their children to use this wonderful opportunity.

Today and Up Coming Events:

-26th April: Funeral Mass at St. Joseph's Burntisland, Fife for Late Theresa Thomson, 10.15am. No morning mass in the parish please.

-28th April: Building maintenance Fund collection, please support it.

-30th April: Talk on "Looking for God in a Broken World: The Case of Persecution of Christians in our world today" by Fr. Gregory Umunna. Host: Sera Vocation Group. Venue: St. Mary's Lochee, 7.00pm. Everyone is invited.

Dates for the Sacraments in 2024:

-Sacrament of Reconciliation: Wednesday, **8th of May 2024**. Time: 5pm.

-Sacrament of Confirmation: Sunday, **19th of May 2024**. Time 2.00pm. —

First Holy Communion for School and Parish Candidates: Sunday, **2nd of June 2024**. Time 2.00pm.

-June 12th: National Prayer Breakfast for Scotland, Edinburgh all morning and afternoon.

-19th May: The Apostolate of Communication. Special collection.

26th May: Building maintenance Fund collection, please support it.

-9th June: Day of Life Special Collection. Please support it.

-30th June: Building maintenance Fund collection, please support it.

July: Peter's Pence.
August: The Apostleship of the Sea.

-At the repository: available are our 2024 Diary, rosaries, medals, holy pictures, candles etc and these will make lovely presents for family and friends. Please visit Our Parish Repository.

-St. Mary's Coupar Angus will, *ad interim*, be happy to receive and store your unwanted gift items and other items you may wish to donate in support of the Church fund. Please hand them in or leave in the Lower Hall. Stalls will be set up in St. Mary's Coupar Angus at specified date in Spring and Summer. Contact MOB 01828627723.

-New to the Parish? Please pick a form at the entrance of the church, complete and hand in the form. Thanks. New members are always welcome to come along and attend or visit the following parish groups: SVDP, Wednesdays 7.30pm; Divine Mercy, Tuesdays 10.30am; Adoration, Wed. 6.00pm.

-Parish Finances: All of us hope to leave the world a better place than when we came into it. When making your will please consider leaving something to St. Stephen's R C Church so that you will continue to assist our parish to flourish and leave behind a legacy of Faith. If you feel able to support the parish in whatever way you could via Standing Order, occasional or one-off payment, it would be very much appreciated. By signing the Gift Aid form, your offertory collection can earn the parish a bit more.

Mass offertory collection goes back to the pre-Covid practise with the plates going round from 1st Sunday of May. Thanks.

Details of Parish account: Royal Bank of Scotland, 14 Allan Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6AD. Sort code:- **83-16-33**; Account No:- **00240708**. Account name:- Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dunkeld No3 Char TST St Stephens RC Church. Many thanks.

***Last Sunday's offertory coll. £275.02:** Many thanks for your support to the parish.

*Figures exclude takings from Standing orders, bank transfers and direct debits. Comprehensive Parish Accounts are published on the Notice Board. Thanks.

First Aid Training: The following people have indicated their interest to be part of the proposed First Aid training in the parish:

Amanda Donnelly, Kian Donnelly, Juliet Vivers, Hayley Ritchie, Maria Dawson, Katherine Fraser, Ellie William, Gail McIntyre, Anne-Marie Hogan and Mary

Wojtowicz. This is the final call before a meeting is arranged soon. Thanks.

Going Back to Galilee Without Fear

After the death of the master, the disciples had scattered; their faith had been utterly shaken, everything seemed over, all their certainties had crumbled and their hopes had died. But now, that message of the women, incredible as it was, came to them as a ray of light in the darkness. The news spread: Jesus is risen as he said. And then, there was his command to go to Galilee; the women had heard it twice, first from the angel and then from Jesus himself: Let them go to Galilee; there they will see me". "Do not fear" and "go to Galilee".

To return to Galilee means to re-read everything on the basis of the cross and its victory, fearlessly. To re-read everything—Jesus's preaching, his miracles, the new community, the excitements and the defections, even the betrayals—to re-read everything starting from the end, which is a new beginning, from his supreme act of love.

For each of us, too, there is a "Galilee" at the origin of our journey with Jesus. "To go to "Galilee" means something beautiful, it means discovering our baptism as a living fountainhead, drawing new energy from the sources of our faith and our Christian experience. To return to Galilee means above all to return to that blazing light with which God's grace touched me at the start of the journey. From that flame, I can light a fire for today and everyday, and bring heat and light to my brothers and sisters. That flame ignites a humble joy, a joy which sorrow and distress cannot dismay, a good gentle joy.

In the life of every Christian. There is also another "Galilee", a mere existential "Galilee", the experience of a personal encounter with Jesus who called me to follow him and to share in his mission.



Reflection: Pope calls for every effort for dialogue and peace in Mideast

At the conclusion of Sunday's Regina Coeli, Pope Francis makes a heartfelt appeal to halt the spiral of violence in the Middle East and for all nations to favour negotiation and peace efforts, while assisting those suffering in Gaza. Pope Francis made a heartfelt appeal on Sunday following the Regina Caeli, when he called for a stop to any actions that may fuel the "spiral of violence" in the Middle East that risk plunging the region into an even wider war. The Pope said he is following with "prayer and concern, even sorrow" the news arriving in recent hours about the worsening situation in Israel following the intervention by Iran. He emphasised that nobody should threaten the existence of others, and that instead all nations should "take the side of peace," helping Israelis and Palestinians to live in two States, side by side, in security. He added, "It is their deep and legitimate desire, and it is their right! Two neighbouring States."

Humanitarian emergency

The Pope renewed his appeal for a ceasefire in Gaza and that the path of negotiation be pursued "with determination." Recalling the suffering of the population in Gaza, "plunged into a humanitarian catastrophe," he called for every effort to alleviate their suffering. He prayed that "the hostages kidnapped months ago be released!"

"So much suffering! Let us pray for peace. No more war, no more attacks, no more violence! Yes to dialogue and yes to peace!"

A reflection on The Good Shepherd's Sacrifice

The 4th Sunday of Easter Year B invites us to reflect on Jesus Christ's role as the Good Shepherd, a theme beautifully unveiled in the Gospel reading. This imagery is not just a metaphor but a deep revelation of Christ's sacrificial love and commitment towards us. Unlike a hired hand who might flee at the first sign of danger, Jesus stands firm, ready to lay down His life for His sheep. This act of

ultimate sacrifice is a testament to the depth of His care and concern for us. It's a love that goes beyond duty or obligation. Jesus wants to be our shepherd, guiding us, protecting us, and leading us to pastures of eternal life.

In today's readings for the 4th Sunday of Easter Year B, we are invited to contemplate the nature of this sacrifice. It's a voluntary offering from Jesus, not coerced or done grudgingly but out of a boundless love for humanity. He emphasizes that He lays down His life willingly, with the power to take it up again. This authority and voluntary sacrifice underline the divine mission and the profound love Jesus has for us, highlighting His unique role in God's salvific plan.

"We Christians too, in our journey of life, are in this state of walking, of progressing in familiarity with the Lord. The Lord, I could say, is a bit "down to earth", but He is down to earth because He walks with us, we recognise that it is Him. No one asks Him, here, "who are you?": they knew that He was the Lord. It is an everyday familiarity with the Lord, that of the Christian. And certainly, they ate breakfast together, with fish and bread, certainly they spoke about many things naturally."

Considering the Priesthood: Have you every thought about a life of loving service to others in God's name?

If so, 'Come and See' at the National Enquirer's Event for anyone considering the Priesthood on Saturday 25 May in Turnbull Hall, Glasgow.

Please be in touch with Fr Jim Walls (stmarieslochee@dunkelddiocese.org.uk; or 01382-611282). Transport will be arranged from Dundee.

Also, the link below gives bulletin prompts up until Pentecost. <https://priestsforScotland.org.uk/think-vocations-2024-prompts-for-parishes/> Any queries don't hesitate to be in touch.

God bless, Jim

The year 2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. The First Ecumenical Council in the history of the Church. The Creed of Nicaea affirmed the Christian faith in the Triune God and (in the version of the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in 381) is widely used in the Eucharistic liturgies of Eastern and Western Christianity to this day.

St Mary's University is delighted to host a symposium featuring important scholars who will discuss the legacy of Nicaea and its Creed in the theology of Benedict XVI. The symposium is jointly organised with the Neuer Schülerkreis Joseph Ratzinger/Papst Benedikt XVI. Founded at the request of Benedict XVI in 2008, the Neuer Schülerkreis is an association of scholars who are committed to advancing research on the thought of the late Pope and to continuing his theological approach.

The symposium is supported by the Joseph Ratzinger Papst Benedikt XVI.—Stiftung.

Date: Saturday 11th May 2024
Time: 2:00pm to 6:00pm
Venue: The Waldegrave Drawing Room, St Mary's University.

-Congratulations to baby Johannes Morocco and Micah Morocco who will be baptised this Sunday at the 11.00am mass. Micah and Johannes, the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Morocco for presenting their children for baptism.

