



St. Stephen's R C Church.

8 Bank Street Blairgowrie Ph10 6DE, 872171

St. Mary's Coupar Angus & St. Luan's Alyth.

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross - Feast, Year C. 14/9/25

Parish Priest and Prison Chaplain: Fr. Gregory E. Umunna Ph.D

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

E-mail: ststephen@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Scottish Charity No: SC001810

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.

Our Vision and Mission: To be a welcoming and participating Catholic community on a journey, striving to be led by the Spirit, strengthened by a bond of love and unity, guided by the gospel message of Christ, refreshed and nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ at the Eucharistic table. Enriched by a vibrant people of God from diverse backgrounds and supported by many gifts and talents employed in various ministries and stewardships, we journey together hand-in-hand through life as a parish family of God's people.

Parish diary: Week beginning from 14/9/25

This weekend, as we continue with our celebration of the Jubilee Year of Hope, focusing on the Jubilee of Consolation, we welcome Dr. Jim McManus to share with us his own experiences where Hope and Consolation made a real difference in his specific area of practice.



Saturday - 5.30pm: Vigil mass. St. Stephen's.

Sunday - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's.

- 11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

Monday - Prison ministry all day. **Our Lady of Sorrows**

Tues - 10.00am Holy mass at St. Stephen's. **St. Ninian's**

Wed - 10.00am Holy mass at St. Luan's.

- 6.00pm Rosary, adoration, St. Stephens.

- 7pm. Holy mass at St. Stephens.

Thurs - Prison ministry all day.

Frid - 10.00am. Holy mass at St. Stephens.

Saturday - 5.30pm: Vigil mass. St. Stephen's.

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

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

This week: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." The Exaltation of the Cross is celebrated each year on 14 September, when in AD 335 a church marking the site of the crucifixion was first dedicated in Jerusalem. We honour the cross today and reflect on its meaning in our lives.

Opening Prayer: Lifted up among us, O God, is Jesus the crucified: sign of your steadfast love and pledge of your will to save. To those who look upon the cross with faith grant healing of soul and life eternal. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Introduction to the Scripture Readings
Numbers 21:4-9 The bronze serpent Moses put on a pole, with the power to cure, is a symbol of the cross of Christ.
Philippians 2:6-11 Understanding the humility of Jesus and his glory gives us a balanced picture of the meaning of Jesus' life and death.

John 3:13-17 Jesus compares himself to the bronze serpent lifted up by Moses in the desert.

Other Participatory Programmes of the Parish.

-Family Rosary and adoration. Every Wednesday 6.00pm-7.00pm. Mass for the sick every Wednesday 7.00pm-7.30pm.

-Sac. of Reconciliation: 5.00pm every Sat and 9am every Sun.

-Divine Mercy Devotion. Tuesdays after morning mass.

-Please join us. Mass with St. Stephen's Pri. Sch: 1st Fri. of the month; end of terms and core events masses.

- Journeying together in Faith Group - Every fortnight.

Kindly remember also those on our prayer list:

Michael Rolls, Neil McDowall. Pam McKenna, Mary and George Flockhart. Snooky Marshall, Maud McGinn, Cipriano and Carmelita, Tom O'Malley, Giles Umunna and Tony Donnan, Lisa Robertson, Philip Lafferty. Philip Jackson.

Today's and Up Coming: 14th September: Bishop's Mensal Fund; 28th September: Building maintenance Fund; 12th Oct: Mission Sunday; 26th October: Building maintenance Fund; 9th November: Sick and Retired Priest's Fund/Catholic Education Service; 30th Nov: Building maintenance Fund; 14th Dec: Poor Mission Fund; 28th Dec: Building maintenance Fund.

-Details of Parish account: Name: **St. Stephens RC Blairgowrie.** Account Number: 28075068; Sort Code: 80-22-60.

Last Sunday offertory collection: £404.85 Many thanks for your support to the parish. *Figures exclude takings from Standing orders, bank transfers and direct debits. Comprehensive Parish Financial Audits and Accounts are published on the Notice Board. Many thanks .

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.

Tea/Coffee, Everyone is welcome to tea and coffee served in the Lower Hall after 11.00am mass in St. Stephens every Sunday Thanks.

St. Stephen's Parish Library. Selection of Books on: Spirituality/ Prayer. Lives of Saints/ Martyrs, Theology/ philosophy History/ Psychology, Pilgrimage sites. Pls feel free to borrow any from the shelves in the lower hall and return a week after use. Thanks.

Communion to nursing homes, house bounds and the elderly is part of our ministry of care. Please let any of the Eucharistic Ministers or myself know if you know some- one who is in need of this care. Thanks.

Journeying together in Faith Group. 19th September. 6pm.

Topics discussed so far: **Prayer**: How, when and where to pray, types of prayer; **Purgatory**: meaning, why and how long before they are freed, Should we pray for or to those in purgatory; **Sin**: venial and mortal sins; **Reconciliation**; **Hell**, a state of deprivation not a place, devil, fallen angels, will and choice; **Mercy of God**: works of charity, etc. Following the recommendations of the parish group "Conversation in the Spirit." we shall continue to test run this initiative in our parish within an atmosphere of a relaxed, friendly and welcoming gathering every fortnight.



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

COFFEE MORNING : It was an amazing show of support to the Happy Tummies Kids Kitchen. Many thanks to all the donors, supporters and participants at the occasion. A total of £1.000 was raised, Huge appreciations to Daria and her team of organizers from Alyth, Blairgowrie and Coupar Angus.

Parish Diversity Day Celebration: Sunday 28th September 2025. This year will showcase cultural diversity in a unique setting: Flags A4bsize, multi linguistic mass celebration and prayers, songs, poems, cloths, prints, culinary and many other initiatives from our diver communities in the parish.

A Reflection: The triumph of failure

In the time of Jesus no one would have considered crucifixion a triumph or a win of any sort. It may have been considered a triumph for those who were doing the crucifying; it certainly would never have been considered a triumph for the person crucified. Yet, that is what we are celebrating . Jesus, in being crucified, triumphed. It was a triumph of love over hatred. As John the evangelist says in today's gospel, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.' Jesus revealed God's love in all that he said and did, but he revealed God's love most fully on the cross. Authentic love is always life-giving and that is uniquely so of God's love. As well as being the triumph of love over hatred, the cross of Jesus is the triumph of life over death. The blood and water flowing from the side of Jesus in John's gospel speaks to us of the life that flows through the death of Jesus. From the cross Jesus draws all of us into the love and life of God. As he says in John's gospel, when I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself. We simply have to let ourselves be drawn by him.

News from the Vatican: Pope: Seeing with Mary's eyes helps people and cultures walk in peace

Pope Leo concludes the 26th International Mariological Marian Congress with a speech in the Paul Audience VI Hall, stressing

that the Virgin Mary continues to open doors, build bridges, tear down walls, and help humanity live in harmony amid diversity.

By Daniele Piccini

"Contemplating the mystery of God and of history through the inner gaze of Mary shields us from the distortions of propaganda, ideology, and toxic information—none of which can ever offer a word that is both unarmed and disarming. Mary's gaze opens us instead to divine grace, the only true path to enable people, nations, and cultures to walk together in peace."

Two Biblical categories

The Pope pointed out that the title of the Congress itself reflects two "biblical categories"—jubilee and synodality—which powerfully express the vocation and mission of the Mother of the Lord. In her, he said, "we can read the vocation of the Church itself." Mary thus stands as a model for the Church. "The Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church," the Pope said, "teaches us how to be the holy people of God."

A "Jubilee Woman"

Mary, explained Pope Leo, is a "jubilee woman" because she always begins anew from listening to the Word of God. She does so with the attitude described by St. Augustine in Book X of the *Confessions*—not by expecting a desired answer, but by choosing to desire what she hears from God. Like Mary, the Church must never grow weary of engaging in dialogue with God or of asking difficult, even unsettling questions—as Mary did at the Annunciation: "How will this come about?"

A "Synodal Woman"

Mary is also, the Pope said, a "synodal woman", because she is "fully and maternally involved in the action of the Holy Spirit." The Spirit always calls those who were once divided—whether by mutual distrust or even outright hostility—to walk together as brothers and sisters. Mary is the "perfect collaborator of the Holy Spirit," he continued. She never ceases to open doors, build bridges, tear down walls, and help humanity live in peace and harmony amid diversity.

A Church with the face of Mary

From these two attributes—jubilee and synodality—flows the mission of a Church with a Marian heart. Such a Church, the Pope said, "continually deepens its understanding of the hierarchy of truths of the faith, integrating reason and emotion, body and soul, the universal and the local, the individual and the community, humanity and the cosmos."

A Marian piety and practice, the Pope emphasized, brings the Church's charitable mission into concrete reality (@Vatican Media)

A Marian piety and practice, he emphasized, brings the Church's charitable mission into concrete reality: taking seriously all aspects of human life, especially those of the poor and the marginalized.

Mary: A path for cultural dialogue

Before leading the assembly in the *Ave Maria*, the Pope thanked the Pontifical Academy for its valuable ecclesial service—presenting the image and message of the Mother of Jesus as a path of encounter and dialogue among cultures.

-- Wishing you a lovely weekend, Fr. Gregory

