

Our Lady, Star of the Sea and St. Drostan

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St. Mary's

64 St Peter Street
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Our Lady Star of the Sea & St. Drostan Church, Fraserburgh, and St. Mary's Church, Peterhead, are currently closed until further notice, due to Government regulations in connection with action taken to combat the spread of the Covid 19 coronavirus.

Sun 10 th Jan	The Baptism of the Lord
Mon 11 th Jan	Monday in the 1 st Week of Ordinary Time
Tue 12 th Jan	Tuesday in the 1 st Week of Ordinary Time
Wed 13 th Jan	Saint Kentigern, Bishop - Feast
Thur 14 th Jan	Thursday in the 1 st Week of Ordinary Time
Fri 15 th Jan	Friday in the 1 st Week of Ordinary Time
Sat 16 th Jan	The Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday – Optional memorial
Sun 17 th Jan	2 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



**"You are my Son,
the Beloved; my
favour rests on
you."**

Welcome to a special lockdown issue of our Newsletter!

"Peace be with you! Do not be afraid!" (John 20:19; Matthew 28:10). Once again we need hear those words of our Lord in the Gospel!

To be really convinced of the presence of our loving Saviour near to each one of us is all the more necessary as, with most people in the UK, we re-enter another period of strict lockdown.

Jesus' words were echoed by His Mother 15 centuries later at Guadalupe. Appearing to the 50-or-so year old native Indian, Juan Diego, who was worried about his uncle who was ill, She said:

"Listen, put it into your heart, my youngest son, that what frightened you, what afflicted you, is nothing; do not let it disturb your face, your heart; **do not fear this sickness nor any other sickness, nor any sharp and hurtful thing.** Am I not here, I who have the honour to be your Mother? Are you not in my shadow, and under my protection? Am I not the source of your joy? Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Do you need something more?"

Our blessed Lady, who considers Herself to be "honoured" to be our Mother, doesn't deny the existence of "sharp and hurtful things", but She insists that they are as "nothing", and should not be allowed to disturb us. Even if these things should come knocking on our door, they are never as close to us as the love of God and the love of Mary our Mother: "Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms?"

"We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose", says St. Paul (Romans 8:28).

That loving "purpose" flows underneath our experience of suffering like an underground river or molten rock far below the surface of the earth, and so transforms our lives that anything negative really becomes a "nothing" in comparison with the good at work in us. "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth

comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18).

So let us trust our good Lord. As St. Teresa of Avila loved to say, He knows what He is doing. We need to stay close to Him and help others to do so too. That means helping each other, because when we look out for each other and are kind, this manifests something of God's goodness in the world and brings souls to experience His love.

And that's really important in this day and age.

Staying in touch

For the foreseeable future, we're going to be relying especially on the phone and on the internet to keep in touch.

If you fancy a chat, please feel free to phone the Presbytery! The number's at the top of this page.

I was surprised this week by just how much of a psychological reaction I myself experienced as a result of the new lockdown. For a couple of days, I felt quite "put out" – almost as though I didn't know what to do next... Not that there aren't any number of things that call for one's attention. I suppose a change of routine, new challenges, and even new opportunities, all played a part.

A small but positive message in the news over recent days came by way of an interview with someone who said that they were going to be "kinder" to themselves during this lockdown than they were in the last one.

Yes, I think kindness to oneself is a concept that has mileage in it. A firm, but sympathetic, grasp on the tiller of one's own soul. St. Francis of Assisi, at the end of his life, truly wonderful man that he was, asked pardon even of his own body for the times when he treated it too hard.

Virtues

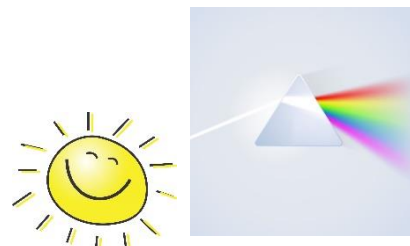
It was pleasant to be reminded this week about virtue. I was listening to an excellent (and fun) podcast by a young professor of

philosophy at the LMU in Munich, called Peter Adamson. The whole series, “A History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps”, can be downloaded free of charge from his site, www.historyofphilosophy.net. Mention was made of Virtue Ethics, which, as the name implies, is a way of looking at ethics based on the virtues: good human qualities that enable us to act well and attain happiness. For people like Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, virtues help us to follow a good, middle course, avoiding the extremes of either “too much” or “too little”. This chart gives the idea with a few examples:

Sphere of action or feeling	Excess	Mean (in the middle)	Deficiency
Fear and Confidence	Rashness	Courage	Cowardice
Pleasure and Pain	Self-indulgence	Temperance (Moderation)	Insensibility (“no interest” ...)
Getting and Spending	Prodigality	Liberality	Meanness
Anger	Irascibility (losing one’s temper)	Good temper / Patience	Lack of spirit (“no oomph” ...)
Social Conduct	Obsequiousness	Friendliness	Cantankerousness
Shame	Shyness	Modesty	Shamelessness

The qualities we want – the virtues – are the green ones!

It was nice to be reminded about the virtues. They are like the different colours that appear when light passes through angled glass. Each one is beautiful, and all of them taken together show up something of the goodness and beauty of God, for **“Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights”** (James 1:17).



Epiphany Saints

While it’s interesting to think about the virtues from an ethical or philosophical point of view, if we really want to appreciate their full beauty, the best place to look for them is in the lives of those who have practiced them in a perfect way: our Lord Jesus, of course, and His Mother Mary, and all **the Saints**.

Now, on this latter point (the Saints), one of the highlights in my week was the **“extraction of Epiphany Saints”**. It’s a Franciscan tradition, I think... (they’ve got a lot to answer for ☺).

Basically, around the time of Epiphany, after praying to the Holy Spirit for guidance, someone draws out of a hat the name of a Saint and a Blessed (someone on the way to becoming a Saint) who will be a person’s **special patrons for the coming year**. I like to add a virtue to practice and a Marian title too. The virtue selected “by chance” (that is, by God’s providence) often gives us an idea of what would be good to work on, and the Marian title is a nice way of invoking our Lady to ask for Her help in practicing it. (Anyone interested in knowing my virtue for 2021 shall be duly informed if they promise to make a suitable payment to defray the cost of heating the church this winter.)

If anyone would like me to ask the Lord for some Saints, a virtue and a title of our Lady, for them for 2021, just e-mail me at the parish address on the top of page 1, and I’ll send them to you by return.

The Baptism of Our Lord

Not surprisingly, given Genesis chapter 3, Revelation chapter 12, and other texts in the Bible, serpents and dragons come in for pretty bad press in Christian tradition.

And so the following antiphon in Evening Prayer 2 for the Feast of the Baptism says something more than that the creators of the Breviary had a vivid imagination:

“The Saviour crushed the head of the serpent in the river Jordan; He released all men from his power.”

Jesus’ Baptism was part of His manifestation (see Mark 1:9-11). Remember the words of the Father? (They’re in the cartoon next to the Liturgical diary at the top of page 1, if you’re stuck...) That was an invitation to all people to believe in Christ and His message, to receive baptism, and experience the saving power of God. And in that way evil is overcome in each of us.

If we compare our own souls, or our own lives, to the river Jordan (ever-flowing, swirling here and there, beautiful, sometimes agitated, always a little bit risky...), we can sometimes discern the presence of a “serpent” lurking in the depths; for in each of us there is a tendency to act irrationally, to do foolish things, to turn away from God.

On my desktop, I have the following prayer written on a sticky note: **“Grant me, Lord, true sorrow for all those sins I commit for which presently I am not sufficiently sorry.”**

It’s a great prayer. When He gives us the grace of contrition (being sorry for our sins), the path to life is opened up in front of us. Instead of hiding a lurking serpent, we cradle the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God’s grace and peace be with you all in the coming week.

Fr. Bruno

NOTICES

ST MARY'S CHURCH, PETERHEAD

Offertory Collection Cash Plate, Christmas Day Mass & Sunday 27th December: £628.23
Approx. Monthly Standing Orders I/C: £265.00

Thank you for your support.

OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA & ST DROSTAN CHURCH, FRASERBURGH

Offertory Collection Cash Plate, 27th December: To be advised
Approx. Monthly Standing Orders I/C: £195.00

Balance of Lottery Fundraiser Year 12 - 2020 (Now suspended until further notice.)	
Total Entered in Draws:	£2,167.00
Prize Money Paid Out:	£1,056.00 -
Projected Monies Raised for Church:	£1,111.00
Donations from Overpaid Subscriptions & Prize Money Donations:	£59.00 +
Total:	£1,170.00
Non-Payment of Subscriptions through the Year:	£304.00 -
Sum Total Raised for the Church:	£866.00

Thank you for your support.

Our Safeguarding Coordinator is Mrs Anne Reilly.

Items for the newsletter, website and Facebook page, should be sent to Bob Watson, email: rlambwatson@gmail.com