



Holy Cross Parish

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Holy Cross is the Parish of the Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, a Charity registered in Scotland – number SCO08540

22nd March 2020 – 4th Sunday of Lent - A, page 158.

First Reading: *Samuel 16:1.6-7. 10-13*, Psalm 22: **“The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.”** Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14;

Gospel: **John 9:1-41.** *He went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.*

Sun. 22 March – Mass for People

Mon. 23 March – Canon Brian Halloran

Tue. 24 March – Jim Fegan

Wed. 25 March – Abbie Darling Paterson

Thu. 26 March – Catherine McMurray

Fri. 27 March – Dion Walls

Sat. 28 March

Sun. 29 March – Mass for People

This Sunday (22.03.2020) is fourth Sunday of Lent in the Year A

Wed. 25th March – The Annunciation of Our Lord - solemnity

Next Sunday (29.03.2020) is The 5th Sunday of Lent - Year “A”

Confessions only by appointment

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

We are all saddened by the news that, in order to slow the spread of the coronavirus, the Bishops in line with government policy have decided that there will be no more public Masses until the virus lessens and the policy changes. This is a lot for us to take in. I ask you to be patient and find ways to develop your Christian lives in the circumstances that we are in. You will find attached the pastoral letter from the bishops and also a number of points of information from Archbishop Cushley.

Pastoral Support

The pastoral council and I met yesterday evening to consider how we can best support you and how to help you support one another. We all realise that the point of this very serious action is for us not to meet in groups that would encourage the spread of the virus, and so the normal means of support in prayer and talking together as a parish are not open to us. We also realised that what we are planning below would be greatly affected if we go into ‘lockdown’, but we will plan for that next.

To help us gain a good idea of the pastoral situation within the parish we ask that **those who are self- isolating or for other reasons cannot leave their house to email or ring the parish house to give us their details.** In particular we ask anyone who has any needs such as shopping that they cannot do themselves to let us know through the parish house or, if phoned by a parishioner, to ask the parishioner to let us know. We cannot ask the parishioners to help if we do not know the needs of individual parishioners. We would be grateful for names of parishioners who would be willing to contribute practical help like shopping for those tied to their homes. Please also remember you can do online ordering for others.

In order to help us support one another we are asking for parishioners to volunteer to call some of our parishioners who are self-isolating or for other reasons cannot leave their house. If you would like to help with this could you contact the parish house with your contact details. Also those who are self- isolating and those who for other reasons are confined to the house may also want to help by giving other people a call. Please also email or call to the parish house. Let us know if you would like a call.

Practical Support

We have asked the **St. Vincent de Paul Society** to be on stand by for practical help. If you would like to make a donation to this you can either give it directly or through the parish office.

Foodbank: Please remember the local foodbanks.

SCIAF: Please remember the SCIAF collection that would normally have taken place on this 4th Sunday of Lent.

Church Opening

We have a lively community that supports one another by our presence at Mass and also by our prayer and working together for the good of the community. When this is missing, we all miss it. As Archbishop points out in his statement we can still pray for one another and can still visit the church for moments of quiet prayer, though we cannot gather in groups. For the week starting 22nd March:

Holy Cross will be open for prayer:

Saturday 4.00pm-5.00pm;
Sunday 3.00pm-4.00pm;
Monday 10.30am -11.30am;
Wednesday 6.30pm- 7.30pm;
Friday 10.30am -11.30am
Saturday 4.00pm-5.00pm

St. Margaret Mary's will be open:

Sunday 1.00pm-2.00pm;
Tuesday 10.30am -11.30am;
Thursday 10.30am -11.30am.

We need three people to be present in the churches for each 30 minutes during the time they are opened. Please contact the parish house if you can help. *Please check next week's newsletter for the times the churches will be open during the week starting 29th March.*

Sacraments and Prayer

The Penitential Service due in Holy Cross on Wednesday 25th March has been cancelled. I will be available, however, for Confessions on 25th from 6.30pm-7.30pm. I will not be hearing Confessions in the Confessional but at the back of the sanctuary.

During the time of no public celebration of Mass, **Catholics can ask for the Sacrament of Penance, the Sacrament of the Sick and for Communion.** For the moment please ring me on the parish landline 0131 552 3957 to arrange this. I am not sure how this will work out, and we will have to find out the best way of doing it.

Please read what the Archbishop has said about Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals. Hopefully I will have better information about this next week.

Funerals and Baptisms: Please contact Fr. Hand as normal for Baptisms and Funerals.

First Communions: These have been postponed until the autumn

Streamed Masses will be available from some churches and details are available on the archdiocesan newsletter and archedinburgh.org/news-events.

I am in the process of contacting the **Communion ministers** to the housebound to discuss what the immediate future holds.

When we can't get to Mass and Penance: We are united with Jesus in many ways in our prayer and lives. Jesus is with us always strengthening and forgiving us. The sacraments are the special ways in which he touches us. When we don't have access to them, and when we pray and turn our hearts to him, he is still with us helping us to be the disciples he wants us to be. We miss the Mass and Confession, but he does not leave us to our own devices; he is with us!

Fabric - I ask all cleaners to continue with their cleaning..

Day of Prayer 22nd March - The Churches have called for a day of prayer on Sunday 22nd March. Please find ways of observing it.

Stipends - On the days that I celebrate Mass I will put in the Mass intentions as normal. If, however, you have put in an intention and would prefer it to be said when public Masses start again please phone me as soon as you can.

Holy Week: At the moment we have to assume there will be no public celebrations of the Holy Week and Easter Services, but the Archbishop is still consulting about this.

God bless,
Fr. Hand