



# ST FILLAN'S & ST JOSEPH'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

Dunkeld Diocese, Scottish Charity No: SC001810  
Website: stfdac.co.uk

If you feel that some form of communication or support network could be very useful to parishioners, especially those who are housebound and vulnerable, please contact Fr. Les by phone at 01877 330 702 or by email at stjosephcallander@dunkelldioocese.org.uk.

## Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024



Epiphany is a meaningful time for Christians. One of the very first holidays (also called feast days) of the year, Epiphany comes on the heels of Christmas celebrations and is a time of joy and faith. While the biblical origins of Epiphany remain relatively consistent among believers, the actual holiday itself, from the date to its name to its length, varies greatly.

What is Epiphany and what happens on Epiphany? Find out!

### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

**Isaiah 60:1-6** The glory of the Lord shines upon you.

**Psalms 72** All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

**Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6** The Gentiles are coheirs of the promise.

**Matthew 2:1-12** We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.

When Isaiah wrote the poem that we hear today, the Israelites had just returned from decades of exile in Babylon. Judah was devastated and left desolate, but Isaiah saw it through eyes of faith. The magi must have seen with eyes of faith as well in order to present a newborn in a feeding trough with expensive gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

*As members of the one body of Christ, let us listen to God's word with ears of faith, recognizing ourselves in those who come to praise and worship the Lord.*

### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The visit of the Magi occurs directly before the story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Matthew's Gospel tells a version of Jesus' birth that is different than the one in Luke. Of the actual birth of Jesus, Matthew tells us little more than, "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod..."

The story of the census is found only in Luke's Gospel, but we hear about the visit of the Magi only in Matthew's Gospel.

*We know little about the Magi.* They come from the East and journey to Bethlehem, following an astrological sign, so we believe them to be astrologers. We assume that there were three Magi based upon the naming of their three gifts.

The Gospel does not say how many Magi paid homage to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, they represent the Gentiles' search for a Saviour. Because the Magi represent the entire world, they also represent our search for Jesus. We have come to consider the gifts they bring as a foreshadowing of Jesus' role in salvation.

**We believe the meaning of the gifts to be Christological.**

**GOLD** is presented as representative of Jesus' kingship. **FRANKINCENSE** is a symbol of his divinity because priests burned the substance in the Temple. **MYRRH**, which was used to prepare the dead for burial, is offered in anticipation of Jesus' death. The word Epiphany means "manifestation" or "showing forth." Historically several moments in Christ's early life and ministry have been celebrated as "epiphanies," including his birth in Bethlehem, the visit of the Magi, his baptism by John, and his first miracle at Cana.

### Family Connection

The tradition of giving gifts at Christmas is thought by some to be rooted in the gift giving of the Magi. **In many cultures, gifts are not exchanged at Christmas, but rather on the feast of the Epiphany.** Whenever you exchange your Christmas gifts, take some time to reflect on this tradition of gift giving at Christmas. *Think of the best gift you have received.* What was it? What made it special? Was it the gift itself, the thought that went into it, or the person who gave it to you?

### THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, exactly 350 years had passed since the first revelation received by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque at her convent

in the French town of Paray-le-Monial. Jesus revealed to her the secrets of His Heart, and from these events began the now worldwide spread of the devotion.

The beginnings of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus are already visible in the Middle Ages, where independently, in various places, the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus emerged. From the 17th century, the cult of the Most Sacred Heart spread throughout the entire Church. This was particularly due to two people: St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and her confessor, St. John Eudes. He was the first to introduce, with the permission of the Bishop of Rennes, the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1670, which was then celebrated in all the houses of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary (Eudists) founded by him. Two years later, he received permission to celebrate the Holy Mass of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was closely linked to the devotion to the Heart of Mary.

On the occasion of this anniversary, the Apostolic Nuncio in France, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, celebrated a special Thanksgiving Mass. In his homily, the prelate pointed out the parallel between the situation in the world during the time of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and today, indicating the continuous relevance of turning to the Sacred Heart.

"In the 17th century, there was a great need for the humanization of private, family, social, and political life. It was in this context that the revelation received by Margaret Mary took place. The atmosphere we live in once again marks an era of great need for humanization," emphasized Archbishop Migliore. "Today, the world is grappling with the aftermath of a pandemic, with uncertainty and fear for the present and the future. There has also been a resurgence of violence at all levels. There is the barbaric war in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, the deconstruction of family, social, and political life. Additionally, there is indifference towards the losers, the defeated, the forgotten. All this contributes to a picture of human misery in which we live. 'Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest' – Jesus tells us."



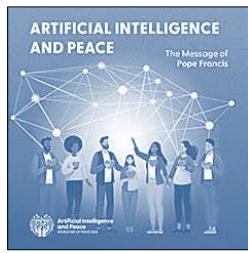
### EMBRACING THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS IN MODERN TIMES

As we navigate through the challenges and hustle of modern life, the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus offers us a path to deepen our understanding of Christ's love and His presence in our lives. **Here are some ways we, as a parish community, can draw closer to this rich and inspiring devotion:**

- We invite you to participate in formation meetings where we will explore the history and significance of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and its impact on our faith.
- We encourage personal and communal prayer focused on the love of Christ. We particularly recommend participation in the First Friday devotions each month.
- Regular participation in the Holy Mass and the sacrament of confession are foundational to our relationship with God, a key aspect emphasized in the devotion to the Sacred Heart.
- We invite you to practice Lectio Divina and other forms of prayer that assist in meditating on the Word of God and deepening our relationship with Christ.

Joining our prayer groups and community meetings allows us to share our faith and support each other in our spiritual journey.

We encourage everyone to reflect on their own life and seek ways to become more Christ-like in daily situations. Let this journey towards the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus be a source of spiritual renewal and inspiration for a deeper experience of our faith. **We invite everyone to join us in discovering the richness of this devotion.**



### MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 57<sup>th</sup> WORLD DAY OF PEACE, 1 JANUARY 2024

“At the beginning of the New Year, a time of grace which the Lord gives to each one of us, I would like to address God’s People, the various nations, heads of state and government, the leaders of the different religions and civil society, and all the men and women of our time, in order to offer my fervent good wishes for peace.”

Key points of this message include:

**1. Progress of Science and Technology as a Path to Peace:** Pope Francis highlights the role of human intelligence, as a gift from God, in advancing science and technology. He emphasizes that these advancements should lead to peace and betterment of humanity.

**2. Future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Promise and Risk:** The Pope acknowledges the transformative impact of digital technologies, but also notes the risks they pose, such as control over individual freedoms and societal impacts. He stresses the need for responsible development and use of AI.

**3. AI as a Variety of Sciences and Techniques:** AI is a collection of various technologies and approaches. The Pope underscores the difference between AI systems and human intelligence, emphasizing the need for AI to adhere to human values like inclusion, security, and privacy.

**4. Ethical Challenges of AI:** Concerns are raised about AI’s potential for bias, manipulation, and impact on privacy. The Pope calls for ethical oversight and responsible use of AI, emphasizing its impact on social equality and peace.

**5. Limits of the Technocratic Paradigm:** There’s an acknowledgment of the limits of technology and AI. Not everything is quantifiable, and human judgment is essential. The Pope warns against a technocratic mindset that neglects human values.

**6. Ethical Considerations in AI Development:** AI’s potential impact on various societal aspects like employment, criminal justice, and personal freedoms is discussed. The need for ethical guidelines in AI development and use is highlighted.

**7. Educational Challenges:** The Pope stresses the importance of education in developing critical thinking about AI and technology, particularly among the young.

**8. Development of International Law:** The global nature of AI requires international cooperation and legal frameworks to regulate its development and use.

**The Pope’s Francis message concludes with a prayer for the responsible development of AI that promotes solidarity, justice, and peace, rather than exacerbating inequalities and conflicts.**

“I hope that the foregoing reflection will encourage efforts to ensure that progress in developing forms of artificial intelligence will ultimately serve the cause of human fraternity and peace. It is not the responsibility of a few but of the entire human family. For peace is the fruit of relationships that recognize and welcome others in their inalienable dignity, and of cooperation and commitment in seeking the integral development of all individuals and peoples.

It is my prayer at the start of the New Year that the rapid development of forms of artificial intelligence will not increase cases of inequality and injustice all too present in today’s world but will help put an end to wars and conflicts and alleviate many forms of suffering that afflict our human family.

May Christian believers, followers of various religions and men and women of good will work together in harmony to embrace the opportunities and confront the challenges posed by the digital revolution and thus hand on to future generations a world of greater solidarity, justice, and peace.”

From the Vatican, 8 December 2023

Franciscus

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/20231208-messaggio-57giornatamondiale-pace2024.html>



### LETTER FROM BISHOP PRESIDENT OF JUSTICE AND PEACE

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Astronauts share a unique experience, for they have been able to go into outer space and look down in awe and see the beauty of the earth. The astronauts see the earth as God gave it to us, one earth, one world.

But for us, when we look at our maps, we see a world that is divided by lines, indicating the borders and the barriers that partition this one world into territories and countries. We put up walls, we erect fences of barbed wire and we say to our fellow human beings “this is my land, this land and its resources are not yours but mine”.

But God has given this one world to all of humanity, so that all human beings can live and flourish and grow, sharing its resources.

We have, of course, got to manage creation, and organise it. We cannot have chaos. But can we say to someone living where it is arid and barren, that they have no right to come here where the soil is good and the food is plentiful, because this is my territory? Do migrants and refugees not have God-given rights to move to a better life?

And the borders we create are often the cause of friction. How many wars are fought over disputed territory, both sides claiming it as their land? How much conflict as people seek to claim for their own the oil, the gas or the mineral wealth that lies under the surface? How many countries grow wealthy, keeping for themselves the riches of the earth and see no obligation to share with the poor?

We are a long way from living in a world where all benefit from the gift of creation given by God to all. We are a long way from peace when countries continue to fight for what they claim is theirs. We are a long way from a united world where we work together for the good of all humanity.

We are not the owners of God’s earth, we are its stewards. The astronauts in space see a world that is beautiful and so it is. It is also rich and plentiful, with resources given to us by God for the good of everyone. Poverty will only disappear when the earth’s resources are fairly shared. Only when we act as stewards and not as owners of creation will there be peace and justice on earth.

May Jesus the Prince of Peace inspire us to work for justice and so establish a peaceful world.

+ William Nolan

### NEW YEAR PALLOTTINES’ FATHER GENERAL WISHES FOR ANNO DOMINI 2024

The year 2023 is passed into history. This is an invitation to look back and take stock. The events of this year will not only remain in the annals, but their consequences and effects will accompany us. Human history has been marked this year by several painful events that have affected new communities of people with suffering. Ongoing wars have been joined by another surprising armed conflict in Palestine and Israel. In many other countries and societies, there is an increase in polarisation and the formation of painful tensions and conflicts. The new technical possibilities of spreading news and opinions on the Internet do not unite humanity. Rather, they lead to deepening divisions, which are often the result of manipulation and the uncontrolled use of ‘artificial intelligence’.

As *Pallottines*, we carry in our hearts the evangelical desire of our Founding Father, St. Vincent Pallotti, to build fraternal unity and solidarity among people. Our actions to revitalise faith and reawaken charity ultimately aim at ‘one-fold’. We are called to use “evangelical intelligence” to create relationships of respect, trust and openness to understanding and forgiveness.

*Like the first apostles, we want to fill our hearts and our Parish community with the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus. May our Parish be, in 2024, oasis in which to cultivate the true fraternity that the contemporary world so badly needs.*

Wish you a grace filled joyful and happy New Year 2024 and we assure you of our prayers. And I ask you: Please, do not forget to pray for us!

Fr. Zenon Hanas SAC, Rector General

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

4<sup>th</sup> Advent Sunday: 24 December 2023

Doone: £139.36 & Callander: £130.30

Christmas Eve: 24 December 2023

Doone: £167.50 & Callander: £55.00

Christmas Day: 25 December 2023

Doone: £101.19 & Callander: £155.00

31 December 2023 – Doone: £84.00 & Callander: £126.02