

# NEWSLETTER



To the greater glory of God  
**St ALOYSIUS' CHURCH**  
a Jesuit church founded in 1908

## 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

This week:

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January **THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January *Feria*

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January *Feria*

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January **St Mungo / St Kentigern**

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January *Feria*

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January *Feria*

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> January *Feria*

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**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

**May the blessings of the Baptism of the Lord be with you all!** I am deeply grateful for the wonderful help that you have been in this last year – almost everybody has been patient – thank you! – and despite the constraints, it is reassuring that one can still detect a smile in the eyes above the masks!

**In the Church** itself we have been fortunate to have had generous help for the stewarding, admin, reception & cleaning in-&-around the Church – thank you! It has kept Aloysius a safe place for people to pray, worship & celebrate the sacraments as we have travelled along the twists-&-turns of this Covid road together. People in the St Aloysius community have also often been so diligent in partnering those who might be older or more frail. I occasionally catch glimpses of these acts of love, but God sees all gifts of grace that are hidden from human sight.

The **St Aloysius ESOL Refugee School**, for example, had to close in March, but with the dedication and imagination of the teachers & coordinators they have continued to provide companionship, food, clothing and education to that rather forgotten group of the vulnerable in Glasgow – a vital link gratefully received by hearts and bodies that have already been traumatised in war-zones of the world. The ESOL Team are now distributing second-hand laptops and data-sticks to the serious students to try to re-build the teaching of English which is still the core of their apostolate and the gateway to the refugees' physical stability in their new country.

St Aloysius has had to close its physical doors again, but in a number of ways the gift of electronic communication has allowed us to open different doors and engage in different types of ministry. The **telephone, email, social media, Zoom** etc... have brought us together in a different way. It doesn't replace a hug or a reassuring squeeze of the arm, but it limits the isolation and allows our imaginations to reach out and touch the spirit of another person. My thanks to all of those who have been engaged in the renewal of our **Website, Facebook and YouTube** projects over the last nine months – their outreach is remarkable.

I am conscious of those in leadership at this time: in particular the pressures on **politicians and healthcare providers** have been immense; judgements that they are making are resulting in decisions of life & death and the vast majority of them are deeply haunted by that responsibility. Our expectations of our leaders can often be unrealistic: they must make the perfect call on every occasion, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – they must have the Wisdom of Solomon for each

situation. That is quite unfair: we rarely judge ourselves by such exacting standards. *“Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone,”* said Jesus knowingly. Let us pray for our politicians & those who must make decisions in this peculiar moment in history.

Once more we all find ourselves in the strangeness of lockdown. We try to adjust ourselves to the new reality. On at least one of the levels of the **physical, the psychological or the spiritual** we are likely to find ourselves feeling fragile – few people are heartily robust in all dimensions of life. Thus you might find this Winter 2021 lockdown is just a re-run of the Spring 2020 lockdown, or you might find yourself surprised that where you were strong then, you might be feeling vulnerable now. Or the reverse - where you were uncertain in April, you are now more confident and calm in January. We are complex people.

**St Ignatius of Loyola** would tell us not to worry or be afraid by these shifting sands; fear can just cloud our perceptions. It is better just to try to notice the movements of the heart & mind and just ponder them. If Ignatius had a difficult letter he needed to send to someone, he would write it but not post it immediately – but just leave it on his desk until the next morning and see if the cold light of day changed his view

Sometimes **we can talk ourselves into rushing forward** because we feel we should be *‘doing something’*... but that type of hurry often doesn’t come from God, but originates from the Bad Spirit. A time of calm thought can often allow the quieter voice of the Good Spirit to emerge with a better plan, less half-baked and rushed. We instinctively know the difference between these touches of the Good and Bad Spirits – they might look similar at first, but they feel quite differently when we spend time in their presence and scrutinise them more deeply. A little bit of reflection can pay dividends in the quality of our lives.

Please feel free to contact me if there is something with which I can help. Let us continue to pray for each other. Together we build the Kingdom, stone by stone.

Blessings and best wishes!

Fr Dermot

## Memo from the Archdiocese of Glasgow:

from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January

All Places of Worship in Scotland had to close.

- There must be no public Masses, devotions, etc., and churches must not be left open for private prayer.
- Funerals and weddings can still go ahead in church. Only 20 may be at a funeral and only 5 at a wedding (*i.e. the priest, the couple, and two witnesses*).
- Sick calls to hospitals and care homes will depend on the institution; sick calls to private homes can go ahead in danger of death with all appropriate precautions in place.
- Confessions can still be heard outdoors, since two people from two households are still allowed to meet outside.

These restrictions are due to last at least until the end of January, but may be extended.

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For prayer resources, the weekly mass and lots more information please go to Church website [www.stalloysiusglasgow.org](http://www.stalloysiusglasgow.org)

Given the American turmoil and the search for truth in a world where opinions are more important, here is a link to the Jesuit America Magazine ...

<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2021/01/08/thomas-more-catholic-trump-supporters-239683>

With some helpful political context on

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04nhfrz>

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If you missed it there was a fine series called *'Faith in Music'* over the Advent & Christmas series on the BBC. Written and presented by James MacMillan is explored the complex lives and works of Leonard Bernstein, Edward Elgar,

Richard Wagner & Thomas Tallis

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000q3g3>