**NEWSLETTER**

 **Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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 **5th Sunday of Easter, 18th May 2025**

 **(**Year C for Sundays; Cycle 1 for weekdays)

 *(Page 449 in Missal for Order of the Mass) (Mass Readings: Page 859)*

Dear Parishioners,

This week saw **Father Brian Dougherty’s Requiem Mass.** He himself had chosen the readings and the hymns. His son Paul is really grateful for the love and respect for his Dad that was so clearly evident at the funeral. He was particularly appreciative that Bishop Tom Williams travelled over. He is the bishop who knew Father Brian best. A moving moment for me was when Fr Brian’s chalice was place on his coffin along with his priestly stole and the Bible. It was the chalice he proudly used to celebrate his first Mass at Sacred Heart, Pulrose and at every Mass thereafter at St Mary’s and at home on his retirement. Paul has kindly agreed that I now use that chalice myself. I’ve never had one of my own. It’s a way of including Fr Brian at each Mass celebrated with his chalice. I’ll leave instructions for it to be left to St Mary’s when I die.

For most of my life every Pope has been an old man. I’ve had my 77th birthday this week. That makes me undeniably old. What clinched this realization was the election of a Pope who’s younger that I am. Pope John Paul II was 58 when elected in 1978. That seems young to me now, but as a 30-year-old, I considered him to be on the brink of senility.

I’ve had numerous messages and emails from people asking if I knew Pope Leo when I was in South America. I never knowingly met the young Fr Bob Prevost even though his time in Chulucanas and Trujillo overlapped with my time in Peru. I left in 1990 after nine years and I certainly wasn’t there when he returned as bishop of Chiclayo. I identify with Pope Leo’s attachment to that place. Peru is a special country. My years there changed me for ever. Peru was the place where I rejoined the human race; nine years of remedial work undoing thirteen years in the seminary. I’d like to think that his decades in Peru did the same for Pope Leo.

Living in another country is so different from being a holiday maker. It muddles up your sense of belonging. Towards the end of my time in Peru I felt more at home in Lima than in any other city except Liverpool – and even Liverpool changed in my absence throughout the eighties. Living in another culture breaks down so many things you thought were absolutes. They do things differently. Different is not better. It’s not worse. It’s not right. It’s not wrong. It’s just different. And different is OK. A black and white version of Catholicism doesn’t survive in such a climate – no matter how hard some people try. Perhaps the biggest difference is that people are poor. Really poor. They live with death on a daily basis. Our reaction to anything bad or sad in the UK is to have a collection. To give money. The people I worked with had no money. All they had was what they stood up in. So they give you themselves. And their prayers. The word ‘solidarity’ takes on a new meaning. Solidarity is free, it doesn’t cost anything. But it is everything. It says, ‘We are with you’. I know where Pope Leo is coming from – and so do my fellow priests who were privileged to work in Latin America.

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On Friday Pope Leo XIV made his first address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See and encouraged the ambassadors to pursue paths of peace with justice, truth and hope. The Pope reaffirmed the Church’s commitment to serve all humanity, describing the diplomatic community as a family “that shares the joys and sorrows of life” and is grounded in human and spiritual values. The Pope went on to note that in this family the Church does not seek privileges but rather opportunities to build bridges, particularly through its distinctive form of diplomacy rooted in pastoral concern. This mission echoes the legacy of Pope Francis, whose commitment to the poor and the marginalised, as well as his attention to the protection of creation and the rise of artificial intelligence, remains a constant and ongoing inspiration. Reflecting then on his own life, which has taken him across North and South America and Europe, the Pope expressed his personal desire to “transcend borders,” and to deepen the Church’s relationship with peoples and nations throughout the world.

At the heart of the Pope’s address were three essential words, which he identified as the pillars of the Church’s missionary activity and the foundation of the Holy See’s diplomatic engagement**: peace, justice** and **truth.**

The first word, ***peace***, he described not as the mere absence of war, but as a demanding and active gift, “the first gift of Christ”. True peace, he continued, must begin in the human heart, through humility, careful speech, and the rejection of both pride and vengeance. This, he continued, refers to words as well, since “not only weapons can wound and even kill”. Pope Leo emphasised the indispensable role of religious freedom and interreligious dialogue in cultivating peace. He called for a renewal of multilateral diplomacy and a decisive halt to the arms race, echoing Pope Francis’ Easter message in which he warned, as he often did, that “no peace is possible without true disarmament”.

Turning then to the second word, ***justice***, Pope Leo reflected on the memory of Pope Leo XIII and the Church’s rich tradition of social teaching. With the world facing ever deepening global inequalities, Pope Leo urged leaders to invest in the family and to uphold the dignity of every human person. He then shared a brief reflection on his own identity as the child of immigrants, and called for greater solidarity, rooted in the shared human dignity of all people, regardless of circumstance or nationality.

Speaking of the third and final word, ***truth***, Pope Leo XIV described the essential need for authentic communication and peaceful relations. In a world where reality is often distorted, especially online, the Pope insisted on the Church’s duty to speak truth with charity, even when difficult or misunderstood. “Truth,” he said, “is not an abstract principle but an encounter with the person of Christ”. It is this truth, he continued, that allows humanity to face its most urgent challenges, such as migration, technology or the environment, with unity and shared purpose.

Pope Leo XIV placed his ministry within the context of the Jubilee Year of Hope, which he described as a time for conversion, renewal, and above all, for leaving conflict behind. Finally, he renewed the Holy See’s commitment to walking alongside every nation in building a world where all may live with dignity and peace. “It is my hope,” he concluded, “that this will be the case everywhere, starting with those places that suffer most grievously, like Ukraine and the Holy Land.” *(Vatican News)*

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**Tuesday 10 June:** Our new **Archbishop John Sherrington** is being installed at the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King at 12 noon on Tuesday 27th May. He will be installed into his seat in our Co Cathedral Church of St Mary of the Isle at a special service at **2.00pm on Tuesday 10th June** to suit the new archbishop’s diary. We understand that not everyone will be able to attend due to work commitments. Catholics from across the Island are invited. The Lieutenant Governor and Lady Lorimer will be joined by Isle of Man Government dignitaries and civic leaders along with ecumenical guests from the Island’s Christian churches. The ceremony will be followed by a reception. **For catering purposes, it is essential that you let us know if you are coming by emailing the parish office by 31 May 2025**. We will be charged per head, so names and exact numbers are required. *Fr John*

* This Saturday at our 5 pm Mass we welcome our First Holy Communion children, who attend schools other than St Mary’s, together with their families. We wish them every blessing as they celebrate this special milestone on their faith journey. Big thanks to the catechists who lead the preparation course for the families.
* **Praying The Keeills Week** begins this Saturday 17th to 24th May. The theme *‘Humble servants of God in the ministry of the beautiful’* links with the celebration of the life and work of Archibald Knox. Everyone is welcome to join all or any of the daily events sharing fun and friendship while exploring local sacred sites and learning about our Celtic and spiritual heritage. Full programme can be found at [www.prayingthekeeills.org](http://www.prayingthekeeills.org)

**Masses and Services for the coming week**

*All Masses and Services from St Mary’s are live-streamed*

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| **Saturday 17th May**5th Sunday of Easter | 5.00pm | St Mary’s | Frances McCarrick intentions |
| **Sunday 18th May**5th Sunday of Easter | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Sonja Lees, recently diedPeople of our Parishes |
| **Monday 19th May** | *No Mass or Service* |  | *No Mass or Service today* |
| **Tuesday 20th May**Day of prayer for survivors of sexual abuse | *10.00am*12.10pm | *St Anthony’s*St Mary’s | *Eucharistic Service*Roy Newson, deceased |
| **Wednesday 21st May** | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | William Smith intention |
| **Thursday 22nd May** | ***10.00am***12.10pm | ***St Anthony’s***St Mary’s | ***Requiem Mass: Elaine Barker***Beverley Pavillar, recently died |
| **Friday 23rd May** | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Nick Gilbert, sick |
| **Saturday 24th May**6th Sunday of Easter | 11.00am to 12noon5.00pm | St Mary’sSt Mary’s | Exposition and Confessions Cyrus, Naro & Angeline intentions |
| **Sunday 25th May**6th Sunday of Easter | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | People of our ParishesFr Brian Dougherty, recently died |