**NEWSLETTER**

 **Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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 **14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 6th July 2025**

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

 *(Page 449 in Missal for Order of the Mass); (Mass Readings: Page 919)*

Dear Parishioners,

For decades **I have defended the Jewish people** from the absurdities of holocaust deniers. I admire, and even love, the rituals and observances of the Jewish faith. My spiritual life has been sustained by the yearnings of the Jewish people expressed in the sublime words of the Psalms; words which Jesus made his own. I envy the Jewish Friday night culture when they gather for a family meal. I have been inspired by the integrity and rectitude of contemporary Jewish figures: religious leaders such as Jonathan Sacks and Hugo Gryn; intellectuals such as Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud; and many more who have contributed to the cultural, scientific and social fabric of our nation.

Throughout the Hebrew Bible, with the exception of the reigns of David and Solomon, Israel has been overrun by powerful neighbours. At the time of Jesus, Israel was a neglected and oppressed province of the Roman Empire. Almost 2000 years later the Holocaust confirmed the status of Jews as victims. Britian was their last colonial overlord prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. American money and military might have allowed Israel to punch above its weight.

Although, in recent years our support for Israel has been tempered by sympathy for displaced Palestinians and a call for a two-state solution, we have been happy to see the modern state of Israel flourish. That support extended to the atrocities of 7th October 2023. We shared their outrage. But the tables have turned. Israel’s moral capital has been squandered in their brutal attempts to wipe the population of Gaza from the face of the earth and in state sanctioned attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank.

Does anyone else now share my discomfort with the constant references to Israel and Jerusalem in our readings at Mass? Non-Jews who are critical of Israeli policy are condemned as antisemitic. In the United States universities are targeted for pro-Palestinian views and protestors are arrested as terrorist sympathisers. Those displaying Palestinian flags are threatened with arrest and deportation. Where in Israel are the present-day successors to the Old Testament prophets **Amos, Micah** and **Hosea**, holding their Jewish leaders to account?

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This week Irish novelist **Sally Rooney** had an interesting take on the situation in Gaza:

*On 20 June, in what has now become an appallingly*[*familiar*](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c74zj9kv2xjo)[*story*](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0ep17gyzrzo)*, Israeli forces once again opened fire on Palestinians at an aid distribution site, this time*[*killing 23 people*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cd0vgerp402o)*. The same day, it was revealed that activists affiliated with the UK group Palestine Action had*[*broken into an RAF base*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/20/pro-palestine-protesters-deface-two-aircraft-raf-brize-norton)*and defaced two military aircraft in an act of protest. One of these actions involved the intentional use of lethal violence against civilians, resulting in the deaths of 23 loved and irreplaceable human beings. The other involved no violence against any living things and resulted in no deaths or injuries. The UK government has now announced its intention to deal with one of these incidents as a terrorist offence.*[*Guess which*](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/20/palestine-action-to-be-banned-after-vandalising-planes-at-raf-base)*……*

*If the UK government follows through with its intention to designate Palestine Action as a terror organisation, mere membership of the group would constitute a crime. In fact, even supporting the group purely in words – as I am doing now – could also constitute a serious legal offence, punishable with a sentence of up to*[*14 years in prison*](https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/proscription/)*. Financial dealings with members and supporters may also be illegal, even if the individuals concerned have done nothing against the law other than belong to or express support for a protest movement……*

*Palestine Action is not an armed group. It has never been responsible for any fatalities and does not pose any risk to the public. Its methods do involve property sabotage, which is, obviously, illegal. But if killing 23 civilians at an aid distribution site is not terrorism, how can we possibly be expected to accept that spray-painting a plane is? Law-abiding protest has so far failed to stop the genocide. More than*[*50,000 innocent children*](https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unimaginable-horrors-more-50000-children-reportedly-killed-or-injured-gaza-strip)*have been killed or injured. In what circumstances could civil disobedience ever be justified if not now?*

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Next weekend we look forward to welcoming **Archbishop John Sherrington** to our parishes. He will be administering the Sacrament of Confirmation to our young parishioners and adults. Archbishop John will also preside at our weekend Masses when parishioners will have an opportunity to greet him.  *Fr John*

* Everyone is welcome to **St. Anthony’s Charity Bingo** on **Thursday 10 July** at 7.30pm in the Pastoral Centre.
* **Columba Club Film Night:** On **Friday 11 July** the Club is screening “The Way”, a film drama which is based on the Camino de Santiago. Doors open at 7.30pm. The film will be screened at 8pm. Please contact Brian Murphy or Richard Coase if you wish to attend.
* Our **Little Church** in both St Anthony’s and St Mary’s will take a break during the School Summer Holidays and resume in September. A big thanks to our Catechists who generously give of their time each week. Earlier this summer, a training weekend was held for our Catechists which was led by Liz Parsons, the Head of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Development Department. Like all church activities, compliance with Safeguarding and Data Protection must now be a priority. Parents are required to register their children for little Church by emailing the parish office. They will then complete a form with contact details etc. Thank you.
* **Island Spirituality Network:**on **Saturday 12** **July** from **10am to 1pm** at **Onchan Methodist Church**. Speaker will be Dr Inderjit Singh Bhogal OBE, theologian and former President of Methodist Conference, who will speak on “Church of Sanctuary - Engaging with refugees and challenging hostility with hospitality.” All welcome.
* The **Red Mill Hill Missionary Boxes for St. Anthony’s Church**, Onchan, will be emptied this week. If you have a box, please leave it in the usual place in the Church porch at St. Anthony’s.

**Fr John’s Retirement**: Thank you to those who have let the parish office know they wish to attend Fr John’s retiring event on **Sunday 20th July from 3pm to 4.30pm at St Mary’s Church.** The theme will be ***Strawberries & Fizz*** with soft drinks, beer, fizz and wine provided together with mini sweet snacks, goodies and nibbles. **All St Anthony’s and St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph’s parishioners are invited**.

If there are additional parishioners who wish to attend *please let the parish office know by next weekend, preferably by* *email to* saintmaryiom@rcaol.org.uk. We need to know numbers to order drinks and food. Several parishioners have generously returned Brown Collection Envelopes with donations for a farewell gift for Fr John. Please return these in the collection baskets at weekend Masses or through the parish office letterbox. Thank you.

**Masses and Services for the coming week**

*All Masses and Services from St Mary’s are live-streamed*1

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| **Saturday 5th July**14th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 5.00pm | St Mary’s | Leo McCaffrey, anniversary |
| **Sunday 6th July**14th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Christopher McBurnie, deceasedPeople of our Parishes |
| **Monday 7th July**(Tynwald Day) | *No Mass today* |  | *No Mass or Service today* |
| **Tuesday 8th July** | *10.00am*12.10pm | *St Anthony’s*St Mary’s | *Eucharistic Service* William Robert Corran |
| **Wednesday 9th July** | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Alison & William Smith, intentions |
| **Thursday 10th July** | 10.00am12.10pm | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Deceased ClergyJill Boncompte, sick |
| **Friday 11th July**St Benedict, Patron of Europe | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Chris & Terence Brady |
| **Saturday 12th July***Sea Sunday*15th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 11.00am to 12noon5.00pm | St Mary’sSt Mary’s | Exposition and Confessions Fr Brian Dougherty, recently died |
| **Sunday 13th July***Sea Sunday*15th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | People of our ParishesMonica Singleton, anniversary |

We remember in our prayers **Eddie Moore** who died this week. May he rest in peace. We think of his grieving family and friends who mourn his loss.