**NEWSLETTER**

 **Parishes of St Anthony of Padua, Onchan; St Mary of the Isle & St Joseph, Douglas
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 **15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 13th July 2025**

**Sea Sunday**

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

 *(Page 449 in Missal for Order of the Mass); (Mass Readings: Page 923)*

Dear Parishioners,

When hearing the word ***‘Samaritan’*** most of us think of the telephone counselling service available 365 days of the year. We imagine that all Samaritans are good. The surprise in the **Parable of the Good Samaritan** in today’s Gospel is that a Samaritan could be good at all. A Samaritan is the last person any Jew would look to for help. Yet in today’s story the Samaritan outperforms both the priest and the Levite in his compassionate response to an injured Jewish traveller. The ones they would expect to help ‘pass by on the other side’.

Mutual hatred between Jews and Samaritans goes back a thousand years before Christ. At the death of King Solomon, the kingdom of Israel split in two. Samaria became the capital of the Northern Kingdom (Israel), while Jerusalem became the capital of the Southern Kingdom (Judah). The Samaritans developed their own religious practices and traditions. Around the 7th century the population embraced Islam although there is still a significant Christian population. But as current hostilities in the Holy Land demonstrate, **enmity between Jews and Samaritans continues to the present day.**

The Good Samaritan of the parable will have lived in what we now call the **‘West Bank’.** Israelis still call it Samaria. It’s always been a contested territory. It was part of the Ottoman empire until 1917 and then administered by the British until 1948. It was under Jordanian rule until the Six Day war in 1967. Since then, it has been under Israeli occupation. Although currently ruled by Israel, if proposals for a **‘Two-State Solution’** were to be accepted, it would be known as Palestine. However, nationalist Israelis want to drive out the Arab inhabitants of Samaria and Gaza and claim these territories exclusively as their own.

Are you keeping up so far? The Arab-Israeli conflict has been running off and on for at least 3000 years. It won’t be solved overnight, even by the US President.

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We are delighted to welcome **Archbishop John Sherrington** to our parishes this weekend. And what wonderful weather for his visit! Archbishop John will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to our young parishioners and adults. Parishioners will have the opportunity to greet Archbishop John at our weekend Masses.

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*‘The most important thing you can say about God’s love is that God loves us not because of anything we have done to earn that love, but because God, in total freedom, had decided to love us. At first sight, this doesn’t seem to be very inspiring; but if you reflect on it more deeply this thought can affect and influence your life greatly. We’re inclined to see our whole existence in terms of quid pro quo. We assume that people will be nice to us if we are nice to them; that they will help us if we help them; that they will invite us if we invite them; that they will love us if we love them. And so the conviction is deeply rooted in us that being loved is something you have to earn. In our pragmatic and utilitarian times this conviction has become even stronger. We can scarcely conceive of getting something for nothing. Everything has to be worked for, even a kind word, an expression of gratitude; a sign of affection.’* (**Henri Nouwen,** 2002)

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**Pope Leo XIV** has released his prayer intention for the month of July, and invites us to pray that we may know how to choose the right path for our life and reject anything that leads us away from Christ:

*Holy Spirit, you, light of our understanding, gentle breath that guides our decisions,
grant me the grace to listen attentively to your voice and to discern the hidden paths of my heart,
so that I may grasp what truly matters to you, and free my heart from its troubles.*

*I ask you for the grace to learn how to pause, to become aware of the way I act,
of the feelings that dwell within me, and of the thoughts that overwhelm me
which, so often, I fail to notice.*

*I long for my choices to lead me to the joy of the Gospel.
Even if I must go through moments of doubt and fatigue, even if I must struggle, reflect, search, and begin again…
Because, at the end of the journey, your consolation is the fruit of the right decision.*

*Grant me a deeper understanding of what moves me, so that I may reject what draws me away from Christ,
and love him and serve him more fully. Amen.*

Fr John

* 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. 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 which will be kept securely in the parish office. Thank you.
* As our schools break up next Friday, we wish parents, teachers, school staff and children a happy, blessed and refreshing summer holiday. For those who are travelling to spend time with family and friends or going further afield, have a safe journey. For those staying on the island, we hope you can relax from the term-time routine and enjoy some leisure time.

**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 this Sunday lunchtime, 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 12th July***Sea Sunday*15th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 5.00pm | St Mary’s | 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 |
| **Monday 14th July** | *No Mass today* |  | *No Mass or Service today* |
| **Tuesday 15th July**St Bonaventure; St Swithin | 10.00am12.10pm | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Charles Caine, recently diedDenis Cain, deceased |
| **Wednesday 16th July**Our Lady of Mount Carmel | 12.10pm | St Mary’s | Deceased members of the Simpson family |
| **Thursday 17th July** | *10.00am*12.10pm | *St Anthony’s*St Mary’s | *Eucharistic service* Tommy Reed, recently died |
| **Friday 18th July** | ***12.00 noon*** | ***St Mary’s*** | ***Requiem Mass: Michael Ward***  |
| **Saturday 19th July**16th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 11.00am to 12noon5.00pm | St Mary’sSt Mary’s | Exposition and Confessions People of our Parishes |
| **Sunday 20th July**16th Sunday in Ordinary Time | 9.30am11.00am | St Anthony’sSt Mary’s | Joe Greene, 8th anniversaryThanksgiving - Pabellan |