

St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast

Pastoral Area of South & East Belfast

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Henry McCann (and Chaplain to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald), 3 Willowfield Crescent, BT6 8HP.

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Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/stanthonysbelfast>.

Website: www.saintanthony.co.uk

PUBLIC MASS TIMES—COVID-19 ERA (will be under assessment/review)

Saturday Evening at 6.30pm. (English Parish Mass)

Sunday Morning (in Polish): 9am & 6:30pm. (English Parish Mass): 11.30am

Weekdays: (Mon Private 9:30am), Tues & Thurs at 9.30am. Fri at 7.00pm.

All English Masses on Facebook. Polish Weekday Masses: Tues & Thurs 7pm, Sat 9am

Confessions: By Arrangement. Baptisms: By Appointment

Local SVP Conference contact details: 028 90351561



4th SUNDAY OF LENT

Laetare Sunday

The Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, "this man welcomes sinners and eats with them." Luke 15:1-3, 11-32
Jesus, are you a prodigal son? Did you waste your life on us?

Or:

*God, are you the prodigal father, overflowing with love,
who runs to meet us, embraces, and kisses us,
killing the fatted calf for us?*

*Prodigal Son, Prodigal Father, and Prodigal Holy Spirit,
we are filled with awe and wonder at the love you squander on us*

Anne Osdieck

WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Recently Deceased: Brendan Doran

Anniversaries: Brigid Curran, Terence McCann, John & Florrie Guinness, Theresa McCann

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your support. Last week: Needy Parishes £518.69, Weekly £166.50. DONATE £300 [Online Donate Button on Website](#)

We would appreciate that if you send in a cheque to pay for a number of different donations, that you itemise what amount should go to each collection. Also include all empty envelopes in the one envelope

As new boxes of envelopes are being prepared for April, if your details have changed or if you would like a box please contact Fr Henry ASAP.

National Church Collection For Ukraine. The Irish Bishops have asked that a national church collection, to support relief for those affected by the war in Ukraine, be held on Sunday 27th March. "People are also invited to support the charitable initiatives of Aid to the Church in Need, the Jesuit Refugee Service, and Trócaire. Trócaire is currently responding to the crisis through its partners Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Poland which have a strong presence in the region and can use resources strategically to the greatest effect." If you wish your donation to be gift aided, please place your envelope number onto the envelope

Relaxation of Covid-19 Related Regulations & Restrictions. The pandemic is not over, and we will continue to live with the risks and effects of COVID-19 for some time. As a result, it is important that, in a spirit of Christian solidarity, we all do what we can to care for each other. Therefore, the Diocese continues to strongly recommend a number of protective measures to ensure the safety and well-being of all.

1. **Face Coverings:** the Diocese strongly recommends that face coverings continue to be worn at all times in the church.

2. **Hand Sanitizers:** will continue to be provided at the entrances. Hand sanitizing when entering the church is strongly recommended.

3. **Social Distancing:** While we no longer have to observe social distancing in the church, we need to be distance aware, especially for the vulnerable present.

4. Those administering Holy Communion should continue to sanitize their hands before & after distribution, & wear face coverings.

5. **Communion in the hand** should remain the norm.

6. Here in St Anthony's we are to return to the liturgical gestures of standing, sitting and kneeling, as marked in the missalette.

7. As there is still a high prevalence of the Covid-19 virus in the community, and high infection rates, parishioners must consider themselves whether they wish to attend church or not, but the **Obligation to attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days remains suspended**. The full text of the guidelines are available on the [Parish of St Anthony, Belfast Facebook page](#) and [Website](#)

Trócaire Lenten Campaign 2022. Trócaire's Lenten Campaign was launched on Ash Wednesday. Boxes are available in the church. The Lenten Campaign will focus on Zimbabwe, through the story of Thandekile and her two children. For further information see www.trocaire.org, section Lent 2022. Trócaire can benefit again this year from the UK Aid Match programme, which means that the UK government will match parishioners' donations up to a maximum of £2 million. This is an opportunity for our Lenten donations to double.

Lenten Pioneer Pledge. Please consider taking the short-term Lenten Pledge and make a difference to someone's life affected by addiction to drink or drugs, and say the following daily prayer:

"I promise in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and with the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary to abstain from all alcoholic drink during Lent."

Trócaire Gala Concert at Clonard Monastery in Belfast at 7.30pm on Friday 20th May 2022 (doors will open at 6.30pm). Performers: Margaret Keys, The Priests and St Dominic's Girls School Choir and MC, Gerry Kelly. This event will support Trócaire's work in countries around the world, including projects in Zimbabwe which is the focus of this year's Lenten Appeal. Tickets will be available at a later date on a first come, first served basis and we will contact you again to let you know how to book them. Tickets will be free but there will be an option to make a donation on the night with all donations being matched as part of UK Aid Match funding in support of the Lent Appeal.

The Synodal Pathway. Recently you received a postcard in the church. Cards are still available to collect at the back of the church. On your postcard you will see four questions that ask you about your experience of the Church and ask for your thoughts and ideas for the future. We would ask that you think about the questions, pray about them, discuss them perhaps at home, and submit a response. This will allow your voice to be heard. **Completed postcards should be returned by Sunday 27th March** to allow the information to be gathered and fed back into the diocese. You can place postcards in the collection basket. **Alternatively, it is now also possible to submit your feedback directly to the Living Church Office using their on-line questionnaire.** See www.downandconnor.org/synod This facility will remain open until Palm Sunday (Sunday 10th April).

Synodal Listening In The Pastoral Community Of South & East Belfast. As part of this whole process, Bishop Treanor has encouraged local parishes to come together, pray and enter into a conversation about our Church at this time. You are invited to join in the synod conversation on Thursday 31st March 7 - 9 pm in St Colmcille's Parish Centre, 191a Upper Newtownards Road. The session will be facilitated by Jim Deeds from the Living Church office and Catherine McCoy, Pastoral Worker in St John's.

Loughview Integrated Primary and Nursery School

Confirmation congratulations to the 11 children received the Sacrament last Tuesday.

First Confession will take place on Thurs 31st March at 10.30am (sorry for the mistaken date!)

First Holy Communion will take place Saturday 7th May at 10.30am

Please keep these children in your prayers.

Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre New Workshops 2022 - Bookings Now Open.

HELLO YOU Finding the joy, purpose and happiness you deserve, Saturday, 9 April (9.30am - 4.30pm)

NO VISIBLE SCAR Comfort for those bereaved during the pandemic, Friday, 20 May (5pm) - Sunday, 22 May (2pm)

Workshop Facilitator: Father Hugh Lagan SMA, a priest with the Society of African Missions and a chartered clinical psychologist. He has led retreats, workshops and trainings internationally on psychological and spiritual well-being, positive change, trauma, mental health and resilience. Please contact Jacinta or Louisa to reserve your place: TEL: 028 3082 1964

EMAIL: admin@dromantineconference.com

HSC NI Foster Care Appeal.

Could you provide a home for a young refugee? HSC NI Foster Care is appealing for more foster carers and supported lodgings hosts who can provide homes to young refugees who arrive in Northern Ireland without a parent or carer. For more information on becoming a foster carer or supported lodgings host, contact HSC NI Foster Care on 0800 0720 137 or visit adoptionandfostercare.hscni.net/young-refugees/

Irish Men's Rosary of reparation, repentance and conversion for our nation.

This is all done through proper protocol, that is, cooperation and consent from PSNI. We are very privileged to have Archbishop Eamon Martin attend the Newry public rosary. We are having posters printed to distribute to all Diocesan churches for the future dates. See Poster in Porch. Any enquiries please call Owen 0044 7525 166090

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Fatima 2022: Full board in hotel: 7 nights (8-15 September) from £689 per person sharing. For further enquiries and bookings contact Joe Catney 02890714001/0776425631

Parish Safeguarding. Can you please ensure that all Children and Vulnerable Adults are accompanied at all times when entering the Sacristy / Toilet facilities. If you have any queries regarding the Safeguarding Policy please contact a member of the Parish Safeguarding Committee. Many Thanks. Fr Henry McCann PP.



PRODIGAL MIND

I think it's fair to say that the restrictions of recent times have held a magnifying glass up to who we really are. It underlined deprivation and inequalities, and sparked political unrest in the most surprising of places. On the other hand, people reconnected with the power and beauty of nature and humanity. As priests, I think we lost a sense of our fraternity and became more isolated. Every man or woman for themselves became a bit of a common attitude. It was always there

under the surface but it wasn't so obvious.

A pandemic can do that to people, but death in our families is another time when we learn more of the truth about ourselves and others. That's really what was said by the prodigal son to his father – 'You're dead to me so why not give me what I'm due NOW?' More than any other time in a human life, it can be said at the time of a death that the truth is revealed, as the fault lines of family are shown.

The younger son was following the unholy trinity of me/my/mine, with an attitude of taking – not receiving as a

Next Sunday's Readings



Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalms 125

Philippians 3:8-14

John 8:1-11

gift. He had got in touch with material desire but not his deepest desire, for our deepest longing is also God's. It was a strange transition for the son, from freedom to a pigsty, and it all came from his own free choice.

They tell of a bird and a fox. Naturally wary of the hunter fox, the bird stayed up in her tree to avoid the fox's fangs. The fox made an offer to the bird: 'Just give me one feather and you will have a juicy worm waiting for you.' 'No harm in that,' thought the bird and the deal continued for many days. One feather less every day, until one day the bird descended from the tree, enjoyed her meal and found that she couldn't fly away. She was the fox's next meal, fattened nicely by his own plan.

For the prodigal the pigsty became a mirror. We see that while we may think we have chosen what appears to be good, it's not what is truly good. We often only see the short-term, not the long-term implications. We compromise our integrity, beliefs, even the truth – and often it's all socially acceptable but it's not right. We hurt ourselves in big and small ways because we become earth bound – like the flightless bird that gave up its feathers for worms.

God's love within you is your native land.
So search none other, never more depart.
For you are homeless save God keeps your heart.

(John Randall Bradburne) ■

- Tom Cox



Reflection

When have you been lost and then found by God? What is your response to God?



Lesson

The father never lost faith in his prodigal son. Neither does God lose faith in us. He is always ready to give us a hand when we fall.



Prayer

Lord, let me not judge others harshly, but learn to forgive as I also seek forgiveness.



This Week (28 Mar – 3 Apr)

28 M St Sixtus III

29 T St Rupert

30 W St John Climacus

31 T St Benjamin

1 F St Ceallach (Celsus), bishop

2 S St Francis of Paola, hermit

3 S FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

