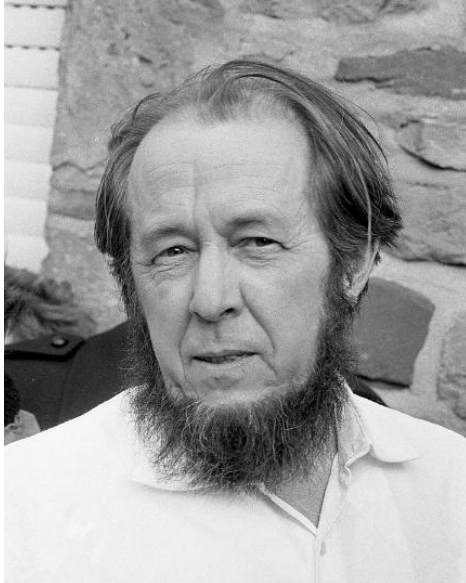


Bridie's Blethers



December 2024

Has God Been Forgotten ?



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aleksandr_Solzhenitsyn_1974crop.jpg

Bridie's Blethers Christmas Issue 2023 highlighted the plight and tragedy of war around the world. Russia was still invading Ukraine and Israel had attacked Gaza after the horrendous attacks by Hamas on October 7. Although, hopefully, there is a glimmer of light that peace will prevail after a fragile ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah. However, one year on and conflict and suffering persist in areas of the world with no peace in sight.

A recent BBC article reported that Russia has now lost an estimated 700,000 troops since the conflict with Ukraine began with an estimated 1500 soldiers losing their life every day. What a waste of human life.

In addition to these conflicts and the suffering it brings to millions of innocent people, poverty and climate changes are also a worldwide problem which has become even more obvious and undeniable through 2024.

As a parish community, while wondering (and praying) for an end to these senseless conflicts, it makes us wonder if God has been forgotten in these areas of conflict and suffering.

The Templeton Prize is an award presented to a living person who has "made an exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery or practical works". Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was a Russian novelist and dissident. He helped to raise awareness of political repression in the then Soviet Union and was awarded the Templeton Prize in 1978. He died in 2008 and is still remembered for his Templeton speech – it is still very relevant today around the world. Aleksander said,

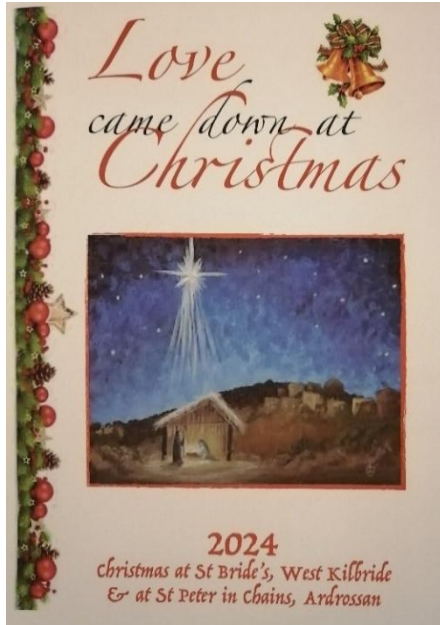
"More than half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened."

He continued, "Since then I have spent well-nigh fifty years working on the history of our (Russian) Revolution; in the process I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies, and have already contributed eight volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by that upheaval. But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous Revolution that swallowed up some sixty million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened."

Aleksandr also warned that the West is in danger of following the same path Russia did all those years ago.

"And contemporary Europe, seemingly so unlike the Russia of 1913, is today on the verge of the same collapse, for all that it has been reached by a different route. Different parts of the world have followed different paths, but today they are all approaching the threshold of a common ruin."

A powerful message. At Christmas time we often send people wishes of peace and joy, so this Christmas we also pray that God's presence is remembered and that the Holy Spirit intervenes to bring peace and harmony to these areas most in need and across the world.



Christmas Services At St. Bride's

Christmas at St Bride's, West Kilbride

Wednesday, 18th December
Christmas Carol Concert
At 7pm (with refreshments)

Sunday 22nd December
Fourth Sunday of Advent 12:15pm

Tuesday, 24th December
Christmas Eve
Mass of the Holy Night at 7pm

Wednesday, 25th December
Christmas Day
Mass of the Nativity of the Lord at 9am

Thursday 26th December
Feast of St. Stephen, martyr
Mass at 10am

Sunday, 29th December
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Mass at 12:15pm

Wednesday, 1st January 2025
New Year's Day
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Mass at 10am

Parish Church Address:
9 Hunterston Road, West Kilbride, KA23 9EX
Contact: 01294 464063
Website: stbrideschurch.co.uk
Email: westkilbride@gallowaydiocese.org.uk

Christmas Eve Prayer

Loving God, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

Christmas Dinner Grace

In the peace of this season our spirits are joyful: With the beasts and angels, the shepherds and the stars, with Mary and Joseph, we sing God's praise. By your coming may the hungry be filled with good things, and may our table and home be blessed. Bless us O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Blessed and Happy Christmas to one and all!
From Father Duncan, Parish Priest
And Cannon Matt and Father Gerry.*

Getting Ready For The Miracle of The Holy Night

...Fr. Duncan



A great Christian Writer, C.S. Lewis has achieved new popularity recently, even after sixty-one years after his death. He will be remembered for his children's books, particularly the Chronicles of Narnia. However, his stories were not just for children. Lewis writes: "A children's story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad children's story." In different ways and in different guises, throughout his books C.S. Lewis brings a powerful message: He encourages today's Christians to avoid three dangers in the face of everything that is happening around us. It is all about "knowledge" and "Passion".

The first danger is: We have no knowledge and no passion. This just cannot happen to the sincere Christian today. Not to want to know about God and to have no enthusiasm and love for God is unacceptable for the serious believer. Getting to know about God and

understanding him more is the basis for loving him more. If we have no "passion", i.e. no inner fire, no enthusiasm, no determination, then anything we do will be weak and never last.

The second danger is: As Christians we have knowledge but no passion. What is the use of knowing about God, if there is no love, no hands outstretched, no open hearts for others, no generosity. This would simply be cold arrogance. It would never bring any life or joy. We don't have to understand everything, but what we do know and understand we have to try and live to the best of our ability.

And the third danger for modern-day Christians is: We have passion but no knowledge. This can be dangerous indeed. What is the use of enthusiasm if we do not know where we are going, or how God wants us to get there? What is the use of having "fire in our bellies" if we don't know the destination and replace God's design for us with our own desires?

Lewis' vision for a life of faith was to always try and unite our heads with our hearts. That means that we do have knowledge and we combine that with a large "injection" of passion, energy and enthusiasm. Saint John Paul once made the stunningly simple exhortation: "Love for Jesus and His Church must be the passion of our lives!" You may remember the fantastic book by Graham Greene "The Power and the Glory" which tells the story of a so-called "Whisky-Priest" in Mexico at the time of the great persecution of Christians. Government forces are looking for him everywhere and if they find him, they will certainly kill him. In spite of his weaknesses, he still tries to faithfully minister to God's people. He visits a family, where a young girl answers the door and asks him why he just doesn't renounce his Catholic faith, the un-named "Whisky Priest" replies: "That's impossible! There's no way! It's out of my power." Greene narrates: "The child listened intently. She then said, 'Oh, I see, like a birthmark'." Christ and his Church are like a "birthmark" on each one of us, that lasts forever.

Our faith grows as we get to know what God is like, who he is and what he wants for us. Then, we put this knowledge into practice by loving our neighbour, by trying to live a good life, and by seeing God in everyone. We reach out to others and feel a genuine responsibility for them.

This was the special aim in Lewis' books. His stories took seriously that God is really present in the world and present and active in our lives. He allows his Son to enter our world - to be born of a Virgin Mother, to live as we live, to experience pain, loneliness, betrayal, to die and to rise again from the grave. God still is working to accomplish his Plan of Love, Wisdom and Power through us. He will pursue every avenue and open every door to fulfil his will. He will never give up on us. He will never "write us off".

In the "Chronicles of Narnia", Lewis describes how a group of children enter a unique, magical land and have many adventures together. It is a world where animals talk and nothing is quite what it seems. Lewis has God enter this world as an untamed and wild lion, called Aslan. He becomes the greatest friend and guide of the children. After their third adventure the children are told they will not be able to return to Narnia. Through tears of protest, Lucy tells the lion that she will miss him and cannot imagine never being able to see him again. "But you shall meet me", said Aslan. "Are - you there in our world too?" said Edmund. "I am," said Aslan. "But there I have another name. You must learn to know me by that name. This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there."

Christmas is the time of a new beginning for all of us: A new beginning with God. Through the mystery of the Birth of Jesus, we can understand more what God is really like and get to "know him better". He is a Father, who loves us so much that he sends his own Son to give us life and save us. God is that best friend and guide who is present and active in our lives - every moment of every day. He is always at our side. He understands our troubles, our crosses, our suffering. He is patient with our weaknesses. He wants to heal our wounds and give us inner peace. He answers every prayer we speak: Sometimes his answer is "yes", sometimes "no" and sometimes "wait awhile". There is no such thing as an unanswered prayer. This is the faith that has conquered the world. This is the faith that makes us a new people - Christians with both knowledge and passion.

On the children's second trip to Narnia, Lucy is surprised when she sees Aslan again. She exclaims, "Aslan you are bigger!" He assures her that it is not so, then adds, "But every year you grow you will find me bigger." Christmas is the time of grace and growth in our faith. Through the Miracle of the Birth of the Saviour, we too can find that God is truly "bigger" in our lives. We can notice him more, talk to him more, experience him more, give to him more. In this way Christmas takes place in us.

Please accept my sincere thanks and appreciation for all your support, love and friendship over the past year. The signs of generosity and loyalty to the Parish are a tremendous encouragement to each one of us. May I take this opportunity already to wish you and all your loved ones a very happy and blessed Christmas and a New Year 2025 of health and peace! May the Saviour Christ fill our lives with joy and a hope that will last! May the God of Love find our hearts and homes wide open, so that we can become the Bethlehem, where the Christ Child can be born again. Christmas - truly a new beginning!

A "Big" Thank You

One of our key editorial team members has decided to stand down from Bridie's Blethers. While we are sorry to see Peter McCluskey leave the team, we wanted to recognise his contributions and drive to make Bridie's Blethers happen in the first place.

BBs (as we call it) was Peter's initial idea and it was his drive and organisation to put the team together which brought Bridie's Blethers to St. Bride's.

So we would all like to say, a **Big Thank You** Peter for all your hard work.

Jubilee Year 2025

...From Our Largs Correspondent



At 7.30.p.m. on Christmas Eve Pope Francis will open the Holy Door in St Peter's Basilica in Rome and the 2025 Jubilee Year will begin. So why is this happening and what does it mean in the twenty first century? The first such year, after all was in the year 1300 during the pontificate of Pope Boniface VIII, and a lot has changed since then. So are Jubilee/Holy Years still relevant today, or are they a relic of a bygone age?

The background to our story begins in Christmas 1299 when, in the face of great suffering caused by wars and disease such as the plague, many thousands of pilgrims came to Rome. As a result, Pope Boniface, in response to the wishes of the people of Rome, decreed that a 'celebration' should take place every hundred years. No doubt then, as now, it was good for local businesses.

The word 'Jubilee' was not used at that time and the whole thing had a lot to do with the historically divisive issue of 'Indulgences'. But that's another story.

A hundred years, of course, was a very long time, especially given the life expectancy of that period, and in 1343 it was reduced to fifty years. In the light of our recent experience of Covid, it is worth noting that during the 1400 Jubilee between 600 and 800 pilgrims died every day from plague. The dates changed a bit for a while, but in 1470, Pope Paul II reduced it to twenty-five years which is where we are now. What lay behind all this is too much to go into here, but at the heart of it was the notion of pilgrimage. And so I offer you some words of Pope Francis on this topic.

'Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life. A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life.

So how does this relate to Jubilee 2025? Well I offer you three ways of thinking about it.

The first I call the cynical approach. The second takes us into the Old Testament. And the third relates to the situation we find ourselves in today.

According to the cynical view, the Jubilee will achieve nothing. In a year's time, according to this way of thinking, experience of other such events in the past suggests it will come and go leaving things pretty much as they were before. 2024 was supposed to be a year of prayer in preparation for this Jubilee. But what impact has that had on us? Do we even know that we are coming to the end of a year of preparation? The Pope speaks about pilgrimages on foot being a way to rediscover the value of silence. And that is true, as pilgrims on the Camino to Santiago de Compostela and other similar places of pilgrimage around the world know from experience. But it is hard to see how that experience can be replicated in busy, crowded, noisy Airport terminals. And how do we reconcile encouraging thousands of people from distant countries to fly all the way to Rome with our responsibility to the environment? Care for nature and the earth, as we will see in a moment, are central to the Old Testament ideas which underpin the whole notion of Jubilee.

The relevant Old Testament passages for our reflection here are in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy which speak of a Jubilee Year every fifty years when slaves received their freedom, land was returned to its original owner, debts were cancelled, and the land was given time to rest. It is worth reading the whole of Deuteronomy 15. It contains sentences like; There must be no poor among you. For the Lord will grant you his

blessing in the land which the Lord your God is giving you. It is a vision so radical that it was probably never put into practice. But it is even more urgent today than it was then. The very future of the planet depends on us embracing the message of Deuteronomy. There are many countries in the world, for example, which spend more in servicing debts to the rich countries than they receive from us in Aid. And only by addressing their problem will we ever solve our problem of migration and immigration. People will keep coming to Britain and other places from poorer countries until we cancel their debts, give them back their land, enable them to develop their economies and so stay at home where they want to be. If only next year's Jubilee were about these things rather than about getting Indulgences by walking through Holy Doors in Rome.

As far as our own situation is concerned, Pope Francis is encouraging us to look for signs of hope during the Jubilee. This is a great need among people today. Many cannot bear to watch the News on television. Continual stories about war, climate disaster and crime are depressing many of us. Some are deciding not to have children because they are terrified of what kind of future those children will face. Given the situation of the planet, will they have a future at all? These are massive issues and we can feel powerless in the face of them. But there is one thing I suggest we can all do as men and women of hope.

We can make a deliberate and conscious choice every moment of everyday day to see the goodness which is all around us. The world is a God-filled place. Our faith tells us that. The vast bulk of human beings are good. Day in day out they are doing their best, looking after their children, caring for sick and elderly parents, reaching out others and making a positive contribution to the world around them.

I remember my good friend Brian Kemp. Brian was a good man whose glass always seemed to be half-empty. The world for Brian was not a good place. It was a Godless place. And when we spoke about these things I used to ask him 'Brian, how many bad people do you know?' And he could never think of any. So let's make a conscious decision to acknowledge this during this Jubilee Year. Let's rejoice in the goodness of so many people. And when the opportunity is presented to us have the courage to speak words of hope to those whom we meet, especially if they are being pulled down by what they see as a world devoid of hope.

If we could, with God's grace, do that every day, if we could become messengers of hope to the people around us, maybe the Jubilee of 2025 will indeed have a positive impact on the world more than eight hundred years after it all began.



May 9th 2024 (Ascension Thursday), Pope Francis proclaimed the Jubilee Year 2025 with a public decree (papal bull), with its theme "*Hope does not disappoint.*"

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Homage To The Mother Of God

...Clare McIlhatton



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At this time of Advent, preparation for the coming of the Christ Child, the tendency is sometimes to put Our Blessèd Lady a little in the shade. We really do not mean to do it but there you are.

I remember when I lived in Germany, the people of Bremen celebrated Advent in a big way. They went to the Christmas markets, invited friends and family to their homes, ate, drank and made merry. So when Christmas came it was to my mind a bit of a let down. Of course, Our Lady was absolutely nowhere to be seen.

Therefore, I am about to put that to right!

Mary is the most effective means of intercession we have, since she is the bridge between us and her Son.

From the reformation onwards She has been vilified as if she were some sort of negative cult figure. Her image was trodden under foot. The reason why is not quite clear. However, it could have had something to do with her Immaculate Conception which was considered, along with transubstantiation a 'superstition' surrounding some Catholic practices, cloaked in secrecy.

One must remember that people are not always taught their religion well, their faith not always cultivated as it should have been and therefore it was difficult for many to comprehend miracles of such magnitude, or indeed accept them.

Even in the present day many people, including clergy, maintain the Luthern and Calvinistic idea that in giving Mary her true and proper place beside Jesus, would be somehow diminishing the love and respect we bear for God.

Loving Mary is loving God.

Christ's words are often manipulated by putting another connotation on them. For example, at the Marriage Feast.

They give the impression that Jesus is giving his Mother a telling off when in actual fact he is only stating a fact, that the right moment has not yet come. Nevertheless, she knows Her Son very well and tell the servants to 'do as he says'.

In observing Our Lady throughout the life of Christ, from His birth to His death, we get a clear picture of Her and Her role in Her Son's life.

She was a quiet intellectual of her time, going about her business, carrying out her daily tasks in silence and prayer. She was always present on the important occasions without interfering.

She was by his side all the way to Calvary, suffering the entire time.

She also understands our suffering. She is our strongest ally because she has Christ's ear and God sees us and our sins through the blood of his son.

Mary is also our Mother and there is nothing she will not do for us. In our sorrow we implore her to speak to Her Son on our behalf which She always does and since God refuses Her nothing likewise He gives us what we need....what is good for us. We can survive the greatest of pain both physical and emotional and mental anguish by keeping close to Our Blessèd Lady.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort made himself a 'slave of Mary' in doing so he knew that he was on the side of the angels. He prayed to Mary constantly with the confidence a child has in his mother. He understood God's way through her.

Finally we come to the Holy Rosary.

This is a most important practice and good habit to acquire. It only takes about 20 minutes of our time. It can be said 'on the wing', while driving, doing housework and even while waiting for the football to start.

It is a most powerful prayer. The Battle of Lepanto was won by the Christians against the Ottomans by the constant saying of the rosary. We must not forget that.

Our Lady is Satan's worst nightmare. She beats him hands down every time. She crushes the serpents head beneath her heel.

In conclusion, Christmas is almost upon us! Just keep The Holy Family in mind on that cold night in December so long ago, when a young girl called Mary gave birth to the Saviour of Mankind.



St. Bride's Sycamore Programme

On 3 Wednesday evenings leading up to Advent and by popular request we attended more Sycamore sessions held in St. Bride's Church hall. The sessions were:

- ❖ What is Faith ?
- ❖ Does Prayer make a difference?
- ❖ The light of Christ

The quality of the videos is excellent and presented by Fr. Wang.

Once again it was agreed it was so good - very warm and simple .

It is a gift to see each other's Christian faith blossoming and deepening.

We hope to choose a few more sessions in the Spring to which everyone is welcome .

Obituaries



Peter Ross was a loyal Parishioner to St Brides ensuring that our music system worked well on Sundays , attending Deanery meetings on our behalf as well as working hard all summer cutting the large amount of grass around the church . He and Cathy were a great example of Christian unity in West Kilbride . Thank you Peter. Rest in Peace



Paul McNulty was a well-known and highly regarded member of St Bride's. His unstinting contribution to the parish included serving as sacristan at daily & Sunday masses; opening the church every morning for visits; serving on the Building & Finance committee.

Paul was always willing to meet workman and give them access to the church. In addition to his deep faith, Paul had 3 great loves in his life; his wife Eileen, Celtic and golf!

He spent many hours volunteering to help people both in the local community and further afield, to meet challenges in their lives. He was always willing to lend an ear and support others. Paul's absence leaves a vacuum in our church which will be difficult to fill.

St. Bride's New Gardener



Our new gardener **Andrew McLean** has transformed our church grounds into beautifully manicured gardens.

More future developments are planned!

Wine Tasting And The Bishop

Some of the ladies from St. Bride's attended an enjoyable wine tasting event as part of the recent parish festival at St. Mary Star of The Sea, Largs.

At the event, Betty, Jo and Lorraine managed to meet up and speak to our new Bishop Francis and took the opportunity for this photo.



Out And About

...Laura McLean

While on my regular walk along Ardrossan beach towards Saltcoats last week, I noticed the ruins of Ardrossan Castle on the hill. I had seen it many times but had never really looked at it.

I couldn't get close to the actual monument but from what I could see it was definitely very old.

I did some research and was fascinated to discover its colourful history.

Stories of its connection to the devil and the Knights Templar.

Fact and fiction legends abound. Believed to be constructed around 1140, the castle is one of the oldest in Ayrshire, dating to the Scottish Wars of Independence in 1357. Originally there was also a chapel on the site.

The buildings were captured by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers in the 1640s.

There is an interesting legend about Fergus Barclay who was a signatory to the Declaration of Arbroath



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ardrossan_Castle_keep,_North_Ayrshire._View_from_the_south._Well_passage_to_the_left.jpg

He was apparently a superb horseman, and it was believed his abilities were credited to his enchanted saddle. It was believed that he had sold his soul to the devil in return for his wealth and prosperity!

Listen to more stories about Ardrossan and other castles on the YouTube channel, hosted Aidan Lynn. Just search for "Ayrshire Legends" - or better still have a walk to the castle or visit the local history museum

St. Bride's Christmas Dinner

An enjoyable evening was had by everyone who attended the annual Christmas dinner in West Kilbride's Golf Club. Santa also popped by to say Merry Christmas to everyone.

What a wonderful night we had, celebrating with our Parish friends. We had a Christmas Quiz, Irish Bingo, beautiful Raffle prizes and all the way from the North Pole, Santa, who gave out the prizes. All money raised is going to Child Poverty in North Ayrshire. Our Carol Service donations will also be added to the Raffle money and the total raised will be announced at Mass and in the Bulletin.



Reminders

Synod Report Final Document

Pope Francis highlighted how the final document, written over the course of the 2nd Session of the Synod on Synodality that began on the 2nd October following a process of listening and dialogue, is the fruit of over three years of listening to the People of God. It reveals, he noted, a shared path forward toward a "synodal Church" that embodies the Gospel not merely through words but through every act and interaction.

Pope Francis described the document as a gift with multiple dimensions, serving as both guidance for the Church and as a symbol of unity and shared mission.



Highlighting the Church's role as a peacemaker in a broken world, the Pope said "In our time marked by wars, we must be witnesses of peace, even by learning how to live out our differences in conviviality." The Spirit, he reminded the assembly, is the unifying force of the Church across all cultures, challenges, and hopes, and thanking the assembly for their participation, Pope Francis encouraged all Synod participants to carry gifts of the Spirit into the world as a Church that listens, prays and acts with humility.

The Synod Report is available to download from the St. Bride's website or via this link - https://stbrideschurch.co.uk/images/OtherMedia/Synod_2014_-_Final_Document.pdf

Pope Francis "Dilexit Nos" – He Loved Us

Pope Francis issued his fourth Encyclical on the 24th October 2024, called "Dilexit nos" ('He loved us'): on Human and Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ.

A world that has become "heartless" and indifferent to greed and war, and a Catholic Church in need of revitalising its missionary joy need to open themselves up to Christ's infinite love, Pope Francis wrote. The Encyclical is available to download from the St. Bride's website or via and this link - <https://stbrideschurch.co.uk/index.php/news-events/latest-news/2-uncategorised/75-dilexit-nos>



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pope_Francis,_June_2024_%28cropped%29.jpg

Evening Prayer To Mary, Mother Of God.

New Year's Day, Wednesday 1st January is the feast of the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Here is an evening prayer to Mary.

Evening Prayer To Mary, Mother of God

Night is falling, dear Mother, the long day is o'er,
And before thy loved image I'm kneeling once more,

To thank thee for keeping me safe through the day,
To ask thee this night to keep evil away.

Many times have I fallen today, Mother dear;
Many graces neglected since last I knelt here.

Wilt thou not in pity, my own Mother mild,
Ask Jesus to pardon the sins of thy child?

I am going to rest, for the day's work is done,
Its hours and moments have passed one by one.

And the God Who will judge me has counted them all;
He has numbered each grace,
He has counted each fall.

In His book they are written against the last day
O Mother, ask Jesus to wash them away;

For one drop of His Blood for which sinners was spilt
Is sufficient to cleanse the whole world from its guilt.

And if e'er the dawn I should draw my last breath;
If the sleep that I take be the long sleep of death,
Be near me, dear Mother, for Jesus' dear sake
When my soul on Eternity's shore shall awake.

Amen.

Bridie's Nuggets



"Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer and reformation of our hearts. Since it comes at winter time, fire is a fitting sign to help us celebrate Advent...If Christ is to come more fully into our lives this Christmas, if God is to become really incarnate for us, then fire will have to be present in our prayer. Our worship and devotion will have to stoke the kind of fire in our souls that can truly change our hearts. Ours is a great responsibility not to waste this Advent time."

...Edward Hays, A Pilgrims Almanac

"During Advent opportunities for works of charity abound calling out for Christians from every side: a sack of food for a needy family, money dropped in a Salvation Army kettle, a donation to an Indian school, a toy for 'Toys-for-Tots,' etc. Unfortunately, these works of charity so easily can assuage the Christian conscience, while doing nothing to being about a solution to the root causes of the problem.

"Works of justice, on the other hand, follow the road less travelled of Advent's hope to pursue solutions for difficult problems. Hope comes through works of justice rather than simply performing works of charity."

...Fr. Brian Cavanaugh

"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."

...Mother Teresa



"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?"

...Bob Hope

Just for a laugh.....

The Sunday School Teacher asked, "Now, Johnny, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?"

"No sir," little Johnny replies, "I don't have to – my Mum is a good cook!"

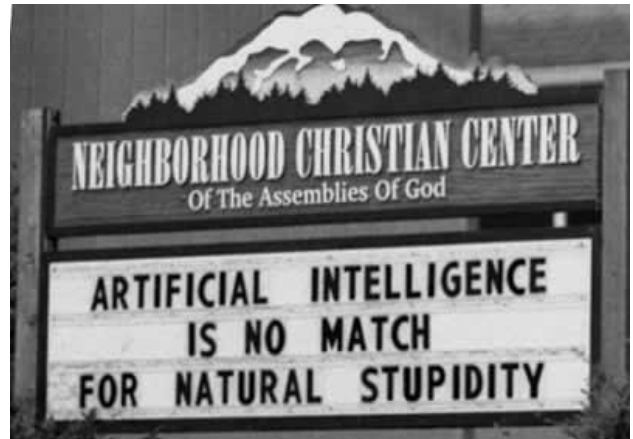
And Another.....

All the way home in the back seat of the car the boy was quiet. His father asked him three times what was wrong.

Finally, the boy replied, "The preacher said he wanted us all brought up in a Christian home, but I wanted to stay with you guys."



https://www.flickr.com/photos/au_tiger01/2404126159



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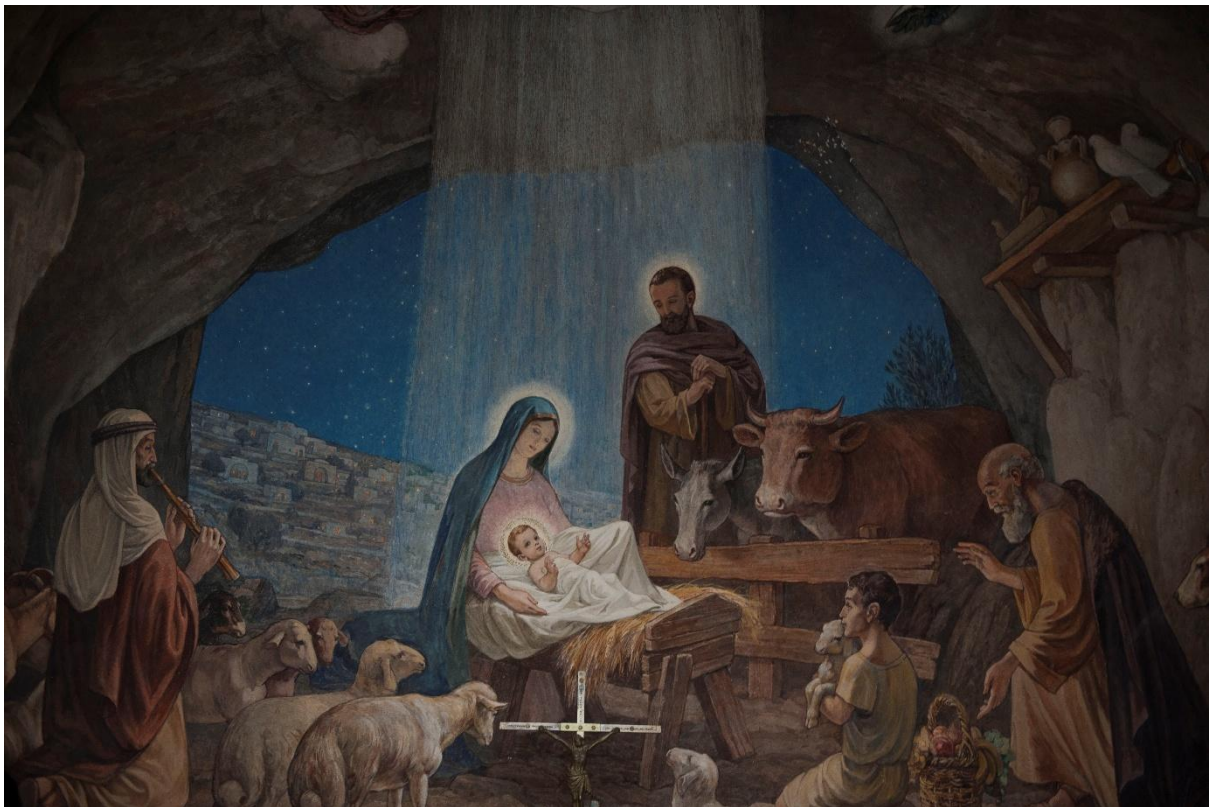
If a friend calls you at 2AM in the morning saying they can't sleep, tell him to read Isaiah 48:22, "There is no rest for the wicked."

Please write to us with your thoughts! We hope you have enjoyed this edition of Bridie's Blethers. For future editions your parish needs **YOU!** Please provide any feedback (good or bad) and most importantly topics and articles to include in the next edition by emailing westkilbride@gallowaydiocese.org. Alternatively, speak to or email one of the editorial team: joe.mcaleavy1804@yahoo.com; howiephyllis@yahoo.co.uk; laura.mclean9@icloud.com

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**Your
Parish
Needs
You**

*A Merry Christmas To Everyone At St. Bride's
And A Blessed, Peaceful and Joyful New Year*



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