



## ST. PETER'S AND ST. FERGUS' PARISHES

### Bulletin

SUNDAY: 15 FEBRUARY 2026

(Sir 15:15-20, 1 Cor 2:6-10, Mt 5:17-37)

Eucharistic Prayer III



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Parish Priest: Rev. Thomas John, (Resident at St Peter's)

Sunday Mass: St. Peter's 4.00pm (Sat) & 10.00 am, St. Fergus' 5.30pm (Sat) & 11.30 am

Weekday Mass: St Peter's – Tue, Thu, & Fri 10.00am; St Fergus – Mon, & Wed 9.30am

Confessions: St Peter's 3.15-3.50pm (Sat), St Fergus' 5.00 -5.25pm (Sat); and on request

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** We pray for all who are sick namely Helen McAleer, for all who have recently died Terence Kelly and Mary Lyons and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Philip Duffy, Joseph Bisland, and Delia Delaney.

**ASH WEDNESDAY:** The Ash Wednesday mass on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February is as follows:

St Fergus: 9.00am

St Peter's 7.00pm

You can also know the Ash Wednesday mass and service times throughout the diocese on the diocesan website at <https://rcdop.org.uk/ash>.

It's a day of FASTING and ABSTINENCE.

**FUNERAL MASS:** A requiem mass will be celebrated for the happy repose of soul of Donna McPherson on (Ash) Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> at 10am in St Peter's. Her remains will be received into Church shortly before the Funeral Mass. May she rest in peace.

**FRIDAYS IN LENT:** Every Friday in Lent there will be exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, individual devotion and Way of the Cross in St Peter's parish. Join us for this devotion held from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, beginning this Friday, the 20th. While in St Fergus, it will be after the morning mass on Wednesdays, starting from Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup>.

**SUNDAY COLLECTIONS (25 JAN):** St Peter's - Offertory: £456.00, B. Fund: £309.00, Hall Let: £100.00, 100 Club: £250.00, Stall: £222.00, SPRED: £160.00. St Fergus: Offertory: £240.00, SPRED: £92.00.

**SAFEGUARDING THROUGH the Month of February:** We take time to respond to the Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse on Friday 20th February 2026. The online version of 'In God's Image V2,' the latest Safeguarding Manual can be accessible at Bishops Conference of Scotland > Safeguarding.

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**PRAYER FOR THE ABUSED:** The day suggested for the Prayer for those who have suffered abuse is Friday after Ash Wednesday. In our parishes this event will be observed during mass.

**ST PATRICK'S AFTERNOON TEA:** St Peter's parish will organise St Patrick's Afternoon Tea on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 1.00pm. Entertainment will include Irish Dancers and Ceilidh music. Children's liturgy will host this event and would love to see as many parishioners as possible coming along. More details will be given in the next three weeks.

**TEA AND COFFEE** in the parish hall. All welcome.

**SEASON OF LENT:** Lent is a sacred season for various reasons. It starts with Ash Wednesday on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February and ends with the celebration of the Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord on 4<sup>th</sup> April this year. Earlier days, Catholics observed this season very resolutely as they believed it as an important time in their lives. This was evident when they strictly followed the three disciplines of lent namely fasting, prayer and almsgiving. The Church has in no way lessened its importance. However, gradually many people have deviated from its strict observance, although many traditional Catholics still uphold them as important in life especially during this time of preparation leading to the celebration of Easter.

What does it mean to fast during Lent? We have ample evidences of 'fasting' mentioned in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. There is mentioning of an ancient practice of fasting in sorrow and repentance for sins found in the Old Testament. Fasting also accompanied fervent prayer to God. The idea was that fasting made one's prayer more acceptable to God. It was a way of demonstrating one's level of commitment

before the Lord. These ideas remain valid today. God desires that we prove our love for him not just through words but through actions.

The New Testament records people questioning Jesus regarding why his disciples neglected to fast. When questioned about this by John's disciples, Jesus insists that fasting is unsuitable in times of joy. In saying this, he compared himself to the bridegroom and his disciples to wedding guests (Matt 9:14 ff; Mark 2:18 ff; Luke 5:33 ff). In other words, while Jesus and his disciples are together, it is a time of joy like a wedding feast, not a time for fasting. Jesus notes that when the bridegroom is taken away, then there will be fasting, which seems to imply fasting as a sign of mourning the loss of the bridegroom and also in anticipation of and preparation for his return.

In the gospel we read Jesus after his baptism in the river Jorden goes to the desert where he fasted and prayed for forty days and nights in preparation to begin his public ministry (Matt 4:1-2; Luke 4:1-3). The forty days of Lent are in imitation of Christ's time in the desert. Therefore, fast and prayer during lent means Christians' journey into the desert with Christ so as to have the strength to avoid temptation with the help of God's grace. In the early Church, we find that the apostles were familiar with fasting and did so prior to making important decisions to gain divine assistance (Acts 13:2 ff; 14:23).

These days many Catholics are quite ignorant of these traditional practices in the church. Now days Catholics fast and abstain only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and abstain from meat on other Fridays of Lent, which is the minimum required by the precepts of the Church. Fasting has long been recognized as an excellent means of penance, with many spiritual benefits. Sometimes people give more focus on the physical advantages of fasting while its spiritual benefits are disregarded.

What are some of the spiritual benefits of fasting? To explore that question, let's look at the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas teaches that fasting is practiced for a threefold purpose: 1) we fast in order to bridle the lusts of the flesh; 2) we fast in order that the mind may arise more freely to the contemplation of heavenly things, noting that Daniel received a revelation from God after fasting for three weeks (Dan 10:2 ff); and 3) we fast in order to satisfy for sins, as it is written in Joel 2:12: "Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting and in weeping and in mourning" St. Thomas points out that fasting tends to raise the mind and heart to heavenly things, toward the contemplation of God. Fasting empowers us in prayer. It focuses the intellect on seeking to know God and the will on obtaining God as the greatest

good. It helps to purify the desires and aspirations of the soul toward the divine beauty and truth of God. St. Thomas notes that fasting is a means of atoning for our sins.

Fasting is a means of taking responsibility for our sins; it helps us make amends before God for those times we have offended him, others, and his holy Church. This is not to say that fasting confers forgiveness for the guilt of sins. We obtain forgiveness for our sins from God by virtue of the merits of Christ's saving death and resurrection. We are forgiven the eternal guilt of sin through repentance and the sacrament of confession (John 20:22-23).

Lent is a time of penance and atonement for sin in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord. Fasting and abstinence are integral to that preparation for several reasons, such as building virtue, self-mastery, and helping to avoid sinful tendencies that may ultimately lead to a better Christian life.

**YOUNG ADULTS:** The Young Adults series on the Doctors of the Church continues on Wednesday 25th February at 7pm in the Diocesan Office, with a talk on St Thomas Aquinas. All young Catholics 18-35 are welcome. For more information contact Fr. Joe McGill at [joe.mcgill@rcdop.org.uk](mailto:joe.mcgill@rcdop.org.uk) or Fr Paul Laverty [Paul.laverty@rcdop.org.uk](mailto:Paul.laverty@rcdop.org.uk)

**APPLYING FOR SEMINARY:** At this time of year the Catholic Church in Scotland welcomes applications for Seminary for the year 2027. If you think God may be calling you to the joyful life of a Priest in the Diocese of Paisley, to serve His people, to celebrate the Sacraments and to Preach the Word, 'do not be afraid – He is there.' To find out more about the application process and Seminary itself, please contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Eoin Patten, by email [ve-vocations@rcdop.org.uk](mailto:ve-vocations@rcdop.org.uk)

**EASY FUNDRAISING FOR ST PETER'S AND ST FERGUS:** As some of you may be in the process of securing cheaper summer flights to arrange your vacation. Without adding any additional fare to the cost of your air tickets, you will be able to raise some fund for the parish. *Easyfundraising* is a platform that allows people to raise money for a noble cause. When you book your tickets through the *easyfundraising website or app*, the airliner donates a certain per centage as charity to the customer. (Many of the airlines donates a percentage of the sale price to the customer's chosen cause without any additional cost to you). It may be a small amount but it's a meaningful contribution, and we are thankful for it. This same principle applies to any online purchasing too. For more information please get a copy of the flier at the back of our Churches.