



Galloway Diocese NEWS

*Lent
Edition*

*March
2026*

Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit



Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.”

Bishop Frank writes

Growing Church: Answering the Call This Easter



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to the latest edition of Galloway News.

As I reflect on the past few months, one of my highlights was the Rite of Enrolment Mass on the 22nd of February at the Cathedral in Ayr. Here, over 40 men and women came from across the Diocese to formally present themselves to me as Catechumens and Candidates preparing to be received into the Church at Easter. The atmosphere of joy and excitement was infectious. Here were people from all places and all sorts of backgrounds who had heard God's call to come home and were answering that call. It was particularly moving to see them individually inscribe their names in the book placed on the altar and for me to be able to congratulate them in person.

Some of you reading this will have been among that group, and some will have taken the same path in years past. But for most of us, it is something that was gifted to us in infancy by our parents: a faith we grew up in rather than an initial choice we made, so it is especially inspiring to see our brothers and sisters come to Christ as adults. I for one am looking forward to hearing their stories of how this journey came about. Inevitably those stories will not just be about their relationship with Christ, but also those whose faith-witness has inspired them and supported them in this.

It is also uplifting to see these stories replicated across Scotland and beyond. And in every Diocese the message is that this is on the rise. More and more people are entering the Church in Scotland and beyond. This is what a missionary Church looks like and one we all have a part to play in. And there are more out there who need to hear the call. You might be the person who helps them hear that call.

Sometimes when we use the word "missionary" we think of those rare individuals who went to foreign places to bring Christ to others. They are a great part of the story of the Church, but if that is all we mean by "missionary" then we are letting ourselves off the hook. Every single person is called to be a missionary. In Baptism and Confirmation, the Holy Spirit comes upon us and unites us to Christ and His Church. This is something we receive but is is not

something we should keep to ourselves. The treasure we have in our faith, in the Church, in the Sacraments, in the Word of God must not be a hidden treasure. Despite what our secular culture might try to teach us, religion is not a private affair: it is something to be lived, shared and proclaimed.

At Easter, these wonderful people who are entering the Church will make their Profession of Faith. It is a profound moment where they renounce Satan, announce their Faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. But they do not do it alone. Every Catholic makes the same Profession of Faith, and in a special way we do that at Easter as we renew our Baptismal Promises. Maybe we did receive our faith as a gift from our parents but that does not make us passive recipients. We are called to answer God's call and to renew our personal commitment to Him every day. So, as you renew your Baptismal promises at Easter (or are making them for the first time) listen to what you are saying, reflect on what it means and be prepared to share that faith with your sisters and brothers in the wider community.

As we pray for those preparing to be received into the Church, their stories will tell us that they rely on the example and witness of faithful Christians. This Easter, as we rejoice in the gift of knowing that we are saved by the risen Lord, let us all reflect on who has been part of our journey of faith and pray that we might in turn be part of someone else's story.

In the Easter Gospel, the risen Christ appears to Mary of Magdala, and his first instruction is for her to go and tell others what she has seen. As we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ and hear the message of salvation again, let us also hear the command to go and tell others. This is a treasure not to be kept to ourselves but to be shared generously and courageously. Do not be afraid (and don't be shy!).

St Ninian, pray for us

+Francis Dougan



A Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit

By Louise Girvan



Bishop Frank has asked that this year, 2026, is a year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit for the Diocese of Galloway. As part of this year I was asked to design a logo to represent the Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit. The new logo brings together two powerful symbols of our diocesan story: St Ninian, the first to bring Christianity to Scotland, and the Holy Spirit. Bishop Frank has invited us to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a renewed way this year as we begin to look towards the Great Jubilee Year of 2033. In the image, St Ninian is shown holding Whithorn Priory Church, the current modern building found on Bruce Street in Whithorn. Ninian holds this as a sign of his continuing care for the people of Galloway. Just as he once carried the light of Christ to these shores, the logo suggests that he now carries us, the living Church, in his prayer and protection as our patron.

Above St Ninian, the Holy Spirit descends, echoing the diocesan prayer:

“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.”

The movement of the Spirit towards St Ninian, and therefore towards our diocesan community that he holds, expresses our hope that this year will be one of deepening faith, renewed courage, and openness to God’s call.

Throughout this year Bishop Frank will be celebrating monthly Masses across the diocese travelling to different deaneries. In January he began these Masses in St Margaret’s Cathedral, then in February travelled to St Andrew’s deanery and St Mary’s deanery in March. Everyone across the diocese is encouraged to pray the diocesan prayer to the Holy Spirit regularly throughout this year.

During Bishop Frank’s first monthly Mass in St Margaret’s Cathedral his homily reflected on how easily we might overlook what is right in front of us, using the images of the four evangelists in the church as a starting point. These traditional symbols remind us that the

Gospels are inspired by the Holy Spirit, but not dictated. The cooperation between divine inspiration and human agency is also how the Church discerns God’s will today. The bishop stressed that discernment is rarely instant or clear-cut, but is something that unfolds over time through prayer, conversation, listening, and openness to challenge. As a diocese we begin our own period of discernment and the bishop urges us to have patience, unity, and a willingness to be changed.

The Holy Spirit does not hand us a ready-made blueprint, but instead invites us to “listen better”. No matter where we are in 2033, we will have the love of the Father, the presence of Christ, the action of the Holy Spirit and being part of a community of faith that is the Church.

In February’s Mass in Dumfries, Bishop Frank focused on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He explained that prayer is not about changing God’s mind but about noticing the God who is already speaking. Like prayer, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not things that we wait to receive, they are already given in baptism and confirmation. Our task is to open our hearts, through prayer, to recognise and engage with what God has placed within us. The bishop urges us to be open, generous, and willing to be challenged as we discern God’s will. Because the gifts of the Spirit are already given, the task that we undertake is to open our hearts so that wisdom can guide the Church’s decisions. Bishop Frank concluded by inviting everyone to pray to the Spirit, the Son, and the Father, asking Him to open our hearts in a spirit of generosity and readiness to be challenged and surprised before we are ready to respond to what He asks.



Bishop Frank in St Andrew’s Deanery, February 2026

Prayer for the Diocese of Galloway

**Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful and
kindle in us the fire of your love.**

**Send forth your Spirit
and we shall be created and you
shall renew the face of the earth.**

**O God,
who has taught the hearts of your
faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit;
grant that by the gift of the same
Spirit we may be always truly wise
and ever rejoice in his consolation.**

Through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

St. Ninian, Pray for us.

Galloway Diocese Dates for the Diary

Tuesday 31st March, 7 pm
Mass of Chrism
St Margaret’s Cathedral

Thursday 23rd April, 6 pm
Mass to the Holy Spirit
St Joseph’s, Kilmarnock

Sunday 21 June
 Lourdes Hospitalité 70th Anniversary Pilgrimage
 Carfin Grotto

When I used to see Lent in terms of deprivation; giving up smoking, drinking, chocolate and other treats, I would spend hours agonising: what should I give up for Lent? Three years ago, I decided that during Lent I would read Matthew's Gospel; Mark and Luke followed in the next two years. Gradually, Lent became for me almost a health check on my spiritual well being. As St. Josemaria, founder of Opus Dei and patron saint of diabetics, put it last century "Lent should suggest to us basic questions around faithfulness to Christ, desire for holiness, apostolate in daily life... during Lent let us renew our faith, hope and love. In a similar vein, Pope Leo, in his Lenten message, urges us to refrain from harsh words and sentiments and make room for Jesus.

Last year's Jubilee created many lasting memories. For some reason, one of the strongest for me was an art exhibition, organised by the Dicastery for Evangelisation. The exhibition consists of the display of two works of art of exceptional importance The Disciples Peter and John Running Together to the Tomb of Christ on the morning of the Resurrection. By Eugene Burnard (1898) and The Supper at Emmaus by Rembrandt (1629). The paintings are two of the most famous in the world dedicated to Easter, the day Jesus rose from the dead.

The Disciples running to the tomb captures the moment when John and Peter, still incredulous, run to the tomb. The golden glow of the sky, lit up by the early morning sun, and the movement of the figures convey intense urgency and hope. This painting has always belonged to the French national collections. After being exhibited in the Louvre, it now hangs in the Musee d'Orsay. In the Emmaus Supper, Rembrandt depicts the moment when two disciples, filled with amazement recognise the Risen Lord. The work, inspired by a passage found only in

Luke's Gospel, conveys a strong religious message, transforming an inn scene into a moment of revelation. These two paintings offer profound reflections on faith and hope. These two paintings focus on Jesus; he does what he says and can be relied on and trusted. Also evident is love. Both John and Peter clearly love Jesus. John the Beloved Disciple refers to himself as the disciple Jesus loved. In his Gospel (ch 13) he tells us (referencing Jesus) that greater love has no man than that he lays down his life for his friends. Peter's love for Jesus is proclaimed three times. The love Jesus has for us is pervasive and forgiving, and he greatly desires for it to be mutual I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

On Ash Wednesday, we learned from the first reading; when we stumble He always reaches out to us, come back to me with all your heart. Acceptance by us requires repentance and a real commitment to rebuild and deepen our friendship and love for Jesus. Happily, as we receive our Ashes, we are exhorted to repent and believe in the Gospel. The Gospels are an (auto)biography of Jesus, which can be readily broken down into manageable segments. These are very much like love letters and, with prayer, reflection and dialogue, a great deal can be learned about the human person of Jesus as well as his divinity and our loving friendship deepened. This is particularly true when we open up to Jesus; make our requests to him and tell him our circumstances, I can still hear the Yorkshire voice of the priest who led us in the Spiritual Exercises: "Speak to Jesus as a friend, in your own words." In his Angelus address on the First Sunday of Lent, Pope Leo told his audience that during their Lenten journey they should "Let the Lord cleanse you, purify you and transform you into a unique Masterpiece.

Safeguarding in Galloway Diocese

Tony Fisher is Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser



Volunteers: Thank You

An event is being arranged to formally thank the volunteers in Galloway for their ongoing commitment to all of the many ministries that they support on a day to day basis. Details of the event to follow soon.

Safeguarding: Self-Evaluation Audit

This year's self-evaluation process has been streamlined to focus mostly on the statistical data relating to Standards 1–5 of In God's Image (IGI). This approach was agreed with the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to allow the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, dioceses, religious congregations, and Catholic organisations to engage in a consultation process being facilitated by the Kinharvie Institute in the next few weeks.

Unlike previous years, this year's process will not require any significant qualitative review of safeguarding practices by participants or any publication or refreshment of action plans. The questionnaire has been abbreviated and is designed to reduce any administrative burden but will still ensure effective monitoring of the key statistical data.

Key Dates

By 27 March 2026 – Submit Allegation Recording Forms
End of June 2026 – Analysis considered by Safeguarding Leads
End of August 2026 – SCSSA publishes report

Walking with Christ Through the Desert: A Lent Journey of Testing and Grace

By Amélie Davidson

As we journey through the holy season of Lent, we are invited to journey inward and reflect deeply on the places in our lives where God calls us to grow. In Scripture, the desert is a place of starkness and simplicity, a place where distractions fall away and where God speaks in ways that are often quiet but unmistakably deep. It is no coincidence that some of the most significant moments in salvation history take place in this barren environment. The desert is where people are tested, purified, and prepared for what comes next.

Jesus' own journey into the desert comes immediately after His baptism in the Jordan. Before He heals the sick, before He calls the disciples, before His public ministry begins, He is led by the Spirit into a place of solitude. There, He fasts for forty days, faces temptation, and confronts the human struggles that touch every one of us: the desire for comfort, the lure of power, the temptation to test God. His responses reveal a heart rooted entirely in trust. Rather than relying on His own strength, He relies on the Father. His victory in the desert becomes our reassurance that we are never alone in our own moments of trial.

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread’”
- Matthew 4:1-3

The desert is a quiet, simple place where Jesus was tested and learned to trust God. Even when things feel hard or lonely, God is with us - helping us grow stronger. Just like Jesus, we can choose to trust God when we face tough times. The desert moments in our lives teach us to rely on God's love and prepare us for good things ahead.

The desert echoes throughout the Old Testament as well. Moses encounters God in the burning bush on a desert mountain, a moment that alters the course of his life and the destiny of his people. The Israelites wander for forty years, learning slowly and sometimes painfully that God provides exactly what they need, exactly when they need it. Elijah, overwhelmed and despairing, flees into the wilderness only to discover that God is found not in the drama of wind or fire but in the gentlest whisper of a breeze. Over and over again, Scripture shows the desert not as a place of abandonment but as a place of encounter.

While most of us will never stand in an actual desert, we all recognise the “desert moments” that appear in life. Periods when we feel stretched, tired, or uncertain; when prayer feels dry or God feels distant; when we face illness, grief, change, or confusion. These experiences can feel isolating, but the biblical desert reminds us that such moments are not signs of God's absence. In fact, they may be the times when God is doing His most transforming work within us. The desert strips away noise. It reveals what we rely on. It shows us our fears, our limits, and our longing for God. And in the quiet, if we

allow ourselves to listen, we begin to recognise His presence in ways we may have missed before. Lent gives us a framework for embracing these experiences rather than avoiding them. By choosing silence, simplicity, and small acts of sacrifice, we make space for God to move in our lives. Lent does not promise comfort; instead, it offers clarity. It reminds us that our identity is not found in what we achieve or possess but in the God who created and sustains us.

The desert, however, is never the final destination. Jesus leaves it strengthened and ready to proclaim the Good News. The Israelites eventually enter the Promised Land. Elijah rises from despair and continues his mission. Every desert moment leads somewhere; every trial carries within it the possibility of renewal. Lent leads us to Easter, to resurrection, and to hope that cannot be dimmed by fear or failure.

We are invited to walk with Christ into the quiet places, trusting that God meets us even, and perhaps especially, in the emptiness. The desert may be dry, but it is fertile ground for grace. And if we allow the journey to shape us, we will emerge from it changed, strengthened, and ready to follow Christ with renewed hearts as we move toward the joy of Easter.



Christ in the Desert, Ivan Kramskoi (1872)

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Adult Faith Formation in the Diocese

By Father William McFadden



Those of us with good memories will perhaps be able to remember the various initiatives offered in the diocese to support and encourage adult faith formation over the last forty years. Among these were the RENEW process; the different Pastoral Ministry Courses, including the certification courses with Abertay University; the “Three Night” Presentations which took place throughout the diocese on a range of subjects; the course in conjunction with Maryvale Institute for Ministry in the North Ayrshire Deanery; the Sycamore Course promoted during Covid and which some parishes have continued to use; the Lay-Led Funeral Courses in both the north and the south of the diocese; and the most recent four deanery resources offered during the Year of Jubilee on the four major documents of Vatican II. Each of these were aimed at facilitating individuals and parishes in embracing the importance of ongoing adult faith formation, and in taking seriously the need to engage with continuing learning, development and understanding in our faith.

Following on from Bishop Frank’s invitation to see 2026 as a Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit, and to begin prayerfully to prepare for the great celebration of the next Jubilee Year in 2033, it would seem appropriate to once again highlight adult faith formation within this vision, and to look at how as individuals, parishes, deaneries and as a diocese we can renew our commitment to this task.

Of course, the goal of faith formation is not simply to complete more courses, nor is it to concentrate on developing a more intellectual or academic understanding of our faith. Rather, it is about expanding our mindset to grow in knowledge and love of God and to find new and exciting ways of experiencing and sharing that awareness.

In recent years modern means of communication have offered us a real opportunity to engage with adult faith formation. However, with such an assortment of “teachings” on offer, discernment is necessary since not

all claiming to be “Catholic” can be considered of equal value. This being so, it is our intention in the diocese to propose and recommend different resources which might be considered useful, and which might profitably be taken on board as part of our adult faith journey. This will mean providing resources and courses which might be helpful, as well as encouraging individuals, parishes and deaneries in deciding how best they might take up the challenge in fostering a culture where continuing adult faith formation is an integral part of our adult faith pilgrimage.

As a core team in the diocese, I am supported by Geraldine McClune and Josephine Friederich-Thomas. We invite you to offer suggestions and recommendations which you have found helpful in adult faith formation, and which you think might prove beneficial if offered more widely. We are also happy to consider imaginative and creative ideas which you think might be effective in advancing a positive outlook if shared with others.

We would like to invite anyone with a particular interest in promoting adult faith formation to get in touch with us and to help us form a network in the diocese to encourage greater awareness. Simply contact me at william.mcfadden@rcdg.org.uk and we can take it from there.

As a first step in this Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit, and in stepping out to embrace a mindset which might help us to journey towards the Extraordinary Jubilee of 2033, we hope to promote and encourage online book groups looking at suggested documents and teachings, and so anyone who might be interested in initiating such a project should also get in touch.

Taking our individual responsibility for Adult Faith Formation seriously is a wonderful way in which we can grow in our faith. In the diocese we are here to support you as you make this journey.

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Calvary and share in
Christ’s Resurrection
at Church!**

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News

from across the Diocese

Diploma in Catechetics St Thomas the Apostle, Muirkirk By Susan Deary



Susan Deary, Archbishop Leo Cushley,
Father Philip Kitchen at the Graduation Ceremony.

The Legion of Mary St Winin's, Kilwinning

By Ellen Quirk

We currently have only two Praesidia in the Galloway Diocese, one in Largs and one in Kilwinning. The Our Lady of Compassion Praesidium spent time outside the Mall in Irvine with their Christmas Crib giving the true meaning of Christmas. Over 100 Prayers for Peace were given along with Christmas Cards and Miraculous Medals. The Praesidia meet in St Winin's Church, Kilwinning on a Thursday morning at 11 am. All are welcome. Their works include visiting the sick, visiting hospitals and nursing homes, visiting the bereaved, visiting the local Catholic Primary schools - St Winning's and St Luke's speaking about our Blessed Lord and his Holy Mother and saying a decade of the Rosary with the children of Primary 3/4 and Primary 7. Both schools are very supportive. Last year they also visited St Matthew's Academy and spoke to the Caritas pupils and said the Rosary in the Oratory during lunch time.

The Diploma graduation was held at the Gillis Centre, Edinburgh on 17th January 2026. Archbishop Cushley celebrated Mass with visiting Priests from around the archdiocese and beyond. The Diploma students were then presented with their certificates; it was a lovely day.

Congratulations to Susan Deary, Parishioner of St Thomas the Apostle RC Church, Muirkirk, a great achievement.

Would you like to know more about your Faith? The Diploma in Catechetics is a systematic and rich walk through the Catholic faith, expert speakers, and regular one-to-one support. The course is over 36 weeks, live on a Thursday evening on zoom with catch up on YouTube.

For lifelong Catholics, new Catholics, and enquirers. People of all denominations and faiths welcome. There is a charge for the course, bursaries may be available. If you are interested, please contact Sr Miriam Ruth Ryan RSM, srmiriam.ruth@staned.org.uk.



The Praesidium at the Mall in Irvine at Christmas.



Photos from Across the Diocese

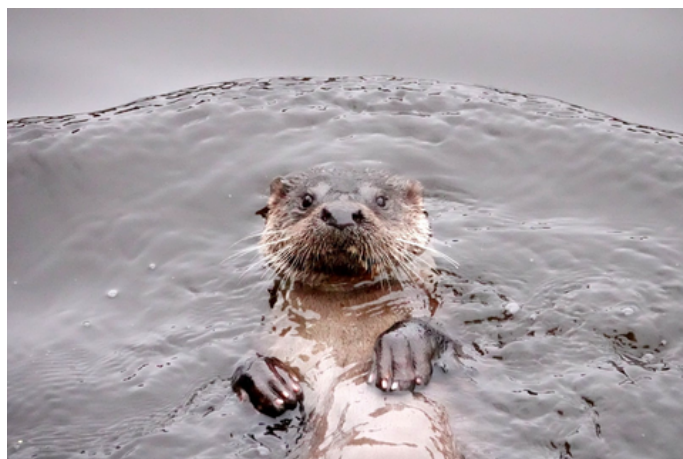


Photo of an otter in the River Nith, Dumfries sent in by Joan Smith from St Teresa's, Dumfries.

Galloway Diocese News

Deadline for the Summer edition
22nd May 2026

Email:
gdnews@rcdg.org.uk
www.rcdg.org.uk

The Galloway Diocese News,
Candida Casa, 8 Corsehill Road,
Ayr, KA7 2ST.

RC Diocese of Galloway, charity number SC010576

HCPT 376
By Josephine Coulter

H.C.P.T stands for Hosanna House Children's Pilgrimage Trust and

is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year having been founded by Michael Strode. The theme for the 2026 Pilgrimage is "Together in Love".

Group 376 is a Jet Set group based in North Ayrshire. We take adults with additional needs to Lourdes as part of HCPT's Easter pilgrimage. The group was founded in 2014 however, the founding members have previously travelled with Group 76 and 207 (serving Ayrshire, Arran and Greenock) from the 1970s onwards.

The group is travelling to Lourdes by coach on Good Friday for the annual Easter pilgrimage. This year we are taking six people who require additional support and they are accompanied by our chaplain Father Patrick Keegans, our group leader and her depute, our nurse and volunteer helpers. The group meets socially on several occasions from August to March to get to know each other and their helpers, and to bond as a group before the trip.

When in Lourdes we take part in H.C.P.T's full programme of celebrations. The highlight being the Trust Mass which is attended by groups from all over the world. Each year we have a walking tour where we follow in Bernadette's footsteps visiting The Boly Mill, The Moulin Lacade (Paternal home of Bernadette's parents), The Cachot and the cemetery where her family are buried. Mass is celebrated in Hosanna House at Bartres surrounded by the Pyrenees mountains this is a truly wonderful experience. We take part in the torchlight procession, the baths or water blessing and visits to the grotto. Afternoons are spent having picnics in the prairie and café visits.

News

from across the Diocese



HCPT 376 Group Photo 2025

The group fundraises continuously throughout the year with car boot sales, coffee mornings, bingo, race night, Christmas Concert and New Years day dip.

We would like to thank Father Duncan McVicar of St Peter-in-Chains, Ardrossan for his ongoing support to the group, and to everyone who contributes in any way financially or by attending our fundraising events. We wouldn't be able to do this without your support.

Congratulations to Peter Sharp



Peter Sharp pictured with Canon Martin Poland, Bishop Frank and his family.

Congratulations to Peter Sharp who was instituted to the Ministry of Lector by Bishop Frank on the 25th January as part of his continuing formation for the Diaconate. We offer our congratulations to Peter and ask that you continue to remember him in your prayers as he continues his formation. Peter, who lives in Irvine, is currently assigned to a Pastoral Placement in St Mary's, Saltcoats and St John's, Stevenston.

THE DIOCESE of GALLOWAY

IS GOD CALLING YOU TO THE PRIESTHOOD?

Do you sense a vocation to be a Priest and wish support to discern this call?

Contact Fr Stephen McGrattan
vocations@rcdg.org.uk 01563 521832

RC Diocese of Galloway - SC010576 www.rcdg.org.uk RC Diocese of Galloway - @rcdgalloway

St Margaret's Deanery Happy Birthday Canon Patrick Keegans

By Louise Girvan

Canon Patrick Keegans marked a remarkable milestone this February as parishioners across St Margaret's Deanery came together to celebrate his 80th birthday, a joyful, laughter-filled marathon of gatherings that reflected the deep affection in which Canon Keegans is held. Canon Keegans' birthday was on Friday 13th February but he celebrated throughout the weekend with several parishes across the deanery that he serves.

Although now a retired priest, Canon Keegans remains exceptionally active in his ministry and is a greatly loved member of the clergy in St Margaret's deanery. His continued presence across the deanery is a source of strength and comfort to many, and his willingness to support each parish is deeply appreciated. The celebrations of his 80th birthday became, in many ways, a testament to the enduring impact of his vocation and a sign of how well loved he is.

The festivities began on the Friday evening at St Quivox in Prestwick, where friends and parishioners hosted a lively party filled with music, games, and personal



Canon Keegans at St Margaret's Cathedral

touches that spoke to Canon Keegans' many passions. One of the highlights was the much-enjoyed 'Famous Pat's Corners', and a quiz entitled 'How Well Do You Know Pat?' a playful nod to his name and well-known sense of fun. The hall was filled with food and decorations reflecting his love of Spain and, of course, a certain football team close to Canon Keegans' heart.

On Saturday, the celebrations continued at St Margaret's in Ayr, where parishioners gathered to honour a priest who has been a steady, compassionate presence in their lives as their parish priest before his retirement and a continuing member of the parish community. On Sunday, Our Lady of the Assumption and St Meddan's in Troon welcomed him with equal warmth after Sunday morning Mass, ensuring the weekend was filled with gratitude, stories, and shared memories.

The following weekend, St Ann's in Mossblown rounded off the birthday celebrations with the same spirit of affection and togetherness. Across each parish, the message was clear: Canon Keegans is a truly cherished member of the clergy within St Margaret's deanery. Canon Keegans described his birthday as 'the best birthday ever', very well deserved.



Canon Keegans with close friends at St Quivox, Prestwick



Canon Keegans celebrating in Troon



Celebrations continuing in Prestwick

ORGAN RECITALS 2026

THE RESTORED 1903 HARRISON & HARRISON PIPE ORGAN

SATURDAY 7 MARCH - 2.30 p.m.

JOHN KITCHEN

Edinburgh City Organist

with STRING QUARTET in a concert of organ concertos in association with
GLASGOW SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS and EDINBURGH SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS

TUESDAY 24 MARCH - 12 NOON

RAYMOND McCLUSKEY

St Joseph's Church, Kilmarnock

TUESDAY 19 MAY - 12 NOON

HANS UWE HIELSCHER

Wiesbaden Marktkirche Lutheran Cathedral, Germany

TUESDAY 23 JUNE - 12 NOON

AARON HAWTHORNE

Freelance Organist

TUESDAY 7 JULY - 12 NOON

ALESSANDRO BIANCHI

St Edward's Anglican Church, Lugano, Switzerland

TUESDAY 28 JULY - 12 NOON

JAMES GOUGH

Southwark Cathedral

FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER - 7 p.m.

STEVEN McINTYRE

Dunblane Cathedral

TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER - 12 NOON

BENJAMIN SAUNDERS

Leeds Cathedral

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER - 12 NOON

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St Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock

It has been a very busy time at St. Joseph's Academy since our last update in the Advent edition. As we move through Lent towards Easter, our S6 Caritas pupils are continuing their volunteering across the school, as well as in St. Matthew's Foodbank and Crosshouse Hospital. Some of our S6 also organised a Charity Quiz to raise money for Fr Martin's Ecuador Trust. In our quest to be one of the first schools in Scotland to achieve the Mary's Meals Schools Award, we are on track for our aim of bronze accreditation as a starting point. Thus far, we have raised an amazing £866.51, which equates to feeding 45 children for the year! During Lent, we are aiming to increase this number through our Easter Hamper raffle.



S1-S3 Rosary Group

Our S1-S3 rosary lunchtime group, led by Mrs Devine, has enjoyed tremendous success, with around 20-30 pupils attending each week for prayer and fellowship! We were pleased to welcome our chaplains to mark Ash Wednesday as a school community. Finally, we said goodbye to a steadfast promoter of the faith and ethos of the school and local church as Mrs Shearer retired from her post as Deputy Head Teacher, following 21 amazing years in St. Joseph's Academy as Principal Teacher of Pastoral Care, Acting Head Teacher, and Deputy Head Teacher. At her request, we said goodbye in the most fitting way possible - with a whole school Mass giving thanks to God for Mrs Shearer and her extraordinary vocation. She will be greatly missed!

St Matthew's Academy, Saltcoats

St Matthew's Academy in Saltcoats is always a vibrant hub of activity and this year is no different. As pupils continue their march towards exams and eventually the summer holidays, vast numbers dedicate time every day to living the school values of Community, Love, Equality, Achievement and Respect. This might be most evident through the Caritas programme. Inaugurated in 2012, commemorating the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Scotland, it aims to recognise the volunteering mission of young people, and offer them space to reflect on their relationship with God. Just shy of 100 students at St Matthew's have committed to the programme, leading to around 4000 hours of volunteering service being conducted. Ranging from litter picks in the local area to reading at Mass, from organising quiz nights in the parish to raising money for SCIAF and other charities, or from leading Ash Wednesday services to decluttering churches, the work has been varied and substantial. Pupils met with local priests and diocesan representatives, and shared their visions of what it meant to live Caritas – God's love. Within school, this has meant supporting the daily life of the school and participating in and leading one-off

events. Recently pupils read and dispensed ashes at the beginning of Lent, inviting all members of the school community to face the season with a sense of repentance and hope. Pupils have also launched the WEE BOX appeal, raising money for SCIAF who are this year particularly supporting projects in Ethiopia. This comes on the back of raising over £1000 through SCIAF Real Gifts. Furthermore, donations have been collected to support Down's Syndrome Awareness UK, Action Aid, Alzheimer's Scotland, and Megan's Space. The school's commitment to equality and showing love to others is exemplified in the reach of the fundraising and generosity of the school community. As we move through Lent, community and respect will be extolled through the Chess tournament and the Lent Football tournament, bringing people together whilst also supporting charitable enterprises. The final term will call on pupils to reflect on their year and their relationship with God, considering how they can take the school values and their own experiences of helping into their future lives.

Queen Margaret Academy, Ayr

Bishop Frank opens Lenten Season with S1 Pupils

First year pupils welcomed Bishop Frank on 27th February as pupils gathered for the school's first Lenten Prayer Service of 2026. His visit marked the beginning of the community's annual SCIAF Fast and set the tone for a season of reflection, sacrifice, and hope. Bishop Frank addressed pupils with a message centred on choosing hope in a world that often feels uncertain. Drawing on the Gospel theme "Let Your Light Shine" he reminded students that Lent is not only a journey toward the cross but also a journey toward renewal. The assembly featured Scripture, prayer, and a reflection on the story of the Sheep and the Goats, emphasising Christ's call to care for the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and the poor. Pupils were invited to recognise Christ "in the faces of those who need us," followed by a moment of silent reflection. Bishop Frank encouraged pupils to take part in the SCIAF Fast through traditional fasting, a sponsored silence, or a technology fast, small sacrifices that help bring clean water and hope to communities around the world.

S2 Pupils Seek "True Happiness" with NET



Second year pupils took part in their annual retreat on the 2nd and 3rd of February at St Paul's Church, led by NET Ministries Scotland - a group of young Catholic missionaries who travel across the country

offering retreats that help young people explore faith, identity and purpose. NET has supported the school's spiritual life for more than ten years and remains a much-loved contributor to our community. This year's theme, "Finding True Happiness: Satisfying Our Restless Hearts," drew on the work of Fr Robert Spitzer and invited pupils to look beyond the noise and distractions of modern life. The team spoke about the restlessness many young people feel today, echoing Viktor Frankl's insight that much unhappiness comes from a loss of

meaning rather than a lack of comfort. Through testimonies, activities, and guided reflection, pupils explored the deeper desires of the human heart: the longing to be known, loved, and rooted in something lasting. Aristotle's teaching that happiness is the one thing we choose for its own sake helped frame the day's discussions. The highlight of the retreat was a prayer session accompanied by live-music inside St Paul's Church, where pupils were invited to pray, reflect and encounter God in a calm, reverent atmosphere. Staff described it as a powerful moment of stillness and openness among the year group. The retreat offered more than a pause from routine; it gave young people space to reflect on what truly brings joy and purpose, and to seek the kind of happiness that endures.

St Josephs' College, Dumfries

How Love in Action Leads to Hope

Lent reflects the time when Jesus went into the desert to fast and pray before beginning His mission. During this time, He was tempted by Satan but resisted, showing strength, faith, and obedience to God. Lent allows Christians to remember this sacrifice by practicing self-discipline, through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, when many Christians attend church and receive ashes on their forehead as a sign of repentance and reflection.

Caritas, meaning "love in action," encourages Christians to turn faith into practical kindness. Inspired by the teachings of Jesus in the Bible, we are called to "love your neighbour as yourself."

This means showing compassion not only to friends, but also to strangers and even those we may struggle to like. True caritas is not about showing off good deeds, but about quiet, genuine love. When we love others, we reflect God's love because every person is created by Him. Love is not just a feeling; it requires action. Acts such as donating to charity, helping family members, or supporting organisations like Caritas International can make a real difference. Small sacrifices such as giving up sweets, spending less money, or giving time to someone in need may seem insignificant, but they can change someone's life. During Lent, choosing to put others first helps develop empathy and generosity. Even the smallest action can spread kindness. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of hope and new life. After suffering comes renewal. When Christians practice caritas during Lent, they prepare their hearts for this message of hope. Helping others during dark times brings light into the world, reflecting the meaning of resurrection. Love transforms both the giver and the receiver. In this way, love in action leads to hope, just as Easter represents hope after sacrifice and suffering.

In conclusion, Caritas means showing love through action. Acts of caritas during Lent help Christians grow in compassion and develop selflessness. By choosing to put love into action, believers prepare their hearts for the new life and hope celebrated at Easter. Even the smallest acts of kindness can reflect the powerful message of resurrection and remind us that love has the ability to bring hope into the world.

From our Primaries

St Winning's Primary School, Kilwinning

St Winning's Primary School in Kilwinning have been busy preparing for Lent. Primary 1/2 have been learning about The Lost Sheep and the important values within the story, such as kindness, forgiveness, and caring for others.

The children have enjoyed sharing their thoughts and relating these values to their own friendships. Father Jim spoke to them about friendship and why it is so important to show qualities such as love, kindness, and respect towards one another.

Meanwhile Primary 3 have been preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They have been learning about making good choices; saying sorry, and understanding God's love and forgiveness. The children have explored how to examine their conscience and have been reflecting on how their actions affect others.

The class have been reading and discussing parables from the Bible, thinking carefully about the messages Jesus was teaching and how we can live these out in our daily lives.

Primary 4/5 have been preparing for Lent by studying the feast of The Passover by reflecting on the book of Exodus as part of Primary 4's Sacramental preparation. Pupils have also been writing their own thank-you prayers to thank God for the beautiful world and nature he created for us. They shared their prayers together outdoors in their school's Faith Garden. During Lent the class have chosen to focus on friendship, and how they can be better friends to one another, as their Lenten Promise to God.

The pupils shared this at Ash Wednesday Mass in St Winin's Church. They also made some beautiful charcoal Ash Wednesday pictures to display in their classroom.

St John's Primary School, Ayr

St John's Primary School has entered the season of Lent with great energy and reflection. Our Faith in Action Pupil Voice group have lovingly refreshed our school's Reflection Room, creating a calm and prayerful space for all classes to use throughout Lent. In addition, our Faith in Action PVG also received two beautiful icons from Aid to the Church in Need, gifted in thanks for our cluster choir's carol service, and have enjoyed learning more about the charity's mission.



Across the school, pupils have been deepening their understanding of Lent through scripture, prayer, and Lenten promises. P6 have been exploring how to read and reflect on the Bible, while P2 created their promises using Makaton. Several staff members are also taking

part in the Know and Grow faith-based Makaton course, supporting our commitment to inclusion within the diocese. Meanwhile, our Primary 4 pupils have begun their sacramental journey, taking part in their Rite of Enrolment at St Margaret's Cathedral - an important and joyful step in preparing for the sacraments, and one of which we are very proud.

Our primary school was honoured to be invited by South Ayrshire Council to take part in their Equalities Conference, where our Equalities and Faith Pupil Voice groups led a vibrant 'mini Culture Day'. The pupils shared the rich variety of cultures and faith traditions that make up our school community, celebrating the uniqueness of each child while highlighting the values we hold in common. Rooted in our Catholic ethos of dignity, respect, and love for our neighbour, the event was a joyful reminder that diversity is not something to be managed but a gift to be cherished. Through food, stories, art, and shared learning, our young people showed how living out the Gospel call to welcome and understand one another strengthens both our school and the wider community.

St Patrick's Primary School, Troon

Living out our school vision: "Inspired to shine in all I say, all I do and all I am."

Foodbank Visit

Primary 5-7 pupils welcomed volunteers from South Ayrshire Foodbank to speak about the important work of supporting families in need within the local community. During the visit, pupils learned about what goes into a typical food parcel and how these essential items help people facing difficult times. The volunteers explained how parcels are carefully prepared with dignity and respect, ensuring families receive nutritious and necessary supplies. The visit gave pupils a chance to reflect on Catholic Social Teaching, especially the call to care for those in need and to live out Gospel values through kindness and service. Pupils engaged in thoughtful discussions about compassion, generosity, and the impact even small acts of support can have. One pupil shared, "It showed me that helping others doesn't have to be big. Even small things can make a huge difference to someone's life."

Missio School Award

We are proud to have achieved our final star to receive the Missio School Award! Our dedicated Missio Champions have been active in fundraising efforts, creating and selling handmade rosary beads to support mission work around the world. These activities have helped our pupils to deepen their understanding of global solidarity and the importance of supporting others through prayer and practical action. Being a Missio School has encouraged our pupils to grow in faith and social responsibility, learning how they can contribute to making a difference both locally and globally through love and service.

Laudato Si' - Cuddle and Relove Project

During Lent, our Faith in Action Pupil Voice Group took the lead in the 'Cuddle and Relove' Project, inspired by Laudato Si'. This initiative encouraged pupils to love, reuse, and recycle soft toys, helping them to understand the importance of sustainability and caring for the environment. Through the project, pupils actively engaged in giving new life to preloved items, reducing waste and promoting a culture of respect for God's creation. Their

efforts have highlighted how simple, everyday choices can make a positive difference in protecting our planet and living out our faith in action.



Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit

As part of the Year of Prayer to the Holy Spirit, pupils across P1-P7 have been learning about the symbols of the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Through this learning, pupils created beautiful spiral crafts to represent the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This creative activity allowed pupils to express their understanding through art while reflecting on how the Holy Spirit guides, strengthens, and inspires us each day. The whole-school focus has supported pupils to grow in faith, deepen their understanding, and live out Gospel values with confidence and joy.



THE DIOCESE
of **GALLOWAY**



Join Bishop Frank and the wider Diocesan Community in praying for the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we journey towards the Extraordinary Jubilee in 2033.

April
23rd - St Joseph's, Kilmarnock

May
23rd - St Margaret's Cathedral

June - August
To be announced

September
16th - Queen Margaret Academy, Ayr
TBA - St Joseph's College, Dumfries

October
8th - St Matthew's Academy, Saltcoats
TBA - St Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock

November
To be announced

December
TBA - St Margaret's Cathedral

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love."

RC Diocese of Galloway - SC010576 www.rcdg.org.uk    RC Diocese of Galloway - @rcdgalloway

The next Mass to the Holy Spirit will be celebrated in St Joseph's Church, Kilmarnock on Thursday 23rd April at 6.00 pm.

Closing the Jubilee Year of Hope

In Dioceses around the world, the 2025 Jubilee of Hope came to an end on Sunday 28th December ahead of the formal end of the year in Rome on January 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany.

Bishop Frank celebrated 9.30 am Mass in St Margaret's Cathedral to mark the end of the year. In his homily for the Mass, he reminded us of the importance of looking forward and reminding ourselves why we can do so with hope, a hope rooted in Christ. Bishop Frank also highlighted the many signs of hope which surround us in our Diocese and in the Universal Church.





RC Diocese of Galloway

Youth Office

Gather · Pray · Discuss · Socialise



@rcdgyouth

youth.rcdg.org.uk



Advent Youth Retreat by Finlay Stoppard

Galloway Youth Office ran their first residential retreat in Ayrshire. Have a read at what they got up to.

On Friday straight from school I headed to the bus to Gowanbank, Darvel. A small town in the Irvine Valley for the Diocese of Galloway's first retreat! The bus was dark, so it made it boring although to make the trip better I was talking to Joel. We arrived at 6pm when I met my roommates, their names were Joel, Leo, Oliver, Gabo. Dinner was a nice beef burgers, homemade chips, and lovely beans then for pudding it was chocolate brownies and ice cream. That night our room stayed up past midnight carrying on and getting to know each other! I was ready to sleep but they were so loud.

Up early on Saturday for delicious breakfast of super pancakes with gooey Canadian syrup. Giving me lots of energy for the blind trial, it was hard because you could not see and having to listen to other people's instructions. Tree climbing was next on our adventure, I found this tough as I have never climbed a tree, although it reminded me of Bouldover so it got easier! Yummy, scrummy bacon rolls for lunch! After lunch I did house activity and was in the games room I played table football and pool this was a fun relaxed time.

We headed back outside before it got dark to try archery, I hit the target 4 times so watch out! I would like to become more fluent in this sport. Bishop Frank joined us for Mass.



When not on outdoor activities, the young people enjoyed the facilities and space on offer at Gowanbank, including a Silent Disco in the evenings, pool table, and arts and crafts.

As super sub, I stepped up to altar serve. Bishop Frank was keen to tell us that we are all amazing and to be hopeful for the season of advent. Fr Kevin brought the chalice from his ordination to use for Mass at the retreat. This holds lots of special memories for him and now also for the youth. How cruel, pasta for dinner, not my favourite but the macaroni cheese was nicer than I expected, it did not ruin my day. Homemade sticky toffee pudding with ice cream and sticky, creamy, delicious sauce for pudding. Finishing the day, we had a short reflectional service where I was able to make the choice to attend confession on my own which I found to be very emotional as I reflected on my family. It is important to tell the truth at confession and listen to the priest. To raise our spirits, we headed to the fire pit for more glucose in the form of s'mores! The flames were red hot almost, the colour of a ruby so we had to be careful.



Throughout the weekend, young people took part in a number of times of prayer. These included talks, Mass, Adoration, and Confession - all with a view to helping the young people prepare for Advent and Christmas spiritually and exploring the true meaning of the season.

The young people took part in a range of outdoor activities including: Nightline, Tree Climbing, and Archery. On Sunday, our Youth Leaders led them in a variety of different games and activities as well.

Happily, on Sunday I got up at 8am and got into my clothes and went down for breakfast which was croissant. I went to activity where we played ninja, musical chairs and steal the Wi-Fi. We celebrated Mass together. For lunch it was pizza and chips then shortbread and chocolate cake for Cleo's birthday. Everyone was almost ready for home we just had to tidy our rooms. With all our gear and great memories, we got back on the bus to Dumfries. My Auntie Nealey greeted me with a great hug and a kiss.



I would really recommend that young people try the youth events as they are great fun, and you get to make friends with people from across the Diocese.



On Saturday, Bishop Frank joined the young people to celebrate Mass and to share with them some of his own reflections on Advent and Christmas.

The campfire was an opportunity for the young people to pray and reflect, before enjoying toasting marshmallows and making s'mores. Prior to the campfire, they wrote prayers to God which they placed in the fire, symbolising both the offering of their prayers, and the letting go of those things they were asking God to help them with.

Be part of the story in 2026!

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN –
REGISTER BEFORE EASTER SUNDAY TO
QUALIFY FOR THE EARLY-BIRD DISCOUNT.**

You've seen the pictures, you've heard Finlay's account of the retreat - and **now it's your chance to be part of the retreat in 2026**. From the 27th - 29th November we'll be returning the Gowanbank for our 2026 Retreat which promises to be an even bigger and better weekend!

From Friday after school to Sunday evening young people will hear from a number of inspiring speakers, take part in times of prayer, reflection, and discussion; and enjoy a variety of different activities including: Tree Climbing, Archery, Archery Tag, and Nightline; as well as arts and crafts, table football, pool and much more! It's a fantastic opportunity to take a weekend out at the beginning of Advent with friends and to make new friends too: to reflect, to learn, and most of all, to have fun!

Register before Sunday 5th April (Easter Sunday) to qualify for our early-bird discounted rate of £140.00, and only pay a £50.00 deposit with nothing further to pay until June. For further details, including the answers to many frequently asked questions and even more photos from last year, scan the QR code or go to our website: youth.rcdg.org.uk.



**2026 ADVENT
YOUTH RETREAT**
RCDG Youth - Diocese of Galloway Youth Office

Weekend includes:
Outdoor Activities
(Tree climbing, Archery Tag, Archery and more!)
Talks, Prayer, and Mass
All Meals & Accommodation

27TH - 29TH NOVEMBER

GOWANBANK	£160 PP
Open to Youth in P7-S4 in 2026/2027 (currently P6-S3).	

EARLY-BIRD REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!
Register before Easter and only pay £140, with a £50 deposit!

LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE
SCAN THE QR CODE OR GO TO YOUTH.RCDG.ORG.UK
TO SECURE YOUR PLACE TODAY!

@ youth@rcdg.org.uk f X Diocese of Galloway Youth - @rcdgyouth

Celebrating Christmas!

On Saturday, youth from across the Diocese gathered for their Christmas Party in St Joseph's Church, Kilmarnock, where they had a fantastic day and a beautiful Mass accompanied by the St Joseph's Academy Junior Choir. The following day Young Adults gathered for their Christmas dinner and enjoyed a wonderful three course meal and an opportunity to catch up after the Christmas season.

Youth (P6-S4) and Young Adults (S5-30) from across the Diocese had two fantastic celebrations of Christmas around the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (Sunday 11th January).



Young Adults' Evenings

We've got two fantastic talks coming up over the next few months. Join us in March when we'll be joined by Bishop Frank for 'An Evening with Bishop Frank' as he addresses a range of different topics and takes questions from the group.

If you don't live in the Kilmarnock area you can still take part online as part of the growing online community through Microsoft Teams where you'll be able to hear the talk, ask questions and take part in the discussion. Go to youth.rcdg.org.uk to register for online participation.

Young Adults (S5-30) Programme



29th March (Mass - 5.45 pm)
An Evening with Bishop Frank
 Bishop Frank Dougan

3rd May
The History of the Church
 (Part 2)
 Fr Philip Kitchen



St Joseph's, Kilmarnock (KA3 1HB)
 or join via Teams - register online: youth.rcdg.org.uk
6.00 - 8.00 pm

Youth Events

NOW OPEN TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN P5 AND UP UNTIL THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS

EASTER YOUTH DAY

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION - HIS LOVING SACRIFICE FOR US.



MASS . GAMES . TALK . ACTIVITIES . PIZZA . BBQ . SOCIAL



SCAN TO REGISTER

SATURDAY 18TH APRIL
 ST TERESA'S, DUMFRIES
FREE - LUNCH INCLUDED

Free event for Youth in P5-S4. Free transport available from: Saltcoats, Ayr, Kilmarnock, and Cumnock. Scan the QR code to register and book your seat.

Easter Youth Day

We can't wait for our next Diocesan Youth gathering – our Easter Youth Day on **Saturday 18th April!** We'll be joined by young people from across the Diocese – last year we welcomed over 60 and we're expecting even more this year! – as we gather to celebrate Easter. We'll also be thinking about the Holy Spirit as part of our Diocesan Year of Prayer: who is the Holy Spirit? How can he help us?

Join us in St Teresa's, Dumfries as we gather for a day of games, activities, Mass and talks! Our S3 Junior Leaders have a fantastic lineup planned of old and new games, as well as our two talks looking at the Holy Spirit. Lunch - a BBQ and Pizza - is also included free of charge. So come along with your friends, and make new friends at the same time too!

Free transport is provided from: Saltcoats, Ayr, Kilmarnock, and Cumnock to help you to take part, with the day itself running from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Interested? Scan the QR code or go to our website to register to take part, and remember, if it's your first event you also need to complete an Annual Consent Form.

YOUTH EVENINGS

for Young People in P5-S4

COME AND JOIN US!

MASS . GAMES . TALK . ACTIVITIES . SOCIAL

<p>22ND MARCH NEW DATE ST JOSEPH</p>	<p>17TH MAY EUCHARIST</p>	<p>21ST JUNE THE CHURCH</p>
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5.00 PM - MASS

FOLLOWED BY GAMES, ACTIVITIES, PIZZA, AND A TALK IN THE HALL UNTIL 7.00 PM.

ST TERESA'S, DUMFRIES	ST PETER-IN-CHAINS, ARDROSSAN	ST MARGARET'S, AYR	ST JOSEPH'S, KILMARNOCK
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Youth Evenings

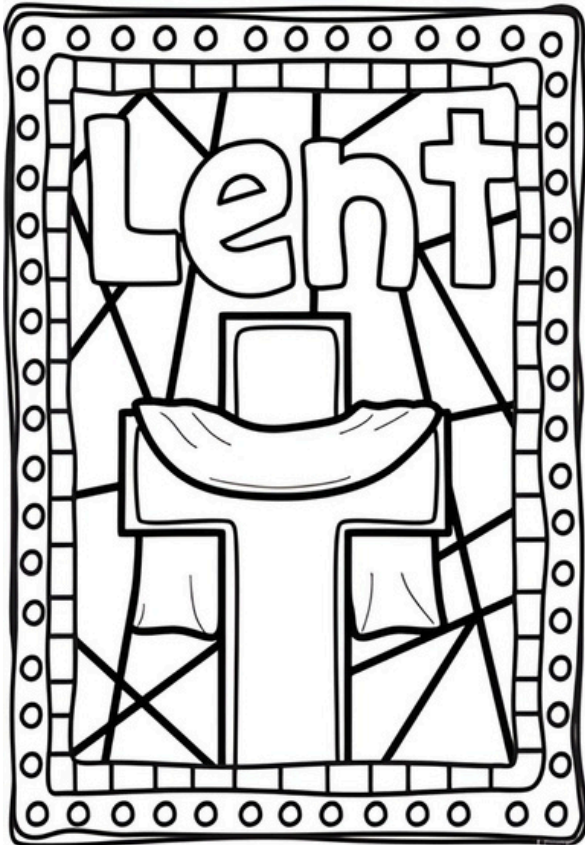
Our monthly Youth Evenings continue until the summer holidays in all four clusters. Join us from 5.00 - 7.00 pm for Mass, followed by games and activities, a short talk on the theme of the evening, pizza and snacks, and lots of time to spend with friends...and making new friends too!

Whether you're a regular or it's your first time, join us in Dumfries, Ardrossan, Ayr, or Kilmarnock for a fantastic evening led by our S3 Junior Leaders.

The evenings are completely free of charge and there's no need to register to take part, just complete an annual consent form on our website (youth.rcdg.org.uk) and come along when you can!



Galloway Diocese Children's Liturgy



Lent is a special time when we get ready for Easter. It lasts for 40 days, just like Jesus spent 40 days in the desert. During Lent, we think about how Jesus loves us and try to be kind, helpful, and close to God. It's a time to pray, give to others, and sometimes say "no" to things so we can grow our hearts.



Fill in the missing words from the word bank below:

desert | prayed | forty | kind

1. Jesus went into the _____ to spend time with God.
2. He _____ for forty days and nights.
3. Lent lasts for _____ days.
4. We follow Jesus by choosing to be _____ to others.

Dear God,
Thank you for loving me.
Help me to be kind and patient,
to pray every day,
and to share what I have with others.
Help me to grow closer to You this
Lent,
just like Jesus did in the desert.
Amen.



LET JUSTICE FLOW. SHARE WATER. SHARE HOPE.



"I was thirsty and you gave me drink."

- Matthew 25:35



Water for a village,
Ethiopia

This Lent, use your WEE BOX to make a BIG CHANGE!

sciaf.org.uk/weebox | 0141 354 5555

For more information, contact getinvolved@sciaf.org.uk



Big change



Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
SCIAF is the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland and a proud member of the Caritas family. 196 Clyde Street, Glasgow, G1 4JY. Tel: 0141 354 5555. Scottish Charity No: SC012302. Company No: SC197327. Photo by James Cave (SCIAF).