



SAINT BRIDE'S PARISH, EAST KILBRIDE

Bulletin for the Twelfth Sunday
of the Ordinary Season - 23rd June 2024

THE BIRTH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Ordinarily, the Church's Calendar keeps the feast day of a Saint on their *Dies Natalis* (birthday), that is to say, their heavenly birthday - the day on which they left this world and were born into eternal life in heaven. However, there are two exceptions, when the earthly birthday is celebrated by the Calendar: the birthday of Our Lady, on the 8th of September and the birth of Saint John the Baptist on the 24th of June, six months before the feast of Our Lord's birth at Christmas.

Why is the feast of Saint John's birth kept on the 24th of June rather than the 25th June? The reason lies in the Roman way of counting. The Romans counted backwards from the *calends* (first day) of the succeeding month. So, Christmas was the eighth day before the *calends* or first day of January (*Octavo calendas Januarii*). Consequently, Saint John's birth was put on the eighth day before the *calends* of July. However, since June has only thirty days, in our way of counting, the feast falls on the 24th of June.



Saint Luke's Gospel gives us some background information about the parents of the Baptist: Elizabeth, his mother, was Our Lady's cousin, a woman who was older than Mary and unable to conceive; and his father, Zechariah, a priest who ministered in the Temple in Jerusalem. Twice daily the carcasses of lambs or sheep were burned on the altar behind the "veil of the Temple" - a large, heavy curtain that hid the altar from the eyes of people. Incense was heaped on top of the carcasses to sweeten the smell of the burning flesh and to make the offering fragrant in God's eyes. Luke's Gospel tells us that Zechariah was carrying out this sacrifice when the angel of the Lord appeared to him and told him that Elizabeth would conceive a child and that the child should be called "John". Zechariah refused to believe the angel, so he was "struck dumb" losing the power of speech.

The child was conceived, and three months later Mary visited Elizabeth (the Visitation, the Second Joyful Mystery). We are told that John "leaped" in Elizabeth's womb when Mary arrived - seen down through the ages as the cleansing on Saint John from the stain of original sin. On the day John was born, Zechariah's power of speech returned, and he was able to declare that the child "was to be called John."

The New Testament tells us nothing of John's early years, but when he was in his thirty-second year, he withdrew into the desert beyond the Jordan to fast and pray. We are told that he kept himself alive by eating "locusts and wild honey" and wore a rough "garment of camel's hair." When he came back to baptise in the villages of Judaea, so powerful was his preaching, that many thought he was the Messiah. John quickly set them straight, saying he had come only "to prepare the way", and that "he must increase, while I must decrease" and that he was not worthy to "undo the Master's sandals."

Last Thursday was the Summer Solstice, when the sun is highest in the sky. But the days are beginning to shorten. Conversely, after the Winter Solstice, just before Christmas, the

days begin to lengthen. Saint Augustine saw in these natural phenomena the life of Saint John and Our Lord reflected: John said that Christ "must increase" when the days are growing longer around his birth and "I must decrease" when the days are beginning to grow shorter. Father McGachey

NEXT SUNDAY

The Bishops of Scotland have transferred the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul from Saturday 29th June, to the following day, Sunday the 30th June. Readers, please note that next weekend's readings will be from the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul and not from the Thirteenth Sunday of the Ordinary Season.

PETER'S PENCE - RETIRING COLLECTION - NEXT SUNDAY

Next Sunday there will be a retiring collection for 'Peter's Pence' to support the Universal Church and the work of the Holy See, including helping Pope Francis to carry out his charitable works. These works benefit our brothers and sisters on the margins of society, including victims of war, oppression, and disasters. Please be generous. For more information, visit www.obolodisanpietro.va/en.html.

SPUC SPONSORED WALK

Thank you for being so generous SPUC Sponsored Walk - £987 was raised.

200 CLUB

This week's winner is Joan McHugh. Please collect your cheque from the sacristy.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS

SICK - Clare (Slorach) Keane, Drew and Monica McShane, Amanda Sherwood, Mary Easton, Pat McElroy, Jean O'Neil, Mary Connor (Canada), Margaret Rose McMahan, Jean Lafferty, Frank Kirk, Mary O'Brien, Margaret Murphy, Father Pierre Potie (France), Father Bill Tollan, Brian Ewing, Alan MacDonald, Jan Milligan, Catherine McLean, Nessie McFadyen, Noreen Lockhart, Grace McHugh, Leo McCrear.

RECENTLY DEAD - David Duncan, Mary Wilson, Molly Livingston, Edward Devli, William McCurry.

ANNIVERSARIES, MONTH'S MINDS AND BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCES - Hugh and Teresa Docherty, Shuggy Docherty, Margaret McKeown, Cathie Hughes, Eddie O'Neil, Tom Lochrin, Christina Sarah Maguire, Anne and James Corrigan, George MacLellan, Moira and Pat McLaren, Lorenzo and Antonio Di Vito.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS - SINCERE THANKS

Sunday 16th June - £2550. This included the Basket Collection and Standing Orders in favour of the Parish. You may wish to make a one-off donation to the Parish or take out a Standing Order in favour of the Parish. Offerings can be made by Bank Transfer, the details of which are as follows: St Brides Parish 10246966 and 80-12-97.