



SAINT BRIDE'S PARISH, EAST KILBRIDE

Bulletin for the Sixth Sunday of Easter 10th May 2026

CARDINAL SIMIONI - THE 'LIVING MARTYR'

I have been reading this past week a short biography of a truly remarkable man, Cardinal Ernest Simoni, aged 97, who has been called by many a 'living martyr' for the Faith.

Born on 18th October 1928, in Troshani, Albania, at the age of ten he entered the Franciscan College in Troshani to begin his studies for the Priesthood. However, his path to Ordination was disrupted in 1948, when the Communist regime of the dictator Enver Hoxha (+1985) began its persecution of religious institutions in the country.



Hoxha ruled Albania with an iron grip for over forty years. He transformed Albania into one of the world's most isolated countries, through his rigid adherence to Stalinism. In 1967, he declared Albania the world's first Atheist state, destroying churches and arresting the clergy. Thousands of Albanians were executed, and tens of thousands were sent to forced labour camps.

The Franciscan convent where Simoni studied was looted and turned into a place of torture for prisoners. Some of the friars were shot, and the novices expelled. Simoni was twenty years old and was sent by the regime to teach in a remote village in the mountains. After two years of hard military service, he concluded his clandestine studies and was ordained on 7th April 1956. He had to carry out his ministry in secret.

On Christmas Eve 1963, after celebrating Mass, Simoni was arrested and imprisoned. He was initially sentenced to death, but the sentence was later commuted to twenty-five years of hard labour. He endured torture and horrendous conditions in the copper mines. Despite these terrible hardships, he remained steadfast in his faith, secretly celebrating Mass - the prison guards thought he was mad as he whispered the words of the prayers from memory - and hearing confessions of fellow prisoners,

After his release in 1981, he was still considered an "enemy of the people" and was forced to work in the sewers of Tirana, the Albanian capital. But he continued to exercise his priestly ministry until the fall of the Communist regime in 1990.

Simoni's extraordinary witness to the faith caught the attention of Pope Francis during his visit to Albania in 2014, when he was moved to tears as he heard his story. In November 2016, he elevated him to the rank of Cardinal; the appointment was also symbolic, honouring the suffering of Albanian Catholics under Communism.

Throughout his life, Cardinal Simoni has been a witness to forgiveness: he never used words of hate or resentment towards his jailers, believing that "only love conquers."

Just before Easter, he met Pope Leo XIV at the Vatican in a private audience and the Cardinal presented the Pontiff with a pectoral cross containing a relic of the Albanian martyrs. On Easter Sunday, he accompanied Leo XIV during the *Urbi et Orbi* ("to the city and the world") message and blessing from the central loggia of Saint Peter's Basilica.

Father McGachey

THURSDAY IS ASCENSION DAY - A HOLYDAY OF OBLIGATION



This Thursday, 14th May, is the fortieth day after Easter and the Feast of Our Lord's Ascension into heaven. It is a holyday of obligation - that is to say, a day when we are duty bound to attend Holy Mass to celebrate the feast.

Masses for the Ascension will be at the following times: on Wednesday (Vigil Mass) at 7pm and Thursday at 10am. There will be Mass in Saint Kenneth's Primary School at 2pm. Father Martin will celebrate Masses for Saint Andrew's and Saint Bride's High School throughout the school day.

In common with the Church throughout the world, on Friday we begin our Novena to the Holy Spirit.

SUNDAY 24th MAY IS PENTECOST SUNDAY

Sunday 24th May is fiftieth day after Easter Sunday and the Solemnity of Pentecost, the Feast of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

We will offer a special anointing with the Oil of Gladness to anyone who would like to receive it. This anointing, is mentioned in the Prophet Isaiah, when he says, "To grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning." In the Old Testament this anointing was considered as a powerful means of transmitting the gift of God's Spirit.



Everyone is eligible to be anointed with the Oil of Gladness for spiritual, mental, emotional and physical healing. All of us can benefit from this spiritual healing.

MAY IS MARY'S MONTH



What a wonderful attendance at the Devotions in honour of Our Lady Untier of Knots on Monday night - I would reckon around 170 people! The second week of the Novena is on Monday evening at 7pm. Many of you remarked on the beauty of the new image of Our Lady Untier of Knots, as well as the new Marian Cope and Golden Crown for Our Lady. They are beautiful ornaments and paraments in her honour. Our Lady continues to wear the crown, I have placed the image of Our Lady Untier of Knots at her altar so that everyone may see it.

Each morning in May we will recite the Holy Rosary and pray the Litany of Loreto at 9.30am. If you cannot attend either the Monday Devotions or the daily recitation of the Rosary, at least try to recite a decade of the Rosary, or spend some minutes at Our Lady's altar before or after Mass on a Sunday. Light a candle and tell her how much you love her!

COMMUNICATIONS SUNDAY - NEXT SUNDAY

There will be a retiring collection for- Papal Communications Sunday next Sunday- to help support the work of the Catholic Press Office, an arm of the Bishops' Conference.

200 CLUB

This week's winner is Carol Johnson. Please collect your cheque from the Sacristy.

AFTERNOON TEA - FUNDRAISER FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF HALL

Please join us at our fundraiser on Sunday 31st May, from 1pm-4pm. You will be welcomed with a glass of Prosecco or orange juice on arrival, and a sumptuous Summer Afternoon Tea. Various Raffles with some stunning prizes will take place on the day. Tickets cost £12.50 and will be on sale after all Masses from this weekend, 10th May, and during the coffee morning on 14th May. The event is open to everyone. Please support your parish and have an afternoon of fun.

OUR NEXT MASS FOR THE SICK

On Thursday 28th May at 10am, we will have our next Mass with the anointing with the Oil of the Sick, as well as organ and incense. Mass will be followed by rolls and sausage and tea and coffee, in the Parish Centre. All very welcome.

FIRST COMMUNIONS

Congratulations to the first of the children of Saint Kenneth's primary school who made their First Communion yesterday. The remainder of the children from primary four will make their First Communion at 10am Mass on this coming Saturday, 16th May, at 10am Mass. The High School carpark will be open to accommodate the increased traffic.

FROM FATHER MARTIN - PROPOSED PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO PARIS, 5th-9th OCTOBER

A full spiritual and excursion programme walking in the footsteps of the French saints. Mass in Notre Dame Cathedral, Basilica of Sacré-Coeur, the Convent of the Miraculous Medal at the Rue du Bac. Bed and Breakfast with lunch provided in Paris each day. The overall cost is dependent on numbers and fluctuating flight prices. At the moment, it looks like being around £1100, which is very reasonable for Paris. A deposit is required of £550 to secure your place. There is a £234 single room supplement. To book, contact Anne Marie Cairns at Alba Tours on 01698 262941 or annemariecairns@yahoo.co.uk

STALL

A selection of First Communion and Confirmation cards and gifts are on sale at the stall. There are other piety objects, as well as a wide range of candles, gifts and publications cards. Copies of *My Day by Day* for May are on sale priced £1.00.

FABRIC AND FINANCE

The piazza area between the Church and Chapel House was power washed last week. The weeds and other detritus from the winter months have been removed. New evergreen Boxwood shrubs have been positioned there. We pay the second instalment of the Diocesan Levy on the 15th May - £6,303. The April gas and electricity bills arrived last week -£1,957.

KILTWALK - KILBRYDE HOSPICE

On the 26th April, Kenny Maxwell completed the Kiltwalk (Glasgow Green to Loch Lomond-23 miles), and raised £950 for Kilbryde Hospice. Kenny extends his thanks to everyone who supported him and this cause.

SAINT BRIDE'S PARISH - EAST KILBRIDE

CLERGY Rev. Dr. Francis G. McGachey, *Parish Priest*
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BULLETIN NOTICES Contact Fr. McGachey or Fr. Martin or bulletin@sbek.org

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CONTACT NUMBER 07712 903732

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL - Monica McShane, Mary Easton, Margaret Rose McMahan, Richard O'Donnell, Owen O'Donnell, Jean Lafferty, Mary O'Brien, Margaret Murphy, Brian Ewing, Alan MacDonald, Jan Milligan, Catherine McLean, Noreen Lockhart, Patricia Carey, Anne McDowell, Paul McCartney, Kevin McCann, Gayle Cochrean, Merisa Todd, James McLean, Elizabeth Kyle, Thomas Quinn, Chris McElroy, Danny McCash, Theresa Tierney, John Paul Quinn, Thomas Finnigan (Prestwick), George Kelman, Ann Marie Kane, Rosemary Maley, Peter Friel, Molly and Robert Ward, Noreen Lockhart, Neil McCready, Michael Conroy, Paul Tollan, Fiona Jane Anderson, Lindsay Sweeney, Robert Ward, Margaret Boyle, Kenneth McEwan, Rosie Maher Law, Stuart Gibbons, Sadie Elliot, Harry Burns, Billy Wilson, Ian McFadyen, Nessie McFadyen, Marie Quigley.

RECENTLY DEAD - Henry Hanlon, May Callaghan, Edward Farrell, Patricia McMurray, Stan Smith, Brian Paul, Paula McShane.

ANNIVERSARIES, MONTHS MINDS AND BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCES - Clare Keane (Slorach), Bonnie McMenamin, Andrew O'Heil, Cecily Wallace, Steven Boyle, Shuggy Docherty, Hugh Docherty, John Smith, Peter McNulty, Evelyn McGlone, Christopher Walker, Ed Cullen.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS

Sunday 3rd May - £3,050.
to the Parish or take out a
Offerings can be made by
follows: St Brides Parish
the adjacent QR code. It will
Income Tax, you can Giftaid
further 25 percent on the basis of the donation you give.



You may wish to make a one-off donation
Standing Order in favour of the Parish.
Bank Transfer, the details of which are as
10246966 and 80-12-97 or by scanning
take you to a secure web page. If you pay
your offering - the parish will receive a