

SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER'S PARISH

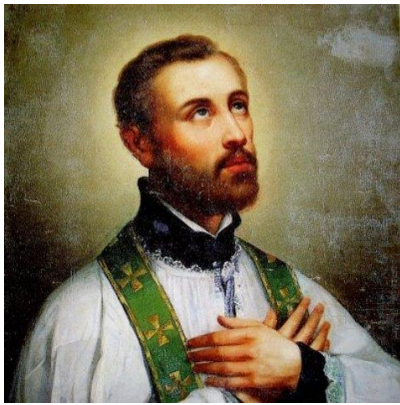
The First Sunday of Advent - 1st December 2019



SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER - OUR PARISH PATRON

Tuesday is the feast of our Parish Patron Saint, Francis Xavier. He was born in 1506 at the family castle in the village of Javier in the Navarre region of Northern Spain. When he was nineteen he went to study at the Sorbonne University in Paris, residing at the College Sainte-Barbe, where he lived with fellow Spaniards, including Ignatius of Loyola. As student he gained a reputation for being a fine athlete and high-jumper. Francis achieved a Master of Arts degree, and had a highly promising career in academics in front of him - he was invited to teach Philosophy at the Sorbonne.

It would be Ignatius who would often quote to him the words of Our Lord in the Gospels: "What profit would there be for a man to gain the world and forfeit his life?" Francis Xavier



did not heed these words at first. Eventually he came to see that Lord was calling him in another direction. He would make a thirty-day retreat called the Spiritual Exercises, which Ignatius himself had devised, and in 1534 at Montmartre in Paris, he took three vows: poverty, chastity and apostolic service according to the directions of the Pope, along with seven other men - and so the Society of Jesus (better known as the Jesuits) was born.

From Venice, where he was ordained a priest in 1537, Francis Xavier went on to Lisbon, and 1540 he sailed to the Portuguese East Indies, armed with four papal briefs making him Nuncio or Papal Ambassador, with full powers, and recommending him to the Eastern Princes. He landed at Goa in India, and began a vast apostolate that would last over ten years.

Wherever he went he lived with the poorest people, sharing their food and humble surroundings. He spent countless hours ministering to the sick, the poor, particularly lepers. There were days when he baptised thousands of people. Very often he had no time to sleep or even say his breviary, but, as we know from his letters home, he was filled always with joy.

Francis went through the islands of Malaysia, and from there on to Japan, learning enough Japanese to preach a simple sermon, to instruct, to baptise, and to establish missions for those who were to follow him.

From Japan he had dreams of going to China, but this plan was never realised - he died on the island of Sancian, a hundred miles south west of Hong Kong. A group of Portuguese sailors, on whose ship he was travelling, were forced to leave him on the shore because he had a bad fever; but a Portuguese merchant, Antonio Alvarez, led him to a ramshackle hut. Here he lingered for two weeks, praying between spells of delirium, and finally died, his eyes fixed on his crucifix.

He was buried in a shallow grave and his body covered with quicklime. When it was exhumed three months later, it was found to be fresh and incorrupt. It was subsequently taken to Goa, where it is still enshrined today. St. Francis Xavier was proclaimed Patron of foreign missions by Pope St. Pius X. *Father McGachey*



THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Today is the First Sunday of Advent. The Season has a twofold character: a time of preparation for the Feast of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God as a child is remembered, and likewise a time when we look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight. The liturgical colours for Advent are purple and silver, colours which underline preparation and expectation.

'MY DAY BY DAY'

These booklets contain a reflection and reading for each day of Advent and are a good way of taking time out to they contain a short reading and reflection for each day of Advent. This is a good way making Advent a holy and prayerful time for yourself.

A SERVICE OF FOR 'ADVENT SUNDAY'

Today at 3pm BBC Radio 3 will broadcast the traditional 'Advent Sunday' service live from St. John's College, Cambridge. It is beautiful liturgy of readings and congregational and choral music for the Season of Advent. I am sure you would enjoy it if you get the chance to listen.

ST ANDREW'S HOSPICE, AIRDIRE

The Diocese has been asked again this year to hold a retiring collection this weekend for St Andrew's Hospice, Airdrie. It costs £65,000 just to keep the place running each week. Please be generous as you always are.

MASS CARDS, CHRISTMAS CARDS AND GOLDEN BOOK CARDS

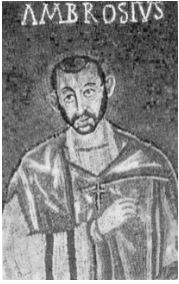
Signed Mass cards and Golden Book cards are available after Mass in sacristy after Mass or at any time from the Chapel House. Our Christmas Cards and Mass Christmas Mass Bouquets are available behind the altar wall.

WEDNESDAY - NOVENA TO OUR LADY UNTIER OF KNOTS with Rosary and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 7pm

Sincere thanks to all those who have come to this Novena, many of whom were from other parishes. I hope Our Lady has answered has heard your petitions and answered your prayers. Special thanks to the servers and the gentlemen who directed parking in the car park.

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION Monday 9th December transferred from Sunday 8th

On this special feast of Our Lady we will have a Mass for the Sick, during which the Anointing of the Sick will be given to all those who wish to receive it, at 1pm. The Mass will be followed by Light Refreshments in the Xavier Centre.



CALENDAR - **Tuesday** is the Feast of **St. Francis Xavier** - see front cover. On **Wednesday** we remember **St. John Damascene**, a learned theologian, who carefully gathered together and transmitted to us the teaching of the Greek Fathers. He died in 749. **Friday** is the memorial of **St. Nicholas of Myra** - undoubtedly one of the most popular saints honoured in the Western world. Considered primarily as the Patron Saint of children, Nicholas is also invoked by sailors, merchants, bakers, and with Saint Andrew, is honoured as the co-patron of Russia. **Saturday** is the feast of the Fourth century bishop of Milan, **St. Ambrose**, who famously baptised St. Augustine.

FESTIVE LUNCH AT THE XAVIER CENTRE SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER

Starters

Lentil Soup served with Warm Bread Roll
Honey Dew Melon served with Fresh Fruit and a Raspberry Coulis
Prawn Cocktail served with Marie Rose Dressing

Main Courses

Steak Pie
Braised Sirloin Steak in a Red Wine Sauce
Traditional Christmas Turkey with all the Trimmings
All served with creamed and roast potatoes and a selection of seasonal vegetables

Desserts

Hot Caramel Shortcake with Ice Cream
Christmas Pudding served with Brandy Sauce
Meringue Nest with Strawberries and Cream

***Children's Option: Chicken Nuggets and Chips or smaller portion of above. ***

****Vegetarian Option available but must be pre-ordered****

Adults £16.50. Children (up to 14 years old) £8.50. Payment required one week before event.

To book Call Mick McCormick on 07827975271

FROM THE CHILDREN'S LITURGY - The Catholic Grandparents' Association have donated four beautiful rosaries. The Children's Liturgy Group have organised a free raffle for the children who attend the 11am Mass today, to give them a chance to win these gifts.

TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR CITIZENS PARTY - Taylor High School is holding a party for senior citizens on Monday 16th December from 2pm to 3.30pm. The afternoon will have musical entertainment and an afternoon tea. Anyone who is interested in attending can give their details to any pupils of the school or phone the school office on 274976. Those attending do not have to have a relation at the school.

THANK YOU - To Mick McCormick who organised and Quiz Night in the Xavier Centre for the Grotto recently and raised £1040. And to Kelly Anne Mooney who organised fundraising event for the Grotto and raised £1310. Sincere thanks and appreciation to both of them and to those who supported these events.

FEAST OF SAINT LUCY - Friday 13th December is the Feast of St. Lucy. Her name means 'light', and she is the patroness of those with problems with the sense of sight. Individual blessings with the relic will be given after Mass on the 13th December. Since most of you will not be able to be at Mass on this day, I would propose to offer the individual blessings with the relic after the all the Masses the following weekend (14th and 15th December) too.

CONTACT US

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WEBSITE www.carfingrotto.org

CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATORS Elizabeth McMahon & Geraldine Battersby

SCOTTISH CHARITIES NUMBER SC 011041

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM - Baptisms are celebrated most Sundays of the year, except during Lent and on Easter Sunday, at 12.30pm.

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE - At least six months' notice must be given of intention to marry.

Please telephone or email Father McGachey to make an appointment, or speak to Father McGachey or Deacon Jim after Mass at the weekend.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

RECENTLY DEAD - Elaine Sherry, Pat Cairney, Marianne Gorman, Maria Farmer, John McMullen, John Larkin.

MONTHS MIND, ANNIVERSARIES, AND BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCES – Catherine, Charles and Tracy Devine, Ann Therese Devine, Joseph Devine, Sarah Savage, Annie Mitchell, Colin Leslie, Betty Stubbs.

Intimations for inclusion should reach the Chapel House by 7pm on a Thursday evening

WEEKLY OFFERINGS FOR SUNDAY 25TH NOVEMBER - £
Sincere thanks for your generosity to our Parish