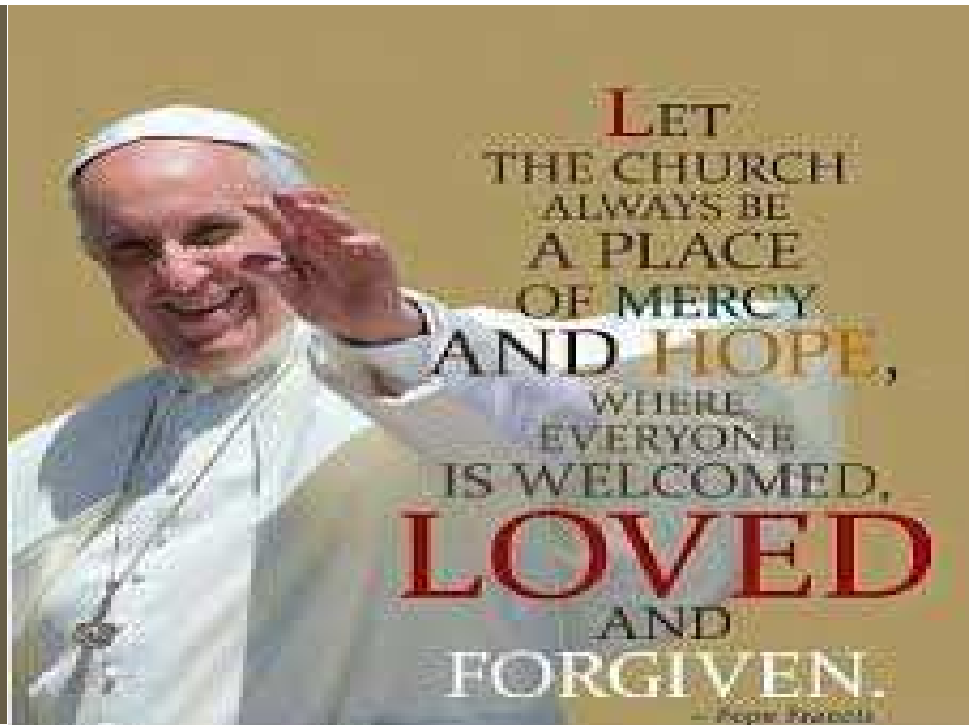




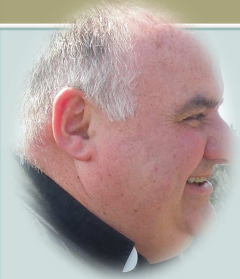
# Unity

Lochgilphead/Inveraray/  
Campbeltown/Islay



**Inside:**  
**The quality of mercy**

October 2015 Issue 23



## Fr David's Message

The Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Lady on the 8th of December this year marks the start of the Church's Year of Mercy. Pope Francis has called this Year of Mercy because he understands that we cannot claim to be Christians and not be merciful. Mercy should be at the heart of all our Christian lives and how we live them. In leading up to this most important year, we are putting together four evenings in the Parish, based on Just Faith, the project supported by SCIAF, Justice and Peace Scotland, Missio Scotland and the Bishop's Conference. You'll remember our introductory Just Faith event in Lent this year.

The Rediscovering Mercy sessions will be from 19-21pm. The first will be in the MS Centre on October 15 and then on October 22, 29 and November 5 in Lochgilphead Parish Church Hall.

These evenings will be a special time for us to come together as a Parish and to learn new ways of 'Rediscovering Mercy' so that we can we can spread Christ's mercy in our homes, in our families, in our communities, and throughout the world.

Pope Francis explains it beautifully when he says 'Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church's very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love. The Church "has an endless desire to show mercy". Perhaps we have long since forgotten how to show and live the way of mercy. The temptation, on the one hand, to focus exclusively on justice made us forget that this is only the first, albeit necessary and indispensable step. But the Church needs to go beyond and strive for a higher and more important goal.' That goal is Christ's Mercy.

Fr. David.



# The quality of Mercy

Cecelia Rees

## Mercy – What should it mean for us?

In the words of Shakespeare, 'The quality of mercy is not strained'. It should come from the heart, a deeply felt compassion and loving care for those in need of our help.

Just as we ask for God's mercy and forgiveness, so we should show mercy to others. It is not enough to say we care about those of our brothers and sisters who are suffering and in distress - and do nothing to try to help them.

As Christians we must be pro-active, not merely passive observers.

We see so many harrowing pictures on our TV screens of desperate people in need of a safe haven yet having doors slammed in their faces, routes barred, told there's no room for them. It is not that there is no room left in our land, but that people are not prepared to make room in their hearts to welcome strangers in need.

The more wealthy people and countries become, the less willing they become to share that wealth, and the more barriers they put up to keep other people out.

We should always try to treat others as if it were Christ himself asking for our help. He was himself a refugee, no room at the inn, forced to flee from Herod's wrath and jealousy. Are we, like Herod, wanting to keep all we have for ourselves? Do we agree with those who say that our country is overcrowded and that there is no room? Or do we act to change attitudes and show mercy, from our hearts, to those God asks us to care for.

How can we help? We can ask those in power to change their selfish attitude to this crisis, write to ministers, sign petitions, demonstrate, let others know we want mercy to be shown, rather than a few scraps thrown to them in refugee camps. Let's get out there and help make the world a better and more welcoming place for those in greatest need.

# Year of Mercy



## ***'No-one can be excluded from God's mercy' - Pope Francis***

When Pope Francis announced the Holy Year of Mercy, he based this extraordinary Jubilee on Luke 6:36 – 'Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.'

The Holy Year will begin on December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council.

His Holiness can hardly have known when he made the announcement about the Year of Mercy back in March of this year what terrible scenes would unfold across Europe as waves of humanity spilled out of Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and many African countries.

What we have witnessed makes the words of Pope Francis even more challenging: 'It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters.'

There has been an overwhelming response to the plight of the refugees in our own parish and throughout the diocese of Argyll and the Isles. A collection made at St Margaret's raised over £700. In Rothesay, over £600 was sent to the refugees. People are offering houses from Kintyre to Uist, and it is clear that the message is 'we welcome refugees', rather than the findings claimed by the pollsters that the people of Britain want to pull up the drawbridge.

'Mercy' is not only about helping our brothers and sisters fleeing from violence and oppression, of course. There are those in our midst who also need us to facilitate Christ's mercy.

Pope Francis says that mercy and justice are 'two dimensions of a single reality that unfolds progressively until it culminates in the fullness of love'.

We can prepare to journey towards that fullness of love through Just Faith's Rediscovering Mercy resource and through St Margaret's Wednesday evening prayer group (7pm).  
MP



## Year of Mercy

### Diary dates

### Rediscovering Mercy:

**Thursday, October 15: MS Centre.**

*Guest speaker – Tim Duffy, Justice and Peace Scotland*

**Thursday, October 22: Lochgilphead Parish Church Hall**

*Session led by Fr David Connor*

**Thursday, October 29: Lochgilphead Parish Church Hall**

*Guest speaker – Sr Stacey Cameron, Missio Scotland*

**Thursday, November 5: Lochgilphead Parish Church Hall**

*Session led by Fr David Connor*

<http://www.justfaith.org.uk/>

*The Just Faith project seeks to share the social justice work of the Church and encourage Catholics to connect their faith with action for change.*

\* Register help you can offer at: <http://www.scotlandwelcomesrefugees.scot/>

Date	Eucharist Ministers		Readers	Date	Cleaners
<b>September</b>				<b>September</b>	
6	D Bernt	M Mc Call	C Lamont	5	C McFadden
13	P Connor	P Singal	J Green	12	J Malcolm
20	M Shaw	I Salmon	B Robins	19	A Cumming
27	C McFadden	J McFadden	C Paddock	26	K Goodchild
<b>October</b>				<b>October</b>	
4	D Bernt	M McCall	M McCall	3	A Martin
11	P Connor	P Singal	R Ranger	10	M McLay
18	M Shaw	I Salmon	A McCartan	17	D McLean
25	C McFadden	J McFadden	C Reese	24	A McCartan
<b>November</b>				<b>November</b>	
1	D Bernt	M McCall	E Salmon	1	E McLachlan
8	P Connor	P Singal	M Pallister	8	E Salmon
15	M Shaw	I Salmon	J McFadden	15	M Robins
22	C McFadden	J McFadden	C Lamont	22	C McFadden
29	D Bernt	M McCall	J Green	29	J Malcolm
<b>December</b>				<b>December</b>	
6	P Connor	P Singal	B Robins	5	K Welsh
13	M Shaw	I Salmon	C Paddock	12	A Cumming
20	C McFadden	J McFadden	M McCall	19	Christmas Clean
27	D Bernt	M McCall	R Ranger	26	Holiday!

Relief Eucharistic Minister: Cecelia Rees