

..... I also met some life-long friends along the way. Overall though, I was just shocked at how much my Lourdes experience helped me grow as a person and as a Catholic.

The hardest part of coming to know the miracle of Lourdes definitely had to be leaving it behind. After meeting a wonderful woman who lived on the other side of the world, I made the decision to move abroad. Living in California meant leaving behind my friends and family in Scotland and giving up my favorite part of the year – visiting Lourdes in the summer. However, I had to move on with my life.

I realized this meant giving up on a career in the bank job I had at the time. I therefore had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. While trying to figure it all out, I somehow ended up being coerced into being a volunteer Catechist to “at-risk” high school kids (the area had a problem with gang culture). Being a teacher of sorts was honestly the last thing I ever thought I would do. Prior to visiting Lourdes, working with young people seemed somewhat scary and definitely boring. Pretty much the exact opposite of what I was thinking about doing when I left school. But teaching kids about Catholicism gave me the opportunity to discuss my experience in Lourdes. This made up for the sadness I had at not being able to go that year. I then ended up becoming involved in the Youth Ministry program there...by my own accord this time.

I always wanted to do something worthwhile for a living and something I would actually enjoy doing. As I had been doing for years, I prayed and prayed and prayed for an answer. But I heard nothing. Little did I know that the silence was simply making me wait for what God had planned. Suddenly, I was offered a job as a Junior High/High School Youth Minister at another Catholic Church in our area.

I kept asking myself why this never occurred to me before – I wanted to have a career in something I loved. So why, when I left St Modan’s at 16, did I never consider my love of God and the Catholic Church as my path in life. Why did it take me until I was 20 to go to Lourdes and start to figure all this stuff out? I didn’t because it apparently wasn’t the right time for me and I had a lot to learn from other young Catholics along the way. If you had told me in 5th year, when I was leaving school, that in 10 years I would have been a group leader on a pilgrimage to France, would have moved abroad and eventually ended up working for the Church...I would have laughed at you. But I genuinely and whole-heartedly credit all the confidence and skills I have learned to get me here through the grace of God and my decision to go to Lourdes. This is not me saying that Lourdes will lead you to a job in the Church, becoming a priest/nun or moving to a different country. What I am trying to convey is that Lourdes gave me what I needed as a young Catholic trying to figure out what to do with my life after school. I thought it would be a one-off experience but it was so much more. It gave me perspective and renewed my faith in God. It could possibly do the same for you.

Consider it as an alternative to your regular summer holiday. Consider how you could give something back to your community and help other people. If not, consider getting involved in the Church. Learn about your faith and spend time caring for others. Get to know God and other young Catholics in the Diocese. Trust that God has a plan for you no matter what. It might be a trip to Lourdes; it might be giving Mass on Sunday another chance. For too long I just said I was a Catholic and didn’t focus on actually being one. When I realized that in Lourdes, it changed my life. - *Andrew Watson*



Coffee Morning at St John Vianney’s:

The proceeds of £100 raised from the last coffee morning held on 5th April are being donated to the Nepal earthquake appeal. **Many thanks.** Next coffee morning will be on **Sunday 31st May** after 9.30 mass.



The next Lourdes Youth Draw will be in Alva on Sunday 31st of May. However due to holidays Karen will be collecting Tullibody’s May subscriptions a week earlier on 24th May after Mass in the Church hall.

St. Bernadette’s & St. John Vianney’s



Parish Newsletter

*Diocese of Dunkeld
Scottish Charity
No. SC001810*

17th May 2015

7th Sunday of Easter



St. Bernadette's
Baingle Brae
Tullibody FK10 2SG
01259 213274

Parish Priest:
Fr. Mike Freyne MHM
Tel: **01259 213274**
Email: mafreyne@btinternet.com

St. John Vianney's
16 East Stirling Street
Alva FK12 5HR
01259 763774

Priest in residence Alva: **Fr. Martin Pletts** Email: fr.martinpletts@gmail.com

Parish Websites

www.catholic-church.org/stbernadettes & www.catholic-church.org/stjohnvianneys



Are you visiting our Parish or have just moved into the area? Please feel very welcome. Introduce yourself to the Parish Priest or welcomers at the back of the church. There are no strangers here..... just new friends you haven't yet met.



Please remember in your prayers those who are sick.....

Dan Tierney, Jean Quinn, Mary Dryland, Christie Scott, Michael Ferguson, Lawrence Allan, Sarah Lownie, Veronica Day, Ursula Crichton, Peter Doyle, Sarah-Jane Connelly, Mary Elliot, Liz Buchan, Mary McGeehan, Thomas Benie, Brendan Murphy, Margaret McIntyre, Elizabeth Docherty, Bridget Grey, Owen Cattigan, Veronica Clarke, Gerard Clarke, Bill Dunsmore, Peter James Clarke, Paul Kochanek, Janet Martin, Lorraine McClusky, Sandy Taylor, Mary McCartney, Theresa Flemming, Mona Pyat, Anne McNiven, Alma White, Kathlean McNeil, Maureen Joyce, Nina Smith, Dr. Michael Basquial, Tina Burgoyne, Margaret Byrne, Margaret Tobin, Mrs McConnichie and all those in the various nursing homes.

Remember those who have recently died.... Sarah Marshall and James Moore.

and those whose anniversaries of their death occur at this time.... May Smith.

REGULAR MEETINGS

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL: Meet in St. Bernadette’s weekly, at 10.30am before Sunday mass and at St. John Vianney’s, on the last Sunday of the month after 9.30 morning mass.

KNIGHTS OF ST. COLUMBA: Meet at 7.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the Hall at St. Mungo’s, Alloa.

This is Communications Sunday, there will be a special collection at all masses today.

Parish Collections

St. Bernadette’s 10th May	£393.09
Nepal Relief	£653.24
St. John Vianney’s 10th May	£351.08
Nepal Relief	£851.03

NEXT WEEKS DIARY

**Sunday Morning Masses:
St. John Vianney's, 9.30am
& St. Bernadette's, 11.30am**

**Sunday Evening Mass:
St. John Vianney's, 6.15pm**

Sunday 17th May	Mass times as Normal - 7th Sunday of Easter COMMUNICATIONS SUNDAY – Special Collection 3.00pm - St. John Vianney's, Adoration & Prayers before The Blessed Sacrament
Mon 18th May	9.30am - Mass, St. John Vianney's.
Tuesday 19th May	NO SERVICES IN PARISH 10.00am - Mass, Nazareth House, Edinburgh 1.30 - 4.00pm - Education Meeting, Clacks Council 7.00pm - Parish Meeting on Council's Education proposals
Wednesday 20th May	9.30am - Funeral Mass of James Moore, St. Bernadette's. 2pm -3pm and 6pm -7pm at St . Bernadette's school - for parents, Informal Public Consultation on Clacks C. Education proposals.
Thurs 21st May	9.30am - Mass, St. Bernadette's.
Friday 22nd May	9.30am - Mass, St. John Vianney's 7.00pm - Mass, St. Bernadette's.
Sat 23rd May	9.30am - Mass and Confessions, St. Bernadette's
Sunday 24th May	Mass times as Normal - Pentecost 3.00pm - St. John Vianney's, Adoration & Prayers before The Blessed Sacrament

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

31st May	Day for Life
7th June	CORPUS CRISTII, FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS
14th June	CONFIRMATIONS - ST. BERNADETTE'S.
23rd June	PPC
28th June	Peter's Pence Special Collection
2nd July	SCIAF 50th anniversary Mass, Cathedral Dundee
7th - 20th July	Youth away at Lourdes
31July - 2 Aug	Catholic Youth Festival, Stirling University

In addition to the collection figures there was also a cheque handed in for £2,000 for the Nepal relief fund. On Wednesday afternoon Sandy Lorrie was at the school to receive a cheque of over £1,200 for SCIAF from the children's sponsored walk during Holy Week.



'Everyone who has joined the ranks of Christ must be a glowing point of light in the world, a nucleus of love, a leaven of the whole mass. He will be so in proportion to his degree of spiritual union of God.' - Pacem in Terris, 164 <http://www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/>

Link to DUNKELD NEWS on Parish website Current Notices page

CLACKMANNANSHIRE'S COUNCIL EDUCATION PROPOSALS

PARISH MEETING OPEN TO ALL

on Tuesday 19th May at 7.00pm in St. Bernadette's Church.
Presentation For and Against Clacks Council's Education proposals
and exchange of ideas.

This is a parish meeting open to all parishioners.
No one from the Authorities will be invited.

CLACKMANNANSHIRE SCHOOL PROPOSALS

For your Diary: In preparation for the official consultations which begins in May the parish will hold another meeting in St. Bernadette's church on Tuesday 19th May at 7pm. This will be an internal parish meeting without representatives from the Education Authorities. The Vicar Episcopal for Education Mons. Ken will join us. This is to clarify doubts and perhaps present clearly advantages and disadvantages of all the proposals, so that when the official consultation begins we are well informed and do not make any mistakes in our choices

LOURDES YOUTH

Over the years, Fr Mike has asked me on several occasions to speak at Mass about my experience attending the Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. This is something I have always been more than happy to do as it was an experience that profoundly changed my life. So once more, I hope that I can perhaps shine some light on how that experience has actually continued to be of great value to me almost 3 years after I last visited as part of the Diocese of Dunkeld.

Recently, my journey of faith (that was kick-started in that small town in the South of France) has taken me to a new Diocese – the Diocese of Orange, in California. I hope the following gives justice to the fact that, through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes and the kindness of our Parish, I have witnessed what giving up a couple weeks in your summer can do for you. Not just for the summer, but for the rest of your life.

Lourdes is not only a place that can strengthen and deepen the faith of the sick and elderly who go there, but impact the life of young Catholics in immeasurable ways. When I first signed up for Lourdes in 2008 I was 20 years old and just as nervous as I was excited about making the pilgrimage there. This was the place where the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette and where so many miracles had occurred. So was Lourdes just for good Catholics? If so, then I didn't deserve to be there. I had went through Catholic school my entire life, but Sunday Mass was not a regular thing for me anymore. Nevertheless, the late Fr Michael Milton urged me to go.

What I learned straight away was that I wasn't alone in being apprehensive about going on a "holy-holy" trip with the Church. But I was also reminded that being Catholic was not a bad thing and was definitely not just a label that I inherited from my parents. It was a way of life that I had to come to terms with and be proud of. This happened through spending time with other young Catholics, from all over the world, and caring for people who couldn't make the trip there on their own.

One trip to Lourdes therefore led to a second and before I knew it a fifth. As my faith deepened with every pilgrimage, I was rewarded with another test – moving into the role of group leader! This was a privilege I did not expect but felt called to accept. From almost not going to Lourdes at all, I was becoming involved in leading other young people and being given all sorts of responsibility. Trust me, this was something I never envisioned myself doing when I left St Mo-dan's. Visiting Lourdes as a group leader, I learned invaluable life lessons that ultimately helped me in both my career and in my personal life..... - (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)