

SUMMER 2024

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S, DUNTOCHER





Friends of St Mary's

Friends of St. Mary's include our many faithful parishioners, those who live in the neighbourhood, those who work in the area and those who grew up in the area and who have moved away. It also in a special way includes those who for personal reasons have stopped coming to Church but in their own way still have St. Mary's in their heart.

Many of these "Friends" have served our Church in a great and varied number of ways over the years since it opened in 1954 and many still do! For St. Mary's to continue in its vital role and for it to prosper in these very uncertain times, however, it needs your support.

Presently, the Chapel and grounds are in good health but we still have work to do. The three buildings need constant maintenance & development, running costs have to be matched and a great many social and pastoral projects must continue to be provided.

Hands on ways to be a helpful friend!

There are many tasks which have to be undertaken on a daily, weekly and regular basis. Ask yourself “could I do that or could I help the team that presently does it?”

Ideally we would like to have groups of people for each task as this allows for the times when someone can't make it.

It also helps if one or two people are willing to lead in preparing rotas, contacting the members re. changes, finding new volunteers and providing feedback to the Parish Priest and Pastoral Council.

Furthermore, if you have a particular skill set (e.g. plumber, electrician, I.T., social media, joinery, gardening, and many more) then it would be invaluable in handling repairs quickly, avoiding bills and reducing costs.

The Hall & Social Activities

It's fair to say that we do well in providing social activities throughout the year for the parish. However what more could we do and are you willing and able to run such events or assist in running them?

Attendance (s)

The volunteers that we have to run dances, social events, tea & coffee after Mass, etc., do a great job, but do please support these events by attending on a Sunday after Mass; by coming to the dances by suggesting what could be done that may encourage more support. 30 minutes of your time on a Sunday morning for tea, buying tickets and bring some friends to a dance would give the organisers a lift in spirits in return for the hard work they all put in.

Mass and Other Special Services

It's sad when you attend Church and the attendance numbers are small but it's truly heart-warming when the Church is busy!

Please make every effort to come along, please gently encourage your close friends and relatives to consider coming along and collectively we WILL make a difference.

Become a Gift Aid Donor!

Gift Aid simply means that instead of putting your donation into the basket you pay by setting up a monthly standing order.

Why?

The main benefit is that by doing the above, we can claim a further 25% on top of your donation from the tax man (HMRC)!!

We currently have a number of parishioners using this method and collectively we receive about £3500 extra per annum. Think what this could be if **YOU** joined up!

Further benefits are that it's an easier task to count the weekly basket collection(s). This will not stop as some still prefer to pay this way and many who have set up Standing Orders still like to put something in the basket

It's less risk as less money then has to be taken to the bank.

We're happy to explain the detail and answer any questions that you may have; it really is simple and brings a great benefit to St. Mary's.

A form is enclosed for your convenience.



“Looking to the future, being faithful to the past”

The recent booklet issued by the Archdiocese lists the following criteria as key to a viable parish.

A Viable Parish:

1. Demonstrates that the Liturgy is at the centre of its life
2. Extends a spirit of hospitality and invites people to become members
3. Should have an annual income that is sufficient to cover the expenses of the parish
4. Should be able to maintain the parish facilities and property in good condition

These challenges can be met even be exceeded with the support of all of us if we each just give a little more effort and input.

Just to demonstrate the challenge:

In 2000, 60,000 people attended weekend Mass in the Glasgow Archdiocese.

In 2022 the figure was **21,000!** Sadly, down a whopping 65%.

In 2020, 550 people attended weekend Mass here in St. Mary's parish.

In 2023, 350 people attended weekend Mass here in St. Mary's parish. Down 36%.



Friends of St Mary's

In summary, our parish is viable and is going in an upward direction. There has been a great deal achieved both pastorally and practically and we should all be proud of the part we have each played. Let's make 2024, incidentally the 70th anniversary of our Church a year of great achievement.

Simply by being **Friends of St. Mary's** and giving a little more we can deliver a truly great and steadfast future as we strive to new horizons and face up to the challenges the year ahead will bring.