



Mount Argus Bulletin

The Parish of St Paul of the Cross and Shrine of St Charles of Mount Argus

-- *Saint Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin 6W (Eircode: D6W XR66) --*

Phone: 01 4992000 Email: office@mountargusparish.ie

Website (including Bulletin online): www.mountargusparish.ie

Facebook Page: Mount Argus – The Shrine of Saint Charles

Masses at Mount Argus

Sunday: 8.00 am, 11.00 am, 4.00 pm

Monday to Friday: 10.00 am, 6.15 pm

Saturdays: 11.00 am, 6.15 (Vigil Mass)

Working Holydays 6.15 pm Vigil, 10.00 am, 6.15 pm

Church Opening Hours

Sunday: 7.30 am to 5.00 pm

Monday to Friday: 9.30 am to 6.45 pm

Saturday: 10.30 am to 7.00 pm

Blessing with the Relic of St Charles

Monday to Friday after 10.00 am Mass

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday at 4.00 pm

Saturday after 11.00 am Mass

Sunday after 11.00 am and 4.00 pm Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday:

11.00 - 11.30 am, 4.00 - 4.30 pm

Saturday: 4.00 to 5.30 pm

Eucharistic Adoration

St Charles Novena Mass: Saturday, 11.00 am

Wednesdays and Fridays: 4.00 to 6.00 pm

The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Not a Drop to Drink?

Throughout my life as a priest I have obviously participated in many baptisms, marriages and funerals – or ‘hatching, matching and dispatching’ as they are occasionally irreverently referred to. And on many of these occasions the priest involved is invited to the celebrations afterwards. In my younger days I would generally accept such invitations, on the grounds that they were a good way of informally meeting one’s parishioners and getting to know them better and thus adjust one’s ministry on the basis of ‘where they were at’.

To be honest, I relatively quickly realised that for me such events were not a particularly fruitful use of my time. For starters, most of the people present would not be members of the parish – being friends and relatives of the families involved – and I was highly unlikely to ever meet them again, other than at their next baptism, marriage, or funeral. But more decisively I was influenced by the fact – maybe you have the same problem? – that these events tended to be accompanied by a considerable amount of background noise, with the result that I found myself constantly having to say “sorry, could you repeat that, I didn’t quite catch it,” and the following day I would be hoarse from having to shout at people. Maybe it’s something to do with my hearing, which is normally very good, but background noise tends to have a very negative effect on me – even in church! (Ahem)

I don’t know what motivated Jesus to attend the wedding feast at Cana – the gospels don’t give us any hint, just that He was there. And we can be sure that He didn’t have to worry about piped music, not to mention a disco, in the background. So He would have had no difficulty hearing His

mother drawing His attention to a potentially embarrassing situation for His hosts! And ‘though He seems to shrug off her intervention, we know that in reality He responds with an astonishing degree of generosity. When you think of it – each of the water jars, we’re told, could hold 20 to 30 gallons – and there were 6 of them! By any standards that’s a lot of wine – like a thousand bottles at least! Clearly Jesus didn’t have any problem with people having a good time at a party! I don’t mean that in any disrespectful way. Remember, Jesus was at the party – presumably to celebrate with His friends, and His mother. It’s no harm reminding ourselves that being a follower of Jesus does not require us to be miserable kill-joys. And, in accordance with the rules of hospitality at the time, there would have been a plentiful supply of wine there to begin with – the steward says as much when he indicates to the bridegroom that it’s unusual to keep the good wine until after the guests have had ‘plenty to drink’!

There are lots of different levels of meaning in today’s gospel – not least the presence of Jesus at the celebration of the love between a man and wife, and His desire to bless all loving relationships. But we shouldn’t underestimate the significance of His stupendous generosity. It is reminiscent of the story of the multiplication of the loaves and fish, with all the basketfuls left over. Jesus always provides us with much more than we need. While He certainly doesn’t encourage it, He is never put off by our wastefulness, especially all the missed opportunities we let slip every day to spread His love and peace in our world, particularly in our circle of friends, at work, in our parish, and most especially in our homes. Let’s appreciate what a loving and generous God we worship.

The normal notices: Sorry – haven’t quite got sources etc. sorted out. Hopefully they will resume properly in the near future. In the meantime I just draw attention to the **week of prayer for Christian Unity** – from 18 – 25th of January. And 2025 is a **Jubilee Year of Hope** in the whole church. More details soon.

A Challenge/Provocation? You will have heard in the notices last week that there was a Parish Pastoral Council meeting scheduled for Wednesday – which duly took place. As it was my first such meeting in my new role, we ranged over a broad area of matters relating to the day-to-day life of the parish. Thank God they showed an admirable level of patience with my constant queries – “what happens?” and “why?”. This is not meant by any means to be a report on the meeting, but totally a personal reflection since then on what I perceive to be some of the key questions facing us as we move forward as a parish.

And the first thing that strikes me is the need for much more involvement of a greater number of people in the day-to-day life of the parish. I really do appreciate those at present involved, who for the most part are doing much more than their fair share; but we have a shortage in all areas of ministry – readers, eucharistic ministers, ushers, collectors, etc. etc.

Which raises questions about our fuller acknowledging of the end of special restrictions that were necessary at the height of the covid pandemic. I’m thinking of - for example – receiving the eucharist on ones tongue for those who wish it (which of course has implications for everyone else); receiving under both species, bread and wine; having collections during mass rather than very insecure baskets at the exits; etc. etc. Can’t be done without more help!

Another issue, that many would probably not notice, relates to the fact that for the first time in the history of Mount Argus we no longer have a sacristan. This was a service provided by our Brothers, the most recent being Br. Vincent of happy memory. We have no brothers at present in a position to provide sure service. Can it be done by volunteers? Do we need to hire someone(s) to do it? We’re talking about opening and closing the church each day; setting up the altar for masses and other services; keeping an eye on supplies – candles, etc.

And I haven’t even mentioned our monthly Family Mass/children’s liturgy. Huge changes in society in general have meant that it has become very difficult to do those concepts justice. But it would be helpful if we had as many families as possible indicating that they would like to be involved on a regular basis, and how best to make such celebrations family-friendly and relevant.

Your thoughts on all of the above, and anything else, will genuinely be appreciated. Email is best.

Financial Update – 19 January 2025: Collection last Sunday, €1560. Standing orders for week, approx. €250. Donations via website, €372. Payments via credit card machines past week, €558.

MOUNT ARGUS PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to be a living parish where all will feel welcome, everyone will be appreciated and encouraged to use their gifts and people and priests work together to develop a community of faith and compassion.