

THE PARISHES OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST AND ST MARY MAGDALENE
35 Brighton Place, Edinburgh EH15 1LL Bingham Avenue, Edinburgh EH15 3HY

Parish Priest: Fr. Jock Dalrymple: 0131 669 5447

Deacon – Revd Eddie White: 07986 015772

Pastoral Team: Alice Codling, Jennifer Morris and Chris Vinestock

Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, EH15 1LP

Administrator: Enrico Fertini

(Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am to 3pm & Friday 11am-4pm)

Web address: www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk Web address: www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk

Joint e-mail for our sister parishes: stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com



Second Sunday of Advent – Sunday 13 December 2020

WELCOME.... If you're visiting, are new to the area, or just live here, you are most welcome in our sister parishes. If you are new to the parish or area, please make yourself known to Fr Jock by email or on the phone and ask for details of how to register on the parishes' roll.

With this newsletter is a Pastoral Letter from the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, on the Covid-19 pandemic, titled 'Light Shines in Darkness.'

Many congratulations to Evlynne and Jim Roarty, who celebrate their Golden Wedding on Saturday 12 December – and who will be renewing their vows at the Vigil Mass that evening.

A warm welcome and our thanks to Fr Jim Smith, helping before all our Masses this Sunday, and Fr Martin Moran OMI with us before the 9.30am, as those who would celebrate a socially distanced Reconciliation.

Reconciliation will also be celebrated next Saturday at 6.30pm before Mass begins....

Fr Jock will be available for Reconciliation

- in St John's from 10.45am to 12.30pm this Wednesday 16 December,
- after the 10am Mass this Thursday 17 December at St Mary Magdalene's,
- and from 5.15 to 6.15pm next Sunday 20 December in St John's.

Next Saturday morning, at 10am at St John's, there will be an extra Mass, which will include the baptisms of Alasdair Preston and Jayden O'Hara, the reception into the Catholic Church of Jessica Mzambe, and the confirmation and first communion of all three of them – as we continue with the RCIA celebrations that were postponed at Easter. The Mass is open to all – no booking required.

A CHANGE IN BOOKING SUNDAY MASSES

To help us to manage the numbers, if you wish to come to one of the 'live' Saturday and Sunday Masses, please contact the parish house



by phone (0131 669 5618 – a special number) only on

Tuesday 10am to 1pm

Wednesday 10am to 1pm

Thursday 10am to 1pm

Or by email (stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com) until Thursday 1pm.

PLEASE DO NOT BOOK BY EMAIL BEFORE TUESDAY – since it means that those who aren't on email and/or who book by phone are at a disadvantage in gaining places a place at Mass.

We are continuing to livestream some of our **Weekday Masses from the Prayer Room** in the Parish House - **this week on Monday and Friday at 10am and Tuesday at 7.00pm** (This is partly because after every Mass in one of our Churches, 'deep cleaning' has to take place – something that takes a considerable length of time and effort. We are so incredibly grateful to our welcomers, stewards and cleaners who are making it possible for us to have our churches open – **and always open to new volunteers.**)

Please also be aware that you will need to utilize hand sanitisers as you come into and leave the church, and masks must be worn throughout the service.

Due to the COVID regulations we have limited seatings available and therefore **we advise early booking.**

We are grateful for your patience and understanding in these difficult times.'

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve – 5.30pm – St John's - Christmas Vigil Mass for Children and Family Bubble
8.30pm – St John's - Christmas 'Midnight' Mass
Christmas Day: 9.30am – St John's - Christmas Morning Mass.
11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – Christmas Children's Mass.'

Fr Jock writes: 'It is obviously going to be a rather different Christmas to any other so we ask your patience and understanding as we try to organise the Masses in the best and fairest way possible – in terms of numbers, venues, times and how people book and places are allocated.

Due to Covid restrictions, and despite holding four Christmas Masses, there will not be enough spaces for all who wish to attend....It has finally been decided that for the services at 8.30pm on Christmas Eve and 9.30am and 11.15am on Christmas Day, the names of attendees will be chosen by 'drawing names from a hat'.

So if you wish to attend one of these three Christmas Masses please contact the Parish House – by calling 669 5618 or emailing stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com between last Tuesday and this coming Wednesday (16 December) and your name will be put into the draw.

To ensure that singles as well as groups can attend there will be separate draws for each category.

Those who do not get a space will be given priority for the Masses of 26 and 27 December – The Feast of the Holy Family.

When you apply please let us know -

- a) your name and contact details
- b) the service you wish to attend (please limit to one service only)
- c) whether the application is for one person or for a group that can sit together;
- d) if a group, the number of people;
- e) which Mass on 26 (6.30pm) or 27 December (9.30am, 11.15am and 4.30pm) you would wish to attend if you don't get a space for Christmas Eve or Christmas Day;

When spaces have been allocated, you will be contacted to let you know whether or not you have a space, and if you do, for which Mass.

For the Christmas Eve 5.30pm Children and Family Bubble Mass (for children and family bubbles only) bookings should be made by calling or texting Arlene Lauder on 07950 880833 between 8 and 16 December. After that you will be informed if you have a place – and if not, you will be given a first option for the two Children's Masses on 10 January.

We will also do our best to livestream as many of the Christmas Masses as we can, so everybody has a chance to participate in Mass on Christmas Eve/Day.

PS For those wary of the idea of 'drawing from a hat', it does have scriptural basis: in the Acts of the Apostles (Chapter 1 verse 26), the Apostles are choosing who to fill the gap left by Judas' death, and two names are put forward, Joseph and Barsabbas...the apostles then pray – '*they then drew lots for them, and as the lot fell to Matthias, he was listed as one of the twelve apostles....*'!

Children's Liturgy at Sunday Mass

Arlene Lauder writes:

Welcome to
Children's Liturgy



'Zoom Children's Liturgy sessions are continuing. Why not join us this Sunday where we will be starting around 11:15 am? To be included, please send your email address to Arlene at Lauder.82@btinternet.com by 4pm on Saturday 19 December Please tell us your full name, your child/children's names and which mass you would normally attend, this information is for our register to keep all involved safe. **Please note that we will automatically send the Zoom link by email to everyone who has joined us before'.**

THIS WEEK

Saturday 12 December

12.30pm – St John's - **Baptism of Ilaria Diotaiuti**

6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass with Golden Wedding Renewal of Vows (fully booked)**

Sunday 13 December (Reconciliation Sunday)

9.30am – St John's – **Mass (fully booked)**

11.00am – **Full length Sunday Mass** (streamed on YouTube, pre-recorded from the Prayer Room)
11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass (booking required)**
4.30pm – St John's - **Mass (booking required)**

Monday 14 December

10am – Prayer Room – **Mass** (livestreamed)
4.30pm – Skype - PEP meeting
7-8pm – Zoom/Google Meeting – **Gospel Sharing and Reflection – Open to All**

To join by Zoom, click the link below

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89585439463?pwd=a0Rtald4UkN1R3hjeWp5VUZDMUIwdz09>

Meeting ID: 895 8543 9463 Passcode: 453281

The format is very simple and unthreatening – listening to the Sunday readings, and to a precis of Fr Jock or Deacon Eddie's homily, and then – for those who wish (but absolutely no pressure, it's more than ok to remain silent) – a chance to share one's own personal perspective, and finally, concluding with some very gentle prayer....Do give it a try....

Tuesday 15 December

7.00pm – Prayer Room – **Mass** (livestreamed)

Wednesday 16 December

9.20am – St John's – **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**
10.00am – St John's - **Mass** (livestreamed, no booking required)
10.45am – St John's – Fr Jock available to celebrate **Reconciliation**



Thursday 17 December

10.00am – St Mary Magdalene's - **Mass** (livestreamed, no booking required)
10.45 – St Mary Magdalene's - Fr Jock available to celebrate **Reconciliation**

Friday 18 December

9.20am – Prayer Room – **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**
10.00am – Prayer Room – **Mass** (livestreamed)
11am - **Rosary** - Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp and on the phone (contact Maria Igoe, 07981 333219)

Saturday 19 December

10.00am – St John's – Mass with **Baptism of Alistair Preston and Jayden O'Hara and Reception and Confirmation of Jessica Mzambe** (no booking required)
6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass (with Reconciliation celebrated before its start).**

Sunday 20 December

9.30am – St John's – **Mass (booking required)**
11.00am – **Full length Sunday Mass** (streamed on YouTube, pre-recorded from the Prayer Room)
11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass (booking required)**
4.30pm – St John's - **Mass (booking required)**
5pm – Zoom/Youtube – **PACT (Portobello and Area Christians together) Christmas Carol Service**

*O Christ Jesus,
When all is darkness
And we feel our weakness and helplessness,
Give us the sense of your presence,
Your love, and your strength.
Help us to have perfect trust in your protecting love
And strengthening power,
So that nothing may frighten or worry us,
For, living close to you,
We shall see your hand
Your purpose, your will through all things.
Amen.
(A prayer attributed to St Ignatius of Loyola)*

From Archbishop Leo's Weekly Ad Clerum

Pro-Life Advent Rosary

Join people across the Archdiocese on Zoom to pray for unborn children, their mothers and all Pro-Life intentions. Each Monday at 7:30pm in Advent. To register for week's event (14 Dec), visit bit.ly/AdventRosary3

Be Still

Sr Anna Marie McGuan RSM helps you cut through the cacophony of consumerism in preparation to celebrate the birth of Christ. **This Zoom event takes place at 7:30pm on Monday 14 December.** No registration required – join on the night using this link bit.ly/BeStillWebinar

Diploma in Catechetics

More people are registering for the Archdiocese's Diploma in Catechetics. Lectures take place on a Thursday evening on Zoom, so you can learn from the comfort and convenience of your home. To register visit bit.ly/CatecheticsDiploma (deadline 01 January). Or for more info email: sranna.marie@staned.org.uk

Advent Healing Service

New Dawn Scotland invite you to take part in an Advent Healing Service, led by Augustinian Friars at Clare Priory in Suffolk. It takes place on YouTube at 7:30-9:00pm on Friday 18 December. For details visit www.newdawninscotland.com

Year of St Joseph

Pope Francis proclaimed a year of St Joseph this week, which runs until 08 Dec 2021. He has issued a new Apostolic Letter, which is available online. Just type *Patris Corde* into your web browser. The letter marks the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.

Stay updated

To receive a monthly update from the Archdiocese straight to your inbox, subscribe at archedinburgh.org/news-events (scroll to bottom of page). Or email matthew.meade@staned.org.uk and put 'subscribe me' in the subject bar. The December update can be found at bit.ly/ArchDecUpdate.

With prayerful good wishes to each of you,

Sincerely in the Lord,

+Leo Cushley

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

Muslim Christian Interfaith Gathering, Sunday 13 December 5pm on Zoom

The Muslim community have invited the Bishops Conference of Scotland to help them host this short interfaith event on Sunday.

It's a moment of reflection and prayer, in this form:

Introduction- Azzam Mohamad

Jesus in the Qur'an – Sheikh Pakdin

Infancy Narratives in Gospels – Canon Robert Hill

Prayer from Fratelli Tutti – Bishop McGee

To join in over Zoom, go to

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88573840398?pwd=eExRNXpSeUZMZkxqN21lbnNLVnRpUT09>

Meeting ID: 885 7384 0398

Password: 879087

Join **The Edinburgh Jesuit Centre** for their Christmas Cracker Series on **Tuesday 15th December**. Their guest speaker will be **Scottish Singer Barbara Dickson!** They will also be livestreaming to their Facebook page! just type Jesuit Centre Edinburgh - For more information, please contact edinburghjesuitcentre@jesuit.org.uk

An Advent Journey with the Scottish Laity Network

Forced like Jesus Christ to Flee - How shall we Sing to the Lord in a Foreign Land?

Thursday 17 December ~ Hyab Yohannes and Hannah Rose Thomas - Stories of Pain, Survival and Hope leading to a Liturgy of Lament and Hope

‘Hyab is an Eritrean refugee and researcher at the University of Glasgow and holder of the UNESCO RILA PhD Scholarship. He works formally for local charities and international organisations in Egypt. Hannah is an English artist and Durham graduate in Arabic and History, currently studying her PhD at Glasgow University as a UNESCO Scholar. Through her art Hannah gives voice to the voiceless, lionises the isolated and prescribes dignity to the persecuted and forcibly displaced. Hannah seeks to use art as a tool for advocacy, bringing their stories into places of influence in the West.’

NOTICEBOARD

A CHRISTMAS RAFFLE - our first St John's Tower Fundraising Initiative - ...will be drawn on Wednesday 23 December – please do continue to buy, and sell, tickets.

Many thanks to all those who have handed ticket stubs in...and our apologies to all those who have only just received their tickets (there was a delay in our second printing) – there are still books available in the Parish House if you are able and willing to sell any more...(THANK YOU).

PS Special thanks to the kind person whose donation made it possible for us to send out three books of tickets by post to so many parishioners...

HOW ARE WE GOING TO KEEP WARM IN OUR CHURCHES THIS WINTER?



Both of our churches have circulating warm air central heating systems.

Current Government regulations recommend that the system can be used provided we switch it off 30 minutes before people arrive at the Church.

In practice that means one hour before Mass as our welcomers, organist and audio-visual team are in attendance earlier.

It is our intention to purchase additional electric heaters in order to endeavour to keep the churches as comfortable as possible.

We encourage everyone to dress as warmly as they can and perhaps bring their own knee blanket ... remembering to take it home again!

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

The Other by RS Thomas

There are nights that are so still that I can hear the small owl calling far off, and a fox barking miles away.

It is then that I lie in the lean hours awake listening to the swell born somewhere in the Atlantic rising and falling, rising and falling wave on wave on the long shore by the village that is without light and companionless.

And the thought comes of that other being who is awake, too, letting our prayers break on him, not like this for a few hours, but for days, years, for eternity.

Messages from the Justice & Peace Group

St Teresa's Foodbank

St Teresa's parish in Craigmillar operate a foodbank for the needy in their area which our two parishes have supported for a while. Obviously, they would like to be a little more generous during this Christmas season so, if you would like to donate any non-perishable foodstuffs – or any games/toys for the children – please leave it at the back of the church (St John's), the foyer (St Mary Magdalene's) or at the parish house. The J & P Group will arrange to deliver it to St Teresa's.

...and a reminder of ways you double the value of your Christmas giving

Mary's Meals. For just £15.90 you can set a place at our virtual Christmas dinner table and feed a hungry child for a whole school year. And it gets even better! Thanks to Double The Love, your donation will now feed two children with Mary's Meals.

Give until 31 January 2021 and your donation will be doubled by the UK government, up to £2 million – meaning we can reach even more hungry children in Liberia with life-changing school meals.

<https://bigfamilychristmas.marysmeals.org.uk/big-family-christmas-table/#set-a-place>

Water Aid If you'd like to help poor communities dependent on polluted water to gain access to the clean water that will help secure their future you can donate to our Future on Tap appeal. Until 4 February 2021, the UK government will match your donations, up to £2 million, making double the difference.

<https://www.wateraid.org/uk/donate>

Safe Passage Social distancing, online festivities, nationwide lockdowns. Christmas 2020 is going to be different to previous years. Unfortunately, for many of the child refugees living in Europe, festive periods separated from loved ones are a reality they face every year. We believe every child deserves to be with their families, and not just at Christmas. If you agree, this December you can Double Your Donation thanks to an aid-matching scheme <https://donate.thebiggive.org.uk/campaign/a051r00001fGxwSAAS>

GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY.... WELL, AT LEAST GOOD NEWS OF A LOAN FROM THE DIOCESE FOR THE ST JOHN'S TOWER PROJECT:

Gary Zoltie, Chair of St John's Finance Council, writes: 'Firstly, some good news!! At a meeting of the Trustees of the Archdiocese on Thursday 26 November they approved our proposal for an increased loan of £150,000 which now means that we have the funds in place to push on with the full tower renovation. The loan will be interest free and repaid over a maximum period of 25 years. Any money raised through donations, second collections, fundraising and grants will contribute towards reducing the loan required and the time over which the loan is repaid. Following my talk after the two St John's Masses a couple of weekends ago, we have received some questions from parishioners about how to process donations and standing order payments so we thought it would be worthwhile to restate that here:-

*For those with online banking you can set up a standing order payment or bank transfer to
Sort Code 80-46-53, Account No. 10765768
Account Name: St John The Evangelist*

Please add "Tower" and your surname to the reference so that we know it's to be allocated to the Tower Fund. If you don't have online banking but still want to make a regular weekly or monthly donation through your bank account we can provide you with a form which you can complete and send to your bank branch and they will set it up for you.

Finally, we thank you for your ongoing support and generosity and please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at garyzoltie@hotmail.com if you have any questions.'

Porty Light Box

*Keep an eye out
for the Light Box at the top of Bellfield St.
There will be
lots of photos from the local churches
providing some lovely Christmas cheer!*

A Reminder for those who do not have the Internet but would like to 'access' Mass....

Maria Igoe writes: 'Dial-a-Mass offers those who are unable at this time to get to Mass and who do not have the Internet, the opportunity to hear a short Mass daily on the phone. This was started by Fr Stephen Baillie, who will now share this service with 4 other Priests, including Bishop John Keenan. It is greatly appreciated by those who have no other way to partake in the prayers of the Mass and the scripture readings. Access this by phoning 0141 473 4869.'

The Faith Companion parishioner magazine is now online only. 'Digital copies and subscriptions are available at <http://www.thefaithcompanion.co.uk> or call 01403 754808. We have now launched Catholic Gifts online selling The Faith Companion candle, rosaries and a gift card for gifts or subscriptions. Please support and pray for our mission to support the Church.'

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline (24 hours)

 0800 027 1234

PARISH REGISTER

Please pray for those who have died recently: Frank Baron (Alice Codling's brother), Ian Allan, Janusz Medykowski and Elizabeth Foster Melliar

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Agnes Stone, John Ritchie, Jane Wright, Ron McLeay, George Smith, Alice Taylor, William Cotterell, Tina Haining, Alice Doherty, baby Colin Newall, Myles Durkin, John Cahill and Pat and John McHugh

St John's Dec.12:- Jean McCraw (2019); Alice Doherty (2019); John Ritchie (2016); Valerie Messent (2003); Myles Durkin (1975); Margaret Riach (1960); Ann Cassidy; James Daly; **Dec.13:-** Jane Wright (2016); John Dalrymple (2016); James Quinn (1991); Joseph P Gannon (1968); Agnes Stone (1964); **Dec.14:-** John Cahill (2017); Isabel Garvie (2015); Peter Brown (2004); Annie C Dobson (2002); Margaret Donaldson; Margaret Ward; **Dec.15:-** Maureen Callaghan (2019); Sarah Carty (2001); Janet Peters (1993); William Cotterell (1984); Jeannie O'Brien (1959); Edward D Maher (1958); Catherine Carvell; Catherine Connell; **Dec.16:-** Winifred Curran (2012); Margaret Mary Dick (2001); Patricia Scott (1999); John Nolans; **Dec.17:-** Annie Nelson (2005); William Cotterell (2000); Elizabeth Grieve; Mary Meehan; Maurice O'Neil; **Dec.18:-** Robert Devine (2001); Pauline Iannarelli (1968); Agostino Nicora (1964);

St Mary Magdalene's Dec.15:- Baby Colin Newall (1968); **Dec.16:-** Patricia Scott (1999);

Sick Parishioners - St. John's: Nora Bruce, Evelyn Oldershaw, Anna Butler, May Flynn, Vincent Knowles, John Cregan, young Saoirse Golden, John Whyte, Chloe Sutherland, Frances Cunningham, David Reid, Molly Lugton, Sheila Tansey, Frank Logan, Charlotte McGregor, Betty Dougal, Anne Thomson, Eileen Brown, Mike Noonan, Sarah McManus, Patricia Lawler, Mike Burns, Sr Jennifer Lindsay, Ernie Moran, Maureen Low, Pat Hunter, Dolores Jones, Alan Blyth, Mary Slight, Mary Phair, Sara Alkahankni, Rose Thornton, Gallagher Kitty Dykes, Norman Telfer, Philip Jamieson, Giulio Crolla, Alf MacNamara, Stan McKay, Maureen Lawrie, Mary Grady, Kathie, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme

Sick Parishioners - St. Mary Magdalene's: Chris and Louise English, Jacqueline Marinello, Sheila and George Service, Ray Donnelly, Sam Burns, Clive Davis, Ella Ayers, Isobel Phillips, Denis Davidson, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Ann Dockrell, John Prior, John Newell, Michael McPhilipps, Bridget Malone, Charles Malcolm, Margaret Ryan, Jacqueline Hannan, Julie Keegan, Rose McKay, Laurie Wallace, Annie Watson, David O'Donnell, Andrew Banks, Jude Ferguson, and Mary & James Muir.

Please pray for sick friends and relatives of parishioners, including: Fr Christy Fox, Joe Greenan, Martin Carr, Michael Igoe, baby Josh Simpson, Katie McAnenny, Piotr and Daniela Przekop. Jack Gibson, Robert Shaw, baby Kinsley McMillan, baby Francesca Horwood, Peter Von Schenk, Anthony Finnerty, John Walsh, Linda McKean, Moira McConville, Kathleen Kay, Margaret and Victoria Roddam, Hazel Yeoman, John Williams, Clare Richardson, Karen MacKay, Laura Anderson, Max Middleton (aged 9), Gloria Crolla, Richard Reid, James O'Rourke, Tommy Muir, Janice Todd, Lauli Ridge, Jan Meise, Seval Kazimoglu, Anne Young, James Shepherd, Carla Zanetti, Peter Hanley, Jennifer Kay, Janie Low, Ranier Carpo, William Young, Marie Baird, Andrew Franklin, Frank Palmer, Paul Henderson, Ellen Green, Andrew Preston, Celine Diniz, Jamie Mitchell, Eunice Macdonald, Peter Bromley, Audrey Burgess, Kathleen Cawley, Margo Law, Misia Jack, Hannah Muldoon, Emma Bromet, Edward Caulfield, Mike Enfield, Savannah McDonald, Pat Dignan, Sharon Anderson, Igor Rekowski, Diana Hibbert, Roksana Moczulstra, Joan Brooks, Sr May Lewis, Mary Turnbull, Stuart Falconer, Jake Jorden and young Ray Donovan Syme

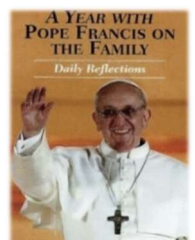
Welcome to the world....Maisie Tweedie, born on 21 November, a first child for Gemma and Roy, and a grandchild for Laura and Alan.



Offertory Collections	St Mary Magdalene	St John the Evangelist
5 December 2020	£30.06 offertory and £5.00 Gift Aid - £35.06 total	£503.40 (including Gift Aid of £284.05) and £600.00 Standing Orders – £1103.40 total
Tower Fund Collection	£1250.00	

“Let us make ourselves ready to celebrate Christmas contemplating Mary and Joseph: Mary, the woman full of grace who had the courage to entrust herself fully to the Word of God: Joseph, the faithful and just man who chose to believe the Lord rather than listen to the voice of doubt and human pride”

*To have a living faith
does not mean that we run away
from the building site
to ask God to do our work for us.
It means that we give all our energies
to the job at hand,
while asking God to work with us.
(Michel Quoist)*



‘WHERE I FIND GOD’ – Daniel O’Connell

Dan O’Connell is married and has two young children. He lives in Ennis and he is a lecturer in Religious Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. He has co-written the new Grow in Love programme for junior and senior infants in primary schools.



Last thing at night, before I go to bed, I call into the children’s bedrooms. We have two boys: one is five and the other is seven. I love this final visit. They are always fast asleep, tucked up safe and sound. They are so peaceful and perfect at this time. In these visits, I feel such a sense of well-being and my heart swells. There is a profound sense of connection to them; my life bound up with theirs.

In these visits I forget about the day that has gone by and I don’t think about the one to come; all I know is this moment. Here I am forgetful of myself. I feel free, simply enveloped in love for these two boys. And it is here, in these moments, that I find God.

I believe that God is love and where there is love, there is God. My children help me notice and cherish the presence of love. In this way, I believe they are somewhat sacramental; their lives reveal the presence of God. Their very existence reorientates my whole life and invites me into love. They ask me to join them in the present moment, for example to wrestle with them on the floor and find delight in doing it. When we explore together the world of Power Rangers, they are asking me to let go of my busyness and take myself less seriously. They help me into a world in which I become less attached to myself and more open to them and their world of wonder and possibility. I believe their love helps me notice God – who is love – loving me, in and through my children.

There’s a Theme to this Year’s Wise Men Jokes....

