



Diocesan Centre  
Coursington Road  
Motherwell  
ML1 1PP

**Rt Rev. Joseph Toal** STB KC\*HS  
**Bishop of Motherwell**

6th May 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

**World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2022**

I hope this finds you well.

In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus tells us:

*"The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;  
I know them and they follow.  
I give them eternal life."*

When we read these words or hear them proclaimed at Holy Mass, we know it is Good Shepherd Sunday and The Church's World Day of Prayer for Vocations. I invite you therefore to listen attentively to the Lord's call and to renew your response in following faithfully and lovingly in the vocation he has given each of us. Let us be grateful for this call and ask the Lord to renew our desire to serve Him and His Body, the Church, with all the talents and graces he has blessed us with.

We offer special prayers on this day for those called to be Priests, Deacons and Religious, and pray that others may hear the Lord's call to offer their lives for formation for ordination or religious consecration. If anyone reading this letter does feel called and ready to respond please share this with your Parish Priest. One of our seminarians, Kieran Burt, is being instituted as a Lector today in the Scots College in Rome at the hands of Archbishop Nolan. I ask your prayers for him and those preparing for priesthood with him.

The Lord promised those who listen and follow his voice eternal life, and we pray that this promise may be fulfilled for Canons Michael Walsh and Willie Dunnachie, who have passed away in recent times after their long dedicated lives of priestly ministry. May they rest in peace. Canon Dunnachie's Funeral Mass will be in the Cathedral on Thursday at 12 Noon.

For many, your vocation is Marriage and Family Life and the Church invites you to participate here in the Diocese in the World Meeting of Families which will take place in Rome towards the end of June. As well as the Celebration of Mass in the Cathedral on Sunday June 26th an invitation is extended to pray the Rosary in your families during the Month of May and to participate in Eucharistic Devotions as Families in our parishes around the Feast of Corpus Christi. Literature has been printed to assist participation and I hope that praying at home and celebrating our faith together in Church may strength our families in difficult times and bring consolation to those most in need.

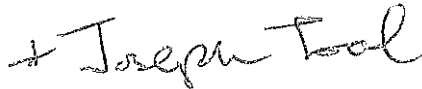
A good number of the priests serving in the Diocese gathered together for a Day of Prayer and Reflection last Thursday and it was good for us to come together after the separation of the last two years. While acknowledging the negative effects of isolation, many priests expressed thanks and appreciation for the love and support received from parishioners during the pandemic and I join them in recording our grateful thanks for all the kindness received. Although we still need to be careful in our parishes we hope that the recovery from Covid will be marked by renewed participation in the life and worship of the Church and continued awareness of the needs of others, especially the poor and lonely in our parishes.

I take this opportunity to thank all who have participated in the Synodal Process in the Parishes, Schools, and other Groups in the Diocese. Your responses will be collated into the Diocesan Response, which will be forwarded then to the Bishops' Conference to become part of the Scottish Response. We will have a Liturgy of Reception and Thanksgiving for the Motherwell Response on 26th May, Ascension Thursday. This will take place in Our Lady of Good Aid Primary School at 7pm. Again the words of the Lord in today's Gospel ask us to listen to him and to follow what he says. Our following of the Lord is enhanced by our walking together in communion and listening to one another as we are being so strongly encouraged to do.

May the Good Shepherd lead us in our efforts and watch over us all as we seek to serve him and each other to the best of our ability in the particular vocations he has blessed us with.

With my prayers and best wishes.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Joseph Toal". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

**+ Joseph Toal**