

Weekly Message from Fr William for Final Sunday in Ordinary Time 2022

Dear People of St Mary's,

As mentioned in my last weekly message I'm looking into whether we can as a parish use our parish hall and our time and service to be part of the Warm Welcome initiative that provides a warm space, a warm welcome, and a hot drink for those struggling with energy costs. Can we provide a warm welcome? Might we even put on a Christmas Dinner at St Mary's during the Christmas Octave for those who might have missed out? I've had one offer already to help out.

Do we have the space, the facilities, the volunteers to do this as a parish? Well, the Hall is currently free at these times:

- Mondays before 12.30pm
- Tuesdays all day
- Wednesdays from 1.30pm (except 7th December)
- Thursdays all day
- Fridays after 1.30pm

Let me know if you can volunteer to put on hot drinks in the hall for some of this time during December and January and help provide a warm welcome, or even help out with a Christmas Dinner during the Octave, or any time during the Christmas Season.

We needn't think of this as putting on something just for those in need. It could be open to everyone, and an opportunity to meet new people across different walks of life, and an enriching experience for everyone.

At the World Day of the Poor in 2021, Pope Francis taught us that the poor are not people 'outside' our communities, but 'brothers and sisters whose sufferings we should share, in an effort to alleviate their difficulties and marginalization, restore their lost dignity and ensure their necessary social inclusion'.

Those who are poor 'can help set us free from the snares of anxiety and superficiality', says Pope Francis. That is why the pope insists that our work is never *for* the poor, but *with* the poor and *of* the poor, work that brings people together. (*Fratelli Tutti* 169)

We would also be doing this in coordination with the other churches across the town. See this Sunday's bulletin for a bit more on this. And see last Sunday's weekly message for a bit more context.

Next Sunday – Advent, and the beginning of a new Christian Year !

