

not 365 days, like a common year.

The next leap day is February 29, 2020. The last Leap Day was on February 29, 2016.

Leap days are needed to keep our calendar in alignment with the Earth's revolutions around the Sun.

It takes the Earth approximately 365.242189 days – or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds – to circle once around the Sun. This is called a tropical year.

Without an extra, or intercalary, day on February 29 nearly every four years, we would lose almost six hours every year. After only 100 years, a calendar without leap years would be off

However, adding a leap day every four years was too often and eventually, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian Calendar. This calendar, which we still use today, has a more precise formula for calculation of leap years, also known as bissextile years.

### Traditions & Folklore

Leap day as a concept has existed for more than 2000 years and it is still associated with age-old customs, folklore, and superstition. One of the most well-known traditions is that women propose to their boyfriends, instead of the other way around.

### Transfiguration Sunday 23 February

The transfiguration of Jesus provides a glimpse of Jesus Christ's deity. This revelation of His glory is recorded in The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 17:1-3; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36).<sup>1</sup> One week before the Transfiguration, Peter shared his confession of Jesus as Messiah. Jesus would soon make His final departure from Galilee, about four months before His death. One of the purposes of the Transfiguration was to strengthen the faith of the disciples in the divine nature of Jesus before they experienced the shock of the difficult days ahead. Jesus longed for a presentation of His Heavenly Father's divine magnificence

### Welcome

Welcome to the February issue of Monthly News from the Wardens and Ministry team. Last month we focus on the festivals of Epiphany and Candlemas and the 40 days of Christmas when our Lord came to us in human form.

This month of February we look at and examine the meaning of the Transfiguration, Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the season of Lent leading to that Glorious Easter Day.

We also have commentary on Eco Church and the use of our world's resources and the history behind 2020 being a leap year and bring a new incumbent to St. Mary's.

A Leap Day, February 29, is added to the calendar during leap years. This extra day makes the year 366 days long –



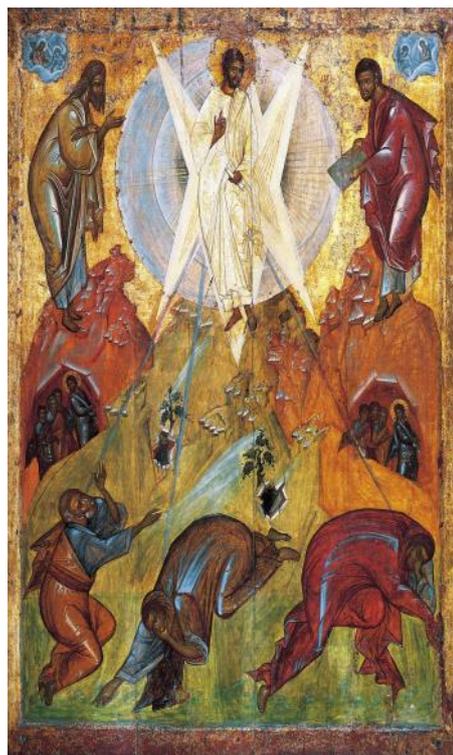
by approximately 24 days in relation to fixed seasonal days such as the vernal equinox or the winter solstice.

Roman general Julius Caesar implemented the first leap day in his Julian Calendar, which he introduced in 45 BCE. A leap day was added every four years. At the time, leap day was February 24, and February was the last month of the year.

and splendor in human form (John 17:24).

Glimpses of His glory were displayed while maintaining unity with His human form/appearance. As Jesus prayed, He was "transfigured" (Mark 9:2). This means His countenance or facial appearance was changed. Jesus' face shown like the sun. The substance of His body remained the same; He was not turned into spirit. His body which had appeared in weakness and dishonour, now appeared in power and glory (1 Corinthians 15:43). His clothes became white and glistening as the light.

At Jesus' baptism, the Spirit of



God came down on His Son in the form of a dove. The voice of God provided the authentication from heaven, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." In Matthew 17:5, at the Transfiguration, God repeats these words. All three Persons of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Spirit—were revealed (Matthew 3:16-17).

The Transfiguration again portrays God's incarnate glory, as it was laid out in the Old Testament (Ezekiel 1:28; Ezekiel 10:4).

Transfiguration and transformation both come from the Greek verb *metamorphoo*, meaning "to change into another form." Scripture makes only four references of this verb. As indicated earlier, Matthew 17:2 and Mark 9:2, bear reference to Jesus' radiant appearance. On the road to Damascus, the apostle Paul encountered Jesus' light which left him temporarily blind and permanently transformed as powerful instrument for God's glory (Acts 9:3, 17-18). In Romans 12:2, Paul urges believers to "be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Our attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and actions are affected by a control center, our mind. This transformation or renewal requires a total change from the inside out. How are Jesus' transfiguration and our transformation interwoven? Second Corinthians 3:18 refers to "metamorphoo" when the apostle Paul speaks to the believers "...who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, [and] are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." As with the disciples, God desires that we are transformed by an encounter with the One and Only.

The Transfiguration represents a focal point of God's Kingdom—Christ fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies—the cross, resurrection, and His eternal glory. Humanity was added to Christ's deity, yet He

became the radiant "light of men." Jesus Christ, God's Word made flesh, offers magnificent illumination and transformation to all people. (John 8:12)

**Pope Francis says 'care for our common home' should be everyone's concern**



CARE for "our common home" should be a concern for everyone, not the subject of ideological conflict, Pope Francis has said.

In his annual New Year address to the 183 members of the Diplomatic Corps who currently have diplomatic relations with the Holy See, the Pope told them: "The protection of the home given to us by the Creator cannot be neglected or reduced to an elitist concern."



Besides climate change, the Pope also spoke on topics including child abuse in the Roman Catholic Church, and ongoing efforts for peace around the world, and praised the part played by women in society.

He said: "Care for our common home ought to be a concern of everyone, and not the object of ideological conflict between different views of reality, or, much less, between generations... "At every level we are being

urgently challenged to protect our common home and to 'bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development'.

"Sadly, the urgency of this ecological conversion seems not to have been grasped by international politics, where the response to the problems raised by global issues such as climate change remains very weak and a source of grave concern."

He also spoke of his disappointment at the outcome of the COP25 climate summit (20 December 2019).

Second-century Church refer to the wearing of ashes as a sign of penance.

Priests administer ashes during Mass and in public areas where all are invited to accept the ashes as a visible symbol of penance. Even non-Christians are welcome to receive the ashes. The ashes are made from blessed palm branches, taken from the previous year's palm Sunday Eucharist service.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection at Easter. Our Eucharistic service starting at 7-30pm will include ashing and give time for reflection and prayerfulness.

To help inspire our prayerfulness in this penitential season please consider joining the Lenten meetings held on each Friday evening or take time out from the busyness of the day and come to "Breathing Space" and "Holy Hour" each month.



### Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent

Ash Wednesday is one of the most popular and important holy days in the liturgical calendar. Ash Wednesday opens Lent, a season of fasting and prayer. Ash Wednesday takes place 46 days before Easter Sunday.

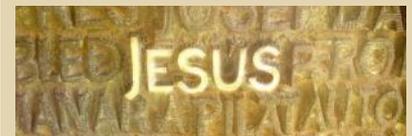
Ash Wednesday comes from the ancient Jewish tradition of penance and fasting. The practice includes the wearing of ashes on the head. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. As the priest applies the ashes to a person's forehead, he speaks the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Alternatively, the priest may speak the words, "Repent of your sins and turn to Christ"

Ashes also symbolize grief, in this case, grief that we have sinned and caused division from God. Writings from the

### Lenten Prayer

*Lord may Lent be a time of inward searching that makes me more able to look with compassion at the needs of the world. Help us to draw near to you in praise, stripping away all that distracts us from worship, building up your Kingdom, here and now. Amen*

### Gospel Readings



2 February Candlemas  
Presentation of Christ in the temple

Luke 2: 22-40

9 February Epiphany 5

Matthew 5: 13-20

16 February Epiphany 6

Matthew 6: 25-34

23 February Epiphany 7

Transfiguration Sunday

Matthew 17: 1-9

26 February Ash Wednesday

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Be at Peace

### HOLY HOUR



11am

Last Saturday of the month

In Church

### Breathing Space

"A time for you  
with God"

2nd Wednesday of each  
month

Next 12 February

8-00pm to 8-45pm

in church

See Rev.Carole for details

## What's on



2 Feb Candlemas (normal service times)  
6 Feb PSP 10am (check twitter)  
9 Feb Epiphany 5 (normal service times)  
12 Feb Breathing Space 8pm  
13 Feb PSP 10am (check twitter)  
16 Feb Epiphany 6 (normal service times)  
20 Feb PSP 10am (check twitter)  
23 Feb Epiphany 7 (normal service times)  
26 Feb Ash Wednesday 7-30pm (with Ashing)  
27 Feb PSP 10am (check twitter)  
29 Feb Holy Hour & Eucharist 11am  
1 Mar Lent 1 (normal service times)

St Mary's parish prayer  
Loving Father, we pray your blessing on our parish. Help us to have hearts open to your Holy Spirit.  
Give us the courage to follow the way of Christ. Strengthen us to be faithful in prayer and loving service. Help us to play our part in building up your Kingdom here and now. Amen.



CHOIR  
PRACTICE

Thursday evenings  
7-30pm till 9-00pm  
Please see Gary for details



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SUPPORTING OUR RESTORATION

## Study Course

During Lent

Each Friday Evening

7-30pm

See Rev. Carole

For details

Limited numbers

for catering purposes



### Regular worship at St Mary's

#### Sunday

8.00am Eucharist  
10.30am Sung Eucharist

#### Tuesday

7.30am Morning Prayer  
8-15am Eucharist

#### Wednesday

7.30am Morning Prayer  
8-15am Eucharist

#### Thursday

7.30am Morning Prayer  
\*9.10am Eucharist in St Mary's School  
\*10.00am Pre-School Praise

#### Friday

7.30am Morning Prayer  
8-15am Eucharist

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