

## **St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall**

Scottish Charity SCO 05322/CCL No 119086

[St Magnus Cathedral Facebook page](#)

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Welcome to St Magnus Cathedral this morning. It was founded in 1137 by St Rognvald, in honour of Magnus, his uncle. The Cathedral belongs to the people of Orkney and its doors are open to all. If you are a visitor, we hope this order of service will help you feel part of our worship together.

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You can find our Sunday worship

[here on Facebook](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation/>

or [on YouTube here](#)

Join our Wednesday ZOOM meditation by signing up here.

[stmagnuszoom@gmail.com](mailto:stmagnuszoom@gmail.com)

Candle Lighting and opening meditation

**In our tradition the time of rest begins with the lighting of a candle. In this moment the stopping truly begins. To take a few breaths, to allow the mind to quieten. This is the beginning of sacred time.**

Logos - The Word

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, pitching his tent in our daily life. The Word is our light, enabling us in the darkness. The Word helps us to perceive the straight and narrow way, the spiralling way that leads to that mystery beyond telling. The Word is the door of the sheepfold, enabling us to move freely as we are guided to vital sustenance. The Word is ever-present with compassionate love. The Word ever holds for us the energy of prayer, that vital essence of all that is, enlightening, encouraging, enabling and spiritually enriching as we are gently transformed on our earthly journey from now to eternity.

### Reading Mark 1: 4-11

And so John the Baptizer appeared in the desert, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to John and were baptised by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. John was clothed in camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and he ate nothing but grasshoppers and wild honey. In the course of his preaching, John said, "One more powerful than I is to come after me. I am not fit to stoop and untie his sandal straps. I have baptised you in water, but the One to come will baptise you in the Holy Spirit." It was then that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan River by John. Immediately upon coming out of the water, Jesus saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. Then a voice came from the heavens: "You are my Beloved, my Own. On you my favour rests."

### Reflection

We have all seen them.  
Walking briskly with briefcase and mobile phone in tow,  
weaving in and out of pedestrians along the footpath  
as they go from appointment to appointment.

Company representatives.  
Sales people.  
Public servants.  
Even ministers of religion.

A few years back now a group of computer salesmen went from Edinburgh to Glasgow to take part in their annual State one-day sales meeting. They assured their spouses they would be home in plenty of time for dinner.

But, with one thing or another, the meeting ran over time so they had to run to Central Station, tickets in hand.

As they rushed through the ticket terminal area, one man inadvertently crashed into a table supporting a display of fruit.

Without stopping they all reached Platform No. 10 and the train - just, and boarded it with a sigh of relief. All but one.

He paused, got in touch with his feelings, and experienced a twinge of compunction for the youth whose fruit stand they had caused to almost collapse.

He stepped off the train, waved goodbye to his companions and returned to the ticket area where he helped pick up the scattered fruit.

He was glad he did. The youth was blind.

As he picked up the fruit he noticed several of the peaches and pears were bruised. He reached into his coat pocket, took out his wallet, pulled out some money and said to the youth: "Here, please take this £20 for the damage we did.

"I hope it didn't spoil your day too much".

As he started to walk back towards the platform to wait for another train,

the bewildered youth called out to him:

"Are you Jesus, or something?"

ooOoo

Mark the gospel storyteller has told his story this morning. And we have accepted his invitation and told another story in reply.

In that story Mark invites his listeners to see the presentness of the sacred, in Jesus... He says:

"And a voice came from heaven,

"You are my Beloved, my Own. On you my favour rests."

But Mark is not here and we are a different people in a different time.

Our challenge now is to ask the question:  
How can we translate that into a daily recognition  
of the presentness of the sacred in every person?

For most of us, that can be a bit hard.

Freddy is very drunk.  
He sits in the church alone, abusing out loud.  
Nobody is there.

People begin to arrive for the evening service.

Freddy becomes more abusive and aggressive  
so that it is inappropriate to begin the service.  
Freddy has to go.

Things were proceeding fairly well and we are nearing the door  
when 'all hell breaks loose':  
foul language directed at the minister;  
threatening to hit him and kick him,  
blaming him for so many things and finally, spitting at him.

"Through all this," said the minister, "I remained externally calm.  
Inwardly I felt both angry and a little frightened.

"What a relief it was when he left the church and I closed the side door  
behind him.  
Now, on with the service."

Crash. He has returned and started to kick in the door  
of the recently restored church.

"Now I showed my anger externally", the minister said.  
"A bit of a chase ensued and then he was gone again.

"It was difficult to compose myself after this."

This, of course, was the drink presenting a facade.  
The dignity of the man was hidden.

"I saw him later," the minister said, "and gently reminded him of this  
episode, but he had no memory of it". .

How can we translate that into a daily recognition  
of the presence of the sacred in every person?  
To do so means breaking down the facade  
that keeps us from seeing the God-given dignity of every person,  
and recognising the presence of the sacred in others -  
especially those who are suffering.

"Hey Jimmy, what are you doing down here tonight?"

After all, he isn't well and he has a room in one of the Lodging houses.  
Here he is out on the street.

"You've got a room to go to, so get yourself into gear and go home".

This is crazy that he should be out on a cold night.  
"Come on, get home."

And then he gets a chance to speak.

"I can't go home, boss. Frank's crocked himself and he has nowhere to  
stay,  
so I've given him my room for the night.  
"I'll be right".

The presence of the sacred in every person....

#### Prayer

*We bring to mind those who are enjoying successes, and those who are  
taking stock after painful defeats. May neither success bring selfishness,  
nor defeat breed bitterness.*

*We bring to mind those who are just and compassionate, and some who  
are unjust and cruel. May injustice be brought down and mercy be blessed  
with greater mercy.*

*We bring to mind those who seek peace and those who are out to make  
enemies. May the Spirit meddle in human affairs and teach us the way of  
justice and peace.*

*We bring to mind people who are celebrating the birth of a new child, and  
those who are mourning the death of a dear one. May the Spirit's  
presence minister to each according to their need.*

*What we have prayed for others we now pray for ourselves. No matter  
what happens, may we be blessed with that good humour which flows from  
a faith founded on Christ and nurtured by the Holy Spirit.*

## Blessing

We are beloved, forgiven and cherished, so may we go in peace.  
We go in the knowledge that we are treasured members of God's family,  
companions with Jesus along life's journey,  
and forever accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

May you stay safe in the Way of Christ, and may you be blessed by his  
Spirit this day and always.