

# **EIN HARGLWYDDES SEREN Y MÔR OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA LLANDUDNO**

35 LLOYD STREET. LL30 2YA

**SUNDAY 23 AUGUST 2009**

**may we know Christ more clearly  
love him more dearly  
and follow him more nearly**

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# Dear Parishioner,

His name sounds Scottish. It could be spelt MacGrahay. He speaks with a bit of a Scottish accent, or at least I would imagine he does, for he has been living in the West of Scotland for the past eight years. But his name is not spelt MacGrahay, but Alde-baset Ali al-Megrahi. He is, of course, the Libyan who was found guilty of perpetrating the Lockerbie air disaster in 1998, Britain's worst ever terrorist attack, when two-hundred and seventy people were killed.

On Thursday, the Scottish Justice Secretary, Kenny MacAskill, in a comprehensive and profoundly Christian speech, of which the Scottish Nation can be truly proud, announced Megrahi's release from prison on compassionate grounds, as his life expectancy is very limited, suffering as he is from terminal cancer.

Great political pressure had been put on Mr MacAskill to keep Me-

grahi in prison till he died, to ensure that he paid the last half-pennyworth of his debt to society. The US administration, represented by seven US Senators, including Edward Kennedy and John Kerry, had leaned upon the Justice Secretary to keep Megrahi locked up to the bitter end, while Hilary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, said that releasing him would be "absolutely wrong". I am glad that the Scots had the political backbone to stand up to this American pressure and not to have "poodled" around as Mr Blair so blatantly did in the past. But I mustn't get into politics; my purpose in focussing on this story is otherwise.

There is a nasty streak in human nature that must see heads roll when disaster strikes. We have seen all too often on our television screens the relatives of victims in tears when a person, falsely accused and banged up in jail for years, is released on new evidence. They were happy

that somebody was paying the price—and it would sometimes seem that it didn't matter who!

There can be no doubt about the rightful sense of outrage when something like the Lockerby bombing occurs, and I would be the last to underestimate the grief and distress of the loved ones.

But what do those loved ones gain from Megrahi, in this case, dying in a foreign prison away from his family? What gain can anyone derive from seeing another person suffer? Only that sense of satisfaction which seems to gratify this perverse streak in us which wants to see heads roll, vengeance taken. Because he brought disaster to 270 families, something of the same should happen to his. That's the thinking, but is it right? It can't be.

I am not arguing for every criminal Tom, Dick and Harry to be released early. What I am trying to say is that there must always be time for being compassionate.

I know this to be true because it is what God does, what Christ

taught by his words and showed by his deeds. What hope would you or I or anyone else have, if God thought like Hilary Clinton thinks, or the US Senators, or so many of the families of the victims? If he showed no compassion towards us; if he exacted the last pound of flesh? "Be compassionate as your heavenly Father is compassionate", said Jesus.

St Paul tells us that Christ died for us when we were still sinners: he died for us even when we were out of friendship with Him. He died for Judas, for Pilate, for the soldiers who hammered in the six-inch nails, for you, for me, for Hilary Clinton, for Megrahi.

Christ reveals God as the infinitely Compassionate One. If we are to be pleasing to God, if we are to be Christians worthy of the name, we too must be compassionate. To be able to get inside another man's skin, no matter who he is, and feel his pain and touch his fears.

God bless you, Fr Antony Jones

DAY	FEAST	MASS	INTENTION	DEVOTIONS AND ACTIVITIES
<b>SAT</b> 22nd	<b>Queenship of BVM</b>	12 noon 530pm	Tom Byrne MM Tom and Agnes Flynn	<b>Children's Adoration: 10am</b> Confessions 4.15 –5.15 pm. And after both Masses
<b>SUN</b>	<b>Sunday 21B</b>	930am	For the Parish	<b>Baptisms: 12 noon</b>
<b>MON</b>	<b>St Bartholomew</b>			
<b>TUE</b>	Feria	12 noon	Canon O'Donovan RIP	Finance Committee: 430pm Catechumenate, 730pm, SM
<b>WED</b> 26th	St David Lewis	12 noon	Glyn Davies RIP	<b>Funeral 945am: Michael Anthony McGee</b> SVP 730pm Eucharistic Adoration 8-9pm.
<b>THU</b> 27th	St Monica	12 noon	Eric Lockwood RIP	Rosary, 1130am <b>Open House, 2-4pm, Stella Maris</b>
<b>FRI</b> 28th	St Augustine	12 noon	Sean O'Donnell and Family	<b>No YCM Coffee Break during Holidays</b> Eucharistic Adoration: 1230-415pm Holy Hour 3-4pm. Benediction 4pm.
<b>SAT</b> 29th	Martyrdom of St John the Baptist	12 noon 530pm	Joe O'Donnell and Family Holy Souls	<b>Service of Reconciliation: 10am</b> <b>Confessions: 4.15-5.15pm.</b> And after both Masses
<b>SUN</b>	<b>Sunday 22B</b>	9.30am	For the Parish	<b>Wedding 3pm. Katie and Kostas</b>

Thank you for Last Sunday's Collection: £948 (of which £242 was gift-aided= £68 tax refund to Parish)  
 Thank you for Feed my Lambs, £252 (feeding over 300 starving Sudanese children for a week) Brilliant!  
 Collection Today for the Diocese's **Poor Mission and Church Extension Fund**  
 Appeal at all Masses next weekend for **Aid to the Church in Need**