



## DIOCESE OF PAISLEY

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### Day for Life 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

### Day for Life 2023

Today is Fathers' Day and a good opportunity for us to thank GOD for our fathers, whether still with us or gone to the LORD, and to ask His blessing on them and their vocation to be good witness to their children as they guide and protect their families through these unsettled times.

Each year on this day, our Churches in Scotland, England and Wales and Ireland celebrate the Day for Life, a day in our Church's year which is dedicated to raising awareness about the meaning and value of human life at every stage and in every condition *from the womb to the tomb*.

This year's theme, ***Listen to Her***, tells *Jane's Story* of the healing a woman found through the Church and the Sacraments and a *Rachel's Vineyard* retreat following the tragic circumstances of her abortion, and of her long journey back to peace and light. At the end of her journey, she found the consolation and joy of accepting herself and her motherhood in the grace of GOD. This year's theme focuses on the all too often silent voices of women like Jane, on their regret, their lifelong struggle with post-abortion trauma and their hope of eventual healing and new life.

The scene of our First Reading is a wilderness, a place seemingly without life or hope. Yet it is precisely here that the LORD comes to His People with a message of fresh promise. He is a GOD powerful enough to defeat all that enslaves them and, at the same time, gentle enough to carry them with eagles' wings to a new beginning. Through Moses He encourages His People that He loves them with a unique Father's love, more than anyone else in all the world.



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In the Second Reading, Saint Paul reassures us that GOD saves us not because we are good but because He is good; because He is our Father, and we are His children. Because of GOD's infinite personal love for us we can joyfully count on being saved if only we trust in His love, proved in the sacrifice of His Only Son, Our LORD Jesus Christ.

In the Gospel, amid the dejection and sorrow Jesus finds all around Him, He sees only hope of a rich harvest. He has the authority to cast out every darkness and power to heal any sadness that has engulfed His Father's children who have lost their way in life. He can even raise those who are dead in heart and soul. All He needs are generous workers who will proclaim the Good News of His Kingdom of mercy and grace to His broken People.

Today we find many souls lost in the wilderness of these present times, living anxious and disconsolate lives. The Good News is that these are the ones closest to Our Father's heart, Who has the means to free them for new life and dreams out of His loving goodness.

We pray that He finds in our Church generous workers who will spread His message of life and transform the wilderness of our times into abundant harvests of hope and joy.

In his Message for **Day for Life 2023**, Pope Francis imparts his apostolic blessings on all those in Scotland, England and Wales, and Ireland who participate in this Day and I add my own prayers to his.

With every good wish and blessing,

*John Keenan*

Bishop President for Marriage, Families and Life.