



St Brigid's Parish, Blanchardstown Newsletter

Fourth Sunday of Advent— Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December 2023



Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:7-8



Four Gifts for you this Advent

Christmas Arrangements

Sunday 24th Dec	10.30am 4th Sunday of Advent
Sunday 24th Christmas Eve	6pm Family Mass 8.30pm Carol Service 9pm VIGIL MASS
Monday 25th Christmas Day	9am and 10.30am No Evening Mass
Tue 26th to Fri 29th	Mass at 11am No exposition of the blessed sacrament
Saturday 30th	6pm Vigil for Sunday
Sunday 31st	10.30am
Monday 1st Jan	11am Public Holiday No Evening Mass
Tuesday 2nd Jan	10am (Normal Schedule resumes)
Friday 5th Jan	10am 7.30pm (Vigil of Epiphany)
Saturday 6th	10am Epiphany 6pm (Vigil for Sunday)

One day while on honeymoon in Crete, we joined a trip going up the mountains to an evening of traditional dance and food. It was sweltering hot and was a treacherous journey, along a small, winding dirt road whose steep edges constantly threaten an unforeseen plummet into the seemingly arid valley below. The whole area seemed desolate and empty as we got higher I got another view. From here, in the distance, through the window of the vehicle I could see the outline of a currently dry river bed. It was easily visible because all along its dry banks, life abounded. From high above, the river bed was like a ribbon of green and gold. In the brilliant sunshine, green and gold leaves fluttered on trees and shrubs, whose roots stretched out to be watered by the stream when the rains came. These roots must have gone deep to sustain such abundant life even during a long, dry season. Advent is a time to sink our spiritual roots deep, to let them stretch out to God, the source of all life. Because we are thus connected with God, we too can be sources of life to others in the way we live our daily life. Christmas is not only the season of receiving gifts; it is even more so the season of taking delight in giving to others. We emulate what God has done for us and in that we find our deepest joy. Let us prepare, then, to be generous in offering our family, co-workers, and neighbours spiritual gifts such as patience, prudence, encouragement, counsel, faith, hope, and love. There's a spiritual adage that says, "You can't give what you haven't got." The gift offered during this last week of Advent is the gift of hope. Let us drink deeply of the spiritual gift of hope that God offers us. Then we can cherish within us the spirit of Christmas and bring to others the blessings of the Christ Child every day of the year.

Theme: Hope Helps Us Endure in Difficult Times

We can easily become impatient with God and with one another. Living in hope means being willing to live courageously day to day. The signs of change in us will most likely be subtle. Living in hope means that while Jesus has already come, we are still in the process of letting him complete the journey into our hearts. Rediscover, live and be the hope and strength that comes from the celebration of the Christmas story.

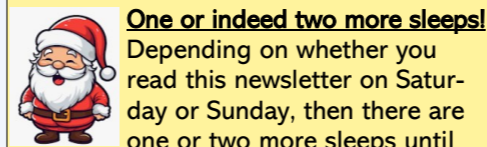
THESE GIFTS ARE GIVEN FREELY TO BE OPENED - ENJOYED & SHARED
Adapted from Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts—Parent newsletter



May the Miracle of Christmas fill your heart with joy

From the Pastor's Desk

The Season of Advent



One or indeed two more sleeps!

Depending on whether you read this newsletter on Saturday or Sunday, then there are one or two more sleeps until Santa arrives. I hope all parishioners receive beautiful presents this Christmas.

Rite of Acceptance
Congratulations to Darina Homolova who liturgically began her journey to reception into the Catholic Church last Sunday by undergoing the Rite of Acceptance. Thank you to Deacon Michael O' Connor who prepared this liturgy and made it prayerful and beautiful

Thank You's! - The Christmas Tree
Yet again Tim Ryan, Donal Glennon, assisted by Sean Feeney, have decorated a beautiful Christmas Tree for our Parish – thank you.

Church Décor
The Liturgy Team have again outdone themselves in making St Brigid's resplendent in her Christmas Array – thank you.

Justins
A sincere thank you to Justin who, each year, supplies the Parish, free of charge, with a magnificent Christmas Tree and also this year a series of beautiful wreaths.

Christmas Cards
Thank you to George Maybury and the Thursday morning parishioners who put the Christmas cards and dues envelopes into packs. Thank you to the volunteers who delivered the cards to parishioner's homes.

Parish Calendar
The 2024 Parish calendar is available in the Church. Please take one and also take one for a neighbour who you believe might appreciate it.

Happy Christmas
On behalf of myself, the Parish Team; the Parish Staff and the Parish Pastoral Council, I'd like to wish the parishioners of St. Brigid's a joyful and Happy Christmas. May Christ Jesus dwell with you, keep you from all harm, and make you one in mind and heart, now and forever. Amen

Christmas Dues Envelopes
Thank you to all who have returned their Christmas dues envelopes. If you did not receive Christmas Dues envelope and would like to contribute to the Priests of the Parish and the Diocese, please take one from the tables in the Church.

Fr Michael Carey PP

Parish Office

The Parish Office will be closed for Christmas holidays on Tuesday 26th December and will re-open on Wednesday 3rd January

Children's Corner: In the Gospel Today

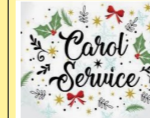
God sends the angel Gabriel with a message for Mary. She is going to have a very special baby! Mary does not know what this means, but she says "yes" anyway. Mary trusts God completely.

A message for Mary

Today Mary receives good news from an angel sent by God. Join the dots to see the angel Gabriel.



The angel has good news for Mary. Use the code to find out what it is.
A PRAYER TO SAY! Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.



Carol Service
The Carol Service was a beautiful evening! I thank all who were involved: setting up the Church and returning it to its original condition! I thank our fantastic Parish Choirs. The opening Carol was sung by Cameron Feeney. I thank the Ministers of the Word: Richard Carroll; Andrea Rock and Jane Osadebe. Deacon Michael O'Connor delivered a prayerful homily. Manning the collection for St Francis Hospice were Derek Whelan and Michael Flynn. I thank the Organist Dr. William Woods. **James Murphy** our Choir Director selected the Carols, assisted by Grainne Uí Chaomhanaigh with the Youth Choir. All take a bow for a very enjoyable evening! Thank you to all who attended and for your charitable contribution to the collection - **€730 for the Hospice**. Thanks to our great Hospitality Team...you had a late night!!



CHRISTMAS TREE: A SIGN AND REMINDER OF DIVINE LIGHT

"God became man and came among us to dispel the shadows of sin, bringing His divine light to humanity. This highest of lights, symbolised and recalled by the Christmas tree, has not only shown no sign of dimming through the passing of the centuries and the millennia, but rather continues to shine upon us and to illuminate every person who comes into the world, especially in moments of uncertainty and difficulty. Jesus Himself declared, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life'. ... And, the attempts made through the ages to extinguish the light of God, to replace it with the glare of illusion and deceit, have heralded episodes of tragic violence against mankind. This is because the attempt to cancel the name of God from the pages of history results in distortion, in which even the most beautiful and noble words lose their true meaning".

ADVENT Prayer for the 4th Sunday OF ADVENT

This Advent-time we remember Mary and Joseph, giving thanks for their faithfulness, courage and obedience, stepping out into the unknown in the strength of your Spirit, playing their part in the fulfilment of your plan to bring your prodigal people home again. We pray that their example might be the pattern of our lives, that when your gentle whisper breaks through the clamour of this world and into our small corner, we might be ready to listen, and having listened, to act. Amen

Mass intentions for the week

Saturday	Stephen McGrath Kathleen Foley	Rose Gill John Ennis
Sun	Norah & Donal Doolin	Mary Daly
Tuesday	Philip Gammell Michael Sheridan	Pat & Cis Devitt Phoebe Fagan
Thursday	Michael Farley	
Friday	Thomas & Elizabeth Flynn	and family

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