



St Brigid's Parish, Blanchardstown Newsletter

Christmas Season—New Years Eve -Sunday 31st December 2023



GLORIA

CURRENT SCHEDULE

Sunday 31st Dec	10.30am
Monday 1st Jan	11am Public Holiday No Evening Mass
Tuesday 2nd Jan	10am <i>(Normal Schedule resumes)</i>
Wednesday 3rd	10am Liturgy of the Word
Thursday 4th	10am Mass
Friday 5th Jan	10am Mass 7.30pm (Vigil of Epiphany)
Saturday 6th	10am Epiphany
1st Saturday	- followed by confessions 6pm (Vigil for Sunday)
Sunday 7th	10.30am mass

The Parish Office will re-open on Wednesday 3rd January. For urgent business please contact the Sacristan or Fr Michael.

We welcome those baptised in the month of December ;

Molly, Sionainn, Maverick,
Niamh, Aidan, Niamh, Fianna,
Oscar, Cuán, Annie, Ryan,
Daihtí and Alex

May they continue to grow strong in body, mind and spirit.



THE HOLY FAMILY AND THE HIDDEN LIFE

After the infancy narratives the Gospels tell us that Joseph and Mary returned from Egypt and settled in Nazareth. Beyond that there is silence – indeed the only reported incident during the next thirty years is when Jesus stays behind in the Temple to listen to and ask questions of the great teachers there. The life of the holy family is something totally hidden from our view.

Self-evidently they lived and worked normally within their little society. If you visit Nazareth today you will be shown the town's original well (over which an orthodox church has been built), which historically was the area's one and only source of water. For the monument-weary pilgrim it is a refreshing touch of authenticity! Here, throughout those hidden years, Jesus, Mary and Joseph must have come to this spot for their water, rubbing shoulders and doubtless passing the time of day with their neighbours.

Yet beneath that ordinary everyday existence, something extraordinary was happening. Jesus was being 'filled with wisdom and God's favour' quietly and unobtrusively. When he first began to preach in his own home-town the reaction of his fellows to the 'gracious words that came from his lips' (Lk 4:22) was absolute astonishment. 'But this is Joseph's son, surely?' they all told themselves. Even as Jesus was experiencing, in human terms, the formative influences of a normal family life, he was also acquiring the habits of a prayer-life – this we know from his continuing need, throughout his public ministry, to go off alone to pray.

One spiritual writer, who truly understood this interior life of prayer, was Pope Paul VI. In 'The Pattern of Nazareth' (an address he gave in 1964) he wrote: 'Here (Nazareth) in this school, one learns why it is necessary to have a spiritual rule of life, if one wishes to follow the teaching of the gospel and become a disciple of Christ... May the silence of Nazareth teach us recollection, inwardness, the disposition to listen to good inspiration and the teaching of true masters. May it teach us the need for, and the value of, preparation, of study and of meditation, of personal inner life of prayer which God alone sees in secret.' Long ago, I copied this down as a profound spiritual recipe for those who seriously seek to know God.

In this often frantic life it is the people who have learned the value of silence who can remain calm and untouched by the pressures. Jesus is destined to have a very public life, followed everywhere by huge crowds, and finally in full view of everyone himself being tried, stripped and scourged. Perhaps these thirty years of quiet preparation within his family were what enabled him in the end to cope with three years of so public a ministry.

In our modern world, where family life appears to have disintegrated still further with every new set of statistics, do we not need to re-educate ourselves (and society) on the value of silence and reflection, to gain spiritual nourishment and inner strength? I don't mean in the secular sense of attaining 'self-awareness' or 'self-fulfillment' or any other slogans that are bandied about, but in order for us to be an open channel of God's grace to others. If the hidden life of Christ is present among us, that 'pattern of Nazareth' can even today mature that wisdom which 'deploys her inner strength from one end of the earth to the other, ordering all things for good' (Wis 8:1).

(Source: *A Feast for Advent and Christmas* by Delia Smith)

Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him (Lk 2:40)

From the Pastor's Desk



Happy New Year!

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 Blanchardstown a peaceful and Happy New Year!

Parish Calendar

The 2024 Parish calendar is available in the Church. Please take one and take one for a neighbour who might like one.

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

A New Year's Blessing

Lord, at the beginning of this New Year, we thank you for your gift of time. Let us embrace time as Mary did, as the experience of the unfolding of your plan of salvation. We measure time with calendars and watches. You experience it as an ever-present "now." Bless our ordered lists of weeks and months, of holydays and holidays, of feast and fasts, and all our special days of remembering. Please bless these instruments with which we measure time. Let them remind us that you are the master of time as we dedicate this New Year to you. Lord, bless this New Year, each of its days and nights. Bless us with happy seasons and healthy lives. Lord, we thank you for the gift of 2024. Grant that it will be a year of love and peace. **Amen.**

Children's Corner: In the Gospel Today

Mary and Joseph take Jesus to be presented to God, just like every other Jewish baby boy. In the Temple the Holy Family meet Simeon and Anna, two wise and holy people. They both praise God when they see Jesus as they know he is no ordinary baby. This baby is the light of the world!

Maze

Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to the Temple.



A PRAYER TO SAY

Loving Father, help me to always see and understand how important Jesus is in my life. Help me to shine with Jesus' love so that other people can recognise him too. Amen.

New Year's Resolutions

New Year's resolutions are too often made simply as fodder for jokes with the assumption that they won't last. Our celebration of the Christmas Mystery, however, asks of us a response that is more than a half-hearted resolution. We cannot afford to take lightly our encounter with this mystery and its power to make a real difference to how we live.

After their marvellous encounter with the newborn Saviour lying in a manger, the shepherds returned to the ordinariness of their lives. Yet they were not the same. These scruffy shepherds had become messengers of the in-breaking of God's salvation. When we come to the end of this year's celebration of the Christmas mystery, we will return to the ordinariness of our lives. How will we have been changed? What message will we proclaim to others during the rest of the year? (Source: *Living Liturgy*)

GOD IS WITH US



THE THREE WISE MEN

One legend says that the wise men were of three different ages. Caspar was a very young man, Balthazar was in his middle age, and Melchior was an old man. When they arrived at Bethlehem, the three of them betook themselves to the cave of the Saviour's birth, and they went in one at a time. When Melchior, the old man, went into the cave, there was no one there but a very old man his own age with whom he was quickly at home. They spoke together of memory and gratitude. The middle-aged Balthazar encountered a middle-aged teacher when he went into the cave, and they talked passionately of leadership and responsibility. When young Caspar entered, he met a young prophet and they spoke words of reform and promise. When they had all gone outside after going in one by one, the three of them took their gifts and went in together. And when they went in together there was nobody there but a twelve-day-old infant. Later on they understood. The Saviour speaks to every stage of like. The old hear the call to integrity and wisdom. The middle-aged hear the call to generativity and responsibility. And the young hear the call to identity and intimacy. (Source: *A World of Stories* by William J Bausch)

Mass intentions for the week

Saturday	Deceased members of the Maguire Family Christopher Critchley	Catriona Farrell Padraig Coughlan (MM)
Sun	John Webster	Brigid & James Heskin Joe Dowling
Monday	Dowling & Sinnott Ancestors	
Tuesday	Millicent McDermott	Margaret French
Sat 10am	Brigid & Margaret Kelly	Rose & Richard Harrison

We pray for our recently deceased;
CARMEL QUIRKE
ANNA BROPHY
Always loved, never forgotten



PARISH CONTACTS: V REV Fr. Michael Carey: 8213660 Rev Jim Adams(Deacon) 0862232411
Rev Michael O'Connor(Deacon) 0872941729 Sacristy: 8238354
Parish Finance Christine Carleton / Parish Secretary Jean Rogers: 8115412
email: office@blanchardstownparish.ie website: www.blanchardstownparish.ie
https://www.facebook.com/St-Brigids-Parish-Blanchardstown-44438662375848/

