

*More rapid than eagles his courses they came,
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name;
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer!
Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on,
Dunder and Blixem!"*

(most commonly known as Donner and Blitzen)

Moore had written the poem for the enjoyment of his own family, but in 1823 it was published anonymously in the Troy Sentinel. It became very popular and has been reprinted countless times under the more familiar title, *The Night Before Christmas*. "A Visit" became the basis for much of modern Christmas lore, but the total number of Santa's reindeer grew to nine more than a century later when the most famous reindeer of all joined the team. – Next week read about that famous reindeer! (*Santa's Reindeer by Patricia Hope – St. Martin Magazine, December 2018*) **Fr. Michael Carey**

Intentions for Next Week

Mon 8.00am Pat O'Reilly	Sat 6.30pm Margaret Byrne
Mon 10.00am Carmel Morgan	Fr Sean O'Neill
Tues 8.00am Mary Carroll	
Tues 10.00 Geraghty & McGreevy Families	
Wed 8.00am Special Intention	Sun 8.30am Elizabeth Burke
Holy Souls	Sun 11.15 Mary, Joseph, Tommy & Joe
Wed 10.00am Martin Bradley	Gerrard
Thurs 8.00am John & Kathleen O'Connor	Emma O'Rourke Mythen MM
Thurs 10.00am Philip Markey	Geraldine Griffin MM
Fri 8.00am Sheila Fitzsimons	
Fri 10.00am Veronica Barker	

Church of the Visitation Drynam *The Visitation of the BVM*

Mass Times for Drynam: Sun, 10.00am & 11.00am (Irish Mass)
Next Sunday 23rd December, we will have a Service of Reconciliation at the 10:00 Mass.
The 11:00 Irish Mass on the same day will be broadcast on Raidio na Gaeltachta.

Advent Wreath-week 3

3rd CANDLE – (pink) **THE SHEPHERD CANDLE or THE CANDLE**

OF JOY – The angels sang a message of JOY! "...and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.' Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'" (Luke 2:7-15)



Planned Giving - 2019 New planned Giving/Family Offering Envelopes are now ready for collection from the Parish Office, Parochial House, Seatown Rd.

Fr. Michael Carey-8403378: Fr John Collins 8405948
Parish Secretary: Colette Stokes - Parish Office, Seatown Road-8407277
(Mon to Fri 9.15am-12.30pm & Tues-Thurs 2pm-4pm)
Sacristy: -8400547 (Mon –Sat 9.30am-9.55am and 10.30am to 10.50am)
Website: www.swords-parish.com Email: stcolmcilleschurch@gmail.com

3rd Sunday of Advent

Santa's Reindeer

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice"

Newsletter Sunday 16th December 2018

Christmas, besides being the day we celebrate the birth of Christ, is also a wondrous and magical time for children. Traditions have developed over the years that are geared towards making it a special time for them; the story of Santa Claus and his sleigh pulled by eight reindeer flying over the rooftops, delivering gifts to families all over the world is one of them.

The character of Santa Claus is largely based on the legend of St. Nicholas of the fourth century Myra in Greece. St. Nicholas is said to have travelled via a noble, white steed – so how did the reindeer come to be associated with Santa Claus?

Reindeer were once viewed as mysterious creatures linked to lands in the northern part of the world. Their population was widespread in Scandinavian and Eastern European countries where, during the eighteenth century, they were domesticated. They were often used in transportation, pulling sleds and sleighs, and are still an important aspect of some indigenous northern European cultures, particularly to the Sami people (commonly known as Laplanders).

In 1812, American author Washington Irving (writing under the pseudonym Diedrich Knickerbocker) referred to St. Nicholas as "...riding over the tops of the trees, in that self-same wagon wherein he brings his yearly presents to children". No mention is made of what propels the wagon in that story: so where did the story of the flying reindeer originate?

The first known written account of reindeer in association with Santa Claus occurred in 1821. That year, New York printer William Gilley published a booklet and in that book, reindeer are introduced into the Santa Claus narrative:

*Old Santeclaus with much delight
His reindeer drives this frosty night.
O'er chimney tops, and tracks of snow,
To bring his yearly gifts to you.*

However, perhaps nothing has fixed the image of Santa Claus and his reindeers so firmly as a poem entitled A Visit from St. Nicholas written by Clement Moore in 1822. Moore, a professor of biblical languages at New York's Episcopal Theological Seminary, drew upon early New Amsterdam traditions and added some elements from German and Norse legends. These stories held that a happy little elf like man presided over midwinter pagan festivals. In the poem, Moore depicts the saint as a tiny man with a sleigh drawn by eight miniature reindeer. They fly him from house to house and at each residence he comes down the chimney to fill stockings hung by the fireplace with gifts. And, for the first time, they are identified by name:



ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN

*How much better our family life would be if we used the words....
Please. Thank you...and I'm sorry. Pope Francis*



Carol service

Last Sunday's Carol Service was truly a wonderful occasion and a great crowd attended. After a year's absence it was fantastic to have it back and what a return it made!! Well done to all in the Choir who sang sublimely and especially the new members – hopefully the first Carol Service of many! All your rehearsals paid off!

A **special thank you** to Choir Director Morgan Crowley. He certainly introduced a programme that was invigorating and interesting. Thank you to the Pianist Karen Crowley. As advertised there were wonderful solo performances by small groups and individuals and congratulation to Helen Dignam who beautifully sang, 'O Holy Night'. I also thank Maurice Kealy who as Choir Secretary had many tasks to undertake and they all paid off on the night. The choir showed their appreciation by presenting flowers to Morgan; Karen and soloists Helen and Caitlin White. The Minister's of the Word proclaimed God's Word superbly and helped prepare all of us as we journey towards Christmas – thank you to Bernadette Marks; Angela Grace and Susan Rallo. Finally, many thanks to all who helped prepare for this wonderful afternoon, especially, the Parish Liturgy Group, who provided the very welcome mince pies and refreshment afterwards. Finally thank you to all who attended – it was much appreciated and I know that you thoroughly enjoyed yourselves.

Do This in Memory

I welcome the boys and girls and their families to the 6.30pm Saturday Vigil Mass as part of their Parish based preparation programme for the Sacrament of First Eucharist. I would also like to thank the parents who are part of the organising committee who met during the week to prepare these Masses

Sung Evening Prayer

On **Monday 17th December at 7.30pm** we will a sung Vespers-Evening Prayer, in St. Colmcille's to mark the final run up to the feast of the Nativity. From the 17th December the liturgy focuses on the events that prepared immediately for the birth of Jesus. During these days we should prepare ourselves for the Feast of the Nativity. The Liturgy introduces the "O Antiphons" because the title of each one begins with "O". Each antiphon is a name of Christ, one of his attributes mentioned in Scripture. **They are:** December 17: O Sapientia (*O Wisdom*); December 18: O Adonai (*O Lord*); December 19: O Radix Jesse (*O Root of Jesse*); December 20: O Clavis David (*O Key of David*); December 21: O Oriens (*O Dayspring*); December 22: O Rex Gentium (*O King of the nations*); December 23: O Emmanuel (*O With us is God*);

• God's Housekeepers

The next date for cleaning the Church is next **Friday 21st December** after the 10.00am Mass. This will be the clean-up for Christmas. If anyone has a half hour to spare you would be most welcome

• Christmas Mass Bouquets

Special Christmas Mass Bouquet cards are now available in the Sacristy and Parish Office for both churches. All Masses on Christmas Day and St. Stephens Day will be offered for the intentions of the donors of these cards. They cost €5 per card.

Reconciliation Services

Communal Service of Penance (with visiting Priests)

Thursday Dec 20th

St. Cronan's Brackenstown 7.30 pm.

Saturday Dec 22nd

St. Finian's River Valley 11.00 am.

Mass followed by Reconciliation

Liturgy (Confession)

Confessions: St. Colmcille's, Swords, Monday 24th December 10.30am until 12noon



JESSE TREE-week 3

Today is the third Sunday in Advent and we now add three more symbols to the Jesse tree in both our churches.

The hammer of Joseph: Joseph became Mary's husband, and looked after Mary and Jesus. We thank him for the part he played in the life of Jesus

The Sun: Just as the natural sun gives light and life to all upon whom its rays fall so Christ, the Rising Dawn, dispels darkness and brings eternal life and light.

The Lily: The Lily represents Mary, the mother of Jesus. From earliest Christian days she has been called blessed. Her example of motherhood, the training she gave her child, her patience and love, the way she encouraged Jesus, and the manner in which she bore her later grief-all this has influenced all who love her.



Christmas Cards

There are still some cards to be delivered. – I need your help to have these cards dropped onto people's letterboxes. If you can take a road or an estate it would be greatly appreciated. Thank You!



World Youth Day – Panama in Dublin: Calling all youth and young adults aged 16-29 Creating the best parts of World Youth Day here in Dublin for those who can't go. It will be a celebration of faith – we'll live stream the Pope's talks and homilies – we'll have music, workshops, drama, food, fun and fellowship. *Save the Date* From 5pm January 26th to 5pm January 27th (Bring your sleeping bags) Booking – www.emmauscentre.ie DARE TO SAY YES!

- **Bethany Bereavement Support Group** There will be no bereavement support meeting on Monday 31st December - New Year's Eve. The next support meeting will be on Monday 14th January 2019. Meetings will continue in 2019 on the second and last Monday of every month. The Bethany Bereavement Support Group wish all Parishioners the Peace, Joy and Blessings of Christmas time. If anyone is in need of our support please phone 8403243 or 086 6006397. The Samaritans can be contacted anytime on free phone 116123.
- **The Lambay Singers** will perform their Christmas concert in St Colmcille's church today - **Thursday 20th December at 8.00pm -please note change of date.** The programme will feature a variety of seasonal pieces including the works of Mendelssohn, Holst and Britten. Tickets €10 at the door.