

us: making love, not hate, normal; mutual help common, instead of indifference and hostility. It is not by chance that Nazareth means 'she who preserves', like Mary who, as the Gospel tells us, 'treasured all these things in her heart'. From then on, whenever there is a family that preserves this mystery, even if it should be at the outer reaches of the world, the mystery of the Son of God is at work. And He comes to save the world. *(Talk given by pope Benedict in his weekly general audience on Dec 17th 2014)* **Fr. Michael Carey**

**Mass intentions for Next Week**

<b>Mon</b> 8.00am Special Intention	<b>Sat</b> 10.00am Christna Stefanazzi
<b>Mon</b> 10.00pm Liam Spencer	
<b>Tues</b> 8.00am Kathleen & John O'Connor	
<b>Tues</b> 10.00am Sheila & Thomas Maher	<b>Sat</b> 6.30pm Christmas Mass Bouquets
<b>Wed</b> 8.00 Kathleen & Pat O'Reilly	<b>Sat</b> 9.00pm Christmas Mass Bouquets
<b>Wed</b> 10.00 Vera & Paddy Barker	
<b>Thurs</b> 8.00am Margaret O'Reilly	<b>Sun</b> 8.30am Christmas Mass Bouquets
<b>Thurs</b> 10.00am Ann Yorke	<b>Sun</b> 10.00am Christmas Mass Bouquets
<b>Fri</b> 8.00am Margaret Byrne	<b>Sun</b> 11.00am Christmas Mass Bouquets
<b>Fri</b> 10.00am Elizabeth Burke	

**RECENTLY DECEASED**

Please remember in your prayers those who have died recently:

<b>Declan Morris</b>	<b>Aspen Road</b>
<b>Paddy Flanagan</b>	<b>Moatfield Road Coolock</b>



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

**Mass Times for Drynam: Sun, 10.00am, 11.00am (Irish Mass)& 12 noon ,Mon & Tues 9.20am**  
 We will be setting up the church for Christmas on Wednesday morning. Let us know if you would like to help. Looking forward to seeing you at one of the Masses over Christmas: Christmas Eve, 6:30pm and 9:00pm. Christmas Day, 10:00,am 11:00am and 12 noon

**Advent Wreath - 4th CANDLE – (purple) THE ANGEL CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF LOVE –**

The angels announced the good news of a Savior. God sent his only Son to earth to save us, because he loves us! *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”* (John 3:16-17)

**5th CANDLE – (white) “CHRIST CANDLE” –** The white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins! His birth was for his death his death was for our birth! *“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”* (John 1:29)



**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 and would make a 'lovely stocking filler' for your nearest and dearest.

**Fr. Michael Carey-8403378: Fr. Peter McCarron-8405948, 087 1621662**  
**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**

4th Sunday of Advent

**Jesus chose to come to the world as part of a family**

*“We have to realise that all of us are a complex mixture of light and shadows”. (Amoris Laetitia 113)”*

Newsletter Sunday 18th December 2016



The family is the great gift that the Lord has given to the world ever since the beginning, when he entrusted to Adam and Eve the mission of multiplying and filling the earth; the gift that Jesus confirmed and sealed in His Gospel.

The proximity to Christmas illuminates the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, which opens a new chapter in the universal history of man and woman. And this new beginning occurs within a family, in Nazareth. He could have come spectacularly, or as a warrior, an emperor... No – he came as the son of a family, in a family.

God chose to be born in a human family, that He Himself had formed. He created this family in a remote village in the outer reaches of the Roman Empire. Not in Rome, the capital of the Empire, not in a great city, but in an almost invisible and somewhat notorious periphery. This is even noted in the Gospel, almost as if it were a turn of phrase: 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?'. Perhaps, in many parts of the world, we too still speak in this way when we hear the name of certain peripheral areas of large cities. And yet, it was precisely there, in the outskirts of the great Empire, that there began the most holy and good story of Jesus among mankind.

Jesus chose to remain in the periphery for thirty years, during which there is no mention of miracles or healing, of preaching, of crowds who run after him. In Nazareth, everything seems to happen 'normally', according to the habits of a pious and hard-working family of Israelites. ... The Gospels, in their sobriety, say nothing of Jesus' adolescence and leave this task to our affectionate imaginings. Art, literature and music have followed the path of the imagination. Certainly, it is not difficult to imagine how much mothers could learn from Mary's tender care for her Son! And how much fathers could benefit from the example of Joseph, a righteous man, who dedicated his life to supporting and defending his wife and child – is family – through difficult times. To say nothing of how much the young could be encouraged by the adolescent Jesus in understanding the necessity and beauty of cultivating their deepest vocation, and of having great dreams.

Every Christian family – as Mary and Joseph did – must first welcome Jesus, listen to Him, speak with Him, shelter Him, protect Him, grow with Him; and in this way, make the world better. Let us make space in our heart and in our days for the Lord. This is what Mary and Joseph did, and it was not easy: how many difficulties they had to overcome! It was not a false or unreal family.

The family of Nazareth calls to us to rediscover the vocation and the mission of the family, of every family. And so what happened in those thirty years in Nazareth can also happen to

## ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN

*Antiphon - Let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour*

### Carol service

Last Sunday's Carol Service was truly a wonderful occasion and a great crowd attended and the atmosphere was fantastic. 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! As always, a **special thank you** to Choir Director Anne McDonagh – all she asks of the Choir is that they “watch her”.



Thank you to the Organist Orla McDonagh, who was excellent. Well done to the fabulous soloists Brian Peel and Helen Dignam, who beautifully sang, 'O Holy Night'. The Ministers of the Word proclaimed God's Word superbly and helped prepare all of us as we journey towards Christmas. Finally, many thanks to all who helped prepare for this wonderful afternoon- the Parish Liturgy Group, who provided the very welcome mince pies and refreshment afterwards; God's housekeepers and last but by no means least it was wonderful to see the boys and girls from our St. Colmcille's Parish Schools participating and doing it so well! Thanks to all who attended – it was a very impressive turnout.

### Church Christmas Decorations

The Christmas tree and Christmas decorations are lovely. A special thank you to the hard work and dedication of the Parish Liturgy Team.

### Advent Gifts

#### **Gift 4 – Hope that lasts**

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.

*May the miracle of Christmas fill your heart with joy*

### Confirmation Classes

I welcome this weekend the boys and girls and their families to the 6.30pm Saturday Vigil Mass and the 6.30pm Sunday Evening Mass as part of our Parish initiative as they journey towards the Sacrament of Confirmation. We anticipate their presence and look forward to seeing them and their families and praying with them.

### JESSE TREE-week 4

This tree is named after Jesse the father of David, the great king of Israel. 'A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse and from his roots a bud shall blossom' (Is 11.7) Today is the fourth Sunday in Advent and we now add three more symbols to the Jesse tree in both our churches.

**Palm Tree** - On Christmas night, the angels declared 'Peace to all who enjoy God's favour'. Jesus came to bring peace on earth, he is the prince of peace.

**Peace** - On Christmas night, the angels declared 'Peace to all who enjoy God's favour. Jesus came to bring peace on earth, he is the prince of peace.

**Jesus-Chi-Ro symbol** - Our final symbol represents Jesus, who came to be our Saviour and whose birthday we will celebrate on Tuesday. May He come into our lives and hearts once again this Christmas



### Advent Penance Service

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is not about a guilt-trip. Rather, it is about unburdening. The Lord invites us to receive from him 'rest for our souls' (Mt 11:29) so that he may set us free (Lk 4:18) that we may continue to seek to live 'life to the full' (Jn 10:10). Jesus is encountered in and through the Sacrament. The Advent/Christmas Reconciliation service takes place in **St. Colmcille's, Swords on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm** and in St. Cronan's Brackenstown on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm. This is a communal penance service with visiting priests for the Swords Grouping for individual Confession.

### Christmas confessions

Confessions in St. Colmcille's will be available on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December from 10.30am to 11.00am and on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> (**Christmas EVE**) from 10.30am to 12noon

### Richard Coleman

Last Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> December Mass was offered for Richard Coleman on the 98<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death (9/12/18). He was from Main St. Swords. He died in prison from pneumonia. Patrick Pearse wrote to Richard Coleman, congratulating him on his handling of the men under him at manoeuvres held just before the rising. Upon hearing of the death of Coleman, Eamon DeValera, from Lincoln Jail, wrote: 'And poor Dick Coleman has left us to join his comrades. Fingal has contributed more than its share in this conflict'

### Preparation for Christmas

All three readings this Sunday deal with the identity of 'the One who was to come'. The identity of the child was vaguely glimpsed in the Old Testament. Isaiah talked about the coming of a very special child (First Reading). But there is no reason to believe that he knew just how special that child would be. No prophecy is fully understood until after its fulfilment. Matthew shows that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus, and in a far greater way that the prophet could ever have imagined. The New Testament reveals the true identity of this special Child (Jesus). The Second Reading and the Gospel make it clear that Jesus was the Son of David. This was so because Joseph, his legal father, was descended from the line of David. But he is more than that. He is also the Son of God. (*Fr. Flor McCarthy, SDB*)

### 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".