

Yet so many people do not know where to turn to encounter this God whose unconditional love of us can redeem us in our weakness and inadequacy. The problem is that we look for God in the wrong places and indeed you might say that often we have been taught to seek God in the wrong places. (Source: *Archbishop Diarmuid Martin – Christmas homily*)

May the wonder of that first Christmas be with you always Fr. Michael Carey

Mass intentions for Next Week

Mon 8.30am, 10.00am, 11.00am Christmas Mass Bouquet Cards

Tues 10.00am Christmas Mass Bouquet Cards	Sat 10.00am Brian O'Connor
Wed 10.00am Agnes & William Maxwell	
Thurs 10.00am John Breen	Sat 6.30pm Christina Stefanazzi
Fri 10.00am Aileen O'Brien & dec members of O'Brien & Deering families	Sun 8.30am
	Sun 11.00am Patrick Barry Snr & Patrick Barry Jnr
	Sun 6.30pm Thomas Green Jnr

Church of the Visitation Drynam The Visitation of the BVM

Mass Times for Drynam: Sun, 10.00am, 11.00am (Irish Mass)

We wish all our Parishioners a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year

JESSE TREE-week 4

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

Palm Tree: Christ is often holding the palm branch as a symbol of his triumph over sin and death

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



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The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

Anything New Happen Lately!

“The incarnation of the Word in a human family, in Nazareth, by its very newness changed the history of the world”. (Amoris Laetitia 65)”

Newsletter Sunday 24th December 2017

For this Christmas Newsletter I have three short reflections which I hope will enrich this wonderful day and season immeasurably for all who read this.

The Spirit of Christmas

There is such a thing as the spirit of Christmas. It has survived every human failing one cares to mention. All the inhumanity, greed and violence have not succeeded in extinguishing it. Thank God for that. We would do well to allow ourselves to be possessed by the Spirit of Christmas.

Christmas creates a climate which encourages us to reveal our better natures. Christmas was born out of love, and carries on out of love. It springs from God's gratuitous love for us.

The human heart is a great repository of compassion. Christmas has the power to move the heart to its utmost capability. Christmas is the feast of the heart. So, if we feel the impulse to be forgiving and charitable and loving, we should go with it.

Christmas reveals to us what the heart of God is like. It was God who started it all when he gave us the gift of his Son. And it reveals what the human heart is capable of. Charles Dickens said: 'Christmas is the one time in the long calendar of the year when people open their shut-in hearts to one another.'

The extent to which we open our hearts to God and to one another will be the extent to which we experience the great joy the angels announced to the shepherds, because joy is the fruit of love. (Source: *Flor McCarthy S.D.B*)

Nothing much ever happens around here.

In 1925, the *New York World* celebrated the birthday of Abraham Lincoln with a cartoon that became something of a classic. Two Kentucky farmers are pictured talking over a picket fence. One asks, "Anything new happen lately?" the other responds, "Nothing much. A new baby was born over at Tom Lincoln's place, but nothing much ever happens around here."

I'm sure there were folks who said the same thing in Bethlehem on the night when Jesus was born. I can picture them – can't you? – standing on the corner, just outside the inn. "Anything new happen around here?" "Naw, just a baby born down in the stable. Nothing much ever happens around here." (Source: *William J Bausch-A World of Stories*)

The birth of Jesus is an event which introduces us to a God who is revealed in Jesus Christ as a God of love. Infinite power which is the attribute of God is revealed in unconditional love. Encountering a saviour means encountering the absolute love of God in our lives. Only an encounter with God's unconditional love can redeem us from becoming trapped in compromise or sinful selfishness.



Fourth Sunday of Advent

The season of preparation is drawing to a close. Like Mary, our getting ready involves deep listening to what God is asking of me now and an interior willingness to say: "Let what you have said be done to me." What is God asking of me now, as a person, in the family, at work, and indeed within the faith community of the Church? Have I noticed a pattern of "nudges" from God calling me to a deeper, perhaps different engagement as a disciple? Are my gifts – tokens of God's grace – fully at the service of my neighbour?

Prayer - Great and loving God, open my ear to your word, open my heart to your call, open my life to your service. Give us all the strength to live according to the Good News of your Son, Jesus, our Lord. (Source: St. Paul's Missal)

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*



Congratulations-Anne McDonagh

Anne McDonagh has been granted an honour by the Vatican. She is a **'Dame Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great'**. When Anne retired as Choir director I applied at the behest of the Choir for a 'Benemerenti' medal for Anne for her over 50 years of faithful service to the Choir and the Parish. I thank the choir members who wrote the required testimonials. When it 'landed' on the Archbishop's desk he went for this higher award (*using our submissions and his own*) given Anne's dedication to Catholic Education both as School Principal and then as head of the Education Secretariat in Archbishop's House. From here on in Anne is known as **Dame Anne**.

Gifts for Advent - 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

The Lambay Singers

I want to congratulate this group on their recitation in our Church last Friday evening. Their singing is only beautiful. All who attended enjoy the performance

Planned Giving 2018

The new Family Offering boxes are now available for collection from the Parish Office

Parish Office

The Parish Office will be closed for Christmas holidays from Thursday December 21st and will re-open on Tuesday 2nd January.

Advent Wreath-week 4

4th CANDLE – (purple) THE ANGEL CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF LOVE – The angles 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)

RECENTLY DECEASED

Please remember in your prayers those who have died recently:

Michael Hall

Ormond Close



Feast of the Nativity of the Lord

Happy Christmas

On behalf of myself, Fr. Peter; Fr. Pat; the Parish Sisters; the Parish Staff and the Parish Pastoral Council, I'd like to wish the parishioners of St. Colmcille's, Swords and Our Lady of the Visitation, Drynam 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 Cards

By now most if not all houses in the Parish should have received their Christmas Cards and enclosed contents from the Parish. I sincerely thank those parishioners who delivered them. If you haven't received any there are some available in the book rack of the Church.

Christmas Dues Envelopes

If you did not receive Christmas Dues envelope and would like to contribute to the Priests of the Parish, please take one from the book rack at the back of the Church

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

Pavilions Crib

I thank the Management of the Pavilions Shopping Centre for yet again erecting such a beautiful Crib. If you get an opportunity it would be nice if you could say a 'thank you' to the staff at the information desk. I have sent a letter of appreciation and thanks to the Management of the Pavilions Centre

Flowers

The flower arrangements are fantastic and involved hours of work. I sincerely thank the flower ladies: Marie Brophy; Martha Gallagher and Barbara Sweeney

Remembrance

We remember all our friends and loved ones who have died in the past year. All sharing in common that they died into the arms of our loving God. We pray especially for those who are grieving and are without consolation at this time.

May the gentle light of Jesus shine on them
and may they know the love and compassion of our Lord in their hearts

Family Prayer for putting the Infant Jesus into your Crib

God our Father,
you sent Jesus your son,
born of Mary in the stable in Bethlehem.
As we celebrate this great event
and place this figure of the Infant Jesus in our crib,
we ask you to bless our family,
friends and community.

We pray for peace and goodwill among all peoples.
We pray for compassion and care for all who are in need.

We pray that we may be open to your Son being born in our hearts and
strengthening the bonds of family and friendship between us.

We ask this through
Christ our Lord.

