

St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Henry McCann (and Chaplain to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald)
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MASS TIMES & SERVICES (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

Saturday Evening at 6.30pm. (English Parish Mass)

Sunday Morning (in Polish): 9.30am, 1pm & 7pm. (English Parish Mass): 11.30am

Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday at 9.30am. Friday at 7.00pm.

Wednesday: Communion Service discontinued until further notice (Day off)

Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil Mass at 7.00pm & Morning of Feast Day 09.30am

Confessions: Before each Mass and By Arrangement. Baptisms: Saturdays at 4pm (3 weeks notice required)



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GAUDETE SUNDAY—REJOICING SUNDAY

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

John 1:6-8, 19-28

1. 'There is one among you whom you do not know'. We can know about Jesus but do we know him? What helps you to know Jesus in a way that enables you to follow in his footsteps, trusting God as he did, and seeing other people as he did?
2. John the Baptist came to bear witness to Jesus. Who have been the people who have borne witness to you of the good news that God loves you – a friend, a parent, a teacher, etc.? To whom have you borne that witness?
3. John appears in the story as one who had the courage to be himself in the face of loud and aggressive people. He was also a person who knew his own value, did not make exaggerated claims and was content with his mission. Can you recall times when you have been able to be yourself, even in the face of criticism from others?
4. John was 'the voice of one crying out in the wilderness' – announcing confidently to those in the wilderness that they must not despair because God's grace may come to them at any moment. Have you had the experience of being in the wilderness, feeling lost? From whom did you hear a voice that gave you hope? Have you been able to give hope to other people when they were in the wilderness?

John Byrne OSA. Email jpb Byrneosa@gmail.com

WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Recently Deceased: Katie Shinn (niece of Kay Dunn), Monica Cusack, Canon Hugh Starkey.

Anniversaries: Sally Watson, Nancy Grogan, Peter Hughes, Patrick Joseph Greenan, Bro. Peter Gallagher, Johnny Kelly, Mark Mahoney, Marie Matthews, Rose Meenagh (Sun 17th Dec at 11:30am), John Higney (Sun 31st Dec at 11:30am)

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 17th December

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Maria Murphy & Phyllis McGrillen
Morning Mass: Tracey Mallon & Margaret Woods

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Sean Rafferty
Morning Mass: Louis Corscadden

Sun 24th December

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Eamon Blaney & Carmel Blaney
Morning Mass: Martina McClory & Kathryn Curran

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Ann Wright
Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your contribution to last week's collections: Weekly Collection £634.65, Monthly Stipend £30, Bishop's Commissions £1, Shrines £73.02. If your details have changed, or if you would like to register for a box, please give your details to Fr McCann as soon as possible. Please consider signing a Gift Aid form so that the parish can claim back the Tax from the HMRC on your contributions. Your own Tax is not affected.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have missed sending in your collection envelope donations, One Envelope Per Collection (eg Weekly or Monthly) will suffice. For example there is no need to put weekly envelopes inside each other with your donation. Discard the missed envelope(s) and place your total donation into ONE envelope. Thank you. **PLEASE NOTE ALSO:** The Old £1 coin will no longer be accepted in collection envelopes or candelabra/shrines

Advent Stations of Confessions available in St Anthony's after 6.30pm mass from next week (Sat 2nd December) from 7.30pm–8pm. Why not prepare early before the Penitential Services, in preparation for Christmas.

Advent Penitential Services:

The Advent Penitential Services in our Pastoral Community are as follows

Sunday 17th December St Matthew's at 4.00pm

Sunday 17th December, St Brigid's at 4.00pm

Monday 18th December, Holy Rosary at 7.30pm

Wednesday 20th December, St Bernadette's at 7.30pm

Thursday 21st December at Carryduff parish at 7.30pm.

To help parishioners prepare for the Sacrament, the Penitential Service liturgy that will be used, is available for you to pick up in the church porch. (pink sheet)

Christmas Mass Times in the South & East Belfast Pastoral Community:

Holy Rosary: Vigil 7pm (children), 9pm Morning 9am, 10:30am, 12pm, 1:15pm

Drumbo & Carryduff: Vigil 7pm (children), 9pm Morning 9am, 10:30am, 12pm

St Bernadette's: Vigil 7pm (children), 10pm Morning 9:30am, 11am

St Anthony's: Vigil 9pm (Polish), 11:30pm. Morning 9:30am & 1pm (Polish) 11:30am (English)

St Stephen's: 9:30am & 12pm (Polish), 11:30am (English)

St Matthew's: Vigil 7pm Morning 11am

St Colmille's: Vigil 7pm (Children), 10pm Morning 9:30am, 11:30am

St Malachy's: Vigil 8pm Morning 9:30am, 11:30am

St Brigid's: Vigil 7:30pm, 9pm. Morning: 9am, 10:30am, 12pm

Advent at Clonard Monastery. You are invited to join us in Clonard Monastery to celebrate the beautiful season of Advent. Let's gather together on four consecutive Tuesdays (28 Nov, 5 Dec, 12 Dec and 19 Dec) in the conference room of Clonard Monastery from 7.30-8.30pm. Kindly, sign up at Clonard reception, or email reception@clonard.com, or phone 028 9044 5950.

Saintfield & Carrickmannon Parish: Liam Lawton Concert - O Holy Night, Monday 18th December 2017 in Aid of Marie Cure and the N. I Hospice. Tickets contact: 07788435797 or 07919332490.

Mary's Meals at Christmas. Raffle: Prizes galore in our raffle Hampers, Toiletries, Candles Tickets £1 –sold in porch. Give a Mary's Meal Gift card Prices from £5 to £30. Join us for Tea and mince pies on Sunday 17th December after mass to celebrate the good work achieved by all of you on behalf of Mary's Meals this year. See poster in porch.

Mary's Meals Newsletter now available in Church Porch.

"In love there is no room for fear, but perfect love drives out fear..." John 4:18. Trócaire's Christmas Appeal, 'Until Love Conquers Fear', is raising money to support people all over the developing world who face fear every day of their lives – like the fear of not being able to feed their children or the fear of having to flee their homes because of conflict. To find out more about the appeal visit www.trocaire.org

An Evening of Festive Favourites at Drumalis, Friday, 22 December at 7.00 pm. The evening will include seasonal favourites, old and new, performed by Voices Chamber Choir under the direction of Loreto McAuley. On arrival, there will be a festive reception with entertainment commencing at 7.30 pm. A two-course supper will be served during the interval. The cost for the evening is £25 per person and admission is by pre-paid ticket only. For further information, please contact Drumalis during office hours (Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm) – telephone 028 2827 2196/028 2827 6455.

The World Meeting of Families—The Amoris Programme – 'Let's Talk Family'. Training of the group leaders, consisting of two evening sessions, will take place at three venues across the diocese. Trainee leaders can attend training sessions at whichever venue suits them. Training of Group Leaders 2018:

1. All Saints Parish Centre, Ballymena, 4 Broughshane Road, BT43 7DX. Two training sessions – Wednesday 10th and 17th January, 7-9.30pm.
 2. St. Malachy's Parish Centre, 24 Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8EN. Two training sessions – Thursday 11th and 18th January, 7-9.30pm.
 3. St. Michael's Parish Centre, 99 Irish Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6BS. Two training sessions – Wednesday 24th January and 7th February, 7-9.30pm.
- If you are interested please give your names to Fr McCann as soon as possible.

Towards Peace. Christmas and New Year is often a time when we are reminded of our deeper selves and deepest hopes, and deepest pain. The vision of Towards Peace is to provide a safe supportive space for people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context, and who are seeking to explore the spiritual impact of the abuse. If you have been abused and would like a space to reflect on the impact of the trauma of abuse on your own relationship with God and spirituality, Towards Peace is here for you: www.towardspeace.ie / 003531 505 3028. See leaflets in porch.

Bangor Parish 7 Day Trip to Brittany and Normandy. From June 25th to July 1st joining the one day St Columbanus International Meeting in St Coulomb June 30th. The cost is 895 euro pp sharing, all breakfasts and dinners included, 3 nights Lisieux, 3 nights St Malo. Day trips include: Places associated with St Therese, Mont St Michel, Dinard and more. (Courier: Kieran Troy who has led Bangor groups in the recent past). As there is great demand for hotel space in Brittany in this period prompt booking would be highly recommended. Details and booking form on parish website www.bangorparish.com.

Diocesan Directory with Lists of Clergy, Parish details & Mass times, Religious Orders, Diocesan Bodies, etc. available in the sacristy. Cost £4.

Parish Safeguarding. Can you please ensure that all Children and Vulnerable Adults are accompanied at all times when entering the Sacristy / Toilet facilities. If you have any queries regarding the Safeguarding Policy please contact a member of the Parish Safeguarding Committee. Many Thanks: Fr Henry PP.

Parish Newsletter

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

17 December 2017

Year B

Issue 3

PEOPLE OF HOPE

The Gospel stories of John the Baptist paint a portrait of a remarkable person but they also create an image of a society in which many people were unhappy, dissatisfied with their lives – and dissatisfied with their leaders. They lived in a wilderness and were ready to listen to a person with a vision of how things could be different. With his call to “Repent”, he was not just asking them to be sorry for past wrongs, but to change their ways for the future. He

was telling them that if they wanted the times to be better, that had to start with themselves. It was an uncomfortable message. Despite that, crowds came out to listen to him and signified their willingness to give up destructive ways of living by being baptised by John in the Jordan. Change and conversion is a decision for each individual

Centuries later, St Augustine would issue a similar challenge in one of his sermons:

Today's Readings



Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11

Psalm: Luke 1:46-54

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Next Sunday's Readings



2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16

Psalm 88:2-5, 27, 29

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

(continued on back page)

"Bad times! Troublesome times! This is what people are saying.

Let our lives be good and the times will be good for we make our own times.

Such as we are, such are our times.

What can we do?

Maybe we cannot convert masses of people to a good life, but let the few who hear live well."

(St Augustine, Sermon 30.8)

Earlier this year, on his visit to Colombia, Pope Francis also stressed how important it is for each person to accept the responsibility of making a contribution to change the wrongs in society. He was speaking where the legacy of a bitter 50-year long civil war had left a country deeply divided. Opposing factions are deeply distrustful

of one another. His aim was to promote reconciliation and the motto for the visit was "Take the first step".

"Reconciliation is not an abstract word," Francis told the crowds, many who had survived such awful violence.

"Reconciliation means opening a door to every person who has experienced the tragic reality of conflict. What is needed is for some to courageously take the first step in that direction, without waiting for others to do so. We need only one good person to have hope! And each of us can be that person!"

There is much in our world today that is not as it should be. Bad times and troublesome times they certainly are. The call to prepare a way for the Lord is still relevant. Is there some way in which we might take the first step to improve something in our world, or in our neighbourhood?

– John Byrne

Reflection

When were you surprised by a positive response when you took an initiative?

Lesson

"We need only one good person to have hope! And each of us can be that person!" (Pope Francis).

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of this day. Help me to live it to the full.

This Week (18–24 December)

- 18 **Mon** St Flannan
- 19 **Tue** St Anastasius I
- 20 **Wed** St Eugene; St Fachanan, bishop
- 21 **Thur** St Peter Canisius, priest
- 22 **Fri** St Flavianus
- 23 **Sat** St John of Kanty, priest
- 24 **Sun** FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

