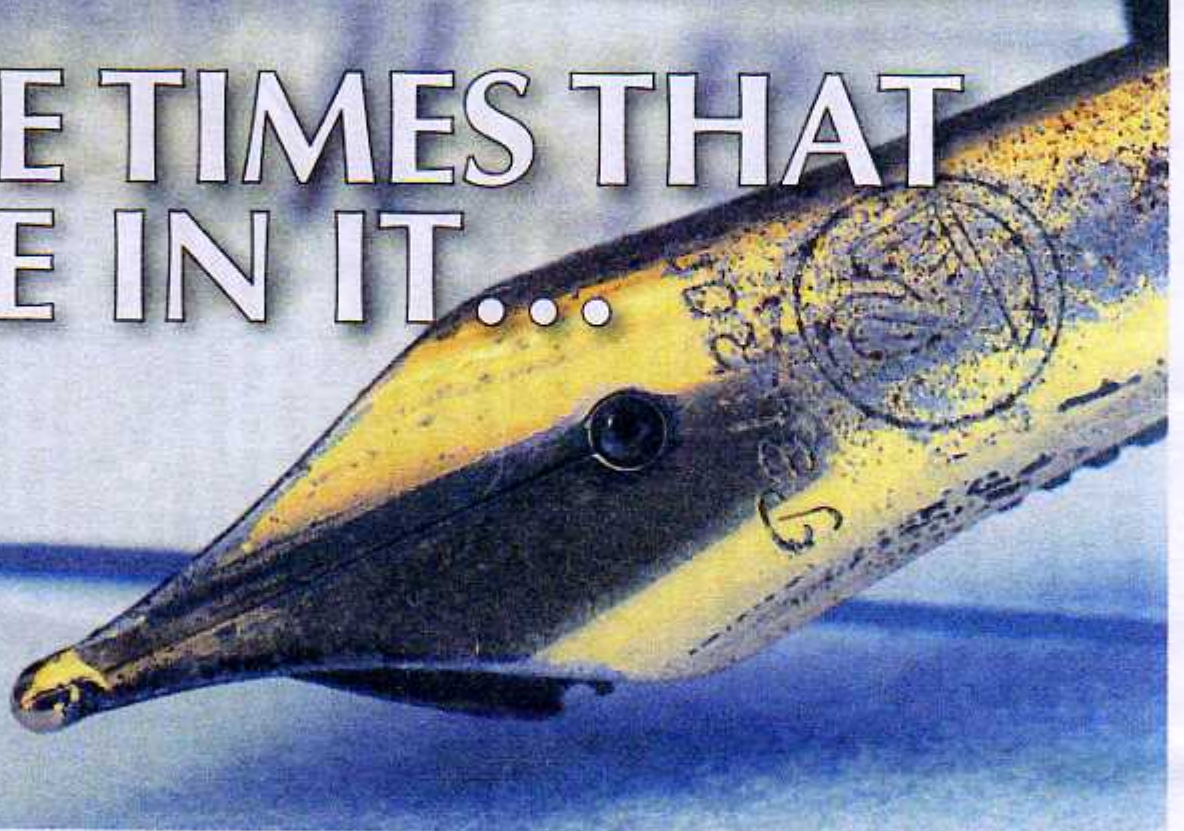


Parish Newsletter

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT | 2 December 2018
Cycle C | Issue 01

THE TIMES THAT ARE IN IT...



It was only last week I heard of a person identifying the end of the world to be in October 2018 (I write in July 2018) – so on the off-chance you're reading this – it looks like he was wrong. Anyhow it reminds of an amusing story of a meeting that took place between Saints Peter and Paul and some senior archangels: Gabriel, Raphael and Michael. With the year ending, they were balancing up the

books on the people of the earth. The bottom line was that 70 per cent of the human race had become so deviant and degenerate and corrupt that something had to be done. It was 'Sodom and Tomorrow' rather than 'Sodom and Gomorrah' but the action was needed again by way of another great flood. Raphael, who, is the angel of healing asked, was it fair to punish the 'good' 30 per cent with the 'bad'

Today's Readings



Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalm 24:4-5.8-10.14
1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2
Luke 21:25-28.34-36

Next Sunday's Readings



Baruch 5:1-9
Psalm 125:1-16
Philippians 1:4-6.8-11
Luke 3:1-6

70 per cent? Gabriel the messenger helpfully said not to worry, that he could contact the 30 per cent, give them the date of the next flood and tell them where to go for safety, where they would survive. St Paul was on hand to draft yet another letter. All were agreed and the letter was sent.

As I heard it the storyteller paused then and somebody asked, 'What did the letter say? What is the date and where is the safe place?' To which the raconteur replied, 'Goodness! Didn't you get a letter?'

Thankfully it's just a yarn – because I didn't get a letter either. But there is a message today from the Lord for everyone. Christmas is almost upon us. We will hear the age-old story of the birth of Jesus, the Christ-child. The

manger, the joy of Mary and Joseph and the shepherds, the joy of the elderly couple Simeon and Anna and of the Magi (wise men) who find the Christ-child after a long, hard journey. But you can feel the sorrow of the story also, which we gloss over. The power-grabbing Herod did slaughter the innocent children, the Baby Jesus' life is in danger. Jesus, Mary and Joseph are forced to flee their homeland and become refugees.

Today's Gospel is not about being a killjoy but it is realistic. God comes to us in our joy and each of us has special moments and times of joy and it is good to realise that God is with us – loving us in those days of 'wines and roses'. But there are other moments, too, that we are asked to live through. When they do, we are to stand erect, hold our heads high, for our liberation is near at hand (Gospel).

– Tom Cox

Reflection

How do we prepare ourselves worthily for the birth of Jesus?

Lesson

There is a call for us to persevere in centring our lives in Jesus.

Prayer

Lord, as I prepare myself for Christmas, let my thoughts be on you and my less privileged brothers and sisters in society. Let my preparation be more a spiritual one rather than a material one. Amen.

This Week (3-9 December)

- 3 **Mon** St Francis Xavier, priest
- 4 **Tue** St John Damascene, priest and doctor
- 5 **Wed** St Crispina, martyr
- 6 **Thur** St Nicholas, bishop
- 7 **Fri** St Ambrose, bishop and doctor
- 8 **Sat** THE IMM. CONCEPTION OF THE BVM
- 9 **Sun** SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



The Parish of St Anthony's is part of the Diocese of Down and Connor and operates in accordance with the Diocesan Privacy Notice, copies of which are available in porch.

St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast



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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)

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT—Year C

SEEKING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS
Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

1. *This passage can be taken as a metaphor for personal experiences when it seems that your world is collapsing around you: plans thwarted, deep disappointment, something out of your control altering the course of your life, etc.? When have such experiences been a prelude to something new? Allow the dramatic language of the passage to remind you of this experience, making sure that you recognise the double movement of collapse and liberation.*
2. *Jesus himself is the model in this gospel story as he taught his disciples the spirituality of 'waiting in joyful hope'. What difference has watchfulness (in the sense of being watchful in prayer) made to you in facing difficult situations?*
3. *Advent is a time that calls us to be alert to the signs of the hidden presence of God in our world. What reminds you of this presence of God? Have there been occasions when something woke you up in an unexpected way to the presence of God in the world, e.g. through love, beauty, nature, etc.?*

John Byrne OSA. Email jpb Byrneosa@gmail.com

WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Recently Deceased: Susan Casey (aunt of Suzanne Hopkins), Jeremiah Sheehan (father of Fr Diarmuid Sheehan), John Gantley (father of David Gantley—Diocesan Property Manager), Fr Christopher Nellis
Anniversaries: Paul & Ita Hetherington, William Kane, James Murray, Canon Hugh Starkey*, Sarah McCartan, Vincent & Ethna Heaney, Mary Grogan, Roseanne Meenagh, Brother Peter Gallagher (Sun 2nd Dec at 11:30am), Mark Mahoney (Fri 7th Dec at 7pm), Peter Hughes (Sat 8th Dec at 6:30pm), Marie Matthews (Sun 9th Dec at 11:30am), Minnie Tanney (Sat 15th Dec at 6:30pm), Patrick Joseph Greenan (Sun 16th Dec at 11:30am)

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 2nd December

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Anthony Clifford
Morning Mass: Suzanne Hopkins & Kay Dunn

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Stephen Murphy
Morning Mass: James Henderson

Sun 9th December

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Eamon Blaney
Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard & Eileen Dunn

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Frank Doherty
Morning Mass: Séamus Monaghan

New Rotas are available from this weekend

St Paul Missals for Readers available in the sacristy

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your contribution to last week's collections: Weekly Collection £659.11, Bishop's Commissions £10, Monthly Stipend £5, World Meeting of Families £2, Shrines £83.06.

St Vincent de Paul (St Bernadette's Conference)

a member of Saint Vincent de Paul from St Bernadette's conference will be giving a short speech on their activities locally in recognition of the support mass-goers give each week, at all the masses next weekend 8/9 December 2018.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Sat Dec 8th). Vigil Mass (Fri 7th at 7pm), Sat at 9:30am

Prayer Books by the Order of the Knights of St Columbanus. Some left available in the porch

Pilgrimage to Rome and San Giovanni Easter 2019 (last remaining seats) with Papal Ceremonies in Saint Peter's Square in Rome for the 7 nights Ex Dublin €995

pps Payments can be made in instalments contact James Treacy on 061921470 or 0860572216.

Pilgrimage to Fatima and Lisbon ex Dublin (last remaining seats) for Feast Day of Saint Anthony 9th/14th June 2019. Full Board €675 pps Single supplement €32 Contact James Treacy: 061921470.

Medjugorje Irish Centre Pilgrimages April - Oct 2019: 7 nights B&B and Airport Shuttle service from Dubrovnik or Split for €279 per person sharing. Book any flight - any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service. Call us for further info and book the dates that suit you. Tel. 01 4434510 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje Group Leader: James Treacy Accompanied by Spiritual Director. 30 July 2019. 7 nights Half Board in Guesthouse close to St James Church. €725.00 per person, inclusive of Group Travel Insurance. Early booking offer. * €100 off if paid in full by 10 Dec 2018. Includes full religious programme. Day flights ex - Dublin Airport including return airport transfers to Medjugorje. Joe Walsh Tours Medjugorje Representative: Philip Ryan. For information please contact: James Treacy Tel: 086 0572216. Poster in Church Porch.

Drumbo Parish Pilgrimage To Rome, Assisi & Cascia. Including Divine Mercy Sunday in Rome 6 Night Pilgrimage to Assisi, Cascia, Rome & Vatican City. 27 April- 03 May 2019. Package price from €945.00 pps. Spiritual directors: Fr Conor Mc Grath & Fr Dominic McGrattan. Single rooms are now on a waiting list. This pilgrimage is an excellent opportunity for a parish-orientated group to explore Assisi, the Sanctuary of St Rita of Cascia & Vatican City, discover the fascinating history of our Christian faith. Pilgrimage includes return flights from Belfast City Airport (via Heathrow) to Rome, transfers, 4 nights Half-Board in a central hotel in Rome (within walking distance of the Vatican) & 2 nights Half-Board in a 4 Star Hotel in lower Assisi. Fully guided tours of Assisi, Cascia & Rome. The pilgrimage also aims to include the Divine Mercy Sunday Angelus address with the Holy Father, Pope Francis I (depending on the Pope's calendar). For more details, please contact the parish office 028 90812238 opt 2. Application form now available in the Parish Office

Suicide Alertness for Everyone (safeTALK). Would you like to help make this a suicide safer community? A Free of Charge, Suicide Alertness for Everyone (safeTALK) programme is being delivered for anyone over the age of 15 living in the community. You do not need to have a professional background or any additional training. The programme is 3 ½ hrs long and being delivered on 10th December 2018 at 6.30pm-10pm in the New Parish Centre Good Shepherd Church. To register contact: Margaret Woods on 07510514979 or by email woodsm78@aol.com.

Carols by Candlelight: St Peter's Cathedral Schola Cantorum would like to extend an invitation to attend Carols by Candlelight on Sunday 9th of December at 4.30 pm in St Peter's Cathedral. The service is set in the very beautiful, candlelit St Peter's, and features carols and readings that reflect the true meaning of Christmas. We are joined this year by special guests, the Winchester College Quiristers, and the evening is sure to be a very special treat for fans of Choral music. Entry is free with a collection in aid of the continued work of Schola and there will be festive refreshments served in the parish hall after the service. It truly is a real highlight of the advent season and one not to be missed! More information can be found on the St Peter's Schola Cantorum Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stpeterscathedralscholacantorum/> And the event link is here <https://www.facebook.com/events/199638654186390/>

Northern Ireland Hospice Carol Service at St Peter's Cathedral Sun 2nd December at 3:30pm. Special guests, Paul Clark, UTV, Cavehill Community Choir & Downshire Brass. Everyone welcome

Jesus Heals: Koinonia John the Baptist Ireland invites you to join us for a special moment of prayer in Saint Bernard's Pastoral Centre, Glengormley, this Friday 7th December from 7pm-9.30pm. It's a perfect opportunity to draw close to Christ, and make room for Him in our hearts and homes this Advent season. Sr. Christine Sawey will guide us in reflecting on God's Word and ask Him for His gift of restoration. The evening will conclude with refreshments and a chance to chat. If you have any questions please contact Anne on 07796 540465 or Ellen on 07708 022478.

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 McCann PP.