

Parish Newsletter

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT | 9 December 2018
Cycle C | Issue 02



THE WAY FORWARD

Every age likes to think of itself as the enlightened time, but the truth is that every age has its light and shadow. The characters mentioned in the opening lines of today's Gospel are as real as the earthly politics and personalities of that time were brittle and fragile. We know Lysanias, Herod and Co. did exist and we are reminded that it was not at some vague or unmarked portion of time that God

decided to intervene in human history, firstly through the Baptist and then his cousin Jesus.

But there's more. All those political big hitters are bypassed by the Spirit of God who goes not to secular power centres but to the wilderness. It would be like Pope Francis, on his recent visit, speeding right past Áras an Uachtaráin and the civic reception at

Today's Readings



Baruch 5:1-9
Psalm 125:1-16
Philippians 1:3-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

Next Sunday's Readings



Zephaniah 3:14-18
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:10-18

Dublin Castle straight to the Capuchin Day Centre. It's the kind of thing I suspect the Pope would dearly love to do sometimes but we live in a time of compromise and pragmatism and that did not happen but, from the time of the Baptist and Jesus, there is no softening or compromising on the message of repentance and the need to straighten the winding ways and various aisles of our world.

Some feel we need to reset the clock in our parish structures in Ireland and to ask ourselves 'what exactly are we about?' Just what are our parishes for? Have they become a matter of ticking the appropriate boxes, meeting targets, completing audits and so forth? Is it simply a matter of keeping the machinery going as best as we can? Kicking the can down the road?

Reflection

Are we doing our part to level-out the sharp peaks of greed and mountain-sized injustice in the world?

Lesson

God's justice working in us produces the rich harvest of freedom, peace and a joy which no one can take from us.

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for coming to me today through your word in Scripture and through your Body and Blood in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass.

Patching here, filling there, and delaying the inevitable question that more and more churches in Ireland with no weekend Mass will pose: 'what is our parish about'?

St Paul's prayer (Second Reading) that people's faith and knowledge and perception may deepen gives us a possible path forward. It's fundamentally about addressing faltering faith, a weak knowledge and a limited perception of things as they are. For every time is imperfect and its leaders, both secular and sacred, are flawed – but we should take heart this Advent Sunday that it was at the worst of times that the best of things happened – the Word was made flesh.

There is always hope because God made you. I am quite certain, as it says in the Second Reading, that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is completed. ■

– Tom Cox

This Week (10-16 December)

- 10 Mon** St John Roberts, priest and martyr
- 11 Tue** St Damasus I, pope
- 12 Wed** Our Lady of Guadalupe, St Finnian, bp
- 13 Thur** St Lucy, virgin and martyr
- 14 Fri** St John of the Cross, priest and doctor
- 15 Sat** St Mary di Rosa
- 16 Sun** THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



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)



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT—Year C

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

Luke 3:1-6

1. The manner in which Luke identifies in detail the time when John the Baptist started his preaching shows that Luke regarded this as a historic moment. Perhaps you can recall in detail the time and the circumstances of particularly significant moments in your life?

2. John called people to give expression to their desire for a change of heart by a symbolic baptism in the Jordan. When have you found it helpful to symbolise your desire to change for the better by some symbolic gesture, e.g., burning a packet of cigarettes, sending a card, making a phone call, etc.

3. Behind the quotation from Isaiah lies the practice of preparing festival routes for religious celebrations. Isaiah visualises such a celebration to celebrate the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem. Can you recall a particularly memorable Advent? What happened? Think of what you can do this Advent.

John Byrne OSA. Email jpbyrneosa@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: Sarah McCartan, Vincent & Ethna Heaney, Mary Grogan, Roseanne Meenagh, Brother Peter Gallagher, Mark Mahoney, 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), John O'Connor (Thurs 27th December at 9:30am).

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 9th December

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Eamon Blaney

Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard & Eileen Dunn

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Frank Doherty

Morning Mass: Séamus Monaghan

Sun 16th December

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Phyllis McGrillen

Morning Mass: Sarah Corcadden & Margaret Woods

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Sean Rafferty

Morning Mass: Louis Corcadden

New Rotas are available in the Sacristy

St Paul Missals for Readers available in the sacristy

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your contribution to last week's collections: Monthly Stipend £606.82, Weekly Collection £11.80, Shrines £98.03.

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 this weekend 8/9 December 2018.

Mary's Meals - Christmas Cake Sale & Nearly New items. Sunday 16th December after 11:30 mass in back porch of church.

Trócaire Christmas Appeal: 'Do not let the downtrodden retreat in confusion, give the poor and needy cause to praise your name,' Psalm 74:21. Millions of people have had to flee conflict in South Sudan and Yemen. In one area alone in northern Uganda 33,000 mainly women and children from South Sudan have taken refuge. They have witnessed and experienced the worst kind of violence and have arrived traumatised and broken. Trócaire's Christmas Appeal will help these people and many others rebuild their lives. Visit www.trocaire.org to find out more.

South & East Belfast Pastoral Community Advent Penitential

Services: An Examination of Conscience sheet (pink) is available in the porch to help prepare for the Penitential Services organised as follows:

Holy Rosary:	Monday: 17.12.18	7.30pm
St. Bernadette's	Wednesday 19.12.18	7.30pm.
Drumbo/Carryduff.	Thursday 20.12.18.	7.30pm.
St. Brigid's	Sunday: 23.12.18	4pm.

South & East Belfast Pastoral Community—The Times of Christmas

Masses: The times of Christmas Masses is available on a Poster in the Church Porch, and will be printed in next week's Bulletin.

The Live Crib. Visit the Live Christmas Crib at St Mary's Grotto, opening Thursday, 13 December 2018 until Sunday, 6 January 2019. Come along and meet Mary and Joseph, Shepherds and the Three wise men. This year animals are kindly provided by the Irish Donkey association and there will be a baby donkey in the crib this year. Carol singers daily at 2 pm. and 5 pm. Proceeds to the Mill Hill Missionaries working in Sudan.

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 woodsmt78@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. 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/>

Marriage Encounter: Are You Making Wedding Plans? Prepare for your future married life at a Catholic Engaged Encounter Course. 23-24 March 2019 in Our Lady and St. Patrick's Parish Centre, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim. For details/booking: marriageencounter.ie or 028 27638512.

NURSES! The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes is currently seeking volunteers to join our nursing team to care for our pilgrims who will stay at the Accueil Notre Dame, during our 2019 Pilgrimage (10-15 July.) You will need to be a registered nurse, active on the NMC live register - newly registered nurses are welcome. For more information or to register your interest please email us to lourdes@downandconnor.org with your contact details and we will get back to you.

Invitation for Pastoral Councils to the Four Corners Prayer Breakfast. You are cordially invited to our Prayer Breakfast to launch the seventh annual 4 Corners Festival on Friday January 11, 2019 at 8 am in Resurrection Hall, Holy Family Parish Centre, 120 Cavehill Road, Belfast BT15 5BU. This time the Festival will run from Wednesday January 30 - Sunday February 10 and its theme is 'Scandalous Forgiveness'. The keynote speaker will be Richard Moore from Derry/Londonderry, the inspirational founder of 'Children in Crossfire', the charity which works to change the prospects for children caught up in poverty and injustice. Doors will open at 7.45 am and the Prayer Breakfast begins at 8 am and will run for an hour until 9 am during which we will give you a flavour of the Festival's exciting programme of events and distribute the brochure. We would be grateful if you could RSVP to info@4cornersfestival.com by Wednesday December 12th.

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.

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.