



## O Come Let Us Adore Him

The Priests of the Parish join in wishing you and your family a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas, and every blessing in the New Year of 2007. The Priests of the Parish will offer their Christmas Day Masses for you and your loved ones living and dead.

May we take this opportunity to thank all our Parish helpers for their generous assistance during the year. Your support is very much appreciated.

### PARISH CALENDAR

Our Parish Calendar can be useful as it gives parish information. By placing it on the inside of a kitchen door, it will be easily available for reference with regards to phone numbers, Mass times etc.. So please keep it handy.



### A Family Grace Before Meals on Christmas Day

We ask God's blessing this Christmas Day on those who have gathered here. May the Lord bless the food we are about to eat. We remember in love absent members living and dead and those without food or shelter this day.

We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Christmas Dues

The Christmas Dues Envelope you receive through your door at Christmas and Easter help to support the priests of the Parish. They are an important source of income for the clergy. All working people in the house should be asked to contribute. Often it is our pensioners who are the most generous. We hope to send out acknowledgements early in the New Year, so please include your name and address. If you do not require an acknowledgement, please put "NO RECEIPT NEEDED" on the front of your dues Envelope

### A Celebration of Light and Farewell

On New Years Eve at 4:00pm, we will have our customary gathering of our Parishioners in St Agnes Church to mark the close of the Old Year and to pray for God's blessing on the year 2007. We invite members of other Churches to join us for this time of prayer, music and thanksgiving.



### SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION

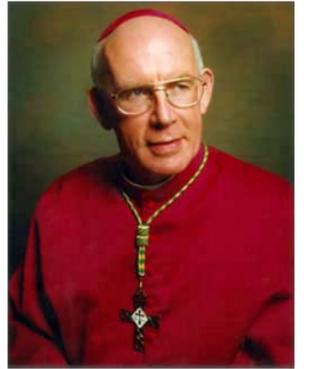
An important part of preparation for Christmas is to go to Confession. We can offer the peace of Christmas to others when we are at peace with God. On Wednesday 20th December, we are inviting you to put aside time for this Ceremony of Reconciliation with Confessions beginning at 7:30pm.



There will also be Confessions all day on Saturday 23rd December

## Interview with Most Rev Sean Brady

(courtesy of Intercom, November 2006)



### Archbishop of Armagh and President of the Irish Bishops' Conference, what are your hopes for the next decade of Irish Catholicism?

I would hope that during the next decade, despite the attractions and obvious blessings brought by the Celtic Tiger and a booming economy, Irish Catholics will hold firmly to the belief that we do not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. The logical consequence of such a belief would be finding time to listen to that word in prayer and to respond to it in worship.

I would further hope that Irish Catholics will, once again, or perhaps for the first time, discover with joy the certainty that they are loved by God personally and enjoy a deeply personal relationship with the Lord, who is at work within us. That discovery would hopefully inspire all of us to come to know Jesus Christ in a deeper way and try to embody his values in our own lives.

I hope that people would come to love and trust the Church for what it really is, the body of Christ, for in the Church the Lord is present. Pope Benedict said recently that the Church exists as the family of God in which our faith and joy and the certainty of being loved by the Lord must grow. I hope that the new generations see the Church as a community of friends on whom one can depend at all times. I had the joy of visiting Nigeria earlier this year where it was my privilege to ordain ten missionary priests for the Missionary Society of St Paul. The Nigerian people are very happy people. I think that is due to the fact that they generally count their blessings and are grateful for them. I wish that we in Ireland could discover the same gift and rejoice in the consolation brought by the Spirit of God. During my visit to Nigeria I met an Irish Missionary priest who said he hoped the Church in Ireland would never lose contact with the poor. I share that hope.

### Questions people ask

**Q. Somebody said that we don't know the actual date of Jesus' birth and that 25 December was some pagan feast. Is that true?**

**A.** Yes indeed, we don't know the date of Jesus' birth. People did celebrate the passing of mid-Winter and the Return of the Unconquered Sun at this time of the year. In the third century AD the Roman Emperor Aurelian proclaimed December 25th as a special day to honour the sun as a god. Christians would not worship the sun but made that day a feast in honour of Christ the Light, the Sun of Justice, the one sent by God to banish the darkness of sin.

*Fr Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap*

WEBSITE FOR CHRISTMAS

[www.bethlehem.org](http://www.bethlehem.org)

Website of Bethlehem—City of Jesus



### A Christmas Prayer

by

**Robert Louis Stevenson**

**Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.**



**Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.**

**May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.**