



**ST AGNES' PARISH
WEEKLY NEWSLETTER**
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Priests of the Parish

Fr. J. Deasy P.P. Ph. 4550955
Fr. J. Foster Ph. 4650714
Fr. P. Coffey Ph. 4650707
Fr. P. Brewster Ph. 4650716

Family Offering: €2,568
St Vincent De Paul: €22,000

Many thanks for your continued support and generosity

Thought for the Week

"Very Little is Needed to Make a Happy Life"

CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS ABROAD

Christmas in the Philippines is incomparable. It is probably the longest in the world. It begins as early as September and ends as late as the end of January. With the arrival of the "...ber" months (September, October etc.) you can already hear strains of Christmas Carols everywhere—in the malls, on the streets and even in offices. Competitions for the best "Belen" or crib are everywhere especially in the financial district. It seems that Filipinos cannot wait for Christmas.

A predominantly Catholic country, Christmas is above all, a religious celebration. It is the season to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. For nine days, beginning on December 16th the people flock in their millions to the Churches for the traditional "Misa de Gallo" or the "Dawn Masses" at 4:00am. Many are awake at 2:00am and go early to secure a seat. The Churches are packed and often the crowds spill out onto the Church grounds. This tradition was introduced by the Spanish Friars to allow farmers to hear Mass before going to the fields early in the morning. Church bells peal out and Christmas music will be played over a public address system—so even if you're not inclined to venture out of bed—you can't sleep either—you might as well join the rest of humanity. After Mass the people pick up steamed rice cakes being prepared outside and they take them home for breakfast with hot chocolate. On Christmas Eve, the people have a Paminuluyan or drama which re-enacts the search of Mary & Joseph for an Inn. A couple dressed as Mary and Joseph knock at the door of the houses looking for a room. They are unable to find a house willing to take them in. The drama ends with the couple seeking refuge in the Church, just in time for the "Misa de Aguinaldo" or "Gift Mass" The couple accompanied by children dressed as Angels process to a make-shift manger and place the child there, the congregation sing the "Gloria" accompanied by the tolling of Church Bells. Christmas carols are sung by Carollers going from house to house. After this Midnight Mass, all return home for the much awaited "Noche Buena" feast of food.

Of all the decorations of Christmas the "Parol" or Christmas Star takes prominence. Rich and poor alike will have one or more. This star/lantern which symbolises the star that guided the Magi to the new born Saviour hangs proudly by the window of every Filipino home. In spite of the onslaught of commercialism the people try to preserve the real meaning of Christmas, it is a season of joy, a season of peace, a season of being with one's family, and most especially, a season to thank God for the gift of His Son.

I was privileged to be part of this celebration for thirty four years and I miss it. If we in Ireland were to tell others about our Irish Christmas, how would we describe it?

The Editor of the Month

CHURCH GATE COLLECTION

This weekend the Collection at the Church Gates is in aid of Bone Marrow for Leukaemia Trust, at St James Hospital. Please be as generous as possible

Recently Deceased

Matthew Roche, Derry Rd.

We express our deepest sympathies to His family at this time.

May He Rest in Peace. Amen.

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 15th December 2007

7:00pm Shared Mass

Sunday 16th December 2007

9:00am Thomas Duff, His Mother in Law & Sister in Law {A}

10:00am Brigid Redmond {A}

11:00am Vincent Gough {A}

12:00pm May & Pat Glennon {A}

1:00pm Esther Walsh {A}

7:00pm Deceased members of the Jackson Family

May their Souls and the Souls of all the Faithful Departed Rest In Peace. Amen

**St Agnes Parish
Readers Roster**

Saturday 22 / 12 / 07

7.00pm Alan Ryan

Sunday 23 / 12 / 07

9.00am Vera Brennan

10.00am Family Mass

11.00am M Finnegan

12.00pm Pat Corrigan

1.00pm Liam Buckley

7.00pm John Green

Masses for Christmas

Christmas Eve 24th December

9:00pm John Green

Christmas Day 25th December

9:00am Catherine Nagle

10:00am Family Mass

11:00am Ann Maher

12:00pm F & M Healy

1:00pm June Winders

Spare Copies of Prayers of the Faithful are available in the Sacristy. If you cannot make your reading, please contact John Green or the Sacristy.

St. Agnes' Family Mass Group.
We would love to welcome new children & leaders to our Family Mass Group. We practise in Parish Centre 6:00pm-7:00 pm each Wednesday evening to prepare for Mass Sunday 10.00am.
Contact Susan 087 224 4048 for more information

Matt Talbot Mass

The Matt Talbot Mass will take place on Tuesday 18th Dec in the Fr Libermann Oratory, Kimmage Manor Rosary 7:15pm; Mass at 7:30pm.

All Are Welcome

Christmas cards in aid of the Lorcan O'Toole Centre are available from Carmel [at back of Church]. Fantastic Value @ €4 per pack of 12.

HELP REQUIRED

This weekend we ask parishioners in all areas of the Parish to take the bundles available from Carmel at the back of the Church and distribute them as usual throughout their neighbourhood. There is a Calendar, Dues envelope and full details of Christmas arrangements for distribution to all homes. Your help would be greatly appreciated

Golden Jubilee
This week our neighbours in St Bernadette's Church, Clogher Road will be joined by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin who will be the principal celebrant at the Jubilee Mass this Saturday evening 15th December.
Last weekend while helping in St Bernadette's they showed me a picture of Archbishop McQuaid blessing the building. There was a fine looking young man in the picture with a mop of dark hair, who was carrying the Processional Cross for the occasion. It was the custom at the time of a Church opening that Clonliffe College provided the students in place of local Altar Boys to assist the Archbishop. I can remember well the blessing and dedication ceremony and this weekend I will be back again, this time representing St Agnes Parish.
I am sure our Parishioners will join with me in expressing our congratulations to all our neighbours at St Bernadette's as they celebrate their Golden Jubilee.
Fr John PP

SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION
"Prepare a way for the Lord"
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 Tuesday 18th December, we are inviting you to put aside time for this Ceremony of Reconciliation with Confessions beginning at 7:30pm.
There will also be extra Confessions on Saturday 22nd December and on Christmas Eve. See notice boards and Christmas details distributed to all homes in the Parish

St. Padre Pio.
The next meeting will be on Tuesday 18th December. Rosary 6.45pm, Mass 7.00pm. Followed by Benediction and Blessing.
All are Welcome

Recently Baptised
Karl Kevin Duffy
Roisin Alice Kenny
Shane Phillip Keddy
Caoimhe Sarah Holland-Murphy
Rian Martin Holland-Murphy
Ciara Kelly Comerford
Barry Stephen Comerford
We welcome them into our Christian Community and wish them every blessing in their lives ahead.

SFO Area Meeting.
Takes place in Oratory of Columban Srs. [back of Fr. Kitt Court] Monday 17th Dec. from 3:00-4:00 pm.
Divine Office Prayers of Intercession before the Blessed Sacrament.
Third Order Franciscans.

Mary Help of Christians Mass.
There will be Mass in the Salesian Oratory @ 7.30pm on Fri 21st Dec. Carol singing with Marie Byrne. **All Are Welcome.**



O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

- O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear, Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!
- O come, now Wisdom from on high, Who orders all things mightily; To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

Christ be our Light

Christ, be our Light! Shine out through the dark, shine! Christ be our Light! Shine in your Church gathered today. Longing for Light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth we turn to you. Make us your own, your Holy people, light for the world to see. Christ be our Light! Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair. Your word alone has power to save us, make us your living voice. Christ be our Light!

Receive O Father in Thy Love

- Receive O Father in thy love, These humble gifts of bread and wine: That with ourselves we offer thee, Returning gifts already thine.
- Behold this host and chalice, Lord, To thee on high the gifts we raise: Through them may we our honour pay, Our adoration and our praise.

How Great Thou Art

- O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder, consider all the works thy hand hath made, I see the stars I hear the mighty thunder thy power through-out the universe displayed.
Chorus: Then sings my soul, my saviour God to thee, how great thou art, how great thou art, then sings my souls my saviour God to thee How great thou art, how great thou art.
- When through the woods and forest glades I wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees when I look down from lofty mountains grandeur and hear the brook and feel the gently breeze.

