

Third Sunday of Advent:

ADVENT: This Sunday, 12th December, is the 3rd Sunday of Advent, also known as *Gaudete (Joy) Sunday*. It is a time to reflect and prepare for the coming of Christ. The Advent Wreath is a reminder that we are preparing to celebrate the coming of Jesus - The Light of the World in darkest winter. For the 3rd Sunday we light the pink candle on our wreath.

All make the Sign of the Cross +

A member of the family lights the 1st, 2nd and 3rd (pink) candle

Loving God, on this Advent night we turn to you in prayer.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of your Son, we ask your blessing on each of us.

Open our hearts to the good news that you bring to us and help us to welcome your light into our lives, a light that gives us the gift of joy in the Lord.

May we see that our deepest joy comes from knowing you.

May this joy fill our hearts, our minds and our home.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Together we say: Come Lord Jesus.

Gospel Luke 3:10-18

'Someone is coming who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire'

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.



Advent Reflection

It is important for us to realise that the Gospel is not a burden added to the many we already have. It is a proclamation of happiness. The cheerfulness of the Christian, as we are told in the first two readings, comes from the Lord who is among us and from the fact that evil had been defeated.

Our lives have meaning, even when they seem not to, because God loves us and plans happiness for each one of us, a plan that he will certainly implement. The Gospel shows us how to experience the Joy promised to those who welcome Christ, by sharing our goods, avoiding injustice, and by not oppressing people.

It makes compassion a key factor of the Gospel of Christ. Compassion as we are told is our ability to feel the pains and suffering of others. It means seeing ourselves mirrored in those whose lives are fragile for lack of food, shelter, and medical care. Those who are naked, hungry, thirsty, homeless and sick experience deep joy when someone, out of a sense of compassion, care for them. Each day there are people near and far who wait for assistance so as to be able to live better lives.

When compassion is shown in real ways, joy is rediscovered and celebrated. Selfishness, on the contrary, breeds sadness. Those who are selfish may have everything this world offers, yet deep down they lack the joy of giving and sharing and are thus unhappy with their life.

Monday, 13th December. St. Lucy,
8.00am: All Souls in Purgatory
10.00am: Thomas Murtagh (Month's Mind)

Tuesday, 14th December. St John of the Cross
8.00am: Special Intention
10.00am: William Condrón (A)

Wednesday, 15th December.
8.00am: Liam Briody (1st A)
10.00am: John Pinder (recently deceased)

Thursday, 16th December.
8.00am: Deceased members of the Rogers family
10.00am: Loretta and Peter Clarke (A)

Friday, 17th December.
8.00am: Mathias Macak (intention) & Mangita Pompova (recently dec)
10.00am: Deceased members of the Moore, Wenman & Galvin families
7.30pm: Patrick & Kathleen McDonagh & Bridget, Martin & Mary (A)

Saturday, 18th December.
8.00am: Brigid Ledwith (A)
10.00am: Belle Hannifin (A)

Sunday, 19th December. Fourth Sunday of Advent
6.00pm (*Vigil*): Monica Murray (1st A)
7.30pm (*Vigil*): Johnnie & Gertie Farrell & son in law Seamus Doherty (A)
8.00am: Annie Connolly her parents Francis & Annie McKenna & DFM
10.00am: Joe Finnegan (A)
11.30am: *Shared*: James, Kate, and Liam Donohoe (A)
Anthony Newman (A)
Irene and Liam Óg Glennon (A)
1.00pm: Joseph and Margaret Reid (A)
6.00pm: Frankie Smyth and his son in law Franz Emig (A)

OFFERTORY COLLECTION: We thank each one of you most sincerely for your continued generous contributions to our weekly collections. The amount received in the Offertory Collection last weekend was €4,005.00.

BAPTISM: With joy, we recently welcomed Isabelle Rose O'Brien and Kathleen Marie Dempsey into the Christian Community.

LONGFORD COUNTY CHOIR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT will be held next Sunday 19th December at 7.30pm. Soloists are Emer Barry and Maria Matthews. Admission is free but people will need to have a ticket. Tickets are available on eventbrite. ie

CATHEDRAL CIRCLE IS BACK!! Weekly draws are now taking place every Mon evening.

PARISH REGISTRATION: We are currently updating our census in the Parish office. We would like to have every household registered and to ensure that each home receives their box of envelopes. If you are not registered or are unsure, please contact the Parish office at 043-3346465 or email: stmelscathedral@gmail.com

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL ANNUAL APPEAL "*Impossible Choices*" has been chosen to reflect what those struggling financially face every day. If you would like to make a donation there are envelopes available in the porch of the Cathedral or you can place a donation in an ordinary envelope marked St Vincent de Paul and leave it in the Presbytery. This year the local VdeP have a "gift card" in lieu of presents that you can send to a loved one. You can get a "gift card" (or cards) by making a donation to VdeP. This can be passed on to a loved one instead of buying a present. The gift card can be obtained from any committee member or from the presbytery.

BOX OF PARISH ENVELOPES 2022: Parish envelopes are now available for distribution. The envelope is a vital source of income for the parish and has been a great source of support to the priests and the parish especially during these Covid times. We need volunteers to distribute boxes in many areas of the parish, and if you can help, even with a small number of boxes, please call to the sacristy or the parish office. Sincere thanks to all who helped in the past.

Christmas 2021

Christmas Confessions: Tues 21st, Wed 22nd and Thurs 23rd: 6 pm to 7pm
Friday (Christmas Eve) 12pm to 2pm

Christmas Masses, St Mel's Cathedral

Christmas Eve: 6pm, 8pm and 10pm

Christmas Day: 8am, 10am, 11.30am and 1pm

Sunday 26th Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (No Vigil Mass: Christmas Day)
8am, 10am, 11.30am, 1pm and 6pm