

PARISH OF TEMPLEMICHAEL & BALLYMACORMACK.



The Presbytery, Longford Tel: 043 3346465

Website: www.longfordparish.com

Email: stmelscathedral@gmail.com 

PARISH NEWSLETTER

4th Sunday of Advent, Monday 21st to Sunday 27th December 2020.

Monday, 21st December.

8.00am: Michael Kilemade (A).

10.00am: Deceased members of the Conboy family (A).

Tuesday, 22nd December.

8.00am: Deceased relatives and friends.

10.00am: Joseph (Joe) Hackett (1st A).

Wednesday, 23rd December.

8.00am: Rose Dowd and family (A).

10.00am: Bella Quinn (A).

Thursday, 24th December. Christmas Eve

8.00am: Matthew Clarke and deceased family members (A).

10.00am: Joe and Denis McGarry and Annie and Helen McDermott (A).

Christmas Eve Mass: 4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm and 12 midnight

Friday, 25th December - Christmas Day - Mass 8am, 10am, 11.30am & 1pm

All Masses will be streamed live on webcam.

Saturday, 26th December. St. Stephen.

8.00am: No Mass

10.00am: Martha Kiernan (A).

Sunday, 27th December. Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

6.00pm: (*Vigil*) Pauline and James Hussey (A).

7.30pm: (*Vigil*) Special Intention.

8.00am: Deceased relatives and friends.

10.00am: Thomas Gray (A).

11.30am: *Shared.* Billy Kett (Month's Mind).

Pat and Valinda Smith (A).

1.00pm: Móira Furey (nee Kenny) (A).

6.00pm: Matt Harte (Month's Mind).

✠**REST IN PEACE:** Your prayers are requested for Liam Briody, Knockmartin whose funeral took place during the week. Also Biruta Gaile, Prospect Woods whose funeral takes place on Monday. May they rest in peace.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION: We thank you for your contribution to last Sunday's Offertory Collection that amounted to €5,080.00. Immaculate Conception 8th December amounted to €1,505.00. People may drop their envelopes through the Presbytery letterbox. Or you may prefer to offer financial support electronically, the following are our banking details: **St Mels Cathedral Account. Permanent tsb. BIC: IPBSIE2D; IBAN: IE48IPBS99073152096969**

CHRISTMAS DUES: In support of the Bishop and the priests of the parish are now due and may be handed in at any time.

RECENTLY BAPTISED: We welcomed Annie Mae MacMahon into the Christian Community last weekend.

CHRISTMAS MASSES: Tickets for all the masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day have been allocated. And regretfully, entrance to mass at Christmas is by ticket only. Please note that the regular Sunday Mass tickets are not acceptable—they are for Sundays only. The only tickets accepted at the door are the special tickets issued for Christmas. If you have not received a ticket you can join with us online or via CableComm TV, Channel 84.

CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 6pm to 7pm.
Christmas Eve 12pm to 2pm.

BAPTISM: The celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism has now resumed. If you are seeking to have your child Baptised in the immediate future please contact the Presbytery to arrange a date.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL: Due to Covid-19 restrictions we currently cannot hold collections in person. To assist us in the many appeals that are made to us for urgent assistance, you can still donate by using the St Vincent de Paul envelope which is available in the Cathedral. The envelopes can be dropped into the Presbytery or into the letterbox at Ozanam House, behind the Cathedral. The funds raised will be spent in this community helping those who are in need of it for education, food, fuel and heating during the winter and beyond.

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 unsure, please contact the Parish office at 043-3346465 or email: stmelscathedral@gmail.com

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT:

ADVENT: This Sunday, 20th December, is the 4th Sunday of Advent,

All make the Sign of the Cross +

A member of the family lights the three purple and the pink candle.

Father, all-powerful God, Your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory and open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Together we say: *Come Lord Jesus.*

All make the Sign of the Cross +

Gospel Luke 1:26-38

'I am the handmaid of the Lord'

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.



BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2020

A year ago, in preparation for our Diocesan Assembly, I referred to "the joys, anxieties and hopes that come with family life". Little did we know then the extraordinary challenges that 2020 would entail.

We have missed what we value most - people. We miss being with and among people, all the ordinary everyday encounters, free from restriction and anxiety. Christmas brings thoughts of people who are no longer with us, especially those who died during this year. We miss those we cannot visit as freely as usual, especially our family and friends who are in hospital or in nursing homes.

We cannot gather as a community to worship the Lord as we normally do; we long to be back. Priests and parishioners carry out Trojan work to keep our churches welcoming and safe and we are grateful to them for their work and care. Although we have experienced lockdown and restrictions the Lord is present with us in so many ways.

At Christmas we celebrate the arrival of God's son among us. The story of the first Christmas in Bethlehem was full of hope and joy. What was expected for so long had come to pass. The Christmas story always refreshes our joy and our hope. The joy that each human life is of vital importance to God because of the baby in Bethlehem. The hope that this baby has changed the way we see ourselves, one another and our destiny.

We hope that life will become safer and less restricted because, decisions taken by individuals will, collectively, reduce the threat to health, lives and livelihoods. There is the hope that vaccines will assist in our great efforts to be safe. During 2020, there were times of sacrifice, when some of our normal freedoms were curtailed for the common good. There are many examples of great care and generosity throughout our parishes. We are grateful to all in leadership, essential services and in our communities whose work and sacrifice contribute to our safety.

The candles on the Advent Wreath are lit one Sunday after another, ushering us closer and closer, week by week, to Christmas. We look forward with great hope to celebrating the birth of the Saviour. Our hope is in him. I wish you and your family and friends at home and abroad a happy Christmas.

Francis Duffy
Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois

