

TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL

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The Holy Family – 26th December 2021

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

On that first Christmas night the Light of the World was laid in the manger - " the Light of the Nations and the Glory of Israel". On that Holy and Sacred night, into a darkened world, the Glory of God descended - "the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us full of light and truth". In our dark times, we turn to that Light and invite Him to break into our lives Who, in His Incarnation and Resurrection from the Dead, has conquered darkness and fear, and pray to Him in the words of the Christmas hymn "O come to my heart, Lord Jesus , there is room in my heart for Thee". There was found no room for our Infant Saviour on that first Christmas night – at this Christmastide may He find us longing for Him, as Mary longed for Him, "with a love beyond all telling" and may He bless us everyone.

Mass Intentions this Sunday (26th December – The Holy Family) **Saturday** – No Mass on Saturday Evening/Christmas Day; **Sunday** 8-00 a.m. Christine Minty (RIP) (Kathleen & Family); 10-30a.m. Bernard Allen (RIP) (Elias Family).

Weekday Mass Intentions: Wednesday 29th December (St.Joseph's) 9-30 a.m. Peter Healey (RIP) (Angela); (St.John Kemble) 11-00 a.m. Anita O'Donnell (RIP) (Owen). Friday 31st December 10-30 a.m. Funeral Mass – Kevin Halloran (RIP).

Kevin Halloran (RIP) Please remember Kevin in your prayers. Please also remember Lorna and the family in your prayers. Kevin's Funeral Mass will take place here in St.Joseph's next Friday 31st December at 10-30 a.m.. The Coffin will be received into the church at 6-00 p.m. the night before. *Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.*

Mass Intentions next Sunday: The Solemnity of Mary Mother of God on Saturday (St.John Kemble) 4-00p.m. Josef Nedza (RIP) (Nancy); (St. Joseph's) 6-00p.m. Marshall and Christopher Abell (RIP) (The Family); **The Second Sunday of Christmas on Sunday** 8-00a.m. Parish & People 10-30a.m. Deceased family & friends (RIP) (Rosemary Insole).

Anniversaries: Of your charity, remember in prayer those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Bernard Allen (2003); Lilian Lowry (2015); Patricia Winter (2003); Arthur Wheatley (2007); Lucy Wiltshire (2009); James Insole (2016); Mair Richards (2007); Patrick Gallagher (2009); Peter Navin (2010); Bridget Amos (2017); *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, And let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

Candles The Sacred Heart – Helen Diane Owen (Good Health); St.Joseph – Alma Elias (RIP); Our Lady – Jacki Jaynes (RIP).

Readers: This Sunday (26th December) 8-00 a.m. Adrian & Paula Macpherson-Jones; 10-30 a.m. Barbara Hunt. **Next Sunday** (2nd January) Saturday 6-00 p.m. Patrick McAteer; 8-00 a.m. Adrian & Paula Macpherson-Jones; 10-30 a.m. Des Nicholas

Cleaning Teams. This Sunday (26th December) 8-00 a.m. Martin & Nuala; 10-30 a.m. Joan & Ann. **Next Sunday** (2nd January) 6-00 p.m. Sian & Mary; 8-00 a.m. Martin & Nuala; 10-30 a.m. Volunteers please.

Parish Collection Last weekend **St.Joseph's** £401-50 & Donation £100 (plus Direct Debits). **St.John Kemble** £50-00. Many thanks.

Afghanistan CAFOD Crisis Appeal There will be a special collection for Afghanistan next Sunday 2nd January.

THE PARISH SYNODS

The date of the next meeting is now re-scheduled for **Wednesday 5th January** at 2-00 p.m. in the Hall. All are invited to contribute to consultation process. The next two questions to be considered are –

(i) How is God speaking to us through voices we sometimes ignore? What space is there for the voice of minorities, especially people who experience poverty, marginalisation, or social exclusion?

(ii) How are divergences of vision, or conflicts and difficulties addressed? What particular issues in the church and society do we need to pay more attention to? How does the Church dialogue with and learn from other sectors of society: the spheres of politics, culture, civil society and people who live in poverty?

A suggestion box is placed at the back of the church for those who wish to contribute but are unable to attend the meetings. Those in either parish with transport difficulties or who may be housebound or reluctant (during this pandemic) to meet socially with others but would like to contribute ideas/reflections, please ask someone to post your ideas into the box. May the Holy Spirit guide us in our understanding of what He is saying to the Church at this time.

First Holy Communion Classes. Classes resume on Sunday 9th January. Because of the large number making their first Holy Communion and so as to accommodate family/friends the **First Holy Communion Mass** will be on **Saturday 29th January at 10-30 a.m.** (First Confession – Saturday 22nd January at 10-30 a.m. in the Church). **Please note** – we only have 18 pews to accommodate 16 candidates! This means that only **one pew** will be reserved for each family so please take this into account before inviting family and friends!

The Sacrament of Confirmation Archbishop George Stack will be with us on **Friday 29th April** (7-00 p,m,) to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. There is no Confirmation Group this Sunday – we shall resume our meetings in February. Attendance at Mass continues to be an essential part of the preparation process.

APF (Red Mission Boxes) . A volunteer is needed to empty 6 boxes in the Bryncoch and Cimla area. If you would be able to help in this parish ministry please have a word with Angela Brennan or Fr.Neil. Thank you to those who have continued to empty the boxes especially during the Covid period.

Angela Bennan We offer our grateful thanks to Angela who is retiring from her role as Parish APF Secretary after 50 years (!) – (1971) - looking after and co-ordinating the parish collections for Home Missions. Grateful thanks to you Angela and also to Sian who has very kindly offered to take on the role of APF Parish Secretary. Many thanks.

SVP Childrens' Christmas Gift Appeal Thank you to all those who bought gifts for children in need. They were most gratefully received.

The Sick and Housebound Please continue to remember in your prayers all those who are sick and housebound, those in hospital and in our local care homes. Especially at this time, Peggy Swan (Glynneath), Jane Boland, George Johnson, Nancy Morris, Cheryl Ford, Andrew Jenkins, Jason Saunders, Stephen Saunders, Yolanda Jones, Elizabeth Fluck, Lorna O'Brien, Betty Hopkins, Rose Williams, Donie O'Connell, Maureen Pitt. If you would like others to be remembered in this prayer list (with their permission) please supply their names.

"More honourable than the Cherubim,

And infinitely more glorious than the Seraphim,

Thou, who without corruption, didst bear God the Word,

Thee, true Mother of God, we magnify"

ENTRANCE

- 1 Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed; Mary was that Mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.
- 2 He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable and his cradle was a stall; with the poor, and mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Saviour holy.
- 3 And through all his wondrous childhood he would honour and obey, love, and watch the lowly maiden in whose gentle arms he lay; Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.
- 4 For he is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us he grew; he was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew; and he feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.
- 5 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own redeeming love, for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above; and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.
- 6 Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by, we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high; when like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

OFFERTORY

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head, the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me for ever, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

Prayer of Self-Dedication to Jesus Christ

Oblatio Sui

Ascribed to Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)

Lord Jesus Christ, take all my freedom, my memory, my understanding, and my will. All that I have and cherish you have given me. I surrender it all to be guided by your will. Your grace and your love are wealth enough for me. Give me these, Lord Jesus, and I ask for nothing more.

HOLY COMMUNION

- 1 Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright, round yon virgin mother and child; holy infant, so tender and mild: sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night. Shepherds quake at the sight, glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia; Christ, the Saviour is born, Christ, the Saviour is born.
- 3 Silent night, holy night. Son of God, love's pure light radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace: Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

RECESSIONAL

- 1 O Mother blest, whom God bestows on sinners and on just, what joy, what hope thou givest those who in thy mercy trust.
Thou art clement, thou art chaste, Mary, thou art fair; of all mothers sweetest, best; none with thee compare.
- 2 O heavenly mother, mistress sweet! It never yet was told that suppliant sinner left thy feet unpitied, unconsoled.
- 3 O mother pitiful and mild, cease not to pray for me; for I do love thee as a child, and sigh for love of thee.
- 4 Most powerful mother, we all know thy Son denies thee nought; thou askest, wishest it, and lo! His power thy will hath wrought.
- 5 O mother blest, for me obtain ungrateful though I be, to love that God who first could deign to show such love for me.



All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace, the assembly of angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate and became a child; our God before the ages. He made thy body into a throne, and thy womb He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace. Glory to thee!

The Bethlehem Star

Moonless darkness stands between. Past, the Past no more be seen! But the Bethlehem star may lead me To the sight of him who freed me From the self that I have been. Make me pure, Lord; thou art holy; Make me meek, Lord; thou wert lowly; Now beginning, and alway; Now begin, on Christmas day.

Gerald Manley Hopkins

Prayer after Low Mass

(Promulgated by Pope Leo XIII)

ST. MICHAEL the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into Hell Satan and all the other evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.