

Ferbane Parish Bulletin

Sunday 24th December 2023 Fourth Sunday of Advent

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CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, FERBANE

SATURDAY 23rd DECEMBER - 7pm

SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER - 11am

CHRISTMAS EVE - SUN. 24th DEC.
5pm Vigil for Christmas Day.
9pm Vigil for Christmas Day.

CHRISTMAS DAY - MON. 25th DEC.
9am and 11am

Tues. 26th: 12 noon - St. Stephen's Day.

Wed. 27th: 10am - 1. Patrick & Sally Kenny.

2. Phil, Mary & Brenda Gilsean.

Thurs. 28th: 10am - Cecilia Corcoran (M/M).

Fri. 29th: 10am - James and Nuala Cooney.

Sat. 30th: 10am - 1. John Rohan.

2. Monica Finnegan

SATURDAY 30th DECEMBER - 7pm

1. Patrick & Breda Daly and their daughter Claire.

SUNDAY 31st DECEMBER - 11am

1. James & Anne Reams their sons Noel, Joe and daughter Mona.
2. Doreen Spillane.

PATRICK & SARAN, HIGH STREET

SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER - 12 noon

CHRISTMAS EVE - SUN. 24th DEC.
7pm Vigil for Christmas Day. *Pray & Play.*

CHRISTMAS DAY - MON. 25th DEC.
12 noon

SUNDAY 31st DECEMBER - 12 noon

1. Alo Kenny, his parents Paddy & Brigie, his brother Kieran, sister Josie and his nephew Kieran.

ST. OLIVER PLUNKETT, BOORA

SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER - 9.30am

CHRISTMAS EVE - SUN. 24th DEC.
7pm Vigil for Christmas Day.

CHRISTMAS DAY - MON. 25th DEC.
9.30am

SUNDAY 31st DECEMBER - 9.30am

MASSES - All ceremonies can be heard on 106.5FM Parish Radio. Parish bulletin is available on www.ferbaneparish.ie.

PARISH OFFICE - Open every Wednesday from 9am-1pm and 2-5pm. Tel: 090 6454309 or email parishoffice@ferbaneparish.ie.

SVP - Confidential phone line 087 9272877.

DEATH - Please pray for the repose of the souls of Mary Duffy, Endrim and Gerard Ward, Caltra (brother of Eamon Ward, Ballyclare). May they rest in peace.

COLLECTIONS - December 17th:

Offertory/Shrine €3,760. Thank you.

ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

WALK - Is being held at Ballinahown Sports park on Wednesday, December 27th from 10.30am - 4pm. Festive refreshments available. Any donations received will be shared with the Premature Baby Unit in Temple Street Children's Hospital. Please support.

BELMONT SENIOR CITIZENS PARTY Will be held on Sunday 7th January 2024 starting with Mass at 3pm in High Street Community Centre.

THANKS - To everyone who supported the Christmas Jumble Sale last weekend. Your support was greatly appreciated.

THE COLLECTION ENVELOPES FOR 2024 -

Are ready for distribution. We would be very grateful if the distributors can call to the Presbytery to collect them. If you cannot deliver the envelopes this year, please let Fiona or one of the priests know. If you have not obtained a box of envelopes and would like to get one, please let us know. Your support is greatly appreciated.

BELMONT GAA - Would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of our supporters for their continued support, it is greatly appreciated. We would like to wish you all very happy and safe Christmas and a happy and peaceful new year.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM BISHOP PAUL

We speak a great deal in Advent about the coming of the light – as Isaiah puts it – *for your light has come, the glory of the Lord has come upon you*. What light? The light that has made itself visible in the flesh, in this tiny infant in the crib. We are attracted by the same light that enveloped the shepherds and was the guide for the Magi on their journey. This is the light that was in the world from the beginning and by which the world was made. The message of Christmas as St John puts it – *the true light which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world*. And elsewhere in St John – *I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life*. The feast of Christmas is full of Christian hope, the light will overcome the darkness in our lives.

And as we ponder on this message at this Christmas time we are all too conscious of how at times we feel surrounded by darkness. There is so much war and destruction in our world, in Ukraine, in Yemen, in Sudan, in Burma and especially in Gaza, the very heart of the Holy Land. Truly we are witnessing yet again the slaughter of the innocents. So much evil. And then there is the darkness in our own lives, the darkness of addiction of various kinds, the threat to human life at its beginning and now mooted for the end of life, the misery of loneliness and the hatred that comes from racism, misunderstanding and ignorance. So much darkness that we can feel overwhelmed. But the message of Christmas is a beacon of hope, the light will always overcome the darkness. Evil will not prevail. The Lord is near, have no fear. This Christmas we are invited yet again to welcome Jesus, the light of truth, hope and love into our lives. Let us make him this Christmas the Lord of our life and let us commit ourselves once again to walking the journey of life with Him.

CHRISTMAS

The Crib's 800th Birthday

Tradition has it that St. Francis of Assisi created the first crib in a cave in the little hillside village of Greccio in central Italy on Christmas night 1223, exactly eight hundred years ago. Having received permission from Pope Honorius III, he brought the Christmas story to life using real people, a manger with hay and two live animals, an ox and an ass. He then invited the local villagers to come bearing candles and torches and behold the simple nativity scene while he preached a sermon about the 'Babe of Bethlehem'. From these humble beginnings a beautiful tradition developed over the centuries as people throughout Europe and beyond erected cribs in all kinds of shapes, sizes and places during the Christmas season. The crib has an enduring attraction. It is a living gospel that speaks to heart, mind and soul. It still draws people into its tender embrace as they come in throngs year after year to gaze in wonder and gratitude to feel, touch and enter into the mystery, magic and life-giving message of the Christmas event. When asked recently to sum up the message of his more than seventy years of preaching an elderly Dominican friar settled on five short words: '**God is on your side**'. That is the essential message of the Christmas story also and it is the message that Francis wanted to convey when he gathered his little flock in Greccio eight hundred years ago and created the first crib. Happy 800th Birthday!

As you stand before the Crib

'Look deeper than this pleasant scene. See your God become your food for eternity in a feeding place for animals. See the simple bands wound around the helpless baby, not the embroidered dress. See a man and a woman wearing the clothes of the poor. See and smell the animals. Feel the cold and dirt of the cave, lighted only by a little fire. Then adore your God who took a human heart that could know the greatest love and the sharpest pain, arms that could embrace sinners, the neurotics, the lepers, and hands that could touch cheeks running with tears and be pierced with nails. Adore your poor and humble God'.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

We wish our parish family at home and abroad a blessed, joyful and peaceful Christmas. As we thank you most sincerely for your unfailing kindness, warm friendship and generous support during 2023, we invoke the words of the ancient Irish blessing:

*The light of the Christmas star to you.
The warmth of home and hearth to you.
The cheer and goodwill of friends to you.
The love of the Son of God to you.
Beannachtaí na Nollag orainn uilig.*