

**St. Brigid's Parish, Blanchardstown Newsletter**  
**Christmas Day—25th December 2021**



**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK - THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS**

**Happy Christmas**

On behalf of myself, the Parish Team; the Parish Staff and the Parish Pastoral Council, I'd like to wish the parishioners of St. Brigid's a joyful and Happy Christmas. May Christ Jesus dwell with you, keep you from all harm, and make you one in mind and heart, now and forever. Amen

**Remembrance**

We remember all our friends and loved ones who have died in the past year.

All sharing in common that they died into the arms of our loving God.

We pray especially for those who are grieving and are without consolation at this time.

May the gentle light of Jesus shine on them and may they know the love and compassion of our Lord in their hearts.

**Royal Canal - Pelletstown**

The Mass was celebrated for the four Thursday's of Advent and it went quite well. There was a turnout in excess of 10 people including children which was lovely. From small acorns...We hope to continue this initiative during the Thursday's of Lent.

**Santa and his reindeer**

A Visit from St. Nicholas written by Clement Moore in 1822. Moore, a professor of biblical languages at New York's Episcopal Theological Seminary, drew upon early New Amsterdam traditions and added some elements from German and Norse legends. These stories held that a happy little elf like man presided over midwinter pagan festivals. In the poem, Moore depicts the saint as a tiny man with a sleigh drawn by eight miniature reindeer. They fly him from house to house and at each residence he comes down the chimney to fill stockings hung by the fireplace with gifts. And, for the first time, they are identified by name:



*More rapid than eagles his courses they came,  
 And he whistled and shouted and called them by name;  
 Now, Dasher! now, Dancer!*

*Now, Prancer and Vixen!  
 On, Comet! On, Cupid!  
 on, Dunder and Blixem!"*

*(most commonly known as Donner and Blitzen)*

Moore had written the poem for the enjoyment of his own family, but in 1823 it was published anonymously in the Troy Sentinel. It became very popular and has been reprinted countless times under the more familiar title, *The Night Before Christmas*. (*Santa's Reindeer* by Patricia Hope – St. Martin Magazine, December 2018)

**A Celebration of Wonder & Awe**



*This reflection was written by J.B. Williams from 'The Christian Year' from Good News; Thoughts on God and Man. I consider it excellent and very appropriate.*

The particular danger, which faces us as Christmas approaches, is unlikely to be contempt for the sacred season, but nevertheless our familiarity with it may easily produce in us a kind of indifference. The true wonder and mystery may leave us unmoved; familiarity may easily blind us to the shining fact that lies at the heart of Christmastide.

What we are in fact celebrating is the awe-inspiring humility of God, and no amount of familiarity with the trappings of Christmas should ever blind us to its quiet but explosive significance. For Christians believe that so great is God's love and concern for humanity that he himself became a man. Amid the sparkle and colour and music of the day's celebrations we do well to remember that God's insertion of himself into human history was achieved with an almost frightening quietness and humility.

This almost beggarly beginning has been romanticised by artists and poets throughout the centuries. Yet I believe that at least once a year we should look steadily at the historic fact, and not at any picture. At the time of this astonishing event only a handful of people knew what had happened. And as far as we know, no one spoke openly about it for thirty years. Even when the baby was grown to be a man, only a few recognised him for who he really was. Two or three years of teaching and preaching and healing people, and his work was finished. He was betrayed and judicially murdered, deserted at the end by all his friends.

By normal human standards this is a tragic little tale of failure, the rather squalid story of a promising young man from humble home, put to death by the envy and malice of the professional men of religion. All this happened in an obscure, occupied province of the vast Roman Empire.

It is two thousand years ago that this apparently invincible Empire utterly collapsed, and all that is left of it is ruins. Yet the baby, born in such pitiful humility and cut down as a young man in his prime, commands the allegiance of millions of people all over the world. Although they have never seen him, he has become friend and companion to innumerable people. This undeniable fact is, by any measurement, the most astonishing phenomenon in human history. It is a solid rock of evidence that no agnostic can ever explain away.

**The Gift of God**

A present that cannot be priced  
 Given two thousand years ago.  
 Yet if God had not given so  
 He still would be a distant stranger  
 And not the Baby in the manger.  
*(John Betjeman)*

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**Christmas Cards**

A sincere thank you to all who packed the cards and to those who distributed them around the Parish. It is really appreciated

**Christmas Dues Envelopes**

Thank you to all who have returned their Christmas Dues. If you did not receive Christmas Dues envelope and would like to contribute to the Priests of the Parish, please take one from the tables in the Church

**Masses for the week after Christmas**

**Sunday 26th: 10.30am & 12 noon**  
**Monday 27th– Friday 31st: 11am**  
**Sat. 1st Jan: 11am & 7pm—Vigil**  
**Sunday 2nd Jan: 10.30am & 12 noon**  
**Monday 3rd Jan: 10am Mass resumes**  
**Wednesday 5th Jan: 10am & 7pm Vigil**  
**Thursday 6th Jan (Epiphany): 10am**



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