



St Brigid's Parish, Blanchardstown Newsletter

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time Sunday 14th January 2024



Mary, The Mother of God

Pope Francis wrote a beautiful for this feast Day, 1st January. Below is an extract:

The words of the Apostle Paul illumine the beginning of this new year: "When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman" (Gal 4:4). The expression "the fullness of time" is striking. In ancient times, time was measured using vases of water; the passage of time was marked by how long it took for an empty vase to be filled. Hence the meaning of the phrase "fullness of time": once the vase of history is filled, divine grace spills over. God becomes man and he does so through a woman, Mary. She is the means chosen by God, the culmination of that long line of individuals and generations that "drop by drop" prepared for the Lord's coming into the world. The Mother, then, stands at the very heart of the mystery of time. It pleased God to turn history around through her, the woman. With that one word, "woman", the Scripture brings us back to the beginning, to Genesis, and makes us realize that the Mother and Child mark a new creation, a new beginning. Thus, at the beginning of the time of salvation, there is the Holy Mother of God, our Holy Mother. It is fitting, then, that the year should open by invoking her; it is fitting that God's faithful people should acclaim her with joy, as once those bold Christians did in Ephesus, as the *Holy Mother of God*. For those words, *Mother of God*, express the joyful certainty that the Lord, a tiny Child in his Mother's arms, has united himself forever to our humanity, to the point that it is no longer only ours, but his as well. *Mother of God*: a simple phrase that confesses the Lord's eternal covenant with us. *Mother of God*: a dogma of faith, but also a "dogma of hope"; God in man, and man in God, forever. The Holy Mother of God. In the fullness of time, the Father sent his Son, born of a woman. But Saint Paul also speaks of a second sending: "God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father!'. In the sending of the Spirit, the Mother also plays a central role: the Holy Spirit comes to rest upon her at the Annunciation (cf. Lk 1:35); later, at the birth of the Church, he descends upon the apostles gathered in prayer "with Mary, the Mother". Mary's receptiveness to the working of the Spirit brought us the greatest of all gifts: she "enabled the Lord of Majesty to become our brother", so that the Spirit can cry out in our hearts: "Abba, Father!"



The motherhood of Mary is the path leading us to the paternal tenderness of God, the closest, most direct and easiest of paths. This is God's "style": **closeness, compassion and tenderness.** Indeed, the

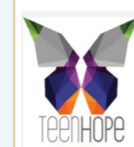
Mother leads us to the beginning and heart of faith, which is not a theory or a task, but a boundless gift that makes us beloved sons and daughters, tabernacles of the Father's love. It follows that welcoming the Mother into our lives is not a matter of devotion but a requirement of faith: "If we want to be Christians, we must be 'Marians'", that is "children of Mary".

The Church needs Mary in order to recover her own feminine face, to resemble more fully the woman, Virgin and Mother, who is her model and perfect image, to make space for women and to be "generative" through a pastoral ministry marked by concern and care, patience and maternal courage. The world, too, needs to look to mothers and to women in order to find peace, to emerge from the spiral of violence and hatred, and once more see things with genuinely human eyes and hearts. Every society needs to accept the gift that is woman, every woman: to respect, defend and esteem women, in the knowledge that whosoever harms a single woman profanes God, who was "born of a woman".

On Friday 26th January, Fr. John Walsh from Limerick will give his testimony during the 7.30 mass in St Patrick's Church Corduff. Fr. John has worked as a chaplain in Limerick prison for many years and now works in a disadvantaged area in Limerick. His testimony is well worth hearing. Refreshments will be served after the mass.

Parish Meetings

This week in the Pastoral Centre
Thursday 18th January – The Parish Pastoral Council will meet at 7.00pm.



Friday 19th January - **Teen Hope**
The teenagers are invited to gather at 7.00pm – Pizza, chat, games, reflection and prayer and FUN!

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Week of Christian Unity-2024

Every year from the 18th to the 25th January (Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul), the Christian Churches celebrate the week of Christian Unity. The theme this year is "You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself" (Lk 10:27). The materials for the 2024 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity were prepared by an ecumenical team from Burkina Faso facilitated by the local Chemin Neuf Community (CCN) Brothers and sisters from the Catholic Archdiocese of Ouagadougou, Protestant Churches, ecumenical bodies and the CCN in Burkina Faso collaborated generously in drafting the prayers and reflections. They experienced their work together as a real path of ecumenical conversion.

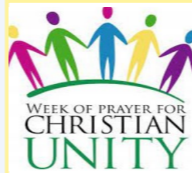
St Vincent de Paul

The monthly outdoor collection takes place this weekend.

Christmas Dues Envelopes

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

Fr Michael Carey PP



GO AND DO LIKEWISE

The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the best-known passages of Scripture, yet one that never seems to lose its power to challenge indifference to suffering and to inspire solidarity. It is a story about crossing boundaries that calls our attention to the bonds that unite the whole human family. In choosing this passage of Scripture for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the churches of Burkina Faso have invited us to join with them in a process of self-reflection as they consider what it means to love our neighbour amid a security crisis. Communities in the British-Irish context may be less vulnerable to acts of mass violence than in Burkina Faso, but there are still many living with the memory and/or the threat of serious violence, centered on issues of identity and belonging.

There are also groups within communities, including people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people seeking asylum, who feel particularly vulnerable to violence or being displaced by the threat of violence. Our neighbours in Burkina Faso call us to reconnect to God's dream for us – a dream of a unity formed of ties of love and compassion. This challenges us not only to reflect on the learning from our ecumenical journey so far, but to widen our vision. What can we learn from people of other faiths, from those whose backgrounds are most different from our own, and what do we need from each other?

Children's Corner: In the Gospel Today

Jesus begins to make friends with people who will help him spread the Good News of God's love.

My teacher

The two disciples called Jesus "Rabbi" which means "Teacher". Can you draw a picture of your teacher?

My teacher's name is _____

Can you name three things that your teacher taught you this week?

- _____
- _____
- _____



Dear Jesus, thank you for inviting us all to follow you. Help me to follow you and do all the good things you teach me. Help me to bring other people to you by showing them how happy I am that you are my friend. Amen.

The apostles

Jesus had twelve special friends called apostles. Apostles have special work to do for Jesus.

UPDATE FROM THE UNIVERSAL SYNOD

In October 2021, Pope Francis launched a Synod on the theme of synodality. This was the first time that a worldwide listening process and consultation with parishes and dioceses took place. Many people in Ireland took part in the listening stage in early 2022. **Did you take part? Have you been wondering what happened after that?**

The Irish Catholic Bishops sent a report of this listening to the Synod Office in Rome in August 2022. This became part of a Continental Stage in Prague (Feb 2023) where an Irish delegation presented some of the themes. The Synod Office in Rome then published a working document based on the themes that emerged worldwide (June'23). This document was the official working document for the first session of a universal assembly known as the Synod of the Bishops. For the first time in their history, 70 non-bishop members, lay men and women, religious brothers and sisters, priests and deacons) participated in this assembly as voting members. The assembly took place from 4-29 October. Bishop Brendan Leahy and Bishop Alan McGuckian were the two bishops nominees that travelled from Ireland. A second session of the Synod of Bishops is scheduled for Oct'24 where further decisions will be taken following a year-long process of reflection, further research, and most importantly, prayer.

A full report of the bishops experience, the themes and questions raised and some of the immediate proposals from the assembly can be found online www.synod.ie/bishopsreport



Mass intentions for the week

Saturday	Marie Marsland (2nd Anniv)	Valerie & Dermot Kampff
Sunday	Jeremiah & Joan O'Brien Fr John Casey	Bernard & Margaret-Mary Jordan Jack Massey (1st Anniv)
Thursday	Richie Beirne	

We pray for our recently deceased,
Patricia Howard and Niko Arra
Always loved, never forgotten



MEDJUGORJE 2024 MARIAN PILGRIMAGE

15th May 2024— 7 nights €750pps.
€50 discount if booked and €200 deposit paid by 1st Feb. Contact Pat 087 223 8911

PARISH CONTACTS: V REV Fr. Michael Carey: 8213660 Rev Jim Adams(Deacon) 0862232411

Rev Michael O'Connor(Deacon) 0872941729 Sacristy: 8238354

Parish Finance Christine Carleton / Parish Secretary Jean Rogers: 8115412

email: office@blanchardstownparish.ie website: www.blanchardstownparish.ie

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Brigids-Parish-Blanchardstown-44438662375848/>

