

Errigal Parish Newsletter – 6th December 2020

Weekday Masses:

St. Mary's Church: Monday (Vigil Mass for the Immaculate Conception at 6pm). Tuesday at 7pm. Wednesday and Thursday at 10am. (Webcam/Parish Radio only - Mass said behind closed doors. The church will open for private prayer after Mass)

St. Joseph's Oratory: No weekday Mass presently.

'Parish of Errigal' **Christmas Masses 2020**

Christmas Eve

St. Mary's Church - 4pm (additional Mass) 6pm.

St. Joseph's Church - 8pm

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Christmas Morning

St. Mary's Church - 9am

St. Joseph's Church - 11am.

To accommodate increased numbers attending Christmas Masses, we will operate a 'track and trace' system. This means you are required to provide your contact details (**name, address, telephone number – number of people to be seated together – 'social bubble' – data sheets attached**).

By indicating your intention to attend a Christmas Mass – (**Mass will be allocated with respect to numbers permitted in the church**), your seat allocation will be offered on a 'first registered – first accommodated' process. (You may only attend one Mass over the Christmas period to permit other members of our parish community to attend a Christmas Mass). Please, be aware just because you or your family has registered your intentions to attend a Christmas Mass, it does not automatically mean that you will be able to attend.

Once we are aware of the numbers, that we can safely permit to gather in the church, we will print a seating arrangement map for each church and for each service. These will be available to view at the back of each church once they are correlated, and no later than Sunday 20th December.

We advise that you arrive at the church, at least 10/15 minutes before the Mass begins. You will be greeted by a steward/usher who will have a seating plan – they will guide you or your family group to your designated seat. Once the seating arrangements are finalized, they will reflect the required regulations pertaining to – (1) Family Bubbles (2) Social Distancing.

I ask for your co-operation in our efforts to manage the safety of all who gather for our Christmas Services. Please ensure that you use the sanitiser as you enter and leave the church, also wear a facial mask, unless you are exempt from doing so.

All who enter the church will be seated, there will be **NO** standing at the back of the church or around the porch area. Once the Mass has concluded and instructed by the stewards/ushers you will be invited to exit the church safely from the back first.

Thank you for your co-operation in these challenging times!

Parish Finance: Thanks to those in recent months who continued to contribute to the parish finances by cheque/parish envelopes. Please note that collection baskets circulating during Mass are suspended presently. There is a collection box at the back of each church at the weekend Masses. If you wish to contribute to the parish by standing order - forms can be forwarded upon request by sending an email to - errigalparish@gmail.com From the end of each month we shall include in the collection figures the amounts relating to the increase in standing orders, these figures are stated above in the brackets at the end of each month.

Meeting with Ushers/Stewards for Christmas Masses: St. Joseph's Church - Monday at 7pm. St. Mary's Church - Tuesday at 7.30pm. Each meeting will take place in the church.

Season of Advent: An Advent wreath symbolises this season. The wreath is made of evergreen or holly. The origins of the Advent wreath are obscure, but it is said it was a family custom widely practised in northern Europe during the 19th century. It is a simple way to start a tradition of family prayer in the home. The wreath is the shape of a circle which represents eternity, since a circle has no beginning or no end. Like God's love, which is everlasting. The evergreen, which is always green, illustrates life, growth, hope and the never changingness of God. There are five candles on the wreath, three purple, one pink and one white in the centre. This weekend we light the second purple candle continuing our journey in anticipation of the birth of the Christ-child.

Advent is the season four Sundays before Christmas in which we prepare for the coming of Christ. The word Advent comes from the Latin word 'adventus', which means 'coming'. Advent is a time of waiting, conversion and of hope. Advent has a two-fold character - it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities' of the Christmas Season, in which the first coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and in its turn in anticipation of Christ's Second coming at the end of time. (Advent Season - Year B)

Join the journey through Advent this year at www.catholicbishops.ie/advent-calendar *'Lord our God, help us to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son. May He find us waiting, eager in joyful prayer. 'Come, Lord Jesus'.*

Seasonal Christmas Cards: Available for sale at the back of each church. (Pkts of six cards - £2.50p).

Stamp Boxes: There is a box at the back of each church for the collection of used stamps for the missions.

Baptism Dates: St. Mary's Church - 12th December at 5pm. St. Joseph's Church - 20th December at 12.30pm.

Sacrament of Initiation Dates 2021: Sacrament of Confirmation - Saturday 13th March at 11am. First Communion - St. Columba's School Saturday 24th April at 11am. St. Patrick's & St. Joseph's School Saturday 15th May at 11am.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Following enquires regarding the reception of this Sacrament (Confession) provision can be accommodated respecting social distancing and wearing a facial mask, by arrangement either in the space proved in the church or alternatively in the Parochial House.

Next week, I will offer times and evenings for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in each church. However, we cannot use the Confessional box for reasons stated above, we will use the open space of the church respecting social distancing.

St. Mary's Church Readers - 12th/13th Dec

Vigil 6pm. - Caroline Loughery

Sunday 10am. - Amelia O'Neill

Eucharistic Ministers - 12th/13th Dec

Vigil 6pm. - Carmel Harkin & Paddy Bradley

Sunday 10am. - Amanda Ferris & Kate Lagan.

St. Joseph's Church Readers - 12th/13th Dec

Vigil 7.30pm. - Ciara Mullan

Sunday 11.30am. - Adrian Cullerton

Eucharistic Ministers - 12th/13th Dec

Vigil 7.30pm. - Diane Burns

Sunday 11.30am. - Maria Healy.

St Vincent de Paul - Christmas Appeal 2020: Christmas time is the busiest time for St Vincent de Paul giving out lots of toys and food parcels kindly donated by the public. However, this Christmas is going to be different with COVID-19 and government restrictions. The safety of the public and their members is paramount. Therefore, St Vincent de Paul are asking the public that instead of buying a physical toy or items of food that they buy a voucher or make a donation for the amount they were going to spend. If you have any questions or need any help please ring **St Vincent de Paul on 07563595868. There is also a link on the parish website to donate.**

St. Mary's Church: Altar Society for December - Orla Doherty, Theresa McKay, Maria Lagan and Kate Lagan. **Counters for December -** Bernie McGilligan, Deirdre Robinson and Paddy Higgins.

St. Joseph's Church: Altar Society for December - Christine Heaney, Lorraine Kelly and Mary Conway. **Counters for December -** Chris & Bernie McNicholl, Patricia McKeever and Kate Bradley.

Prayer Resources for Advent: A series of Prayer resources for Advent has been created by the Diocese, in conjunction with the Northern Pastoral Network and the Catechetical Centre, for family prayer at home during the season of Advent as we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. These resources contain lots of creative ideas and tips to help families and parishes during Prayer resources for Advent the Season of Advent. A family prayer booklet has been compiled specifically with families in mind. The Gospel for each Sunday of Advent is accompanied by a family activity, prayers and a reflection. The booklet can be downloaded at this link: <https://www.derrydiocese.org/news/advent-prayer-service-for-use-at-home> Family activities for Advent including prayers, how to create a Jesse Tree, an Advent Wreath and lots more are available to view on the Catechetical Centre website at: <https://catecheticalcentre.org/family-resources/preparing-our-hearts-for-christmas-adventresources>.

An Advent Prayer - Lord Jesus, you came among us, to share our humanity and transform our lives. We are people of hope and joy, because we know You will always be with us. Encouraging and supporting us in every part of our lives. We will never be alone again. We want to prepare our minds and hearts to celebrate your coming, in a spirit of gratitude for all you have done and continue to do for us. Send your Holy Spirit to us, so we can spend these weeks of preparation thinking about what your coming among us truly means. And about the mystery of your love for us, which surpasses all our hopes and expectations. Amen.

Sacraments of Initiation: MyFaith.ie is a parish-based programme of preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. It releases new modules every two weeks or so as the children and their families prepare for the Sacraments. Each module begins with a short lesson - for parents - on the content of that module before the next item, a taught lesson for the children. The programme is highly interactive and learning is reinforced through challenges, quizzes and interactive games which are scored but can be repeated indefinitely. This is offered to parents/guardians as a format of instruction during the pandemic.

Face Coverings/Numbers at Services: The wearing of face coverings are now mandatory upon entering and leaving the church. Some people are exempt from the wearing of face coverings, even in situations which would otherwise be mandatory. Please continue to observe social distancing, to use the hand sanitiser on entering and leaving each of our churches. Also, with immediate effect the number of people who can attend funerals and weddings are restricted to twenty-five people.

Diocesan Paper 'The Net': The December edition of The Net is now available online, on www.derrydiocese.org. As always, it features a wide variety of news, interesting and inspiring interviews, articles and photos from parishes across the diocese. You are invited to read The Net, on the diocesan website, at your convenience.

ACCORD Virtual Interactive Marriage Preparation Programme - 2021 Course Dates: 12th/ 13th January 9th/ 10th February and 9th/ 10th March. Booking now online at www.accordni.com.

Sisters from the St. Elisabeth Convent: (Minsk, Belarus) are launching the very first Online Christmas Market, so that people from all over the world can purchase Christmas presents and souvenirs made with love and continuous prayer. Please, click here to participate: <https://catalog.obitel-minsk.com/christmas-market> Every item purchased at the Online Market is a donation towards one of the Convent's ministries.

Anniversary Masses: Anniversary Masses/Month's Mind Masses either to be booked or to be added to the weekend list, need to be recorded in the Anniversary Book in each sacristy. As is the custom previously established, the requested Masses can take place during the week or at the weekend, when the date is available. It is advisable were possible to book well in advance in the case of anniversaries. **In the case of a booked Anniversary Mass please inquire of the sacristan before the Mass begins that the Mass is offered for the intention you request.**

Andy's Charity Plant Sale, 86 Mettican Road, Garvagh: On Friday 11th & Saturday 12th December at 9am - 4.00pm Winter planters, Wreaths, Garlands and much more. Proceeds going to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Ballerin GAA: There was no winner of the Lotto. The no's were 1,4, 13, and 22. J/P was £10,000 2nd. J/P £10,000 3rd. £5400 (approx) £50 winner Patricia Cassidy, Ballymoney.

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