

the neighbour we can see. There can be no separation of these two realities: to love God is to love your neighbour and to love your neighbour is to love God. The heart of the Christmas proclamation is here in this reading and we should listen as if we were hearing it for the first time.

Pope Francis tells us that on receiving the grace of being the Mother of the Incarnate Word, Mary did not keep that gift to herself; she set off from her home and went in haste to help her kinswoman Elizabeth, who was in need of assistance (cf. Lk 1:38-39). Here we have our model. She who received the most precious gift from God, as her immediate response, sets off to be of service [to others] and to bring Jesus [to them].

Let us ask for Our Lady to help us too, to give Christ's joy to our families, our companions, our friends, to everyone we meet over the Christmas holidays.

I know that for many of you this Christmas may be tinged with sadness as you remember a loved one who has gone home to God as has been the case with our family in the past year. Or you may look back on past Christmases when a relative or friend who joined you around the Christmas table then is not with us today perhaps because they may have emigrated. And while technology is fantastic, Skype or Facetime are not the same as having someone present.

Whatever our circumstances this Christmas, I hope that you will have some time to relax and reflect on God's mercy, forgiveness and love. And, in particular, the gift of his son Jesus to us at this very special time of the year. If you have time, it's a lovely tradition to visit the crib and perhaps say a prayer like this one:

"Hail and Blessed be the hour and moment when the Son of God was born to the most pure Virgin Mary at midnight in the stable at Bethlehem in the piercing cold. In that same hour and moment, vouchsafe, Oh my God, to hear my prayer and grant my request. Amen."

I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Gerard Reilly is a Permanent Deacon in Donaghmede and Ayrfield parishes



PARISH OF LARKHILL/WHITEHALL/SANTRY



NEWSLETTER



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Christmas – the Festival of Life

24th December 2017

As we gather for mass on this Christmas Day, we give thanks to God for the gift of his son Jesus to us.



festival of life, because Jesus, [was] born like all of us."

Christmas is not an event

that was frozen in the history of 2,000 years ago but for Christians, it is the continuing, dynamic and living presence of Christ amongst us which effects the lives of millions of Christians in our world today. And one of the great strengths of our faith is that this day is celebrated by Christians in many different countries and cultures.

Speaking in the Millennium year, Pope John Paul II said the following about Christmas:

"Today we celebrate the mystery of Bethlehem, the mystery of an incomparable night which is, in a sense, within time and beyond time. From the Virgin's womb was born a Child, a manger became the cradle of immortal Life. Christmas is the

Christ who was born of Mary in Bethlehem wants to be born in all our lives.

We can really celebrate Christmas well, when we show the face of Christ to each other, when God's love becomes real in our own lives as it became flesh in Jesus.

We remember with gratitude today all those who have shown the face of Christ to us and we pray that our own relationships with Christ will deepen during this Christmas time.

The birth stories about Jesus are found only in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. In the birth of Jesus, we see our God made visible. The thrilling reality of the Word made flesh is both gift and call. We are challenged to love the God we cannot see in

Christmas/New Year – As this is the Christmas/New Year edition of our Parish Newsletter, words of appreciation are due to so many. At the time of writing, we have been uplifted in spirit by taking part in our annual Carol Service. Christmas brings out the best in people and the talents and gifts of parishioners are generously expressed to enhance liturgy, worship and service. I would like to offer thanks to all involved in ministry in our Parish, they provide a great support to people at the various stages in spiritual life. Our gratitude is also due to our dedicated Sacristans in both Churches which are always spic and span, many thanks to God's Housekeepers who work throughout the year. Thanks also to Dorothy Gray for the seasonal Church décor, floral arrangements and our beautiful Crib which as usual this year is splendid and well worth a visit to say a little prayer. Thanks to Margaret & Peter Grimes for decorating the Parish Christmas Tree. Many thanks to Tina Deegan and her team of volunteers who manage the Parish Centre. Finally, a very sincere appreciation for all the contribution Anne Flanagan makes to the pastoral administration of our Parish, it's invaluable. To Parishioners and visitors among us; may I wish you all the blessings and grace of this holy time and may 2018 be filled with joy, peace and happiness.

Fr. John Jones



Christmas Crib - Don't forget to visit our beautiful crib and say a little prayer there with wonder and awe at the birth of Our Saviour. It is situated at the top left hand side of the Church.

Parish Christmas Tree – If you have a family member who is unable to be with you for Christmas you can write their names on the tags provided and hang them on the tree as a way of remembering them.



Our Thanks – The Priests of the Parish wish to acknowledge with grateful thanks all who have forwarded Christmas Dues. If you wish to receive an individual acknowledgement please contact the Parish Office.

**Church of the Holy Child
Diamond Jubilee
1957- 2017**

**Book on sale now in the
Parish Shop and at Reception in the Parish
Centre – Cost €5**

**All proceeds will go towards
a new Parish Organ**



Ministers of the Eucharist
Please refer to the December Roster for the coming weeks. The new Roster will be available in January



Recently Deceased: You are asked to remember in your Prayers:
Kathleen Foley

*May she enjoy perfect peace and
reconciliation
in the presence of God.*



**We welcome in Baptism:
Beauden Thomas Murphy**
*May this newly baptised Child
always know and love Jesus as his
friend.*



The Society of St. Vincent De Paul would like to sincerely thank parishioners for their generosity at their recent collection. The amount raised from this Parish was €12,540.00.



Please Support your Parish Lotto

Last Tuesday's winning numbers were:

1st Jackpot: 11 17 20 22 2nd Jackpot: 5 12 15 24

1st Jackpot Winner - €15,000 was won by L. Kelly.

There was no winner of the 2nd Jackpot of €2,000.

The winners of the seven prizes of €25 were: A. Chacko: W. & G. Kenny: B. Hewitt: M. Mullery: M. Kearney: T. Purdue: D. Hanlon.

The winners of the six special prizes of €50 were A. Soden: B. Devine: T. Purdue: E. McGinley: M. McDermott: F. Noonan.

No Lotto this Week. Next Lotto Tuesday 2nd January.

Jackpots on the 2nd Jan.: First Jackpot €1,000 Second Jackpot €2,000

Plus 7 consolation prizes of €25



Mass Intentions for the coming week

Church of the Holy Child

Monday 25th December	Christmas Day Masses – 8.30am, 10.00a.m., 11.15am., & 12.30pm.	No Evening Mass
Tuesday 26th December	10.00a.m.	Francis and Frances Soden (Anniversaries) No Evening Mass
Wednesday 27th Dec.	10.00a.m.	Peter Walsh & Stephen Burke (Christmas Remembrance) No Evening Mass
Thursday 28th Dec.	10.00a.m.	Peggy & Tommie Nolan, Charlie Mongey (Anniversaries) No Evening Mass
Friday 29th December	10.00a.m.	Maurice Coffey (R.I.P.) No Evening Mass
Saturday 30th December	10.00a.m.	Brian Byrne (Anniversary)
	Vigil	7.00p.m. Available for Intention
Sunday 31st Dec.	11.15a.m.	People of the Parish
	12.30p.m.	Mandy Farrell McDonagh (1st Anniversary)
	6.00p.m.	Available for Intention
		<u>Chapel of Blessed Margaret Ball</u>
Wed. 27th December	10.00a.m.	Available for Intention
Sunday 31st Dec.	10.00a.m.	Available for Intention



Christmas Blessings



The Newsletter editorial team would like to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas. May the blessings and joy of this Christmas Season be with you throughout the coming year. The next Newsletter will be available on the 7th January 2018.