

Christmas Day



Ballineaspais Bulletin

Thursday December 25 1997

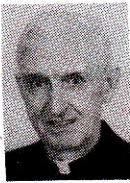


No. 533

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
DENNEHY'S CROSS, CORK.



Bredhe Rafter



FROM OUR
**PARISH
TEAM**

The Dean writes

My dear Friends,

During the week I had a long letter from a friend of mine at the other side of the world. He described at length how they celebrate Christmas out there - picnics on the beach, barbecue in cool of evening, traditional songs, etc. - then he adds, "I never noticed a great emphasis on the central point of Christmas, the birth of Christ, and the religious aspect of the feast".

It reminded me of Fr. John Quinlan's story in the African Mission Magazine this month where the little boy is listing all the wonderful toys and goodies he expects for Christmas - then his little sister interjects, "What about the birthday of the Baby Jesus?" He responds, "I was going to come to that."

In contrast to all that may I quote from a Reflection on Christmas by St. Ephrem - a priest of Edessa in Syria, written about 370 A.D.

"Glory to God in the highest
And peace to his people on
earth."

This is the night of reconciliation, let us not be spiteful or gloomy.

On this all-peaceful night, let us not be threatening or boisterous.

On this night of the Gentle One, let us neither be bitter nor coarse.

This is the night of the Humble One - let us neither be proud nor haughty.

On this day of forgiveness, let us not avenge offences.

On this day of rejoicing, let us be glad and show our joys.

On this day a gift came without our asking for it.

Let us be generous in sharing with those in need.

"Glory to God in the highest - and peace to his people on earth."

I pray that you have a truly happy Christmas - a big welcome to all who came home to share Christmas with us. We, the Parish Team, are truly blessed and privileged to share our lives with so many wonderful and appreciative people in this Parish. Our prayer for 1998 is that people might truly observe, "See how they love one another in Ballineaspais Parish".

God bless you all. Have a lovely Christmas, and a blessed New Year.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

A year end is always a watershed, a division, an ending. We can spend too much time looking back over the past when we should all be living for the future. You can't change what has happened, but together we can change the future, making a difference for everyone, making it a better tomorrow for us all. I urge everyone to think about how they can help to make the world better. This year seems to be ending on a hopeful note - the economy is good and strong, lower unemployment figures, continued peace in the North. At this time of Christmas and the New Year, let us all pray for continued good fortune for the country, for the world and for everyone.

I wish all the faithful readers a Happy and Holy Christmas with best wishes for 1998!



COMMENT

MEDIA COMMENT by "LUKE"

COMMEMORATION OR CAROUSAL?

The emphasis in all of the media for weeks past has been on the celebration of Christmas. By celebration, of course, I mean of the 'eat, drink and be merry variety'. We have been whipped up into a frenzy of buying: food, drink, toys, Christmas trees, decorations, where to book the Christmas Party. The list is endless. At least it is until the money runs out! But what if there was no money there in the first place?

Where did it all begin? Are we being manipulated? Do we Christians have our priorities wrong? Or am I simply being a whinger, a spoil-sport, a wet blanket?

The early Christians apparently did not celebrate Christmas at all but, by the middle of the 4th century, Christmas had become a recognised feast and its date settled as December 25th. Apparently, the Eastern Church originally celebrated the feast on January 6th and the Armenian Church still does so. Interestingly, even though the Protestant Churches do have special forms of Christmas Worship, the Presbyterian Church in Scotland has no particular Christmas Service.

Both St. Luke and St. Matthew tell the story of Christ's birth in a stable in Bethlehem. They go on to tell us about the shepherds coming to worship on hearing the great news. They

tell us, too, about the visit of the Wise Men from the East coming with gifts. All of this story is incorporated into the Christian celebration of Christmas. The concept of singing Christmas carols began, it appears, as the Church's effort to replace the music and dancing of the pagan feasts, which feasts it was hoped to replace with the Christian Christmas.

Is it possible that, in our great enthusiasm to celebrate Christmas - really CELEBRATE - that we have reverted back to the pagan concept of celebration? Perhaps, as we pray our Eucharist celebration today, or as we kneel at the crib and contemplate where it all began, we might give some thought to what the Incarnation of Christ the Son really means in our life. Perhaps that particular mental journey, far from taking from the joyous celebration of the feast, might even add to your rejoicing. I hope so.

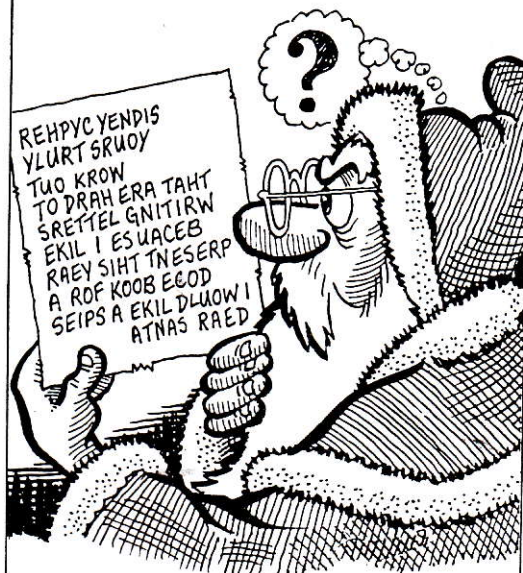
From 'Luke' may I wish you a Peaceful and Joyful Christmas and may 1998 be a Fruitful and Fulfilling one for you all.



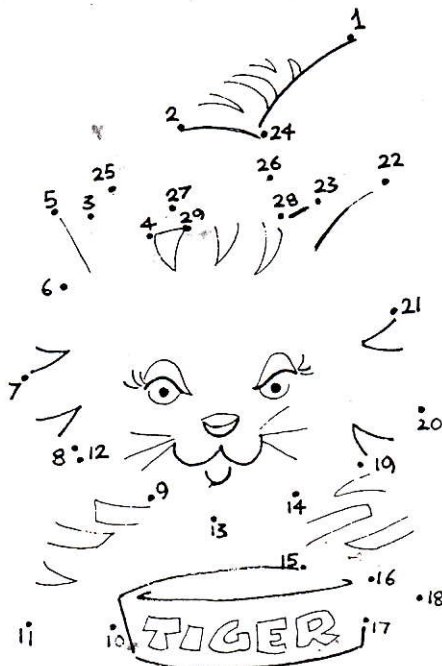
1. What is the name given to a gun which fires a bullet along a spirally grooved barrel?
_____
  2. Who was the messenger of love in Roman mythology?
_____
  3. What is the name given to an animal with 1,000 legs?
_____
  4. How many legs has a crab?
_____
  5. Who wrote "*The Pilgrims Progress*"?
_____
  6. What do whales feed their young on?
_____
  7. Name the members of Boyzone
_____
_____
  8. Name the members of the Spice Girls
_____
_____
  9. What lies under the ice at the North Pole?
_____
  10. What city is said to be built on seven hills?
_____
  11. Who wrote a book about Jemima Puddleduck?
_____
  12. In what part of the body would you find the tibia, the fibula and the femur?
_____
  13. Who wrote "*The Canterbury Tales*"?
_____
  14. Where would you see cirrocumulus?
_____
  15. Is a tomato a fruit or a vegetable?
_____
  16. What is an alloy?
_____
  17. In which ocean is the Island of Mauritius?
_____
  18. Which is the second heaviest land animal?
_____
  19. In which city is Lansdowne Road Rugby Club?
_____
  20. How many seconds are there in an hour?
_____
- Entries should be dropped into the C.P. Centre by Sunday January 4th 1998. A prize will be given to the 1st correct entry picked from the bag.
- Name .....
- Address .....
- .....



Santa's Secret



SEE IF YOU CAN WORK OUT THIS LETTER SENT IN CODE TO FATHER CHRISTMAS. THE WORDS ARE SPELT IN REVERSE AND READ FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP, RIGHT TO LEFT.



Join the Dots !



Look at the pictures. Make up a story about them.



Tell the story to a friend and then colour the pictures.

To encourage a greater participation in the Christmas Quiz, it has been decided to change somewhat the format of previous quizzes. The questions are more difficult and it is hoped that the more senior school students will test their undoubted intelligence skills.

(1) The equation $\text{Dec } 25 = \text{Oct } 31$ is considered to be unique. The five letters in Oct and Dec stand for digits, say $O=6$ and $C=7$. The equation reads $\text{Dec } 25 = \text{Oct } 31 = 20925$.
i.e. $\text{Oct} = 67? \times 31 = 20925$.
Find the digits corresponding to the remaining letters by trial and error.

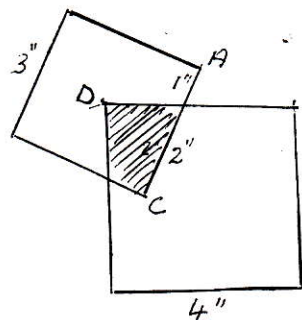
(2) Six people go into a hospital through the ground floor going to floor 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Each person goes to a different floor in the same elevator, which goes up stopping at each floor. Ursula's journey in the elevator is the longest, Elsie gets out before Anne, but after Denis. Charlie gets out first. Finbarr leaves before Denis, who leaves at the third floor. At what floor does each person leave?

(3) In a car race, six cars are lined up behind each other. No. 12 is two places in front of No. 3, which is two places in front of No. 21. No. 7 is behind both No. 11 and No. 3, but in front of No. 21. No. 8 is in front of No. 21 but behind No. 11.

What is the finishing order of the cars if car No. 21 moves forward two positions, car No. 8 moves back three places, car No. 3 moves forward two places, car No. 11 moves back two places and car No. 12 moves forward one place?

(4) When the No. 8 bus stops, an observer looking at one side of the bus with two rows of single seats can see four seats upstairs and four downstairs. Mrs. O'Riordan is sitting two seats behind Mrs. Harris. Mrs. McDonogh is sitting above Mrs. O'Donovan and Mrs. Roche is sitting above Mrs. O'Sullivan. Mrs. Harris sits above Mrs. O'Shea at the front of the bus. Mrs. O'Sullivan is sitting three seats behind Mrs. O'Shea. Mrs. O'Riordan sits on the top deck and Mrs. McCarthy sits behind Mrs. O'Donovan on the lower deck. Who is sitting where?

(5) There are two squares, one side 3" and the other square of side equals 4". The larger square is rotated around point D (which is at the centre of the smaller square) until the intersection of the two sides at point B exactly trisects AC. What is the area of the overlap (shown shaded) of the two squares?

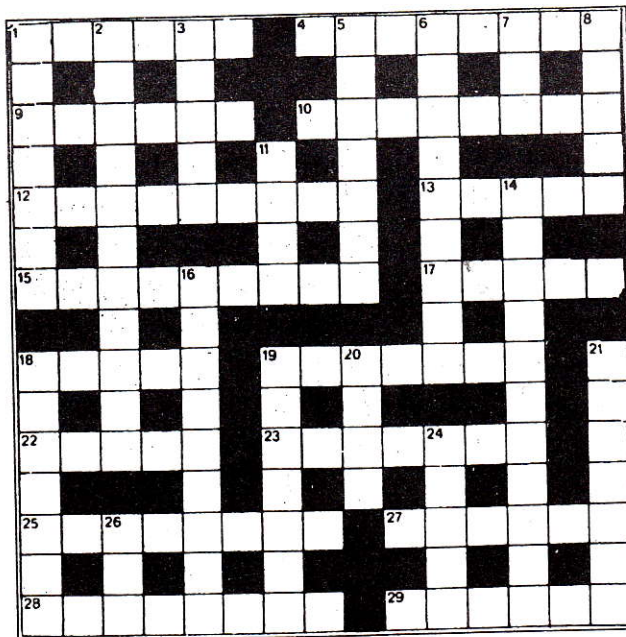


Solutions to be sent to the C.P. Office by 12 January. Prize will be given for the best solution submitted. It is hoped that there will be a good response to the quiz.

A good woman inspires a man, a brilliant woman interests him, a beautiful woman fascinates him, and a sympathetic woman gets him.



CHRISTMAS



CROSSWORD



Across

1. Some are immovable, but some have recently been moved. (6)
4. Chance or mishap could result in this. (8)
9. You wouldn't want it taken against you, but it's the done thing. (6)
10. MEP later became something of great biblical significance. (4,4)
12. Nice latch redesigned to be scientific. (9)
13. Three eminent men in the parish - two have the same name. (5)
15. A sanctified walk. (9)
17. The centre of worship. (5)
18. The centre of evil! (5)
19. Teen bar relocated in Co. Cork town. (7)
22. Those who are caught out come home to this. (5)
23. They very often go out the window. (7)
25. Is there nothing to eat at this feast? (3,5)
27. The female member of the eminent group of No. 13. (6)
28. Gathers material for a hive of industry - or a term of endearment. (5,3)
29. An address to God, or the one who makes it. (6)

Down

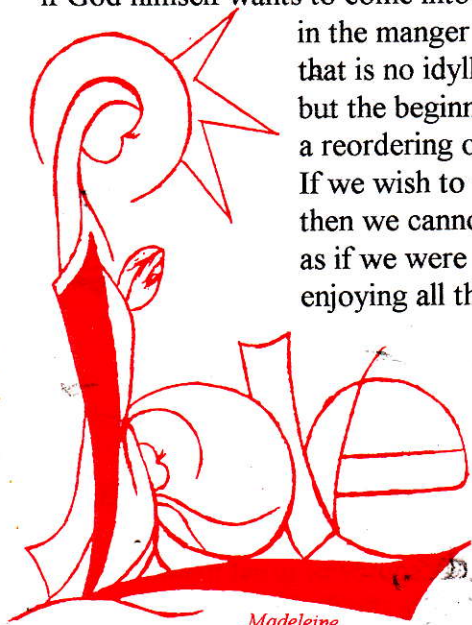
1. Change in craft could make one intensely anxious. (7)
2. I am just gathering.... (1 Kings 17) (1,5,2,3)
3. A source of great irritation, especially if in the flesh! (5)
5. His ministry with 13 and 27 is behind the scenes. (7)
6. No procrastination here. (9)
7. You can lend one, give one, turn a deaf one and walls have them. (3).
8. Can be re-set, known by their fruits. (5)
11. Could be a pain, could be a yearning, could be each. (4)
14. Turn Tuesday around for an environmental subject. (6,5)
16. The site of 17. (9)
18. Serving this kind of time is not desirable - could be too long drawn out. (7)
19. Do this constantly - or else. (7)
20. Up or down it's high. (4)
21. The 3rd of the eminent men. (7)
24. This clue is a mistake. (8)
26. A brilliant type. (3)

Entries in by January 12.



Those Who Go to the Manger will be Transformed

If God chooses Mary to be his instrument,
if God himself wants to come into this world



in the manger at Bethlehem,
that is no idyllic family affair,
but the beginning of a complete turnaround,
a reordering of everything on this earth.
If we wish to take part in this Advent and Christmas event,
then we cannot simply be bystanders or onlookers,
as if we were at the theatre,
enjoying all the cheerful images.

No, we ourselves are swept up into the action there,
into this conversion of all things.

We have to play our part too on this stage,
For the spectator
is already an actor.
We cannot withdraw.

What part, then, do we play?
Pious shepherds, on bended knee?
Kings who come bearing gifts?
What sort of play is this, where Mary becomes the mother of God?
Where God enters the world in the lowliness of the manger?
The judgement of the world and its redemption -
that is taking place here.
And the Christ child in the manger is himself the one
who pronounces the judgement and the redemption of the world.
He repels the great and the powerful.
He puts down the mighty from their thrones,
He humbles the arrogant,
his arm overpowers all the proud and the strong,
he raises what is lowly and makes it great and splendid
in his compassion.
Therefore we cannot approach his manger
as if were the cradle of any other child.
Those who wish to come to his manger
find that something is happening within them.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer