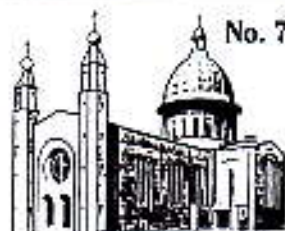




1st December 2002

Ballineaspig Bulletin

First Sunday of Advent



No. 738

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

A CALENDAR FOR ADVENT



1. Help each person who is important to you.
2. Help with a chore at home.
3. Pray about what makes you sad.
4. Pray for someone who lives alone.
5. Thank God for your family and friends.
6. Pray for peace in war-torn countries.
7. Draw a picture of someone waiting for something special.
8. Forgive someone who has hurt you.
9. Be kind to someone today.
10. Thank God for life and love.
11. Pray for all who are sad today.
12. Do something for your Mum or Dad without being asked.
13. Write a Christmas letter to someone.
14. Tell or write a story about preparing for Christmas.
15. Pray for those who are afraid.
16. Think quietly about the people you love.
17. Pray for all those who are alone for the first time this Christmas.
18. Thank God for the gift of faith.
19. Give away one of your best smiles.
20. Pray for those who are blind.
21. Draw a picture of Bethlehem and the place where Jesus was born.
22. Pray for love in the world.
23. Thank God for the gift of Mary.
24. Say something nice to everyone you meet today.

FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES





FROM OUR
**PARISH
TEAM**

The Dean writes

**THE RELIGION WE RECEIVED
FROM JESUS CHRIST IS A
FORGIVING RELIGION**

I hesitate to write on this topic in our Parish Bulletin. I hesitate because it is open to serious misunderstanding. Yet the truth, as I see it, demands that somebody speaks out. Much has been written about paedophilia in the church in recent times – more recently about Bro. Ambrose Kelly released from prison last week.

A feature in the *Examiner* took a whole page to clamour for his retention in prison to his dying breath. Remember, the man was released by a lawfully constituted court of this State.

Of course paedophilia is an unspeakable crime, and nobody wants to excuse it, or defend the indefensible. It is particularly reprehensible in a cleric or religious who has enjoyed a special trust and betrayed it – just as it is in a parent or close family member. So, our first concern in every case is for the welfare of the victim.

But the point of my little piece here is – there is something deeply unchristian about cries of let him rot in prison, and in hell thereafter. The religion we received from Jesus Christ is a forgiving religion – even when the evildoer deserves no mercy.

Remember when Peter asked the Lord should he forgive seven times when wronged (this was stretching things to the limit in Peter's reckoning). Jesus replied not seven times but seventy seven times. To emphasise our Heavenly Father's readiness to forgive, the Lord told the story of the Prodigal Son who did everything wrong, yet the Father threw his arms around

him and welcomed him home. When the Apostles asked the Lord to teach them to pray he taught them and us: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." How awful for us if He took us at our word!! Dying on the cross He prayed forgiveness for his murderers. "Father, forgive them."

When asked to condemn the woman guilty of adultery his reply was: "Let him who is without sin be the first to cast a stone."

Apparently there are many without sin among us, especially in the media – or is it a case of baying with the mob? I repeat: the religion Jesus Christ gave us is a forgiving religion.

Aine O'Donnell

ST. CATHERINE'S NEWS

Preparation for the sacraments goes on all year round in St Catherine's. Last Saturday, the First Communion classes came together with their parents and teachers for their Enrolment Ceremony. On the day before that the Confirmation classes had their Ceremony of Commitment in the school. The role of the family was highlighted at both ceremonies; the parents leading and guiding the younger ones while supporting the older girls in their promises. Fr Tom reminded us all that our faith is for sharing, and that children have a lot to share with adults.

Congratulations to Sinead Plant on gaining 1st place in the local Credit Union Art Competition, and to Clodagh Ronan and Susan Lancaster, who were also prize-winners, all from 6th Class.

Well done also to Kate O'Halloran and Kim O'Brien on attaining 1st and 2nd place respectively in the All-Ireland Gymnastics Competition in Donegal, last week-end.

We are also proud of Danielle Geary, 4th Class, who came 1st in Munster at tennis!



Best of luck in the Inter-provincials, Danielle.

Our school was featured on Morning Ireland last Monday, when Deirdre Ni Challanain, Eleanor Marks and Kathryn Traynor played their violins and spoke about their experience of learning through the Suzuki system, guided by their teacher Ms. Pat McCarthy.

Thank You

Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, we would like to thank you all most sincerely for your generous contributions and continued support.

In this parish last year we collected between three churches namely, Holy Spirit, St. Josephs S.M.A and the Poor Clares, the sum of €27,759.12 which was used to help the needy in your parish as well as the needy in the inner city parish to which we are twinned.

The Society in the Cork Region spent €2.5 million last year which amounts to €4,000 per day. This money was spent in areas such as food, fuel, clothing, housing and education.

We would like to remind you that our Christmas collection is next weekend and we have no doubt that you will be your usual generous selves.

If anyone is in need at anytime you can contact us through our main office in Tuckey Street on 4270444 or through the local Parish Priest.

Leaflets on the work of the Society are available in the church doorway.

Thank you and God bless.

Conference of the
Holy Spirit, Dennehy's Cross

Bible Corner



WATCH AND PRAY

Hope is an essential ingredient in human living. Losing hope is like losing a vital organ. One cannot carry on without it.

This weekend's readings speak the language of hope, struggling to preserve it, acknowledging its source, being alert to its nurture.

Isaiah records the prayer of the downtrodden as they plead for God to come to their rescue. They are at their wit's end, seeing themselves as mere clay but clay which the divine potter can fashion into something beautiful and useful.

Paul is much more upbeat. He stresses how God has blessed believers especially those at Corinth. Their reason for hope is that God is faithful to his promise to be always with his people.

But Mark poses the question: Will we recognise the Lord in our daily world? Are we alert to his presence in our lives? Could we miss the reason for our hope?

Advent is about watching for the action of God each day. It is about reclaiming space to acknowledge what we are really hoping for in our lives. It is a time to watch and pray.



Congratulation to Bishopstown Community School Leaving Certificate Students Maeve Lynch (studying Genetics) and Aidan Constant (studying Engineering) who were awarded Entrance Scholarships to U.C.C., and also to Margaret Bermingham who received an Entrance Exhibition Award in Trinity.



Ministers of the Eucharist

Special evening of prayer and reflection for present and past Ministers of the Eucharist on Thursday 5th December at 8 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul

Monthly collection will take place next weekend at all Masses.

Christmas Mart

Saturday 7th December at 2 p.m. in St. Benedict's Priory, Cobh. Homemade cakes, jams, dried flower arrangements, etc. Floral demonstration at 3.30 p.m. Entrance €2 including tea and cakes.

Mature Students

U.C.C. information evening for prospective mature students on Thursday 5th December in Boole 2 at 7 p.m. All welcome.

Attention Carers

Bishopstown Senior Social Centre, Wilton Park House, will be happy to look after those cared for, on Wednesday afternoon 4th December from 12 noon to 4 p.m. to let you do your Christmas shopping. Enquiries to 4545198.

All Night Vigil of Reparation

To the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary at South Presentation Convent Chapel, Douglas Street on First Friday 6th and First Saturday 7th. Everybody welcome.

Fund Raising Recital

In aid of the Eighth National Song Contest for Peace at St. Aloysius Secondary School on Wednesday 11th December at 8 p.m. starring Majella Cullagh, Eleanor Malone and John Gibson. Adm. €12, concessions €8.

EMERGENCY NUMBER

087 - 251 9940

Parish e-mail address:



The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray; why not learn again how to pray this Advent. Come to :

THE LIGHT WITHIN

GUIDED ADVENT PRAYER

by

FR. DONAGH O'SHEA O.P.

"WHY WAIT?"

Wednesday 4th December 1.10 - 1.30 pm

Snack and chat afterwards

Church of the Holy Spirit
DENNEHY'S CROSS

God's Word

Readings for Sunday 8 December

First Reading:

Is.40:1-5,9-11. Isaiah proclaims a joyful message: God is coming with power, to gather us, like a shepherd.

Psalm 84

Second Reading:

2 Pet.3:8-14. According to St. Peter, everything is coming to an end, so we must live good lives while we wait.

Gospel:

Mk.1:1-8. Mark's Gospel begins with a message of repentance, preached by John the Baptist.