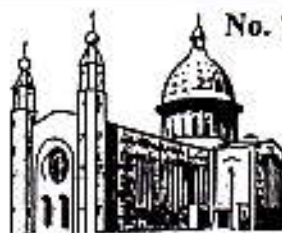


21st December, 2003



Ballineaspais Bulletin

No. 783



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

Fourth Sunday of Advent



OUR
**PARISH
PRIEST**
writes

VARIED ROUTES

It never ceases to amaze me how some of us, myself included, can take the most precious things in life, like friendship, family and faith, for granted. Christmas gift giving focuses our attention on how dependent our happiness is on our relationships with one another and with God. There are many aspects of gift giving and several ways to do it. Some people search for an appropriate gift that suits their loved one exactly. Others just write the cheque or put the cash or a token in an envelope. Such is their way, and their love may be no less. Some families share a gathering time when they come together to receive their presents and celebrate the excitement and the joy of the love that binds them together and which is expressed in the shared gift.

One of the greatest of Christmas gifts is forgiveness and reconciliation. There are many ways of giving it and achieving it. Some might just phone a sibling, or a parent or neighbour and suggest a cup of coffee or a drink with the season that is in it. There may be little said about the past but both want to move forward in renewed friendship and they do so. Others need to explain, to clarify, to say they are sorry more explicitly, to apologise more fully. Such is their way and such is their need. The important thing is that the initiative is not postponed. Some neglected opportunities never come again. Now may not be the perfect time but it is the only time we have.

Something similar can arise in our relationship with God. We know our need of reconciliation. We know his unconditional love and forgiveness. Some will be happy to join the parish community this Sunday from 5.00 to 6.00 p.m. for the family celebration of and thanksgiving for God's gift of the Sacrament of Forgiveness. Others may prefer to renew friendship with the Lord through the more traditional confession box. (A priest will be available most of Christmas Eve.) So whatever your preference, don't let these days pass without reviving tattered friendships and may your Christmas be blessed a thousand times as a result.

THANKS

The priests of the parish thank very sincerely all who have returned their Christmas Dues either directly or through the courtesy of our dedicated collectors. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

We offer our best thanks, too, to those who distribute the Bulletin to the homes so faithfully every month throughout the year, and who will distribute the parish calendar shortly.

With nearly 200 people involved in these tasks, it is possible that an individual home or group of houses may be overlooked. If so, please contact the parish office (4344452) or one of the priests, and we will do our best to rectify the situation.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE

SUNDAY 21ST DECEMBER

5.00 P.M.

Five Seasonal Tips for Christmas (especially for children)

1. **Make Christmas Day a real birthday for Jesus.** Sing 'Happy Birthday' to him at the crib. He gives us the best Christmas present of all in Holy Communion. Christmas dinner can be His birthday party. Set an extra place and put the Jesus from the crib there.
2. **Make the Crib the most important decoration in the house.** Let the children decorate it with moss, ivy, twigs, hay...Make it a focus for a little prayer going to bed. Visit the cribs in town and at the Lough.
3. **Put a lighted candle in the window.** This ancient Irish custom welcomes the homeless Holy Family to your house, says 'Faiite'. The youngest lights (careful!) or plugs it in.
4. **Keep repeating the message:** Christmas is loving and sharing, not grabbing and getting. Visit elderly relatives. They love to see the kids with their toys. Give time and love - the best gifts of all, but often the dearest!
5. **Think of the poor.** If you don't get what you want from Santa, try to remember those who have little. Keep unused toys and pass them on. Be sure to say a special 'Thank you, Jesus' for your family, friends, brothers and sisters, your health.

Rest In Peace

Tim O'Sullivan, Farranlea Grove, died peacefully in the Bon Secours Hospital after a brave struggle with failing health. Among the interests of his early life were drama, vintage car rallying, fishing and sport of all sorts and interest in the Irish language. He loved squash and was one of the first to play at Collins Barracks Squash Club. He was president of Squash Ireland in the 1980s. He helped develop the present squash facilities in Highfield Rugby Club and at the Cricket Club. Tim worked as an electrician, and quietly enjoyed the achievements of his children and grandchildren. We offer our sincere sympathy to his wife Kit, his children, Eleanor, Bernard, Frank, Darra and Teresa, brother Michael, sisters Mary, Celia, Phyllis, and the extended family.

Psychology Lecture

The parents' association of St. Catherine's School will host Dr. Tony Humphreys, Clinical Psychologist, on Wednesday 21st January at 8.00 p.m. in the school hall. Lecture: 'Self Esteem and Children's Education'. Tickets €10 available at school office.

The Chaplaincy,
U.C.C.

'Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present.'

(Phil. 1:3-6)

To the People and Priests of Ballineaspai Parish

The above passage from St. Paul springs to mind as I put pen to paper to thank you all for your kindness to me over the last four years when I was with you, and that fateful Saturday, 29th November, when unfortunately I was very much not with you! So many people had gone to a great deal of trouble to prepare for such an event, but accidents do happen. Thank God no one was injured but I did have to go to hospital to get checked out. It would have been great to have met you all again, as I did love being at Ballineaspai. I trust that you are all well, and pray that the Infant Christ and His Blessed Mother will bless you and yours this Christmas.

With thankful prayers and good wishes,

Patrick Walsh

P.S. Do remember to pray for me, I need it!



CRYPT PROGRESS REPORT

Last Sunday the Crypt was packed with families after the Family Gift Mass. Many appreciated the refurbished meeting area. Indeed, as winter closes in, many Crypt users appreciate the new heating and lighting, while the improved kitchen facilities are a real boon.

Our best thanks are due to Mr. Bertie Pope, Architect, whose professional competence and unfailing generous courtesy were central to the task. Thanks also to Michael O'Shea and his staff. We are indebted to the small committee who oversaw the work so well.

Finance:

Total cost €52,500

Receipts:

• Donations €32,000

• Extra Euro Collection €10,600

Total Income €42,600

Shortfall €9,900

In 2004 we will recover some tax paid on gifts, and the remainder will be covered from ordinary Sunday collections and occasional gifts that may continue to come in.

Sincerest thanks to all of you who contributed to the funds. Hopefully, you are pleased with the use of your money and will continue to enjoy its facilities.

Thanks and God bless.

Tom Clancy

**AN IDEAL GIFT
CHURCH CHOIR
CD**

**'CANTEMUS'
AVAILABLE AT CHURCH DOORS
AFTER MASS**

Bulletin

There will be a Christmas Bulletin and the next Bulletin will be available on 11th January.

A Personal Reflection on Lectio Divina

For the first fifty years of my life I half listened to the gospel and homily at Mass each Sunday. This lacklustre attitude changed completely when I was introduced to Lectio Divina. I was now encouraged to read the gospel several times each day in the week preceding the Sunday. The result of this repeated reading is that the gospel begins to inspire one in a real way in regard to one's own life. One asks what touches me in this reading, why does it touch me, what might it mean in my context and how can I respond to this.

The Benedictine monk, John Main, says that the best way to understand the gospel is to meet people who are living the gospel. It has been my privilege to meet such people in Lectio Divina groups.

Lectio Divina groups were started in the parish for Advent and will hopefully continue into the New Year.

ROS

God's Word

Readings for Sunday 28th December

First Reading:

1 Sam.1:20-22,24-28. Hannah presents her child to the Lord, just as Mary and Joseph later did for Jesus.

Psalm 83

Second Reading:

1 Jn.3:1-2,21-24. As God's children, love is lavished on us. We are called to pass on this love to each other in our families.

Gospel:

Lk.2:41-52. The annual visit by the Holy Family to Jerusalem is described, and Mary's finding of her child among the wise men there.

Parish e-mail address:
holyspiritparish@eircom.net



✂ Please cut out and keep for reference

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CHURCH SERVICES

MASSES

Christmas Eve
9.00, 10.00, 6.15, Midnight

Christmas Day
9.00, 10.30, 12.15 p.m.

Friday 26th
10.00 a.m.

Saturday 27th
10.00, 6.15 p.m.

Sunday 28th
9.00, 10.30, 12.15 p.m.

Monday 29th to January 1st
10.00 a.m.

First Friday 2nd January
9.00, 10.00, 7.30 p.m.

Saturday 3rd January
9.00, 10.00, 6.15 p.m.

Sunday 4th
9.00, 10.30, 12.15 p.m.

Monday 5th
9.00, 10.00, 7.30 p.m.

**Tuesday 6th Feast of
Epiphany**
9.00, 10.30, 12.15, 7.30 p.m.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Dennehy's Cross
Sunday 21st at 5.00 p.m.

Sacred Heart Church
Monday 22nd at 8.00 p.m.

CONFESSIONS

Christmas Eve
10.30-1.00, 4.00-6.00
After 6.15 Mass.

PARISH TEAM

Fr. Tom Clancy 4347616
Fr Declan Mansfield 4346818
Dean O'Connor 4542972

Emergency Number: 087 - 251 9940

Parish Office 4344452 (10-12.30)