



REST IN PEACE

Your prayers are requested this weekend for the soul of Bernie (Bernadette) Seagrave who died this week.

For the souls of the following whose anniversaries occur at this time:

James Curry; Dermot & Julie Ryan; Tony & Josie Walsh; Vera Ward; Damian Reade; Kathleen & Rita Moran; Justin McEnteggart; John Brinkers; Maura Kiersey; Fr. Tim Hurley; Anne Hancock; Dan Murphy; Frank, May & Kathleen Ryan;

And for Carmel Handy whose month's mind occurs.

MAY THEIR SOULS AND THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD REST IN PEACE. AMEN.

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CHURCH COLLECTIONS

The amounts collected last weekend are:

DATE	GREEN BASKET	SHARE
14 th November 2021	€755	€425

The green basket is the collection for the support of the priests of the Diocese.

The white basket is the collection for Share, which meets the needs both of poorer parishes and of central agencies of the Diocese.

We thank you for your contributions to the Church collections and for your continuing support of all the collection

Synod preparation

Local animator training by the diocesan team will take place over two zoom sessions of 2 hours duration each, one before Christmas and one after Christmas. The first takes place in the week of Nov 27th and the second in the week of Jan 17th.

WEEKLY BULLETIN



St. Mary's, Star of the Sea, Sandymount

Parish Office 6683894 / 6683316 – Monday to Friday 9.30 – 12.30
Fr. John McDonagh, Tel: 6684265 – Fr. Cormac McIlraith, Tel: 6686845
www.stmarysstaroftheseasandymount.com

Sunday 28th November 2021

Advent a Special Time

As we begin a new year in the life of the Church on this first Sunday of Advent, we're in a global struggle with the Covid-19 pandemic. The transmission rate of the virus at present is alarming; there's news of a new and more dangerous strain of the virus in South Africa that threatens to defy the world's vaccines to date; there's talk of an urgent need to vaccinate children and the capacity of our hospital services is seriously threatened.

A year ago we entered a new year with patient endurance and with hope that the vaccination programme would hasten a return to normal life. We know that however effective vaccines have been, the struggle is ongoing. We're called upon to keep the basic rules in time of pandemic and to avoid all unnecessary social contact. We're again renewing our resolve to stay in a spirit of patient endurance. With the help of everyone we can do it. Is féidir linn.

It's against this background of a testing time that Advent's message over the next four weeks is one of encouragement in hope through patient endurance. We draw, in particular, on three areas of inspiration, on the prophets as a group, on St. John the Baptist and on Mary, Jesus' mother. Their hopeful waiting is our inspiration.

Advent is the season when we pay special attention to the mystery of waiting. We have a problem here because most of us don't like waiting. We don't see it as a matter for cultivation or celebration. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that nowadays Advent is not well understood as a

spiritual season. On the other hand failure to appreciate Advent may well have led us into a culture where waiting is intolerable for us. We're easily bored and frustrated when life asks us to wait.

The Word of God in the Scriptures teaches us that if we approach it in the right spirit, waiting affords us a creative moment when we may grow spiritually. When we wait we're in touch with an important aspect of human experience, which is that we are dependent on God and on one another. When we wait, there is an act of love involved by our showing respect for others, waiting for them, letting them be free.

Today that act of love finds particular expression in all that we do and in all our efforts in compliance to protect each other against Covid-19.

Let's try cultivate this Advent the virtues we associate with waiting – hope, patience, endurance, courage, faith. It is what makes Advent special.

Christmas Appeal 2021

Our local GAA Club, Clanna Gael Fontenoy, will hold a non-perishable food and new toy collection in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul on Saturday 4th December. All local support is much appreciated.

The collection will take place at Clanna Gael between 9.00am – 1.00pm on 4th December.

Registration for sacraments in 2022

We ask all parents preparing for the celebration of a child's Confirmation or First Communion in 2022 to register with us formally in the parish asap. Application forms are available in the Parish Office. Until preparation classes are up and running for children attending non-Catholic schools and until transmission of the virus is better controlled we cannot be sure as yet of the date(s) of Confirmation and the other sacraments.

Bank Card Found

A big 'Thank you' to the person who found a Bank Debit card and handed it in to the Sacristy. It has been returned to the holder.

VAT on candles

In the Budget of 2020 it was decided to put 23% VAT on candles. Because of Covid it wasn't implemented this year but we are informed that as of January 1st 2022 the 23% tax will apply. It's a significant move from no tax at all to such a high VAT rate and will undoubtedly affect our parish finances. Before Covid, the income on candles in the parish matched the income from parish donations, envelope collections and standing orders. It's unfortunate that this development is taking place at a time when Covid has seriously affected church finances.

Saints of this Week

This week we celebrate two significant saints in St. Andrew on Tuesday and St. Francis Xavier on Friday.

St. Andrew was the brother of St. Peter. The first striking thing is that his name is Greek rather than Hebrew, as one might have expected. It suggests a certain cultural openness in his family and that the Greek language and culture are quite present in the Galilee of Jesus' time. Not only are Peter and Andrew identified as brothers but they are called by Jesus together and in the list of apostles Andrew always comes second after Peter.

Andrew had previously been a disciple of John the Baptist, reflecting a man searching for truth. When he heard John the Baptist proclaiming Jesus as "the Lamb of God," he and another unnamed disciple followed Jesus, 'saw where he was staying and they stayed with him that day' (Jn 1:37-39). He brought Peter to Jesus. The Byzantine Church honours Andrew with the nickname 'Protoclete,' 'The first called.' As the Church of Rome honours Peter, the Church of Constantinople honours Andrew.

There are three other scenes where Andrew is mentioned in the Gospels, each throwing light on his personality. The first is the occasion of the multiplication of loaves and fish. It was Andrew who pointed out that there was a boy in the crowd with five barley loaves and two fish but added, realistically, 'what's that among so many'. Jesus knew what could be done however.

The second occasion was in Jerusalem when Andrew drew attention to the massive walls of the Temple. It prompted Jesus' saying that 'not one stone would be left on another'. He went on to further question Jesus about when it would happen and what sign would be given. Jesus spoke of the destruction of the city and warned them to be on their guard and read the signs of the times. Andrew exemplified the person who is unafraid to ask the Lord questions and then able to accept difficult and challenging answers.

The third scene is, not long before Jesus' passion and death, when Andrew with Philip intervene on behalf of Greek visitors to Jerusalem in their request to meet Jesus. It prompts Jesus to say: 'The hour has come...Unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it produces much fruit'. It was Jesus' way of saying: yes, we will meet but not in a conversation to satisfy curiosity. He will meet them as the Risen Lord, as bread for the world, when the Resurrection enables his meeting the Church of the Greeks, the Church of the world.

Andrew was to become the preacher and interpreter of Jesus for the Greek world. He was martyred at Patras on an X-shaped cross, of which Scotland's flag is a reminder.

(Adapted from Pope Benedict's reflections on the Apostles)

Pope Benedict XVI wrote of Andrew that 'he teaches us to follow Jesus with promptness, to speak enthusiastically about him to those we meet, and especially, to cultivate a relationship of true familiarity with him, acutely aware that in him alone can we find the ultimate meaning of our life and death'.

St. Francis Xavier was born in 1506 and died at the age of 46 as he was attempting to enter China in 1552. He was one of the first seven Jesuits. Sent by St. Ignatius to India, he converted many in Goa and then later in Japan. He is a patron saint of the missions.

