



REST IN PEACE

Your prayers are requested this weekend for the souls of Edward Gaynor; John Dowling and Oonagh Ferguson Purcell whose funerals took place this week.

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

Jim McDonagh; Desmond & Eithne O’Leary; Maura Farragher Collins; Barrie Heffernan; May & William Morley; Austin Pickering; Gerard Brazil; Tony Lincoln; Jack & Betty Ryder;

And for Colm Keating and Bernie Dowling whose Month’s Minds occur.

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
28 th November 2021	€935	€560

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 collections.

WEEKLY BULLETIN



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

Parish Office 6683894 / 6683316 – Monday to Friday 9.30 – 12.30
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Sunday 5th December 2021

Second Sunday of Advent

All of the four Gospels speak of John the Baptist, reflecting an early tradition of the Church that before we relate the story of Jesus you must first speak of the story of John. John is the great prophetic reformer urging people to prepare for a new time on its way and that they should anticipate the coming of someone greater, ‘the straps of whose sandals he wasn’t fit to undo.’

Jesus travels all the way from Galilee in the north of Palestine down to the river Jordan to see John and be baptised by him. After that meeting Jesus’ life took a dramatic turn. While a time comes when Jesus moved beyond John and initiates a new way of relating to God and neighbour, he always holds John in high regard. “I tell you, among those born of woman no one is greater than John.” (Luke 7:28)

And so John the Baptist becomes for us on this Second Sunday of Advent, that voice crying out to us – “prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” and it is a voice speaking to us in the present. The Lord is coming to you, prepare to welcome him.

We can, all of us, reflect on what needs to be straightened out in our lives if the pathway of the Lord to our minds and hearts is to be accessible? What valleys need to be filled in; what do I fail to do, what am I overlooking in life? What mountains and hills are to be laid low; what obstacles to the Lord’s presence in us have to be confronted, values that may prevail in our culture today but are at distance from values of the Lord and the Gospel? Make his paths straight – John’s call for change in us – for change of heart and a mending of our ways. It is a change in keeping with the vision of Baruch “God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven.”

Play your part – let there be ‘peace through integrity and honour through devotedness.’ (Baruch in 1st Reading).

This visionary invitation to us fits the prayer of Paul in the second reading at Mass today, where in prayer for the Christian community of Philippi in Greece, Paul says “May your love for each other increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.”

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception on Wednesday

This coming Wednesday, December 8th, is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. As you know, our church was built in 1853. It was in the following year, 1854, that Pope Pius IX promulgated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Just 4 years later in 1858, Bernadette Soubirous saw 18 apparitions of a “small young lady.” Although she never claimed the lady was Mary, she was encouraged by her parish priest to ask the lady her name. At first, ‘the lady’ smiled and said nothing but finally she said “I am the Immaculate Conception.” It is thought that Bernadette had never heard that name before and, if so, it adds credibility to the vision.

In one of ‘the lady’s’ apparitions Bernadette was told to drink from a spring to which the lady pointed and to eat from the plants growing there. All Bernadette could see was muddy ground and assumed the spring was underground. She scratched the ground until muddy drops appeared which she tried but failed to drink. She continued to 3 times scratch without success until on the fourth effort, the water was more abundant and clearer. She drank it and ate from the plants. But when she turned towards the gathered crowd her face was smeared with mud. Nobody saw streams of water or plants. They denounced her as a fraud but in the following days, clear water began to flow in the very spot where Bernadette was scratching. People began to drink and wash in it and many reported cures and healings. Chemists found the water to be normal but the cures and healing continued. The rest is history, the history of Lourdes.

Such an event is always open to investigation and yet in spiritual tradition there is a spiritual centre in the human person; it’s underground, an interior depth, deeper than the physical or mental dimensions, a God-space within us. It’s only with repeated ‘scratching’ that the Spirit / water will be unblocked and flow outward, bubbling up. “The water I will give will become a spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (John 4:14). It comes gradually and increases as one has courage to participate in it. At first only those privileged by revelation (Bernadette) will attempt to drink but

later others drink and bathe and the healing power of the Spirit becomes manifest. There is an underground longing in all of us. (Adapted from John Shea “Following Love into Mystery.”)

Mass times for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Besides the Masses celebrated at the usual times of 7.30am and 10.00am, there will be an evening Mass at 6.00pm. We celebrate Mary’s freedom from sin.

Pre Sacrament classes

We had hoped to be in a position to begin out of school classes of preparation for First Communion and Confirmation in December. However, the present rate of transmission, concern in particular for children’s health and request from government to reduce social interaction as much as possible prompts us to wait again until the new year.

Parents who haven’t yet done so are reminded to register their intention to see a child celebrate First Communion or Confirmation in 2022 and to submit a copy of the child’s Baptism certificate along with a completed registration form in doing so.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The members of the Society would like to thank parishioners for their generosity last weekend to the monthly collection which amounted to €1,772.

The annual appeal for the St. Vincent de Paul Society will be made at all Masses next weekend.

Parish Pastoral Council Message

Due to the present Covid difficulties, the AGM of the PPC has been postponed until **Wednesday 26th January 2022** as a tentative date.

At that time, some of the members of the PPC will be stepping down, having finished their terms of office. We ask all parishioners to consider how they can contribute their talents to the running of our parish, and to perhaps consider serving on the PPC. If you are interested in serving this aspect of parish life, talk to Fr John.

Tap and Go

During the month of November 2021 the Tap and Go machines in Sandymount Parish collected €2,322.00 from 174 transactions. This is split 60% to the Common Fund and 40% to Share.

