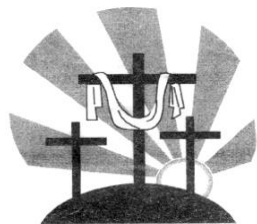


REST IN PEACE



Your prayers are requested this weekend for the souls of Richard Sinnott and Ursula O'Farrell who died this week and for the souls of the following whose anniversaries occur P.J. O'Farrell, Doreen Doyle, May Nolan, Michelle Dalangin, John Kenny, Charlie, Clare and Charles Kelly, Pauline and Jack Crump and Sheila Murphy and for Kathleen and Eddie Gaynor and Marie Ralph whose months 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
4 th January	€ 955	€420
6 th January	€180	€115

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.

Parish Office Hours

For the time being Office Hours are restricted to 10.30 to 11.30 Mon to Fri. You may leave a request for a particular service on the phone at 6683316.

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 January 9th 2022

The Baptism of Our Lord

Today's Feast of the Baptism of our Lord brings the Nativity Season to a close. Advent, Christmas and Epiphany are the three constituent seasons of Christ's birth just as Lent, Easter and Pentecost compose the seasons of Resurrection. Tomorrow we return to what we call Ordinary Time. Of course, in this Covid pandemic time, nothing is 'ordinary'. We continue to strain within the required public health guidelines. May we all keep safe.

The Baptism of Jesus marked the beginning of his public life. When he made his way from Nazareth down to the river Jordan, where John was baptising and calling people to repentance and to live by moral standards, one wonders what was on Christ's mind on that journey. He clearly approved of what John was doing and by his entry into the Jordan and baptism by John, Jesus was identifying himself with humanity and John's call to pursue humanity at its best, amid all that humanity throws up in life, the good, the bad and the ugly. In modern language, he was 'identifying himself with humanity'.

Amid the demands of Covid, how heartening it has been in recent months to see parents bring their little children to be baptised, all a little older now than might have been before Covid came. It was John himself who recognised the difference between his Baptism and the Baptism of Jesus, to which parents bring their children. 'I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit'. If John outlined moral principles for tax collectors, soldiers, or wealthy people in the course of his baptising them, the Baptism of Jesus went further- to gift us with the Holy Spirit who enables us to live in keeping with Jesus own way of being in the world. He may have identified with all of us in his Baptism by John but when parents bring their little ones to be baptised, it is by way of identifying with Jesus and with all that he represents and stands for. Our Baptism links us with Christ. 'You are a member of the Body of Christ, sharing everlasting life'.

Baptised in recent months

There were several months last year through which we were unable to celebrate the sacraments but thankfully we have been able to baptise children into the life of the church in recent months. We welcome all of them, happy to be able to facilitate celebrations, one child at a time until recent weeks when up to four babies could be baptised at each celebration, taking appropriate precautions.

In December we welcomed and baptised Sadie Quinn, Remy Flogdell, Malachy Roche, Harry Burke, Louis Salmon-Brannigan, Simone Hutchinson and Hugh Padraig Coleman Swan.

The impact of Covid-19 may be seen in the numbers of children baptised in recent years. In both 2018 and again in 2019, we baptised 70 children. In 2020 a total of 22 children were baptised and in 2021 there were 43 children baptised.

We continue to celebrate Baptism in the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, after the 12 Mass on Sunday. Parents are asked to submit an application form along with a copy of their child's birth certificate. A meeting is held before each baptism, in circumstances that depend on the prevailing pandemic restrictions.

Did you know?

The readings at Mass on Sunday are on a three year cycle, referred to as A, B and C. We are currently in Year C. What distinguishes the readings in a given year is the particular Gospel from which Gospel readings on the Sundays of that year are chosen. In year A (2020, 2023, 2026) we read from St Matthew's Gospel. In year B, (2021, 2024 etc) we read from St Mark and in year C (as in 2022) we read from St. Luke. The year begins in Advent, at the end of November, so a small part of the previous calendar year is in A,B and C. The Gospel is read serially, week to week, allowing you in the course of a year to reflect on each of these Gospels in turn.

The First reading from the Old Testament is chosen each week because it shares a thematic link with the Gospel passage of that Sunday. So this Sunday, as we read from St Luke's account of the Baptism of Jesus, perhaps you can see why the first reading from the prophet Isaiah was chosen?

The second reading at Mass on Sundays is chosen completely independently of the Gospel reading and First Reading. Over the three year cycle, it is intended to lead us through the Letters of Paul, John, James, Peter and Hebrews, the letters of the New Testament, while The Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse are also included in our planned reading, especially in Easter time.

So this year, Year C, will see us read on Sundays from St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (7 weeks), and then after Lent, Easter and Pentecost, from such letters as St Paul to the Galatians (2 weeks), St Paul to the Colossians (4 weeks), followed over four weeks in August by the Letter to the Hebrews (author unknown), and then returning to read St Paul again in his shortest letter, the Letter to Philemon, and subsequently from his pastoral letters in the 1st Letter to Timothy, (3 weeks) and then the 2nd Letter to Timothy (4weeks). The year ends with three weeks in

November given over to reading from St Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians, which we believe was the earliest of Paul's letters that we find in the New Testament and then on the last Sunday of the Year, the Feast of Christ the King, we return to read from the Letter to the Colossians.

While all these readings speak to our lives, it is also very helpful to know something of their origin and context-why they were written, what they were saying at the time and what they might, with discernment, be saying to our lives today. They speak God's word to us.

The weekday readings are on a two year cycle. More of that story another time.

Church refurbishment

We hope to begin the painting of the Church on Monday January 24th. You may have noticed how badly needed it is but concerns about dampness in the walls, especially behind the altar, precluded our moving on it sooner. We remain vigilant on that problem while hopeful that the time is appropriate to redress the decline in the church's appearance for want of painting. Hopefully, too, we can all be patient with whatever inconvenience arises in the course of the painting work. It will be good to see our beautiful church refreshed in its appearance.

The Synod Prayer

The coming two years promise to be very significant for the Church if the worldwide engagement with members of the Church, leading to the Synod of Bishops in Rome in 2023, is as fruitful as Pope Francis desires.

Between February and April we are asked in the parishes of our diocese to undertake reflective exercises in prayerful dialogue about the Church. Pope Francis is particularly anxious to hear from everyone, both those at the periphery of the church and those who feel very much at home in it. At local level we are keen to respect that desire and seek the observations of a wide spectrum of people who have been baptised.

Each day now at Mass, we pray the Prayer of the Synod Pathway. It is a prayer attributed to St. Isidore of Seville who died in 635 A.D. It has been used as a prayer over the centuries at Councils, Synods and other Church gatherings. Every session of the Second Vatican Council, for example, began with this prayer.

We invite you to avail of a copy of the Synod Prayer, left at the back of the Church. Please make it your own in anticipation of what is asked of us for the sake of the Church in our time. You might avail of a copy also to join in our praying with the rest of the world when we give the prayer expression at Mass.