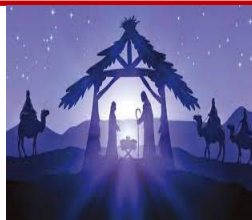


Christmas Day Message 2024

The Parish Team, Fr. Martin, Fr. Michael, our Deacon Frank and Carol our Sacramental Coordinator, together with all those who minister with us wish all of our Parishioners every blessing for Christmas and 2025.

We say a very warm “Céad Mile Fáilte” to you all as you celebrate Christmas with us. A special welcome to all our visitors and to all who have returned home for Christmas. Our thoughts and prayers are very much with those for whom Christmas will be difficult for whatever reason.

Despite many changes over the years, Christmas and the Message of Christmas still finds resonance with very many of us. Today we thank God for the gift of Jesus His Son and we do our best to respond to his invitation to build up His Kingdom on earth of Justice, Love & Peace. Fr. Martin & Fr. Michael



Christmas Message from Carol

I want to take this opportunity to wish all the boys and girls in our Parish a very happy Christmas and hope you all enjoy your holidays.

A special word to the boys and girls who are working hard in their preparation for their 1st Holy Communion - you are all brilliant and enjoy your break.

I look forward to starting Confirmation preparations with the 6th class students in the New Year. Have a safe, happy and enjoyable Christmas.

Carol (Parish Sacramental Coordinator)



“Pray Out The Old, Pray In The New”

Please join us as we give thanks for the blessings of the year 2024 that is just ending and as we invoke God's help for the New Year of 2025 at a Service of Light & prayers to mark the close of the year on Tuesday the 31st of December at 4:30 p.m. The Mass for World Peace and to ask for God's blessing for the year ahead will be held at 11am on Wednesday January 1st.

Please come and join with us at these two very special celebrations.

This Christmas may you get a little time to:

Hold those you love close to you

Appreciate what others have done for you and Tell them

Pray for those who aren't with you

Please don't take your blessings for granted

You can't make it perfect. That's not reality!

Celebrate the day & its true meaning

Hug someone who needs encouragement

Remember those that left you a legacy

It's not about 'me' ... remember!

Savour moments with family & friends

Tolerate the inconveniences & inconsistencies

Make a difference in the lives of those around you

Ask for forgiveness. It's a gift you receive

Say the words, “Thank You” & “I love You”, often.

The
best of all
gifts around
any Christmas tree
is the presence of a
happy family all wrapped
up in each other. - Burton Hillis



CHRISTMAS
JOY

The message of Bethlehem is indeed “good news of great joy”. What kind of joy? Not the passing happiness of this world, but the joy that consoles hearts, renews hope and bestows peace. It is the joy of the Holy Spirit: the joy born of being God's beloved sons and daughters.
@Pontifex December 25th 2023



Crosscare Christmas Food Poverty Appeal

Crosscare, the social care agency of the Archdiocese, is once again asking for support for their Christmas Food Poverty Appeal. So far this year, almost 3,000 people, including 1500 children, have needed basic food supplies and support; over a quarter of those coming to Crosscare's Food Poverty Service accessing food support are parenting alone.

In the Community Café in Portland Row, staff will have served nearly 10,000 affordable, nutritious meals by the end of this year. As families struggle to cope with the cost of Christmas, there will likely be a spike in the number of people seeking help. **Anyone wishing to contribute can donate online at www.crosscare.ie, call 01 8360011, or send a cheque or postal order to Crosscare Christmas Appeal, 2 Saint Mary's Place North, D07 Y768.**



Family Offering Envelopes

If you give to the Parish Family Offering using envelopes, your envelopes for 2025 are in the back Sacristy for you to collect. If you would like to start using envelopes for the Family Offering please contact Jason in the Parish Office in January. If you are collecting an envelope on behalf of a neighbour or friend we ask that you sign the sheet in the Sacristy before you take the box of envelopes. Thank you for your continued giving, it is very much appreciated.



The Annunciation Times

Church of the Annunciation, Rathfarnham

www.rathfarnhamparish.ie

The Nativity of the Lord Christmas Day Cycle C 25th December 2024



Contact details:

Rathfarnham is one of six parishes in partnership together; the parishes are Ballyroan, Churchtown, Ballyboden, Knocklyon and Marley Grange.

Parish team:

Moderator: V. Rev. Martin Canon Cosgrove
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Phone: 01- 495 4554. **Email:** mfc7534@gmail.com

Co P.P. V. Rev. Michael Coady,
St. Mary's Presbytery, Willbrook Rd.
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Deacon: Rev. Frank Browne c/o Parish Office
Sacramental Coordinator: Carol McCabe c/o Parish Office
Email: sacraments@rathfarnhamparish.com
Sacristan: Paul Moreland
Sacristy: Phone 01- 493 8385

Parish Secretary: Jason Monahan

Parish Office:
Parish Pastoral Centre,
Willbrook Road, Rathfarnham (The Old Court House)
Monday – Friday 10 a.m. to 2pm
Phone: 01- 495 8695
Parish Website: www.rathfarnhamparish.ie
Email: parishoffice@rathfarnhamparish.com
Twitter: @RathfarnhamP

Chairperson Parish Pastoral Council:
Mary Cunneen, c/o Parish Office

Registered Charity Number: 20016166

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil 6:45pm

Sunday Morning: 8.30am (Irish Mass), 9.30am & 11.30am

Working Holy Days: Morning: 10:00am

Evening: 7:30pm Vigil: 7:30pm.

Weekdays: Monday to Friday 10:00am

Saturdays & Bank Holidays: 11:00am

Sacrament of Reconciliation: On Saturdays after 11am Mass & before the 6.45pm Mass

Baptisms: 1st and 3rd Saturday of the Month.

NOW TAKING BAPTISM BOOKINGS FOR FEBRAURY 2025 ONWARDS

Gospel Reflection:

There are four Masses that are celebrated for the Feast of Christmas and each is given its own set of readings to help us contemplate Christ's birth. The Gospel for the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve is taken from the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. The Mass at midnight proclaims the birth of Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. The Mass at dawn on Christmas morning continues the story of the birth of Jesus as found in Luke's Gospel, ending with the shepherds' visit to the infant Jesus. In each of these Gospel readings, we hear portions of the infancy narratives with which we are familiar.

The Gospel for the Christmas Mass during the day is taken from the beginning of John's Gospel, but this part of John's Gospel is not an infancy narrative like those found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Instead, John's Gospel starts at the very beginning and presents the Creation story as the framework for announcing the Incarnation. John's opening words echo the first verse in the Book of Genesis. This framework invites us to view Jesus' birth from God's perspective. Each of the Gospels makes clear that Jesus' birth was the result of God's initiative. John's Gospel, however, emphasizes that Jesus' birth was the divine intention from the moment of Creation.

As we observe in today's reading, the Gospel of John includes highly philosophical and theological language. One example that particularly stands out in this Gospel is John's repeated references to “the Word” in the opening verse. This expression (logos in the Greek) borrows from a concept found in both Jewish and Greek thought. Jews used this phrase to describe God's action in the Creation story, for example, and in the Wisdom literature. In Greek thought, the logos was understood as an intermediary between God and humanity. John and others in the early Church adopted this language to describe God's incarnation in Jesus. As the term was used to express the Trinitarian faith of Christians, the Word came to be equated with the Second Person of the Trinity.

In this prologue to the Gospel of John, we also hear the main themes that will be developed in his Gospel. These are often presented as dualities: light and dark, truth and falsehood, life and death, and belief and unbelief. We also hear in this prologue a unique aspect of John's Gospel, the theme of testimony. John the Baptist was sent by God to testify to Jesus, the light. Others in this Gospel will also offer testimony about Jesus. The reader is invited to accept this testimony, which bears witnesses to Jesus, the Son of God. But even more directly, Jesus' action and words will testify to Jesus' identity as God's Incarnate Word.

Thinking about Jesus' birth in these theological and cosmological terms is particularly appropriate as we celebrate the Feast of Christmas in the darkness of winter. At this time, nature itself seems to remind us of the darkness of sin. Into this darkness, in the midst of our sinfulness, God comes to dwell among us. John's Gospel reminds us that through the Incarnation, God saves us from the darkness of sin and makes us his children.

Taken from the Loyola Press website: <https://www.loyolapress.com/>