

## Our spiritual, sacramental and pastoral life in St. Brendan's.

Sung Response to the Psalm today [as last Sunday]: **"May the house of the Lord be at peace."**

### **First Sunday of Advent and first day of the Church's liturgical year.**

**Advent:** translated from the Latin word *Advenire*, it means that Jesus ***comes to*** each one of us personally and not merely that he comes into the world.

**We encounter Jesus in two ways - by Word [the Scriptures] and by the grace which flows from the seven Sacraments of the Church especially participation in the Eucharist each Sunday. There is no other way.**

### **Notice the changes to mark the Season of Advent**

1. The set of purple and pink candles and the Wreath, the Advent water all are blessed today.
2. Purple vestments and purple banners, no flowers until the Christmas Vigil.
3. The new hymn book - Catholic Hymns Old & New is in use here from today.
4. The Gloria is omitted from Mass until the Christmas Vigil.
5. The passages of Scripture focus until 18<sup>th</sup> December on the second coming of Jesus at the end of time, not of his natural birth in a stable in Bethlehem. He is our Saviour and Redeemer.
6. Peter McMillan will speak today about deepening his understanding of his faith through our Wednesday evening sessions and the personal impact of this in his life, day to day.
7. The stall now provides many spiritual resources to help us understand better both the Season of Advent and our Catholic faith. The magazine Advent Extra is very imaginative with something for all ages. Please look there and see for yourself.
8. The Parish will give children books and symbols through the Children's Liturgy for home. Teenagers will be offered separate resources. Each family will receive an Advent Calendar.
9. ***The Advent Challenge***: take a free copy of Matthew's Gospel at the Stall and read a chapter of it each day. This Gospel will be used throughout next year - Year A of the 3-year cycle.
10. During Holy Hour we will pray and meditate on the fourteen Stations of the Infancy Narrative. Fr. Denis McBride composed these and his summary of Matthew's Gospel in the special Diary for 2020 (the Gospel to be used next year) is worth buying to have the benefit of it alone.

***The Children's Liturgy during Advent AND Sacramental Preparation***: Bishop Toal has written once again to all priests and all Head Teachers with amended guidelines on the celebration of Confirmation. He seems very concerned about the standard of preparation he sometime encounters. He makes the same point year on year.

**We want to set a solid foundation from Primary 1 to Primary 6/7 for the three Sacraments celebrated in Primary School.** Fr. Ness will meet with families on ***Sunday 19th January at 2pm*** in the church to review the preparation by P3 & P4 children since August. **Advent has a special place in this preparation. We want to help the children in age groups to grasp the mystery of the birth of Jesus at Christmas.**

**Participation Record Cards for parents to use will be distributed today in the Hall after Mass to let them record for themselves their participation in this Parish between now and the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January.**

Families not from this parish who won't take part in our programs but who attend St. Brendan's PS should speak to the priests in their own parishes to arrange to celebrate the Sacraments there. Children of families from this parish who don't participate in the Advent and later programs will not be refused the opportunity for Sacraments, but dates for this will be set as and when participation is established. ***Celebrating Sacraments requires participation in the sacramental life and the pastoral life of the parish.***

## **PARISH AND PARISHIONERS.**

**Bambinelli [beautiful infant children] Sunday - 15<sup>th</sup> December:** look at the poster on the Notice Board at the entrance to the church. It is a celebration by Pope Francis in which he blesses the figure of the baby Jesus which will be used in the crib. **Our children by God's Providence are to lead the morning Mass that day and we will follow the example of the Holy Father with our very beautiful children.**

**The Ecumenical Service** to celebrate St. Andrew's Feast Day with parishioners in St. Margaret's was held last Sunday. Many members of both communities attended and considered in prayer the call of Andrew to become a follower of Jesus with their own call to follow him. Hospitality was provided generously to us and we will meet with that community again when they come here for a joint **Christmas Carol Concert on 15<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm. We ask our many families with children to bring the children to take a lead part.**

**On Tuesday:** Anne Marie Canavan will again serve as lay Leader at the Liturgy of the Word and distribution of Holy Communion. Anne Marie understood like Evelyn, Elspeth and Margaret, this isn't so much a question of "can I do this?" but rather " ...does God want me to do this for the good of the St. Brendan's community?"

**Each Wednesday we celebrate Mass in our Hall followed immediately by hospitality.** The ladies who arrange this hospitality will provide a Christmas Coffee and Tea after the Mass on 11<sup>th</sup> December and then take a well-deserved break until after the New Year. ***Please note that the importance of this liturgy in our sacramental, pastoral and social life means that funerals won't ordinarily be arranged on Wednesdays***

### **Wednesday evening Faith development at 7pm:**

The Pope has set Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January as a special day to emphasise the provision of Faith Development . ***The Church knows how desperately she needs to improve the level of knowledge we have of our faith which is under attack daily from outside the Church. Many people don't know how to respond when asked questions about their faith and practice. This meeting and the subjects explained each week gives you the chance to improve this knowledge***

**Wedding Anniversary:** on Thursday evening we celebrated the diamond wedding anniversary of Jim and Anne McKenzie ***with Mass in their home surrounded by their family.*** **Our fondest congratulations to you both!!** All families with a significant marriage anniversary celebration in prospect can have this at home.

**Baptisms celebrated during Advent** in a situation of pastoral need. One family has arranged a baptism just before Christmas. This will follow immediately after the wedding of the parents on the same day. It will be a double celebration for this community as we encourage couples who are free to marry to come and discuss and plan for this in 2020 and also encourage couples who have married in ceremonies outside of the Church ***to ask about convalidation - making their civil marriage lawful under the Code of Canon Law.***

### **Appeals for financial help received in the mail at the chapel house this week that might attract you:**

1. **SCIAF – Real Gifts** - we wouldn't think of giving one of the many options on offer to a child as coming from Santa - *but perhaps to a friend or parent who has everything they could ever want.*
2. **Fertility Care Scotland:** see the poster at our entrance. They rely totally on financial help that parishes offer to them. They are a registered charity and so Gift Aid supports a taxpayer's donation.
3. **Let the Children Live** - for street children in the city of Medellin, Colombia - Fr. Peter will present an Appeal personally here on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> February. Send to c/o 81 Calder Road Mossend ML4 2RH.

**Any parishioner wishing to make a donation in response can do so personally or through Fr. Ness. Bishop Toal and Fr. Francis McGachey:** yesterday we learned that:

1. Fr. McGachey who had resumed at St. Francis Xavier Carfin last week, has been re-admitted to hospital.
  2. Bishop Toal is to undergo eye surgery on 19<sup>th</sup> December and will be indisposed into January.
- We will pray for each of them during the four weeks of Advent and also for the people of Carfin parish.

### PRAYER INTENTION REQUESTS FROM PARISHIONERS

Those whose Anniversary or Month Mind Remembrance occurs about now: Ann Owen; Agnes Bryce; Gerard Lynch; Connie McGinn; James O'Donnell; John Collins;  
and those who have died recently: Cathie Kerr; Freddie Hoey; John Larkin.

**This is the first Sunday of December** - so we invite all parishioners to spend some time together in the Hall where hospitality is provided for adults and carefully chosen treats and drinks for children. There is no charge. Your presence is all we look for but your generosity in making a voluntary contribution in the biscuit box has always more than met these costs leaving a surplus to go towards other pastoral expenses for our children.

**Last Sunday's Collection at Mass:** for the first time the two collections exceeded £800 - although only just. **Thank you for your generosity** and please try to maintain this level of income in order to provide for our outlays including heating costs over the winter and for the unexpected things such as the ornamental galvanised grills placed over the rear windows of the hall and the door base protectors which Richard fitted to all doors.

**Religious stamps for Christmas:** if we don't ask when we buy stamps for cards, these ones won't be offered!!

**Education Sunday:** Mr McHugh the teacher from OLHS who attended here last week along with three 6<sup>th</sup> year students spoke very highly of that experience. Specifically, he felt an energy about the community and in our age profile and level of participation in all ministries. He praised the condition of the church, inside and out. He felt he was in a sacred place and said he was happy that his opinion be published for all to know.

**St. Andrew's Day Concert last Friday:** Mrs Oates and the whole staff of the School were very grateful that many families attended the Concert in which all the children including those in the Nursery took part. Due to commitments at the High School, Fr. Ness has hardly visited the children in the Primary School since October but he was asked to give a Vote of Thanks. **"The children participated with a smile and with evident joy. They showed a great variety of talents which let them provide 80 minutes of great entertainment for all"**

**St. Margaret's Parish Christmas Fayre yesterday:** Fr. Ness was pleased to be asked to formally open it.

**In our Piety Stall at the main entrance:** a range of cards, calendars and spiritual gifts are available:  
**Christmas Cards and Calendars for 2020**

**Pope Francis' A-Z Living for Christ and Lessons to children.**

**My Day by Day** booklet for Advent and for Christmas and the **My Day by Day Pocket Diary for 2020.**

**Magnificat** booklet AND the **Sacred Heart Messenger** for December/Christmas.

**Redemptorist pocket/purse size Diary** incorporating a print of the Prayers of the Mass.

**Dates for December:**

**Today** - Blessing of the Advent candles and wreath and blessing and sprinkling of the Advent Water.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December:** Mass for residents at Netherton Court at 2.15PM. All parishioners are welcome to participate.

**8<sup>th</sup> December:** extended preparation for the children to lead morning Mass on 15<sup>th</sup> December. All children are invited to be part of this preparation during Mass and for half an hour - at most - after Mass.

**9<sup>th</sup> December:** Mass of Anointing on the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception at Carfin at 1pm.

**14<sup>th</sup> December:** Sacrament of Reconciliation available at the Cathedral from after Morning Mass.

**15<sup>th</sup> December** - Mass led by the children in Liturgy of the Word and in music. **ALSO at 6PM Christmas Carol Service in St. Brendan's celebrated jointly with the congregation from St. Margaret's Church of Scotland.**

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - **beginning of the Octave of Christmas:** sing Come O Divine Messiah for the first time.

**20<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Dance in the Hall with Santa Claus' visit expected for all adults and families present.

**22<sup>nd</sup> December** - a Christmas Party for the children, starting immediately after morning Mass. morning ,

**The Society of the Innocents – Annual Fundraising Raffle** - sale of tickets will end tonight after Mass.

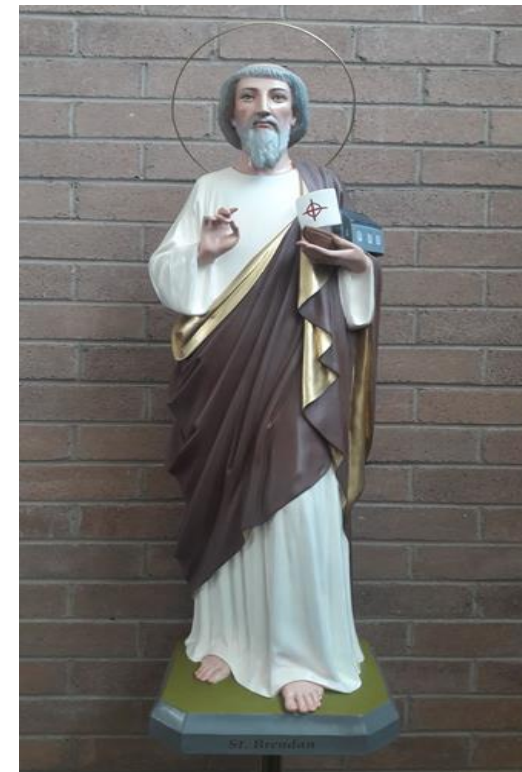
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## **The First Sunday of Advent - 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019.**

*Today is New Year's Day in the Roman Catholic Church*

Our mission as a community is to ***nourish the spiritual life of each parishioner by participation in parish life throughout the new liturgical year.***

*As this secular age with its affluence and sophistication marches ever forwards, a number of men and women have found ways to look and go beyond affluence and sophistication to become the new religious leaders who will teach us and our children how to live as Christians in this new situation. **They are the new saints of our time.***

**Mass times: Sunday at 10.30 [with Children's Liturgy] and at 4.30PM and: Monday to Saturday at 9.30AM.**

**Holy Hour: at 7pm on Thursday with Stations of the Nativity of Jesus.**