

Parish of St. Mary's

Mostrim



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Second Sunday of Christmas - 3rd Jan 2021

Offertory Collection: Dec 24th & 25th €1,962 - sincere thanks.

RECENTLY DECEASED

Please pray for Paul Keenan, Empor, Ballynacargy, Westmeath and formerly Barne, Edgeworthstown who died recently. May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Requiescant in Pace.

HAPPY NEW YEAR - As we begin the new year 2021, we wish a Happy New Year to all our parishioners. We pray for God's Blessings for all the homes and families of our parish. We hope and pray that the year to come will bring peace and contentment to all and in particular an end to the current health crisis and a return to our normal lives. We continue to pray for each other in these difficult days as the restrictions take hold once more.

A Prayer for Hope After A Hard Year

God, Thank you for helping us to make it through this difficult year. Thank you that you've carried us through the uncertainty of deep waters, through the flames of trials, and through the pain of hard losses. We are constantly aware of how much we need you, your grace, your strength, your power working through even the toughest days.

Help us to keep our focus first on you this season. Please forgive us for giving too much time and attention to other things, for looking to other people before coming to you first. Help us to reflect again, on what Christmas is really all about. Thank you that you came to give new life, peace, hope, and joy. Thank you that your power is made perfect in our weakness.

Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Immanuel, is our greatest treasure, not just at Christmas, but for the whole year through. Fill us with your joy and the peace of your Spirit. Direct our hearts and minds towards you. Thank you for your reminder that both in seasons of celebration and in seasons of brokenness, you're still with us. For you never leave us. Thank you for your daily powerful Presence in our lives, that we can be assured your heart is towards us, your eyes are over us, and your ears are open to our prayers. Thank you that you surround us with favor as with a shield, and we are safe in your care.

We choose to press in close to you today, and keep you first in our hearts and lives. Without you we would surely fail, but with you, there is great hope. Thank you for your healing power, thank you for bringing us into this new season up ahead. We look forward to all that You still have in store. In Jesus' name, Amen.

'It is always springtime in the heart that loves God' - Anon

'Joy is the echo of God's life within us' - Joseph Marmion

'If you have no joy in your religion, there's a leak in your Christianity somewhere' - W.A. Sunday

'Goods which are not shared are not goods' - Anon

• The Deep End • Taking Root •

We talk about having 'roots' as a way of describing our connection to a place or people. Being rooted somewhere means we are part of that place. When we are ready to settle down, to become part of a community, maybe to buy a house or start a family, we talk about 'putting down roots'. It means we are making this place our home. It is a rich metaphor from the plant world. The roots of a tree or plant represent its relationship with the soil it is planted in and the elements around it. The deeper the roots, the more connected a plant is to its environment. It becomes part of the place where it's planted. We use this expression in everyday language too - when an idea 'takes root' in us, it is something that becomes a part of us, inseparable from our very selves.

Today's first reading speaks of the wisdom of God 'taking root in a privileged people'. It describes it another way as 'pitching a tent'. These images offer us a way into understanding the complex language of today's gospel, which talks about God's relationship with us by sending Jesus: 'The Word was made flesh, he lived among us'.

By becoming human, God put down roots not just in our physical world, but in humanity itself. God pitched a tent among us and became one of us. It is a connection that cannot be broken - the roots go too deep. We are in God, and God is in us. This is the mystery we celebrate in this season of Christmas - that in Jesus, God became part of the very world that God created, and part of us: 'He was in the world that had its being through him.' We are indeed a privileged people!

'Christ asks for a home in your soul, where he can be at rest with you, where he can talk easily to you, where you and he, alone together, can laugh and be silent and be delighted with one another.'

Caryll Houselander

- Jane Mellett (INTERCOM)

• Seeing Your Life Through The Lens Of The Gospel •

1. John opens his Gospel with a profound reflection on the meaning of creation, of life and of Jesus. Remember when you had a special awareness of the gift of life that filled you with gratitude to God for creation, and the beauty and wonder of the world: 'All things came into being through him and without him not one thing came into being.'

2. We often listen to a reading from the gospels. Sometimes it goes in one ear and out the other. Then there are occasions when it made us feel more alive, times when it helped us see the way ahead, like a light that shines in the darkness. Recall when the gospel gave you hope in the midst of anxiety or sadness and helped you to see what action would be most life giving for you and for others

3. Bring to mind people who have had a prophetic voice in the world - speaking the truth for the world to hear, like as a witness to testify to the light. Some of these may have been public figures. Others were ordinary people who have helped you see the 'light' by the witness of their own lives and words.

4. 'No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son of God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him know.' Jesus came to us to teach us about God and put a human face on God for us. For the people of his day, and for us, that was a mission of getting us to think again about how we see God, and to believe in a God who is a God of love. Who, or what, has helped you along this journey? - John Byrne OSA (INTERCOM)

'Mother is the name for God in the lips and hearts of little children' - William Thackeray

'God forces no one, for love cannot compel, and God's service, therefore, is a thing of perfect freedom' - Hans Denck

- Fr Tom Healy -