

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

GREETING

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
The Lord be with you. And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us..... Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

(The Gloria is omitted awaiting its Christmas Proclamation.)

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.....



LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING *Isaiah 61: 1-2, 10-11*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. 'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. 'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,

as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *(Ps. Lk.1)*

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **[R]**

2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name! His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him. **[R]**

3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy. **[R]**

SECOND READING *1Thessalonians 5:16-24*

A reading from the first letter from St. Paul to the Thessalonians

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything - hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia!

GOSPEL *John 1:6-8. 19-28*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you - unknown to you - the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

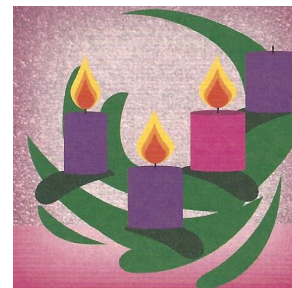
All bow for following three lines:

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.



LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brothers and sisters,
May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.



focus on sunday

The coming of Christ is a message of joy: a joy founded and rooted in God's love and care for his people, and his promise of an eternal companionship.



PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work. Through Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you. And with your spirit. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and just.

SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.
When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts. Through Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you. And with your spirit. May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. Amen. Go in peace. Thanks be to God.



Everyone's life is a witness to something. Foster and adoptive parents give a child a whole new life, often at great financial and emotional cost to themselves. They bear witness to humanity's compassion and care for others. The doctors and nurses of Doctors without Borders go into war zones, at great peril to themselves, in order to give new life to those who have been injured in conflict. They witness to the heroic selflessness which lie within human beings. In their lives, they, like John the Baptist, witness to the One who came that "they may have life and he it to the full." Others, perhaps very damaged by their life experiences, who care only for money regardless of the hurt they cause to others, witness to the self-centredness which also lies inside each of us.

Jesus came to show, first Israel, then the whole world, how to live as the People of God. John the Baptist pointed him out when he came, but many rejected Jesus' message of caring and sharing and universal love. Some, especially the religious leaders, also rejected the messenger; John the Baptist, like Jesus, was also put to death.

Today, we are all called to be John the Baptist, witnessing to Jesus' continuing presence in our world with his message of universal love. We may not end up with our head on a plate, but witnessing to Jesus' love for the poor and unwanted can sometimes be seriously detrimental to our popularity!

Fr. Peter McVerry

Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey

John the Baptist told the people that he was not The Jesus promised to come. He said that he was "A Voice." A voice is a wonder. What makes a voice? Who makes a voice? Poets tell us that everything that exists has a voice ...a story to tell. A Tree has a voice. A flower has a voice. The ballad singer's voice delights people. The baby's voice makes us laugh. May we use our voices to give good to the world and praise the glory of God.

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, BALLYHAUNIS

PARISH NEWSLETTER 17th DECEMBER 2023

Parish Priest: Fr. Stephen Farragher, 094-9630006 / 087-9210305

Email: ballyhaunisparish@gmail.com Parish Office: 094-9630006

PARISH WEBSITE: <http://www.ballyhaunisparish.ie>

PARISH RADIO: 105.2FM Newsletter on line: Parish website & www.mcnmedia.tv

Web-cam: <http://www.ballyhaunisparish.ie> or www.mcnmedia.tv

Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR) Jacinta Flynn, (contact the parish office)

Emergency numbers:

Knock: 094-9388100

Fr. Feeney, Ballinlough: 094-9640155

Fr. McGuinness, Began: 094-9313937

ANNIVERSARY MASSES 18th-23rd DECEMBER 2023

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10.00am. Saturday 7.30pm.

Donald, Cecily & Padraig Moran, Knox St.
 Thomas & Emily Kelly, London & Cortoon
 Decd. members of the Annagh Magazine Society
 Ned & Mae Carroll, Drimbane
 Jim & Mary E. Smith, Bridge St.
 Tom, Pat & Mary Donnellan, Clare St.
 Etta Hernon & decd. of the Healy & Grogan families, Holywell
 Kathleen & Bill Lyons, Knockbrack
 Peter & Mary Boyle, Coolnafarna
 Mary & Michael Morley, Island & decd. of the Morley & Carney families
 Gertie, James & Michael Loftus, Lavallyroe
 Michael, Catherine & Bertie Curley, Clare St.
 Michael & Mary Webb & decd. Main St.
 Eamon & Maisin Meath, Clare St.
 Sr. Evelyn & Sr. Eithne, Convent of Mercy
 Christy Cregg, Ballinlough
 Michael & Katie Conroy, Claremorris
 Peter, Phil & Stephen Keogh, Dublin
 John Jarlath Mullarkey & decd. Tullaghane
 Tom & Margaret Lydon & decd. of the Marigliano family
 Enda & Gerard Murphy, Aisling Drive & Emma Browne, Brackloon
 Delia & James Freeley & decd. Gurteen
 Jim & Mary Hopkins, Larganboy & decd. of the Hopkins & Kelly families
 Andrew & Bridget Devine & decd. Derry
 Tom & Delia Stenson & decd. Tooreen



MASSES:

Monday, Tuesday,
 Wednesday, Friday 10.00am.
 Saturday Evening Vigil:
 7.30pm
 Sunday: 10.00am.

CONFESSIONS:

Before Saturday Vigil Mass

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Between 9am & 7pm daily.

BAPTISMS

First Saturday & third Sunday of the month at 11.00am. Minimum of four weeks' notice required. Contact the parish office, 094-9630006.



18th-25th Dec.	READERS	MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST
Monday	Martin Fitzmaurice	Joe Byrne, Margaret Tarpey
Tuesday	Tommy Caulfield	Breege Halpin, Lorraine Waldron
Wednesday	Mary Donnelly	Margaret Byrne, Mary Sykes
Friday	Christina Concannon	Willie Broderick, Marie Brennan
Sat 7.30pm	Emer Gallagher	Marina Coyne, Anne Carney, Laura Brogan, Eavan Caulfield
Sunday 10am (Christmas Eve)	Alex Eaton	Breege Halpin, Cáit Webb, Geraldine Murphy, Daniela Balbino Romao
Sunday 6pm (Christmas Eve)	Margaret Monaghan	Eileen Donnellan, Eileen Lynch, Tim Byrne, Frances Mulhern
Sunday 9pm (Christmas Eve)	Stella O'Neill	Helene McCafferty, Deirdre Browne, Breda Davis, Eileen Jordan
Monday 10am (Christmas Day)	Julia Kelly	Margaret Tarpey, Mary Murphy, Marie Brennan, Helena Byrne
Monday 12 noon (Christmas Day)	Maeve Donnellan	Willie Broderick, Patricia Plunkett, Mary T. Griffin, Dymphna Grealley

CHRISTMAS MASSES 2023:

Christmas Eve—Sunday 24th Dec:

10am: Sunday Mass

6pm: Family Mass with the Scoil Iosa Children's Choir

9pm: Christmas Vigil Mass

Christmas Day- Monday 25th Dec.

Masses at 10am & 12 noon.

The 10am Mass will be broadcast live on Midwest Radio

St. Stephen's Day- Tues. 26th Dec:

Mass at 12 noon (No 10am Mass on St. Stephen's Day)

New Year's Day- Mon. 1st Jan. 2024:

A New Year's Day Mass for the parishes in the St. Joseph's Cluster (Aghamore, Ballyhaunis, Ballinlough, Began & Knock) will be held on Monday 1st January at 12 noon (No 10am Mass that day). A specially-commissioned prayer card will be distributed at the Mass. All welcome.

CONFESSIONS: A Service of Reconciliation will be held this Sunday evening 17th December at 6pm.

All weekday and weekend Masses, and the daily Rosary at 9pm (when possible) Mondays to Fridays, continue to be broadcast on parish radio 105.2 FM and streamed on the parish webcam:

<https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/st-patricks-church-ballyhaunis> or on the website: www.ballyhaunisparish.ie

Sunday Mass will be broadcast live on Midwest Radio on 17th and 31st Dec. and on Christmas Day at 10am.

PRIESTS' CHRISTMAS COLLECTION: Sincere thanks to those who have already returned their envelopes. Your ongoing support & generosity is appreciated. Envelopes for the Christmas Collection can be returned at Masses or to the parish office. For those wishing to make an online donation to the Priests' Account, the IBAN is IE97 AIBK 9374 4421 3423 54.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE: An evening of quiet prayer & music takes place on Tuesday 19th Dec. from 8 to 9pm in the Chapel of Reconciliation, Knock Shrine.

FESTIVE FAVOURITES AT THE FRIARY: A Christmas

Carol service will take place in Ballyhaunis Friary **this Sunday evening** 17th December at 7pm, featuring the Abbey Male Choir, Parish Choir, Scoil Iosa Children's Choir and Le Cáirde. Donations to the local St. Vincent de Paul.

Offertory Collection
 Sunday 10th Dec.
 2023
 €1,748

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL: Collection envelopes for the local branch of St. Vincent de Paul are available in the Church porch and in local outlets. Donations can be returned to the collection box in the church at Mass times, or to the parish office. Donations can also be made online to Account No. 55855348 **IBAN: IE96 BOFI 9037 2855 8553 48 BIC: BOFIE2D**

Recently Deceased - We remember in our prayers Mary Carolan, Portsmouth, UK & formerly Abbeyvale; John Evangelides, Cyprus- husband of Maria Moran, Main Street; Peter Ferencz, Upper Main St.

MASS SERVERS FOR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR:

Sat. 23rd December—7.30pm: Team A

Sun. 24th Dec – 10am: Team B

6pm Family Mass: Team C

9pm Vigil Mass: Team F

Mon. 25th Dec.-10am: Team E

-12 noon: Team D

Tues 26th Dec.-12 noon: Team C

Sat. 30th Dec-7.30pm: Team A

Sun 31st Dec-10am: Team B

Mon 1st Jan-12 noon: Team D

PARISH CHRISTMAS CARDS are available in the sacristy this weekend, €6 for a pack of 10 cards.

NATIVITY PLAY: The annual Cenacolo Outdoor Nativity Play takes place on Friday next 22nd Dec. at 6pm at the Cenacolo House, Aughtaboy, Knock F12 WK74. Come and see the real life Bethlehem Nativity scene with live animals. All welcome.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE: The Tuam Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes led by Archbishop Francis Duffy will take place from 30th August to 5th Sept. 2024. Direct return flights from Ireland West Airport Knock, 6 nights hotel full board. For details, call 01 2410800 or email info@joewalshstours.ie

SILENT RETREAT: Do you need to come away and have time for yourself? The Foyer of Charity invites you to a silent retreat in St. Mary's Accommodation, Knock from 5th to 11th February 2024, with daily Mass, Rosary & Eucharistic Adoration. The theme is: "If you but knew the gift of God...", with preacher Fr. Kilian Byrne. For details, call Helen on 086 1678027 or visit www.foyerofcharity.ie

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT: Celebrate the joy of Christmas with a collection of carols, hymns and festive favourites at Knock Basilica this Sunday 17th December at 8pm. Admission free and all are welcome.

EPILEPSY IRELAND would like to thank all who contributed to the recent Church Gate Collection which raised €171.

MARY'S MEALS CHRISTMAS GIFTS: Mary's Meals, which provide hot meals to almost 2.5 million children every school day, have launched their Christmas Gifts Campaign, giving gifts that have a real and tangible impact on those in need. For as little as €5.50, which can provide 50 meals for children in their school, you can play a part in changing the lives of those most in need. Visit www.marysmeals.ie to download a gift, or call 01 8535163.

LIVING WELL is a free HSE programme which helps people living with a long-term health condition to manage their condition and improve their overall wellbeing. Anyone with a chronic illness such as diabetes, arthritis, COPD, cardiac illness, anxiety etc can benefit from this programme which is delivered over 6 weekly workshops (2.5 hrs x 6) by trained leaders. The next programme in Tuam starts on Wed. 17th Jan, in Kilkelly on 28th February and the next online programme starts on 30th Jan. Advance registration is required. Contact Liam on 086 0142675 or email lgildea@southmayo.com

IRISH CATHOLIC NEWSPAPER: Copies are now on sale at the back of the Church. Cost €3, please place money in candelabra coinbox.