

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

GREETING

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
May almighty God have mercy on us.... Amen.

(The Gloria is omitted awaiting its Christmas Proclamation.)

OPENING PRAYER

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.



LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING 2 Samuel 7:1-5.8-12.14.16
A reading from the second book of Samuel

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that

place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 88)

R. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. [R]

2. 'With my chosen one I have made a covenant; I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.' [R]

3. He will say to me: 'You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me.' I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure. [R]

SECOND READING Romans 16:25-27

A reading from St. Paul's letter to the Romans

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this

greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

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

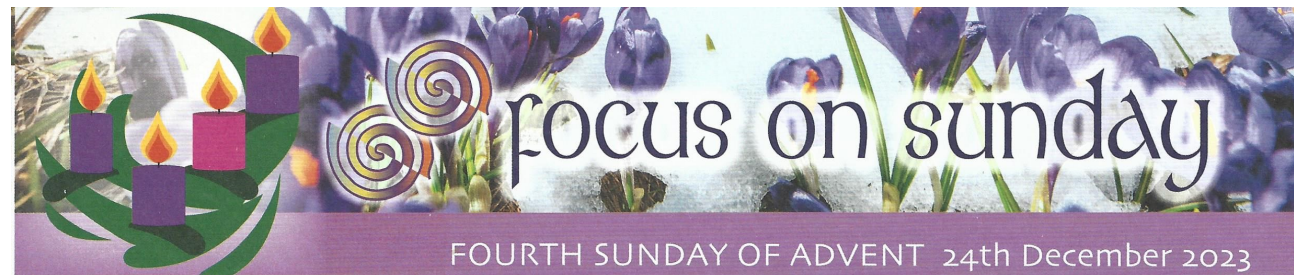


NICENE CREED

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.



Mary accepted the life of God into her womb through the power of the Holy Spirit thus bringing God's salvation into the world. Let us open our hearts to welcoming Jesus into our lives this Christmas.



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.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through Christ our Lord.

EUCHARISTIC 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

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

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.



Someone asked a Christian how the teachings of Confucius and Buddha would differ from those of Christ. He responded with a story.

A woman fell into a deep hole. Try as she might, she could not get out. Confucius came along and looked in. He said, "Poor woman, if you had paid attention to me, you would not have fallen in there in the first place." He kept walking. The Buddha approached. He too spotted the woman and said to himself. "If she can just manage to get out of that hole, I can give her great help in the form of wisdom to live by." And he continued his journey. Finally, along came Jesus. He spotted the woman. He was moved with compassion and jumped in immediately to help her out.

We gather at this Mass on Christmas Eve to celebrate the concern God has for each of us. His eager willingness to jump in and help us is illustrated by the birth of his Son in our world. St. Irenaeus summed up this feast well when he wrote: "God became man so that we might become God." It has been well said that Christmas is a gift that we cannot keep until we give it to someone else. Christ is always with us, especially in the poor, always asking for room in our hearts. As we pray for peace and wish the peace of Christ to one another, may we be mindful that peace is much more than a season. It is a state of mind and a way of life.

Fr. Joe Walsh

Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey

We listen to The Angeleus Bell because of Mary. She listened to the Angel when God invited her to have The Baby Jesus. It is a good prayer to listen to the sound of the Bell, and let the sound pass through from the top of the head to the little toe of one's foot in silence. It is also good to put a hand on one's heart in silence, during the ringing of The Bell.

Liturgical texts: concordat cum originali: †Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin Other texts: cum permissu: †Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin. Excerpts from the English translation of the Roman Missal: © 2010 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Used with permission. The Jerusalem version of the Scripture is copyright Darton, Longman & Todd & Doubleday & Co. Inc. Responsorial psalms are copyright The Grail & or Geoffrey Chapman Ltd. Robin Photo by Tom Clements. Published by Logos Publications, 26 Tolka Valley Business Park, Ballyboggan Rd, Glasnevin, D11 WK38 Phone (01 830 6751).

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, BALLYHAUNIS

PARISH NEWSLETTER 24th 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



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.



ANNIVERSARY MASSES 25th-30th DECEMBER 2023

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

Mary & Eddie Walsh, USA & Bracklaghboy
 Jerome Murphy, Hazelview & Began
 Bartley, Norah, Bartley & Ellen Boyle & decd. of the Boyle &
 Morley families, Carrownedan
 Pat & Úna Phillips, Main St. & decd. of the Phillips family
 Pat, Margaret & Mary Donnellan & decd.
 James & Bridget Sloyan & decd. Brackloon
 Peter Sloyan & decd. Forthill
 Kathleen Webb, Station Rise
 Kathleen Gavin & Rita Walsh
 Helen MacDermott née Lynch, Abbey St.
 Kathleen, Sylvester & decd. of the McBride family, Annagh
 Bernie Joe Lyons, Skeghard
 Judith, Nora & Michael Regan, Killinaugher

SUNDAY 31ST Dec.—FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Thomas Patrick Costello, Carrowhawny

25th Dec.-1st Jan.	READERS	MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST
Monday 10am (Christmas Day)	Julia Kelly	Tim Byrne, Margaret Tarpey, Mary Murphy, Helena Byrne
Monday 12 noon (Christmas Day)	Maeve Donnellan	Willie Broderick, Patricia Plunkett, Mary T. Griffin, Ann Carney
Tuesday 12 noon (St. Stephen's Day)	Tommy Caulfield	Breege Halpin, Lorraine Waldron
Wednesday	Mary Donnelly	Mary Sykes, Marie Brennan
Friday	Willie Broderick	Eileen Jordan, Irene Healy
Saturday 7.30pm	John Doyle	Jacinta Flynn, Jenny Glynn, Frances Mulhern, Seamus Mulrennan
Sunday 10am	Norma Jean Folliard	Bernie Quinn, Patricia Plunkett, Gilmar Neves, Miriam Judge
Monday 12 noon (New Year's Day)	Orla Phillips	Joe Byrne, Breda Davis, Paul Sykes, Helena Byrne
COLLECTORS FOR JANUARY		
Sat. 7.30pm	Ann Curley, Oliver Cribben, Kieran Connolly, Hugh Rudden	
Sun. 10am	Mike Griffin, Pat Phillips, Eddie Mooney, Carlos Balbino Romao	
MASS SERVERS FOR JANUARY		
Sat. 7.30pm	Team C—Liam & Molly Thompson, Carlos Da Sousa Gomes, Luiz Ricardo Da Souza Gomes, Sonny Kelly	
Sun. 10am	Team D-Cian & Hazel Murphy, Abigail Dixon, Fionn Finnegan	

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.

MASS SERVERS FOR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR:

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

Recently Baptised

We welcome into the Faith Community
 Erin Carney, Salthill;
 Mathew Jace Wadiwa Mukazi,
 Old Convent

Offertory Collection

Sunday 17th Dec.
 2023
 €1,985

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

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.**

PIONEERS: Pioneers around the world are invited to attend Mass next Wednesday 27th Dec and to prayerfully mark the 125th anniversary of the foundation of the Pioneer Association in 1898. Mass & prayers will be live-streamed at 10am that day via www.pioneerassociation.org

GENEALOGY: A five-week course showing how to trace your family history through various sources will commence in the Community Hall on Tuesday 16th January at 8pm. Cost €5 per session including tea & coffee. To register on the course, email ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com

AL-ANON offers understanding & support for families & friends of problem drinkers in an anonymous environment. Meetings on Sunday evenings at 8.30pm in Scoil Iosa, Ballyhaunis.

A Word of Thanks & Appreciation, Christmas 2023

If there's one word we associate with this time of year, it's "Home". What we celebrate most of all at this time is the fact that God chose to make his home among us and take on our human flesh. Of the myriad of means he could have chosen to enter our world, he chose to be born to a humble couple in Nazareth. The world into which Jesus was born was similar in many ways to our own. There were wars and widespread poverty. Many families, including Joseph and Mary, had to flee the terror of King Herod and take refuge in neighbouring Egypt. These days people travel across oceans and continents, returning to the circle of warmth that we call 'home'. In recent years many families have made Ballyhaunis their new home. We extend a warm welcome to all of you who have made Ballyhaunis your new home and who bring with you so many lovely customs and traditions from your native land. Welcome also to all our emigrants who have made the journey home for Christmas. We hope that you will have a restful and peaceful time with your family.

Earlier this year we formed a new Parish Pastoral Council which is truly representative of the ethnic diversity that exists within our parish. We thank all who accepted the nomination to the PPC. A special thanks to Kevin Henry for agreeing to serve a second term as Chairperson and to Mary Henry for agreeing to stay on as secretary. So many people are involved in various ministries in our parish. Last summer we had a very enjoyable social evening in the Golf Club for all who are involved in parish ministries. As we come together to celebrate the mystery of the incarnation, the great event of God coming among us in the human flesh, I want to express my appreciation to all who have helped in the preparations for Christmas.

I wish to thank our choirs, soloists and musicians for their commitment to music in our parish. The great array of local talent is regularly commented on by listeners of Midwest Radio. Thanks especially to Martina Kelly who is the Director of Sacred Music in our parish. Martina took over this role earlier in the year when Moira Delaney stepped down after many years of sterling service. Thanks to our Mass-servers and their parents for being so loyal and committed to this ministry. Again many parishioners have commented on how lovely it is to see the servers present at Mass.

I wish to thank the principal and teaching staff of Scoil Iosa for their co-operation on so many fronts; especially in helping to prepare our children for the Sacraments of First Confession, Communion and Confirmation. I wish to express my appreciation to the principal Kenneth Dennedy for his leadership, and to Carol Freeley & Sarah Scully for agreeing to take charge of the Scoil Iosa Children's choir. The participation of the Children's choir in various Masses at Christmas and throughout the year is something that energises and enriches our celebration of the Eucharist.

Last weekend, Archbishop Francis kindly stepped in to lend a helping hand when I was feeling a bit under the weather. He was very touched with how warm and welcoming our parish and church are at this time. Each year a band of enthusiastic volunteers, under the direction of Margie Phillips, undertake the erection of the Christmas crib, the Christmas tree and the decoration of the church. They ensure that our church building has a warm, welcoming festive atmosphere that enables us to celebrate the Christmas season. They have spent many hours over the past few weeks working to ensure that nothing is left to chance. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

Fr. Stephen