

Parish of Ballygalget  
Bulletin 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> December  
Third Sunday of Advent



Fr Feargal McGrady PP (Tel No 42728234)  
(Fr P Neeson Priest in Residence)

**MASS TIMES:** Mon – Thur - 9.30am (And via Webcam)  
Fri – 6.45pm Exposition of Blessed  
Sacrament, Rosary and Mass at 7.30pm  
**Including Perpetual Novena (& via Webcam)**  
Sat Vigil – 6.30pm  
Sun – 9.30am

Parishioners due to attend the normal weekend Mass will be listed on Ballygalget Parish Facebook and displayed on Church door.

St Patrick's Churches (Portaferry & Ballygalget) and St Cooley's Oratory will remain open for Private Prayer. All Masses will be streamed via the webcam, [www.churchmedia.tv](http://www.churchmedia.tv)

**ANNIVERSARIES** – Your prayers are requested for the happy repose of the souls of the following whose anniversaries occur at this time: Joe Dynes, Elizabeth Hinds, James Henry Dorrian, Tommy George Watson, and Liam and Attracta McGrattan.

**This Week's Diary**

Mon 14<sup>th</sup> Dec St John of the Cross, Priest  
Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Dec St Flannan, Bishop

**St Vincent de Paul Helpline** (07508549701). Leave a message or send a text.

**St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal**

This year things are going to be very different due to COVID-19. There will be no 'under the Christmas Tree gifts' There's nothing we can do about the current situation, but there is something we can do to help those families at Christmas. We have decided the best way forward was to appeal for food vouchers and toy vouchers. Our appeal begins on 18<sup>th</sup> November, but our collection for vouchers or cash donations will begin on weekend 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> November until the first week in December. Any gift vouchers may be left at the Rock Bakery Portaferry. Everyone is finding it hard at the minute but any support you can give will be greatly appreciated.

Also, St Vincent de Paul Christmas Cards are now on sale at the Rock Bakery at £2 per packet.

As always, many thanks to you all for your generosity and continued support.

**PRAYER SERVICE & BLESSING – OUR LADY’S GROTTO BALLYPHILIP  
Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm**

A short service ending with Benediction for the blessing of parishioners, families and children from both parishes. You are invited to bring the Baby Jesus figure from the crib to be blessed during the service and that blessing will reach your home and families. You are then invited to wrap the Baby Jesus figurine in Christmas paper at home and this will be the 1<sup>st</sup> present opened on Christmas Day. This will remind us of the great gift we have received at the Birth of Christ.

At the end there will be a short blessing of Tractors. People could leave their cars in the carparks and come before the Grotto, while social distancing and keeping restrictions. Weather permitting.

**PENITENTIAL SERVICE (VIA WEBCAM) ST PATRICK’S BALLYPHILIP – TUESDAY  
15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER AT 7.30PM**

Pope Francis reminded us that during these times of restrictions, that if we are unable to go to Confessions in the normal way at this time, to have our sins forgiven it would suffice for us to say a sincere Act of Sorrow, to tell the Lord our sins with the intention of bringing them to a future Confession in the normal way. To help us to do this for Christmas, we are holding a brief penitential service via webcam on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm.

**A Personal Penitential Prayer in preparation for Christmas**

Advent is a time when we seek a change of heart that we may truly celebrate Christmas. In preparation for this great feast many celebrate this "change of heart" in the Sacrament of Penance. Confession to a priest is an essential part of the Sacrament of Penance but what are we to do this year, when because of coronavirus, it is so difficult to come to the parish church? Pope Francis has spoken about this situation. He said that we should do what the Catechism of the Catholic Church says. The Catechism reminds us that the confessor is not the master of God's forgiveness, but its servant. Only God forgives sin and God, who is the Father of tenderness, waits for the return of the sinner, and always welcomes with a loving embrace - God's forgiveness is immediate! In our present uniquely difficult situation, when it is not possible to come to the Church for Confession, speak to God from your heart; acknowledge truthfully what you have done or failed to do, and with all your heart ask forgiveness with a sincere Act of Sorrow, confident that God always forgives the contrite. Later, when coronavirus has released its grip, we can return to the Church and avail of Confession, and celebrate the forgiveness that has been so freely given. You may find this Penitential Prayer in preparation for Christmas helpful.

\*\*\*\*\*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Almighty and merciful God,  
I come in the name of your Son  
to receive your mercy and grace in my time of need.  
Give me a new heart to love you,  
so that my life may reflect the image of your Son,  
Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

***A reading from the holy Gospel according to John***

**8:12; 15:9-10;12**

Jesus said:

"I am the light of the world;  
anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark  
but will have the light of life."

Again, Jesus said: "I have loved you just as the Father has loved me.

Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love - This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you."

***A time of reflection.***

***A world of darkness is a world of confusion***

So many are confused about life.

So many are lost in darkness.

So many are searching for happiness but cannot find it.

So many are overwhelmed by loneliness.

***I ask myself, "Am I living in darkness?"***

Darkness in my selfish choices.

Darkness in my constant complaining.

Darkness in my unreasonableness.

Darkness in my refusal to forgive others.

Darkness in my hurtful comments.

Darkness when I abuse the goodness of others.

Darkness in peace disrupted.

Darkness in violent words and actions.

Darkness in my jealousy.

Darkness in my self-deception.

Darkness in my anxiety and fear.

Darkness when I am bad news for others.

Darkness in love corrupted

Darkness in self-absorption and empty pleasure.

Darkness in the digital world.

Darkness in the exploitation of others.

Darkness in addictions.

Darkness when I shut out the light.

Darkness in the hungry people.

Darkness in the homeless people.

Darkness in the sad faces I see.

Darkness in waste.

Darkness in lack of care for the environment.

Darkness when I shut God out of my life.

***A time for an examination of life - followed by a general confession of sin, saying:***

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. Amen.

***The Act of Sorrow***

**O my God, I thank you for loving me.  
I am sorry for all my sins,  
For not loving others and not loving you.  
Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.**

***Proclamation of praise and thanksgiving.***

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
**R/. Great is his love, love without end.**

Give thanks to the God of gods,  
**R/. Great is his love, love without end.**

Give thanks to the Lord of lords,  
**R/. Great is his love, love without end.**

To the God of heaven give thanks.  
**R/. Great is his love, love without end.**

***Concluding Prayer***

Lord our God,  
You made the light that scatters all darkness.  
Let Christ, the light of lights, shine on us  
and free us from the darkness of sin.  
We ask this in his name,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **THE ADVENT WREATH**

The Advent Wreath is made of a circle of evergreens, the circle symbolizing the eternity of God. The 4 candles represent the 4 weeks of Advent. 3 candles are purple and one rose. The purple candles symbolize the prayer, penance and preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken before Christmas. The rose candle is lit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – Gaudete Sunday or rejoicing Sunday and symbolizes the hope and expectation of our Lord's coming into the world and the anticipation of His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming to judge the living and the dead. A white candle is placed in the middle of the wreath, which represents Christ and is lit on Christmas Eve. The blessing of the Advent Wreath takes place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent.

**COLLECTION ENVELOPES** – Envelopes for next year can be collected from the Parish Hall on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December from 2pm-3pm. Anyone who would like to contribute through the envelope system should contact Geraldine Roddy (07922117226) or email [g.rodgy@btinternet.com](mailto:g.rodgy@btinternet.com)