

PORTSTEWART PARISH

Part of the North Connor Pastoral Community

27th December 2020

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Sunday B/Weekdays 2 Psalter week 1



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THIS WEEK IN STAR OF THE SEA	
Sun 27 December The Holy Family	Vigil Mass 5.00pm Mass 10.00 am & 7.00pm
Mon 28 December The Holy Innocents	Mass 12.00 noon
Tues 29 December	Mass 12.00 noon
Wed 30 December	Mass 12.00 noon
Thurs 31 Dec New Year’s Day Mass for Peace	Mass 12.00 noon
Fri 1 January	12.00 noon
Sat 2 January	Mass 9.30am

The church will be open for private prayer from 11am until noon each day during the Christmas octave.

Please book for all Masses during the week following Christmas Day by using the app

EVENTBRITE. ☎ Emer 07709 043921 or e:portstewartpastoralcouncil@gmail.com

All Masses are streamed online on the parish website: portstewartparish.website ‘Watch Live’ and on YouTube. Masses are recorded and can be watched on the website 45 minutes after Mass has ended. You can also listen on our parish radio.

REST IN PEACE

RECENT: Francis Molloy

ANNIVERSARIES: Jody Fitzsimons, Hugh McGarry (27), Agnes McCullagh (28), Jack & May Laverty, Edward McGuinness (29), Annie Laverty, Fr Liam Mullan, George O’Connell (30), Michael McGlade, Seamus Mulholland, Rose Murphy (31), Kitty D’Arcy, Teresa Eastwood, Ann Rimmington, Joaquin Twomey (1), Johnny Madden, James Orrell (2)

THE POPE’S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY:

Evangelisation: Human Fraternity

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE?

Catholic Engaged Encounter

A 'Zoom' online Marriage Preparation course is planned for 27-28 March 2021. This 2-day course is a positive way of preparing for Marriage where you will discover how you can enrich your future relationship. Information/Booking: marriageencounter.ie or ☎ 2763 8512

DO YOU LIKE PLAYING WITH RASBERRY Pis?

Do you know what LINUX is? Derek is seeking an understudy to learn the art and craft of talking to your Pi and improving our parish on-line stream. Contact Fr Austin for details.



CHRISTMAS 2020 ADVICE FROM THE DIOCESE

Normally at Christmas time large numbers of people wish to attend Mass. This year, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our churches simply cannot accommodate such crowds if we are to ensure the health and safety of all and conform to Public Health Agency guidance and NI Executive legislation. It is our intention to have Christmas Masses that are open to the public, but only for as many as the church can legally and safely accommodate.

In order to avoid the real possibility of increased transmission of the Covid-19 virus this Christmas, it is important to remember:

The obligation to attend Mass is temporarily suspended and only those who can participate safely should do so. The elderly and those with underlying health conditions should be encouraged to avail of livestreaming services. The obligation to attend Mass in person this Christmas has been suspended.

Christmas Masses will be broadcast live and available online, so people are encouraged to participate in a live-streamed Mass.

There will be sufficient stewards to monitor COVID compliance and to manage movement both inside and outside Church.

There should be no congregational singing. While it is important to have the singing of traditional carols and sacred music, this will be provided only by instrumentalists and soloists.

At the dismissal, parishioners will be reminded that they are to exit in a safe manner, respecting social distancing, and that they must leave the precincts of the Church immediately and avoid gathering in groups.

IN THIS EXTRAORDINARY YEAR, LET US ALL CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS SAFELY

THE BISHOP’S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2020

“Christmas at Home”

Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.” Matthew 1:20 On 8th December 2020, Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter “With a Father’s Heart”¹, dedicating the year ahead under the patronage of St Joseph. The scriptures recall how, in the most difficult of personal circumstances, Joseph took Mary into his home, welcomed the Christ-child as his own and courageously became their guardian. In Joseph, Mary and Jesus witnessed the tender love of God.²

Christmas 2020 is a very different Christmas for everyone. Families and parishes across the world are not able to celebrate in the normal way. For some, this will be a Christmas celebrated at home. Sacrificing much in the pursuit of health and wellbeing, others will spend this Christmas in isolation, unable to join those they love. Like Mary and Joseph, exiled to protect the newly born Christ child, many have been compelled to change their plans at the last minute because of evolving circumstances. And yet the light of the Christ-Child can still illuminate the hearts and hearths of all this Christmas bringing joy and hope.

This experience will certainly evoke in many of us a nostalgia for the memories of Christmas in previous years, recalling those who were with us in the past, family celebrations and gatherings, Christmas carolling, Vigil Masses and prayers around the crib. At the same time, the 2020 Christmas experience will cast light on and reveal so much that we have taken for granted. Over this past year, we have all learned to draw upon new sources of creativity and resourcefulness. This Christmas there is the potential to experience and strengthen further our homes as cradles of faith and prayer within our parishes and Christian communities. Just as with the wise men from the East, there is wonder and joy to be experienced – namely, to identify afresh and appreciate anew the personal qualities of those closest and most familiar to us.

So, let us celebrate Christmas at Home. In our homes, let the Christ-child take centre place. Over this festive season, I encourage you to join our parish communities online and to pray for one another, for your families and friends. Let us pray also for our health care workers and for all front-line staff as they selflessly and tirelessly continue to care for our sick throughout the Christmas season. And we could use the methods of communication available to us to reach out and connect with those we love and especially those living on their own. May the blessing of this Christmas Season bring hope and joy into your hearts and homes.

+Noel Treanor

Bishop of Down and Connor

¹ Pope Francis, Patris Corde (With a Father’s Heart), Vatican City, 8 December 2020. ² Ibid, par. 2.




The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Gracious God, you sent your Son to be born in an ordinary family with ancestors who were both faithful and sinful. We ask your blessing upon all families within households and communities. We pray especially for the unity of the Christian family so that the world may believe. In Jesus’ name we pray Amen



Parish Facebook page and website

 Star of the Sea Portstewart
portstewartparish.website
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