

PORTSTEWART PARISH

Part of the North Connor Pastoral Community

3rd January 2021

Second Sunday of Christmas

Sunday B/Weekdays 2

Psalter week 2



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FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Wednesday 6th January is the day when we celebrate the arrival of the “wise men from the East” representing the world community for whom Christ was born as Saviour. Vigil Mass at 7.00pm on Tuesday and morning Mass at 9.30am.

MASSES THIS WEEK - STREAMED

Sunday Masses: (vigil) 5pm, (morning) 10am

Monday: Mass at 9.30am

Tuesday: Mass at 7pm

Wednesday - Saturday: Mass at 9.30am

The church will be open for private prayer after Mass until noon each day except Tuesday.

Please book for all weekend Masses 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: Mary Hughes, Sarah McColgan

ANNIVERSARIES: George O’Connell (30), James Orrell (2), Marie Kennedy (3), Lily O’Doherty (4).

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

ON THE PARISH WEBSITE

- Bishop Noel Treanor’s Christmas Message
- A 30 minute reflection on the **Nativity Icon**
- The **Twelve Days of Christmas** – there are three days left! Prayers at home during the Season.

ADVICE FROM THE DIOCESE

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.

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.

Christmas blessings to all parishioners, their families and their visitors. The Priests of the Parish wish you God’s peace and love in your hearts and homes. Many thanks for your kindness and support in the past year, as well as for your Christmas cards and gifts. In addition, we express gratitude to all groups, societies, individuals, schools and families for helping to build up our parish community, the Body of Christ, by your prayers and spirit of service.

“KNOW DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

that, as we have rejoiced at the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so by leave of God’s mercy we announce to you also the joy of his Resurrection, who is our Saviour.

On the 17 day of February will fall Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the fast of the most sacred Lenten season.

On the 4th day of April you will celebrate with joy Easter Day, the paschal feast of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the 16th day of May will be the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the 23th day of May the feast of Pentecost.


On the 6th day of June the feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

On the 28th day of November the First Sunday of the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom is honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” *ancient Christmas announcement*

The Christmas season ends on the Sunday falling after 6th January with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.



Parish Facebook page and website

 Star of the Sea Portstewart
portstewartparish.website

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