

PORTSTEWART PARISH

Part of the North Connor Pastoral Community

10th January 2021

The Baptism of the Lord

Sunday B/Weekdays 1

Psalter week 1



Fr Austin McGirr PP 7083 2534 / 07739 223295

Email: pp@portstewartparish.co.uk

Fr Raymond McCullagh – Ulster University and

Dominican College Chaplain 07739 223293

Deacon Terence Butcher 7083 3548

Parish Secretary: Ruth McGuckian 7083 2534

Email: portstewart@downandconnor.org

Parish Pastoral Council:

Chairperson: Emer O’Keeffe 07709 043921

Email: portstewartpastoralcouncil@gmail.com

SVP Helpline: 07508 549572

Parish Facebook page and website



Star of the Sea Portstewart
portstewartparish.website

Follow us for up to date information

MASSES THIS WEEK - STREAMED

Sunday: Vigil 5pm, Sunday 10am

Monday – Saturday: Mass at 9.30am

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: Betty McCaughan, Liam Conway

A month ago: Colum O’Doherty

ANNIVERSARIES: Vincent McAreavey (5), Michael Lagan (6), Ann Rimmington (7), Patsy McCrory (8), Luke Salters (9), Eileen Doone, Ian Madden, Mary McKeown, Alison O’Doherty (10), Veronica Brolly, Deirdre Donnelly, Roisin Mackle, Anne Marshall (11), Nora Bannon, Greta Brolly, Margaret Ferris (12), Gerard Haughey, Bridget Kelly, Nell McIlvenny, Una McQuillan, John McMaster (13), Mary Catherine Diamond, Mary Eastwood, Ellen McCaughan (14), Peter Bradley, Frank McAlonan, Mary Thompson (15)

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.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE FOR EVERYONE (Online)

In Luke’s Gospel we see Jesus’ disciples following him learning on the job what it means to be a disciple. Please join us on this Lenten online Programme and observe what Jesus said and did. Let us learn from how Jesus reached out to the poor and the excluded and disadvantaged and how he challenged inequality and injustice. **Starts Tuesday 2nd February** from 7-8.30pm for 12 weeks (Repeated on Wednesdays) Cost: £8 for Course Book. To register for the Programme contact course Facilitator Kieran Hill as soon as possible. E: kc.hill@btinternet.com or ☎ 07964 287839

4 CORNERS FESTIVAL BELFAST

This inter-denominational arts festival aimed at promoting reconciliation runs **from January 31 to February 7**. Because of the pandemic it is a purely online project with all events being available in the comfort of your home via “live” video streaming. **The theme is Breathe... The Hebrew word Ruach means ‘breath’ or ‘spirit’ – the source of life. Morning and Night Prayer will be streamed throughout the festival.** Night Prayer will be led by Jim Deeds, a pastoral worker in Down and Connor, and Paula McKeown, director of the diocesan Living Church Office will facilitate a workshop on resilience. There will be discussions on topics such as domestic abuse and racism and one of the moderators will be Seamus McKee. Further details: 4cornersfestival.com

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

STATEMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF NORTHERN IRELAND 7 January 2021

“As many people as possible stay at home for the sake of health, life and the Common Good”

Following further briefing today by the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Officer, and in consultation with The Executive Office, we are very concerned at the current serious public health position in which Northern Ireland finds itself: with the extremely high level of transmission of the Covid-19 virus; the continuing escalation of numbers in hospital and intensive care; the number of associated deaths; and, the increasingly unsustainable pressure

on our healthcare staff. The clear message from health officials is that this situation is going to worsen significantly over the coming weeks.

We recognise the efforts of so many in our parishes who have been working to ensure that our gatherings for public worship are as safe as possible and we welcome the continuing engagement between the faith communities and the NI Executive which has led to consensus between us on the importance of people being able to gather in person for worship. At this time, however, we acknowledge and support the unequivocal message from public health authorities that the movement and gathering of people should be minimised and that as many people as possible *stay at home* for the sake of health, life and the Common Good.

In light of our ongoing consultations and of the current serious and worsening situation, and in line with clear public health guidance that people should *stay at home*, **we have decided that for a limited period (from midnight on Thursday 7 January until Saturday 6 February 2021, subject to review in late January), the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgies should take place without the physical presence of the faithful.**

We make this decision reluctantly, conscious that not being able to gather for public worship can cause pain for all the faithful, but in the hope that this limited period of sacrifice will be for the protection of life and health and for the greater good of all. We once more ask for prayers for the sick, the bereaved and all those whose livelihoods have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. We keep in our prayers all health workers, carers, chaplains and other essential workers. We welcome the announcement that a similar position is being taken by the leaders of the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland and many other denominations and faith communities in response to the unequivocal message from public health authorities that as many people as possible stay at home at this time.

THE BISHOP’S NEW YEAR’S MESSAGE 2021

“The path of peace and reconciliation will require new acts of courage and prophetic witness to help us navigate the residual undercurrent of fear that continues to influence our society.” Bishop Noel Treanor

Recognising the dignity of the human person and caring for the other is the beating heart of all Catholic Social Teaching.

2020 has been an extremely difficult year as we have faced together the Covid-19 crisis. This global pandemic has revealed how interconnected we and the entire human family are. The virus has indiscriminately affected persons across all territorial borders and all sectors of society. This health crisis has also aggravated already existent inequalities, poverty, migration, and economic adversity. Many have experienced hardship and suffering. We especially remember all those who have lost family members or loved ones.

The experience of the past year has made it clear, sometimes painfully, that the decisions and actions of individuals affect the lives of everyone. It is not possible to

fully anticipate the legacy of this global pandemic upon society at large and upon families and individuals, businesses and charitable agencies closer to home.

On behalf of the local Church, I pay tribute to all the medical personnel, doctors and nurses, pharmacists, chaplains and all frontline workers who have sacrificed much to alleviate suffering and to save lives. While we are still in the midst of a global pandemic and need to remain ever vigilant to the contagious threat of the virus, the seedlings of hope are emerging with the roll out of vaccination programmes.

The resilience of the human spirit, grounded in our ability to adapt and respond to the changing circumstances of our time and supported by those who love us, provides the foundations to move forward with hope and a greater sense of security.

The year ahead 2021 in Northern Ireland will also be marked by tremendous uncertainty as we withdraw from the European Union and as we reflect upon the Centenary foundations of the Partition of Ireland. This context generates discussion and reflection on identity and identities, on cultural heritage and on the foundations and societal structures of Northern Ireland. We are all aware that the combination of such circumstances creates uncertainty. Fuelled by fear, this uncertainty can also amplify fault lines and create tension across communities.

For these reasons, more than ever, a culture of care as a pathway to peace is necessary. All of us, political leaders, educators, citizens and faith leaders should make a concerted effort to build upon the legacy of peace, achieved through sacrifice and constructive dialogue. The path of peace and reconciliation will require new acts of courage and prophetic witness to help us navigate the residual undercurrent of fear that continues to influence our society.

I extend my heartfelt blessing to all across the Diocese of Down and Connor and beyond and I pray that the coming year may build upon and nurture the foundations of peace and reconciliation.

+Noel Treanor Bishop of Down and Connor

ST VINCENT DE PAUL – THANKS

A huge thank you to the generous parishioners who responded to the SVP Christmas Appeal. In these difficult times, the appeal raised over £7000 – up on last year’s total – which will go to help the most vulnerable in our society.

DIOCESAN COLLECTIONS 2020	
Living Youth	£762.70
Sick & Retired Priests	£784
Needy Parishes	£450
Catholics in the Holy Land	£345
Trocaire Lent Collection	£1665
Diocesan Students to the Priesthood	£395
Peter’s Pence (Pope’s Collection)	£537
Cathedral Fund	£455
World Mission Sunday	£2416
Bishop’s Commissions	£500

Thank you for your generosity.