

# PORTSTEWART PARISH

Part of the North Connor Pastoral Community



24th January 2021

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday B/Weekdays 1

Psalter week 3

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**Parish Pastoral Council:**

Chairperson: Emer O’Keeffe 07709 043921

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**SVP Helpline:** 07508 549572

**Parish Facebook page and website**



Star of the Sea Portstewart

[portstewartparish.website](http://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](http://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.

## MASS IN PORTRUSH - STREAMED

Saturday vigil at 6pm, Sunday at noon

Monday 9am, Tuesday 9am, Wednesday 7pm,

Thursday 9am, Friday 9am

[portrushparish.website](http://portrushparish.website)

## 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.

## REST IN PEACE

**RECENT:** Seamus Doherty, James Close (Armoyle)

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Fr Brian Mullan, Claire Hughes, Sheila Rankin (24), Leo Tosh (25), Patsy O’Kane (27), Herbert Peter Keith (28), Michael & Jean McLaughlin (29), Alex O’Connell (30), John & Margaret O’Hanlon, Desmond Mackenna

## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 E: [kc.hill@btinternet.com](mailto:kc.hill@btinternet.com) or ☎ 07964 287839

## LECTIO DIVINA FOR LENT

This is an opportunity to participate in an ancient way of praying that many people have found helpful in relating God’s Word to their everyday lives. It’s an invitation to spend some time reflecting on and praying with Sacred Scripture.

Organised by *Living Church*, this is a 5-week programme delivered online. Each session will be led by trained facilitators and includes a video recorded by key speakers from the Diocese aimed at initiating prayer, sharing & reflection. Watch out for further details in the weeks ahead.



## NI BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

In order to maintain the vital supply of blood to our hospitals, the Blood Transfusion service is asking as many donors as possible to come forward – they could save a life. The next sessions in Portstewart will be held at Burnside Presbyterian Church, Mill Road on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February** from 1pm-4pm and 5pm-7.30pm.

## 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](http://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](http://marriageencounter.ie) or ☎ 2763 8512

## WANTED TO RENT

Frontline doctor and nurse couple with baby seeking small furnished house or apartment for short term rental, 6 months max. Non-smokers, no pets. References available. Please contact: 07921 513788 or 07871 028482

## APOSTOLIC WORK – THANKS

A huge thank you from Portstewart Apostolic Work for the tremendous support given to the January Sponsored Swim. A magnificent **£2367** was raised which will go to support our missionaries ministering to some of the poorest people in the world. Thanks to those who participated and those who contributed so generously.

## 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”**

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.

**We have decided that for a limited period (subject to review), the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgies should take place without the physical presence of the faithful.**

## POPE FRANCIS’ PRAYER DURING THE PANDEMIC

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection. Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic.

Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply.

Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them.

Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew.

Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us to realise that we are all members of one great family and to recognise the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary.

Amen.