

WELCOME TO ST. PATRICK'S ESKER/DODSBORO/ADAMSTOWN
NEWSLETTER

8TH DECEMBER 2019



St Patrick's Esker/Dodsboro/ Adamstown
December 8, 2019

Mass Intentions for coming week: Sat. 7pm: Bernard Fallon (A); Remember Paddy Clerkin (m.m.); Elizabeth & James English; Mary Weir, Michael May, Anthony Fleming, Richard Mylod, McKeown & Kelly Families whose anniversaries occur; Sun: 9am: Lily Cartwright (A); 10.30 am: Tommy Thompson (RIP); 12 noon: Eilish O'Sullivan (A); Birthday and Get Well Intention

Mon. 10am: Breda McCormack (RIP); Thomas Ansboro (RIP); Tues. 10am: Peter, Mary & PJ Cunningham (A); Paddy Clerkin (RIP); Wed. 10am: Josephine Moynihan (RIP); Tommy Thompson (RIP); Thurs. 10am: Paddy Whelan (RIP); Fanchea Rice (RIP); Mary Catherine Get Well Intention; Fri. 10am: May & Tim O'Mahony (A); Ciaran Beashel (RIP); Sat. 10am: Patrick, Edith & Thomas Hand, Andrew Flanagan and Christina Hand (A) .

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM FR JOHN

Christmas is such a magical time in a parish. The magic is lit up by the large number of children in the national schools. Parents and grandparents witness endless Nativity plays. Pride is the hallmark on seeing their little ones presenting as an adoring angel, a woolly shepherd, a nasty King Herod or better still as Mary or Joseph. We experience the innate wonder of children as they work out how Santa and Rudolf managed to get in and out of the house or apartment without a whisper. We as adults carry with us into adulthood these treasurable memories. Yet Christmas is not the cornerstone of our faith.

The origin of the Christian community is based on the resurrection therefore Easter is our faith cornerstone. It was my hope to be with the parish community celebrating the Incarnation, the birth of Jesus. Christmas celebrates presence, even though the emphasis is often on presents. It is the celebration of God-with-us. I remember those who will live with loss this Christmas and instead of presence there will be absence - the absence caused by bereavement. I remember those whose loved ones are in another country - absent and yet, present.

As members of the body of Christ it is we who live and extend the divine presence in our care for each other - most importantly when the "other" seems different to one's self. I have been the endless recipient of kindness over the past ten months. I'm living in gratitude to the Lord and you the parishioners for your prayers, Mass intentions, chauffeuring, meals, companionship and understanding. My family and friends carried many of the burdens.

My transplant has been successful, but it wasn't without its challenges, especially due to a number of uninvited guests, otherwise known as infections, who came to visit me while I was in isolation. In January I begin a long-term maintenance programme to assist in my remission and I look forward to being back in the parish in February.

However, my reflection is, that in observing the parish from afar, everyone played their part generously in ensuring that the Sacraments were celebrated. I am so proud of all our parish ministry teams and their coordinators, thank you. The invisible workload of parish administration and maintenance deserves a debt of gratitude to those involved. All the weekly cleaning and polishing, which is hard work, is undertaken by volunteers, thank you. None of the Liturgies could be celebrated without the selfless sacristy volunteers who assist seven days a week. Amazing! I often think the most thankless job in a parish is undertaken by the various teams who look after the finances; advising, collecting, counting and lodging, thank you.

We are blessed with Christopher, the pastoral worker appointed by the Archbishop to the three Lucan parishes. It's no easy thing, when one has two small children, going out to work most evenings having already worked during the day. Sr. Rosemarie is truly extraordinary in looking after the children and young people who do not neatly fit into our school Sacramental programmes. The schools new Boards of Management are currently ending their constituted term of office.

On behalf of the patron, Archbishop Martin, I express my gratitude for the governance they have undertaken. They have ensured the smooth but challenging functioning of the parish schools - schools that we are proud to celebrate. The Parish Pastoral Council is tasked by the Archbishop to care for the spiritual and pastoral development of the parish. I would like to express my appreciation to Howard Hughes, Chair of the PPC who is now hanging up his boots. We wish him well in his new undertaking.

I am fortunate to be returning to a wonderful parish and I know I have been prayed for every day by those who recite the Rosary after Mass, thank you. The priests based in Lucan South and St. Mary's have brought their talents to the parish in supporting Fr. Pius while he continues his doctorate studies. I think we will have to pray that Fr Pius fails his exams so that we can hang on to him!! Music is the inner joy of Advent and Christmastide. We are so richly blessed with the diversity of our music at Mass: the Folk Group, St. Patrick's Music Academy, the Filipino Choir, Aontas, Cór Naomh Pádraig and the variety of 10.30 Mass choirs. The skill of the musical coordinators enables this richness to flourish.

It remains for me to wish you and those who are dear to you grace and peace this Christmas. In particular I extend this wish to the sick, those in nursing homes and the housebound. In the manger at Bethlehem heaven and earth become one, humanity and divinity unite. This is our faith, this is the gift we have received, the true gift of Christmas. **Happy Christmas!**