

Parish Newsletter

25th December 2018 ✕ Christmas Day ✕ Year C

Christmas Message 2018

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus as the one who comes into the world to bring hope. In the experience of the people of his time they were waiting in darkness, searching for the light, they were a people lost, who looked for direction. The birth of Jesus was a new beginning, a new direction, a new start in a relationship of love. In any family the birth of a new child brings change. In every child born a new chapter is begun in a family history and as was asked about Jesus, is asked about every child, what will they grow up to be.

The year that is coming to an end has seen a lot of change in our Parish, our country and the world. There is a great sense of uncertainty about how things are unfolding and what the world is going to look like in the next twelve months. In times of change we are the people who are searching for a guiding light. Some changes bring newness and opportunity and we have seen this as we welcomed Fr. Bibin in January. He has experienced the one of the coldest winters on record and one of the warmest summers, but this hasn't hindered him in settling in and with his warm outgoing personality, he has gotten to know many people very quickly.

In September we said goodbye to Peter as he took up his new appointment in Balbriggan and we celebrated the great contribution he made to building up the Parish in the three years he was here. We welcomed Niamh as our new Parish Pastoral Worker who has already been so generous in sharing her talents as she finds her feet and gets to know us here. As the Pastoral Centre has continued to grow as an asset to the Parish, in October we welcomed Aaron as our evening caretaker whose work is appreciated by the groups who use the Centre and the Management Committee in their organization and care of all that goes on there.

Change is also a hard thing to face. Some changes are anticipated and some come out of the blue. This year the country made a decision about the rights of the unborn and removed from the Constitution an amendment which protected them. In the debates that we have seen in the houses of the Óireachtas to bring this change into law, they have made real the fears of those who stood for life as amendments to the Bill were rejected one after the other. In the media it was hailed as a great victory, in reality another story will unfold.

In August we welcomed Pope Francis, who in a whirlwind tour managed to touch the hearts of those whom he met. Of the most memorable moments were his visit to the Capuchin Day Centre, his meeting with young couple in the Pro-Cathedral, the warm reception he got as he made his way through the streets of Dublin, the packed reception he received in Knock, his honest and frank meeting with survivors of abuse which really affected him. This was seen in the Penitential Rite at the Mass in the Phoenix Park and in the meeting he called of all the heads of Bishops' Conferences to take place in Rome. For those who participated in the World Meeting of Families and the Papal Mass, it was a great experience. However the whole event was clouded by mismanagement, misinformation and a constant barrage of negative media coverage. It was a watershed moment, which showed in a very real way that things with the Church in Ireland have changed and a new mission of evangelization needs to happen.

Also in August, the Province of Kerala, India, where Fr. Bibin and many from India who live in our Parish are from, was hit with the most devastating floods in a century. Homes, villages, roads, bridges and livelihoods were washed away. Many people lost their lives. Families were left cut off and isolated in villages and for those who live here, just getting in touch with home caused great anxiety until they eventually heard the voice of loved ones and knew they were safe. At the Carol Service we launched "Brackenstown for Kerala" and set ourselves the target of raising €8,000.00, which is the price of a house there. You can support this by using the donation envelopes and coming to the events that will be organised over the next few months.



CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

(VIGIL) 6 PM, 9 PM, 9AM, 10:30AM & 12 NOON

ALL MASS INTENTIONS ARE FOR CHRISTMAS BOUQUET CARDS

CHRISTMAS WEEK MASS INTENTIONS

Wed 11am:	Jim Reid (3rd A)
Thurs 10am:	Birthday Intention
Fri 10am:	Sandra & Kathleen Brophy (A)
Sat 10am:	Lillie Wolohan (MM)



*We wish all our parishioners
a very Happy & Holy Christmas with
Every Blessing for the New Year*

Please bring this Newsletter home with you or
bring one to a neighbour who may enjoy the read

Through the year families and individuals have also faced great change. The loss of loved ones is particularly felt at Christmas time. Many have battled against illness and it has been great to see them returning to us in health again. It can seem that all around is darkness and this is what change brings into our lives. But Christmas is about God reaching into our darkness and being the light that opens us to the new dawn that follows even the bleakest night. The reality of faith is not that it takes away the difficult things in life but it gives us the courage to face them.

In the lead up to Christmas RTE showed a programme about a Dublin priest, Fr. Tony Coote, who has an aggressive form of Motor Neuron Disease. In the twelve months since his diagnosis, it has robbed him of his independence and taken away so much that we take for granted. Many would lie down under a disease like that and see that the end is coming and say what else can I do? For Tony he wanted to use every day to raise awareness, raise funds for research and to be a witness to hope. He planned a walk from Donegal to Kerry and through this he came into contact with hundreds along the way and caught the attention of the media and public alike. His message is one of challenge for better resources and one of hope. In his interviews when asked about his faith he speaks clearly about a God who loves him, a God who cares for every moment of his life, God who is the love that will embrace him when his life's journey is done.

Hope is what this feast of Christmas is about. It is the hope that says that in every darkness there is light, in every situation there is opportunity and in every meeting with people there is a chance to love and be loved. I hope that you and your family have a very happy Christmas and that whatever today or tomorrow brings, that the Christ child, whose birth we celebrate will give you real strength and hope.

Fr. Paul

HELP US TO BUILD A HOUSE IN KERALA!

The Congregation of St Therese (Fr. Bibin's order) are working hard to help those affected by last August's monsoons which caused widespread devastation in the area around Kerala. Brackenstown Parish has a long relationship with Kerala and we have set a fundraising goal of €8,000—the cost to build a new home for a family.

How can you help?

Take one of the specially marked envelopes at the back of the Church, enclose your donation and return it to one of the white post boxes at the back of the Church. There will also be various fundraising events in the next few months. You are most welcome to help by having a coffee morning/mad hair day/no uniform day.

Where will my money go?

All monies collected will go to the Congregation of St. Therese Flood Relief Projects:

€8,000: the cost to build a house for a family


€625—€2,000: repair of a home (depends on level of damage)

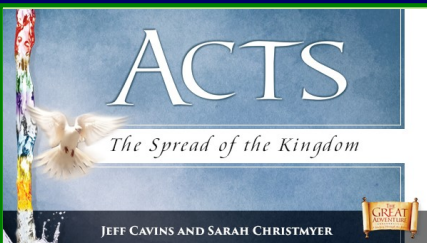
€75: provides basic supplies for one family for one month

Make sure to check our progress on our 'House' at the back of the Church—we colour in one brick for every €100 raised.

MATTERS OF FINANCE

The Finance Committee wish to thank all those who are using the white envelope system for the two collections at weekend Masses. As previously mentioned there are substantial potential benefits for the Parish if the donor is an income tax payer. We will be ordering the 2019 envelope boxes shortly. Those who are already using the envelopes will be automatically supplied with new envelope boxes for 2019. If you are an income tax-payer, we invite you to sign up for the envelope system if you haven't already done so. This will enable us to include your first and second collection donations when submitting the tax reclaim for 2019. The tax reclaim enables the value of your donations to grow by 45%, as soon as your total recorded donations to the Parish reach €250 or more. It costs you nothing and will not affect your tax status. The value to the Parish of a €250 donation is increased by €112.32. You can request a box of envelopes by contacting Louise in the Parish office Tel 8401188, email brackenstownparish@gmail.com. There are also forms available on the tables at the back of the church. Completed forms can be placed in the white post boxes in the Church or returned to the Parish office. Thank you to all who support the Parish so generously.

Brackenstown Parish	No. 101
First Collection	€ <input type="text"/>
Second Collection	€ <input type="text"/>
	



Brackenstown Bible Study 2019; Acts of the Apostles

Our Parish Scripture Study group was established by Fr Paul in January 2013 and has grown and flourished since then. In January we will be starting into our 7th year and 46 people will be taking part in our 20 week study of the Acts of the Apostles. Acts is a fascinating account of how the first Christians, having been empowered by the Holy Spirit, brought the Good News of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. They taught as Christ did, they performed miracles as he did and many gave their lives for him. The Scripture Study group meets from 7.30 to 9pm on Monday nights in St. Cronan's Pastoral Centre. We follow a reading plan for each week, watch a 50 minute DVD presentation by well known Catholic Biblical expert Jeff Cavins and then have a 30 minute question and answer/discussion session. Becoming a member of a Scripture Study group is a great way to become familiar with the Bible and to grow in knowledge about your Catholic faith. There is a great atmosphere of friendship at our meetings and people have an opportunity to discuss issues of faith with others who share the same interest. Our 2019 study will start on Monday 21st January. New members are always welcome even if it's just to attend for a week or two to see if it might suit you.

All Welcome to the
next meeting in

St. Cronan's Pastoral Centre
Tuesday 4th September from 11am - 12pm
Tea & coffee available from 10:30am

Brackenstown Pilgrimage to the Holy Land 2019



The dates are 13th - 21st September 2019

Cost €1,850.00 per person

Deposit of €250 required by the end of February

Agent will be MAP Travel.

Bookings through the Parish Office



Next Parent Meeting is
Thursday 3rd JANUARY
Next dates for Baptisms:

Sunday 13th January 11am & 12:30pm Masses
Saturday 26th January at 12:30pm

Please note one Month's Notice to be given & a copy of
baby's Birth Cert is required when booking a Baptism.

Praying with God's Word

Below are the readings for this Sunday & the following Sunday:

Christmas Day

First Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6;

Second Reading: Hebrews 1:1-6; Gospel: John 1:1-14

Holy Family Sunday

First Reading: Sm 1:20-22, 24-28; Psalm: 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10;

Second Reading: Jn 3:1-2, 21-24; Gospel: Lk 2:41-52



EPIPHANY GIFTS

You are invited to bring along any unwanted Christmas gifts until
6th January.

These gifts will then be passed onto Alice Leahy's Trust, a day-care
facility for the homeless based in the Iveagh Trust Buildings. The
kind of things that are useful are:
chocolates, sweets, scented candles,
toiletries, scarves, gloves etc.

Please bring your gifts to the crib in
the Church and the Pastoral Council will
pass them on. Thank you.



PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

During the year the Parish Pastoral Council attended three
formation training sessions, the purpose of which was to enable us
to gel and operate as a unit. Apart from meeting each month, we
were heavily involved in the planning and running of the inaugural
Swords Tri-Parish picnic. We also facilitated the discussions in
response to Archbishop Martin's letter regarding the way forward
for the Church. Our fundraising effort in support of the Kerala
Flood Relief fund is ongoing.

Willie Curtis (PPC Chairperson)

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION



Mon: 10.30 am - 11.30 am

Wed: 6.00 pm - 11.00 pm

Fri: 10.30 am - 5.45pm

Sat: 10.30am - 11.30am

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place
every Sunday for Advent from 4pm—5pm. Can you
stay 1 hour with me? We encourage new people to
come & join us.

CHRISTMAS ITEMS

Church Art Calendars and Nativity Sets, Christmas
Colouring Books etc available from Legion of Mary
members in main porch after weekend Masses.

THE ROSARY

The Rosary Statue was blessed for use in the homes
of the parish at the October Candlelight Procession.
If you would like to pray the rosary and have the
statue in your home for a week, or get more
information, please contact a member of Legion of
Mary in main porch after Sunday morning Masses.



'LIKE' Legion of Mary Brackenstown Swords

FAMILY OFFERING & COLLECTIONS AT THE WEEKEND MASSES

We thank all those parishioners who support the
running of the parish through the Parish Family
Offering fund. As the newsletters have been pre-
printed, we will publish the amounts of the
Christmas Collections in mid-January.

**The Parish Calendar for 2019 is available
from the back of the Church, from the
Legion shop or from the Parish Office.**

CHRISTMAS DUES

The Christmas Dues together with the First Collection at
Mass and the Easter Dues goes to support myself, Fr.
Bibin and the sick and retired Priests of the Diocese. We
really appreciate your generosity to this collection.

There is a financial benefit to the Parish as your Dues
contributions can be included in your Family Offering for
the Tax Reclaim Scheme.

Thank you again for your generosity and for all your
support. Fr. Paul & Fr. Bibin.

View our Parish Webcam via the Parish Website www.brackenstown-parish.com



brackenstownparish

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