

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH 26th December

A day to pray with and for our family; to give thanks to God for them; to pray for healing of divisions and bitterness. We pray that we may grow in respect and love for our extended family throughout the world.

MASSES

Vigil Saturdays 6p.m. Sundays: 9a.m. & 11a.m.
Weekdays: Monday to Saturday 10 a.m.

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays 10.30am and 5.30pm

Monsignor Gearóid Dullea P.P.

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Dear People of Ballinlough,

I want to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you grace and peace this Christmas. Despite challenging circumstances because of the COVID-19 restrictions, you have made Ballinlough parish "happen".

At this special time of the year I also want to thank so many people who contribute in a particular way to the functioning of our parish. To our Sacristans, parish secretary, Ministers of the Eucharist, Readers, those who look after the flowers and decorating of the church, church cleaners, parish finance committee, people who distribute dues envelopes, our parish schools and so many others. I want to pay a special tribute to our Covid stewards who work to ensure our safe gatherings in the church. Your work is very much appreciated.

Since last September we have had Reverend Ronan Sheehan as a deacon serving in the parish. I want to acknowledge his presence and ministry among us and thank him: his work in the schools, his visitation of the housebound, his links with the local conference of St Vincent de Paul, and his preaching and contribution to the liturgy. We are deeply grateful and we assure Ronan of our prayers for the next phase of his preparation for ordination to the priesthood. Míle buíochas.

May I wish all of our parishioners, a blessed and safe Christmas and the graces of the Christ child to sustain us in 2022.

Beannachtaí Na Nollag,

Monsignor Gearóid Dullea.



Deaths.

We remember in our prayers Ray Cremin, Glencoo Park, may he rest in peace, our sympathies to his family friends and neighbours.

Let light Shine out of darkness.

Once upon a time there was a man who looked upon Christmas as a lot of humbug. He wasn't a Scrooge. He was a kind and decent person, generous to his family, upright in all his dealings with other people, but he didn't believe all that stuff about Incarnation, and he was too honest to pretend that he did. "I am truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, who was a faithful churchgoer. "But I simply cannot understand this claim that God becomes man, it does not make any sense to me."

On Christmas Eve his wife and children went to midnight Mass. He declined, "I'd feel like a hypocrite, I'd rather stay at home." Shortly after his family drove away snow began to fall. He went to the window and watched the flurries getting heavier. He went back to his chair beside the fire and read his paper. A few minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. He thought that someone must be throwing snowballs at his living room window. When he went to investigate, he found a flock of birds caught in the storm and in search for shelter. "I can't let these poor creatures lie there and freeze, but how can I help." The he remembered the barn where the children's pony was stabled. It would provide a warm shelter.

He put on his coat and boots and went to the barn, turned on a light, but the birds didn't come in. He thought food would lure them in. He went back to the house for bread, to his dismay, the birds ignored the crumbs. He tried shooing them by walking around and waving his arms. They scattered in every direction, except the warm lighted barn.

"They find me a strange and terrifying creature," he said to himself, "and I can't seem to think of any way to let them know they can trust me. If only I could be a bird myself for a few minutes, perhaps I could lead them to safety."

Just at that moment the church bells began to ring. He stood silent for a while, listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. Then he sank to his knees in the snow. "Now I do understand," he whispered. "Now I see why You had to do it."

God is with us, every one of us, full of empathy and kind compassion. Let God's light shine brightly this Christmas.



What does Santa Claus cat want for Christmas?
Some new Claus!

How do you help someone who has lost their Christmas spirit!
Nurse them back to Elf.

What do you call an old snowman!
Water.

Mass Attendance Guidance.

Thank you for observing the very important guidance and safety measures which were introduced in our church for the safety of all.

In the current climate, it is more important than ever to maintain the Health and Safety Guidelines in keeping with Government and Public Health recommendations.



Thank you for observing the very important guidance and safety measures which were introduced in our church in 2020 for the safety of all.

In the current climate, it is more important than ever to maintain the Health and Safety Guidelines in keeping with Government and Public Health recommendations....

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