

Mass Times

Sundays: 9 am & 11 am
Working Holy Days: 10 am & 7.30 pm
Monday to Friday: 10 am
Saturday Vigil: 6.00 pm
Fr Colin Doocey Adm. Pro Tem



Recently Deceased

John McCarthy, Beaumont Lawn
May the light of heaven surround him always.



Christmas 2021

Christmas Mass times:

Christmas Eve
4.00 pm, 6.00 pm and Vigil 8.00 pm
Christmas Day
9.00 am and 11.00am



The parish has taken the responsible decision to safely manage attendances at Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day by arranging a ticket system. This will help to balance attendances across five Christmas Masses and to ensure that everyone is comfortable and safe.

- People are asked to take this into consideration before collecting tickets which will be available at Masses this weekend.
- People are asked to take tickets only for yourself or your family group so that arrangements will run smoothly.
- If you will not be using a ticket you are urged to return it to the church so that others can be accommodated.
- You are reminded about mask wearing at all Masses.
- Masses will be at the usual times of 9am & 11am on Sunday 26th December (St. Stephen's Day). There is no Mass on Saturday evening of the 25th December.

Sacrament of Confession

Christmas week **Mon, Tue Wed after 10am Mass**

Anam Cara West Cork the organisation that supports bereaved parents, is holding a Parent Evening on 21st December at 7:20pm in the Munster Arms Hotel, Bandon. This is a free event and open to all bereaved parents.



BLACKROCK ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Under the current Covid circumstances, Fr. Colin has generously offered the poor box near the exit as a collection point for SVP. If you wish to contribute any time, it would be appreciated. Thank you.

You may be using your mobile phone for Mass, if so, please ensure it is on silent. If not, please switch it off. Thank you



Annual Christmas Appeal 2021 runs from November 22nd through to December 23rd

For us in the SVP Blackrock conference this has been a strange year. We too have had to adjust to new ways of working and meeting. Our visits to clients are conducted remotely; our conference meetings are conducted via email, WhatsApp, zoom and phone calls. St Michael's Conference SVP wishes to thank most sincerely the parishioners of Blackrock Parish for their wonderful continued and most generous support throughout 2021. Despite having no collections for the first four months of the year between the months of April to November, parishioners donated €15,600, a most generous amount indeed. We have one final collection this year this weekend of December 11/12. This is our annual Christmas Collection which has been so successful year on year. This year will be different as Mass numbers will be restricted. In light of this, I would appeal that if you cannot contribute at the church that you avail of one of the following options to support this year's SVP Christmas appeal. Please also encourage your friends and family to consider supporting SVP St Michael's Conference, Blackrock this year.

BLACKROCK ST VINCENT DE PAUL
Christmas Church Gate collection will take place on **w/e 11/12th December**
Your support as always, is greatly appreciated.

What must we do?

This Sunday in the gospel reading, the question is asked 'what must we do?' three times. Three different groups ask the same question. John's answers are interesting. Each time his answer is to do less rather than more, to be more centred and less frantic. To the tax collectors, he says 'exact no more than your rate'. To the soldiers, he replies, 'no intimidation, no extortion'. To the people, he replies, 'share your tunic' not rush out and buy ten of them! While things are different this year, we often want to get everything done before Christmas while the readings tell us something very different.



In the first reading, more answers to the question 'what must we do?' are given. The first reading simply says twice that 'god is in your midst' and it is there in the psalm as well. If you like the question is asked three times and the answer is given three times. Our hope is to be here on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning to see the infant placed in the crib and to see before our eyes that 'God is in our midst'. We look forward with trust and hope.
Fr. Michael



Thoughts

Our week begins with "Gaudete Sunday." Gaudete means "rejoice" in Latin. It comes from the first word of the Entrance antiphon on Sunday. The spirit of joy that begins this week comes from the words of Paul, "The Lord is near." This joyful spirit is marked by the third candle of our Advent wreath, which is rose colored, and the rose colored vestments often used at the Eucharist.

The second part of Advent begins on December 17th each year. For the last eight days before Christmas, the plan of the readings changes. The first readings are still from the prophecies, but now the gospels are from the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke. We read the stories of faithful women and men who prepared the way for our salvation. We enter into the story of how Jesus' life began. These stories are filled with hints of what his life will mean for us. Faith and generosity overcome impossibility. Poverty and persecution reveal glory.

Lough Derg Online Shop offers unique Christmas Cards, featuring scenes of the Island from across the centuries and bespoke Gifts including a limited edition Lough Derg Christmas Candle. Christmas Mass Bouquet Cards are also available – Fr La, Prior, will offer a Triduum of Masses beginning on Christmas Eve for all those who are enrolled. Visit www.loughderg.live/shop Telephone 0(0353) 71 9861518 Delivery nationwide and Click & Collect Service available.

ACP AGM 2021 Recording – Synodal Experience:

Kieran O'Mahony, OSA, gave the main presentation followed by Peter McLoughlin and Patricia Melvin, part of the Killala diocesan team leading Placing Hope in Faith, their recent 'Synodal experience'. ACP AGM 2021: Click on the link to hear Kieran O'Mahony, followed by Peter McLoughlin and Patricia Melvin (Killala Diocese) on the Synodal experience. <https://soundcloud.com/user-211747038/acp-agm-2021-synod-extract?si=748edc90726a4077b1434c6687231aab>

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

Irish Catholic. This week the paper marks the Centenary of the Legion of Mary with contributors including Bishop Fintan Monahan, Fr. John Harris O.P., Fr. John S. Hogan, Fr. Conor McDonough, Dr. Evie Monaghan, Finola Kennedy and David Quinn. Subjects covered include Fr. Aedan Mc.Grath/China, the Regina Coeli & Morning Star Hostels, Venerable Edel Quinn, Alfie Lambe and, of course, Frank Duff himself.

Messenger. (1) Fr. Peter Mc.Verry S.J. : Housing for All. (2) Anne-Marie Lee: Creating space to explore Faith

Catholic Voice. (1) The Role of Women -- Nun takes charge at the Vatican
(2) Matt Walsh: Christians, our true battle is spiritual, not political

When you use the newsletter, please take it home with you. **DO NOT RETURN IT TO THE TABLE**

Thought for the day

"What then should we do?" is both obvious and pertinent. In the maelstrom of life, it is good to stand back and discern what is being asked of me in the many contexts of life: family member, spouse, parent, disciple, leader, pastor, evangeliser and so forth. In these different roles, how should I be, what should I do so as to enable others too to fulfil their own callings, as family member, spouse etc. As in the teaching of John the Baptist, our responses are authentic only if they are practical, down-to-earth and real.

Prayer

Help me, Lord, to recognise in the everyday what you desire of me. Help me to see what are the practical steps I can take from today onwards so as to be a better disciple of your son, Jesus, the coming one, whom John proclaims today to all who would listen.

K O'Mahony OSA

Reflections

1. "What should we do?" The common thread in John's answers was to encourage his questioners to be other-centred rather than self-centred, each in the context of their own circumstances. In your experience what difference has it made for you when you changed your attitude in this way?

2. John told the people in a direct and honest way what they should do. Perhaps you have had friends who did not beat about the bush but have told you honestly what they thought about your behaviour when you asked them? In gratitude recall such friends.

3. The humility of John comes out in this passage, happy to acknowledge that he only had a minor role to play in relation to the Messiah. At the same time he was enthused by his mission to "proclaim the good news to the people." What difference has it made for you when you were able to see the good in yourself, and use your gifts without having to score by portraying yourself as greater than someone else?

PRAYER

Almighty God, you sent your Son into a world where the wheat must be winnowed from the chaff and evil clings even to what is good. Let the fire of your Spirit purge us of greed and deceit, so that, purified, we may find our peace in you and you may delight in us. Grant this through him whose coming is certain, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Medjugorje Pilgrimage June 15th to 22nd 2022 flying Cork to Dubrovnik (morning flight) with Aer Lingus staying in Hotel Leone. Spiritual Director Fr. Ted Sheehan. Cost pps €699.00 half board if booked and paid in full by December 10th), €749.00 thereafter. Deposit of €250.00 secures place.



COVID insurance cover included in cost. Contact Sean O'Shaughnessy 0862959380

If you would like to receive a weekly commentary on the Weekly Scripture Readings, both in AUDIO and in PDF, please log on to www.tarsus.ie and register to receive the emails.