

### Mass Times

**Sundays:** 9 am & 11 am  
**Saturday Vigil:** 6.00 pm  
**Tuesday & Friday:** 9.30 am



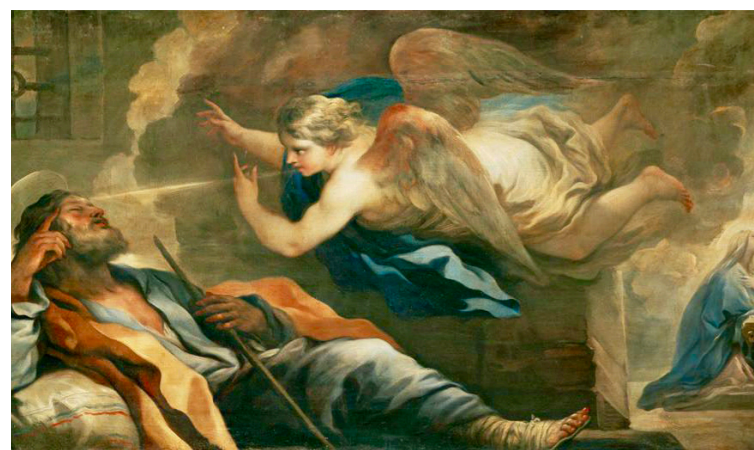
Fr Colin Doocey Adm.

### Baptisms

Muireann Elena Daly.  
 Croia Naoise O'Mahony.



We welcome them into the Christian Family



### CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS ENVELOPES

The Christmas Offerings Envelopes have been delivered this week throughout the parish. In the unlikely event that you failed to receive one, there are envelopes available in the church. Please take some for your friends and family. We thank you sincerely for your generosity.

### St Michael's Church, Blackrock

### Christmas Mass Celebrations

**Christmas Eve Dec. 24th**  
 6 pm 8 pm  
**Christmas Day Dec. 25th**  
 9 am 11 am

Mass at the 6 pm Christmas Eve is likely to be well attended. Even though Covid restrictions have been lifted and mask wearing is optional, if you are in any way unsure, please consider either the 8 pm vigil or Christmas Day masses.

### BLACKROCK ST VINCENT DE PAUL

The Christmas Collection last Sunday raised €8532  
 A great response and support from parishioners.  
 Thanks to all collectors.

### PARISH DEFIBRILLATORS

There are now 2 Defibrillators located in the Parish, one in the village & one outside Murphy's Circle K PetrolStation. The code to operate both is 2017

### THE PAPERS SAY.....

**Irish Catholic.** (1) Interview with George Weigel: Vatican II equipped the Church for mission in a world that's increasingly missionary territory. (2) Mary Kenny: The cold may draw us more together. (3). Irish troops keep the peace and prepare for Christmas in Syria (4). David Quinn: Unjustified harms were inflicted on Catholics by Covid-19 restrictions.

**Tablet of 10/12.** (1). Melanie McDonagh: In Jerusalem Christians now number a mere 10,000 -- less than two per cent of the whole. (2) Kyiv cancels its Russia-linked Orthodox Church. (3). I don't want to dramatically claim that I have 'greatly' sinned since my last Mass.

**Sacred Heart Messenger.** (1). Fr. Peter McVerry: The Right to Housing (2). Fr. Hugh O'Donnell SDB: Matt Talbot in the Mater. (3) Fr. Brendan McManus SJ: What's another year --The Wisdom of Looking Back

**Synodal Times.** (1). Bro. Martin Kenneally of Cork: A Synodal Church gives new impetus to religious brothers to-day. (2). Fr. Anthony Egan SJ: Ecumenism and Synodality. (3). Pope Francis' vision of a Synodal Church.



### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Confessions will be heard next week in St Michaels after the morning Mass on **Tuesday and Friday** and in Holy Cross after the morning mass on **Monday and Wednesday**

**Anam Cara West Cork** the organisation that supports bereaved parents, is holding a Parent Evening on Tuesday 20th December at 7:20pm in the Mill Court, Mill Place, Bandon P72 E938. This is a free event and open to all bereaved parents. For further information please contact us on 085 288 8888 or [info@anamcara.ie](mailto:info@anamcara.ie)



### CHRISTMAS CARDS/JUBILEE BOOK

This Christmas we have a limited number of Christmas card packs available. **Pack of 6 €5.** Also available are Jubilee Books. These were published in 2014 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of St Michaels Church. They contain a treasure of history and photographs dating from the fire to the Jubilee. **Priced at €10**, it is an ideal present for anyone who has an interest in Blackrock and the history thereof. **Proceeds will go to St Vincent de Paul, Blackrock and are available in the sacristy after masses.** Thanks.

### CHURCH HEATING

We apologise for the lack of adequate heating in the church of late. There is an issue with the burner and we are getting a new timer during the week. Hopefully it will be fixed then.

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



### Observations

#### NAMES

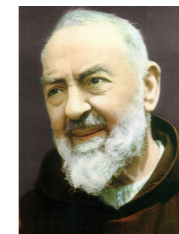
In Matthew 1-2, the baby is given no fewer than three names: *Jesus, Emmanuel, the Nazarene*. Each bears a meaning and is significant. As Matthew is careful to explain, "Jesus" means "YHWH saves" and is the equivalent of the Hebrew name Joshua. Emmanuel is likewise explained as "God-with-us", echoed in the very last verse of this Gospel, framing the whole Gospel. The spelling in Matthew 2:23 is literally nazōraios or Nazorean, the name given derisively to the early followers of Jesus. In this oblique way, Matthew indicates that the destiny of the disciples cannot be different to that of the master. Nevertheless, the same Jesus is with us always to the end of the age.

#### A good Advent?

We find ourselves right in the middle of Advent, which this year takes the four full weeks. What is a "good" Advent? Bishop Sarah Mulally — CofE bishop of London — offers this reflection: *If we want to be people of hope, we need to be people who encounter God, who turn aside from our path and look and wait. Then we will have sight to see and will be formed into people of hope. Hope, as the author of Hebrews reminds us (6.19), is an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It is that which holds us when we are living in shadows.* ("A Good Advent" in *A Good Year* [ed. Mark Oakley], London: SPCK, 2016. P.17)

### St. PIO Prayer Group of Our Lady of the Rosary

We meet on the last Wednesday of every month with Rosary at 7.45pm followed by Mass at 8pm. In Ardfoyle Convent. Why not join us for a quiet unrushed hour?  
 ALL WELCOME.



### COLLECTORS WANTED

We would invite parishioners to assist with the collections at masses on Saturday and Sundays. There will be a rota. If you are able to participate, please contact Fr Colin or Fr Michael. Many thanks.

**Medjugorje Pilgrimage** ex Cork 31st May to June 7th 2023. Price : €849.00. €200 deposit secures place. Half board accommodation in Hotel Leone. Optional insurance €39.00. Spiritual Director Fr. Ted Sheehan. Contact Sean O'Shaughnessy 0862959380 or Joe Walsh Tours 012410800. Places limited.

### BLACKROCK ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Church Gate collection will take place on **w/e December 31st/1st January**  
 Your support as always, is greatly appreciated.

### Thought for the day

In a culture where God is, apparently, absent, it may sound strange to hear words such as "Do not be afraid" and "God is with us." Such assurances are at the heart of our biblical faith from start to finish. Everyone who is anyone in the Bible is told not to be afraid. And the assurance "I will be with you" is found throughout starting with the very name of God in Ex 3:14, I am who I am. The God—in whom we live and move and have our being—is there allalong, whether we are aware of it or not. Faith is the moment of discovery and recognition.

#### Prayer

*You are with us always: you are with us in creation in all its splendour, in our fellow human beings in all their generosity, you are with us in the quiet where we are alone with you. Amen.*

K O'Mahony OSA

As we move into prayer on the passage, we move from consideration of the mystery of how "God with us" was revealed to the world in the person of Jesus two thousand years ago, to a reflection on how we become aware of "God with us" now in our daily lives.

1. It took some time for Joseph to accept the fact that in Mary there truly was Emmanuel—God with us. God is with us now, but at times we struggle to perceive God's presence. Where have you unexpectedly discovered the presence of "God with you"? Recall those experiences and give thanks.
2. Joseph was confused and uncertain about what he should do. It was difficult for him to discern what his next step should be. Perhaps you have also had to make difficult journeys on the way to some decisions or commitments. Recall that journey and the moments when it became clear to you what was being asked of you. Give thanks for the angels who helped you along the way.
3. Mary bore Jesus within her, unseen to all, and unacknowledged by most. In Joseph she found one who believed in the treasure that she bore. We can be bearers of Jesus to others, and they to us. When have you been a bearer of Jesus to another? Who has been that to you?
4. The experience of having a gift that others do not see or recognise can be painful and isolating. Then someone comes, like Joseph to Mary, who gets to believe in what we have to offer. Has that happened to you? What was it like?

#### PRAYER

Eternal God, in the psalms of David, in the words of the prophets, in the dream of Joseph, your promise is spoken. At last, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, your Word takes flesh. Teach us to welcome Jesus, the promised Emmanuel, and to preach the good news of his coming that every age may know him as the source of redemption and grace. *We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near: your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.*

