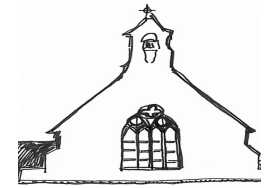


Parish of Killavullen and Annakisha

Christmas Day (December 25, 2020)

20.51



Christmas Day:

1st Reading: The prophet Isaiah wrote at a time of upheaval in Israel. His country was about to be invaded by the Assyrians, the military superpower of that time. Isaiah predicted the coming of a wonder-child, a Messiah who would save his people. For us Christians, Jesus is that Messiah. No matter what threatens us, climate change or pandemic, we continue to find hope and strength in the presence of our Saviour. Having experienced the peace of God in our own lives, may we too be “heralds of peace and bring happiness” for the lives of others.

Psalm 97: God has made known his salvation. We give thanks to God.

2nd Reading: God speaks to us in many ways, through our life experience, through the prophets, through the beauty of creation. But we can know God perfectly in Jesus: he is the revelation of God.

Gospel: Rather than telling the story of Christmas, the Gospel of John reflects on the meaning of the event. God’s eternal Word, who was with God since the beginning of time, became one us with the birth of Jesus, 2000 years ago. He is the light of the world; a light that darkness cannot dim. He is “grace” (God’s help) and “truth”. In this time of fear and foreboding we continue to be consoled and strengthened by His presence in our lives.

Level 5 Restrictions have been imposed on Church activities from St Stephen’s Day. Priests will continue to offer daily Mass for your intentions in private. Churches will be open for personal visits, but public worship in groups is not permitted with the exception of the following:

- Baptisms: attended by the immediate family only.
- Weddings: 25 guests can attend until January 2; and 6 guests thereafter.
- Funerals: can be attended by ten mourners only.

When making a private or household visit to the church and the Crib, please sanitize your hands on entering and exiting and wear a face mask at all times.

Mass is broadcast live every day at RTE NewsNow TV at 10.30am. On every second Sunday, Mass is broadcast at 11.00am on RTE TV One; on the other Sunday it is found on RTE NewsNow at 2.15pm. The readings of the day are found at the parish website: www.killavullenparish.ie

2020 has been a hard year for many, if not for most of us. Twelve months ago, Covid-19 was a distant rumour. Little did we think last January that wearing face-masks would be the norm and that sanitizing gels would be part of our everyday lives. While, thank God, our parish has escaped the worst effects of the pandemic, Covid-19 has inflicted significant damage on the financial and psychological health of many people. This “third lockdown” will perhaps be the hardest one of all, even if a vaccine will become available in the coming months. The night is often darkest just before the dawn.

The Taoiseach’s address, last Tuesday, was a final reminder that Christmas 2020 could not be a normal Christmas. While many family traditions and rituals will be broken this year, new ones may be established. The restrictions have reduced the excessive spending and consumption that has little to do with the religious reason for this season. For many adults, the dream is to have a “quiet Christmas”, a midwinter rest in front of an open fire; children’s brightest hope is to experience the loving company of their immediate family. *May these wholesome Christmas wishes come to pass in your house these days.*

I think that the suspension of small, socially-distanced groups for daily Mass a great pity. We had been doing a good job at keeping our gatherings safe and they meant a lot to those who attended. The peace and goodwill that people gain by worshipping God at church should at least be on a par with the right to go to the gym. The few references to Christianity in the national conversation shows that the Church has ceased to be a significant priority in Irish culture. By the same token, the Christian faith will be an increasingly important part of the lives of the minority who answer Christ’s call to holiness within the Church.

Last weekend’s Collections.

	Killavullen	Annakisha
Weekly Offerings (Incl. sacristans)	€715	€280

Sincere thanks to all who have contributed to the Christmas Offerings as well as the other Church collections this year. On your behalf, I would like to thank the sacristans, the members of the Pastoral and Finance Councils, the florists and church cleaners, the choir director and all have helped the parish’s mission. Wishing you a happy and healthy Christmas. Fr Gerard.

please take this bulletin home.