



Church of Our Mother of Divine Grace, Ballygall

Part of the Glasnevin Partnership of Parishes

(Ballygall, Ballymun Rd, Corpus Christi, Glasnevin & Iona Rd)

**Christmas Day 25th
December 2023**

Parish Website www.ballygallparish.ie Email ballygallparish@outlook.com
Registered Charity RCN 20016166

Parish Team

Fr. Joseph Ryan Co-P.P: Ph 8573776 Fr. Harry Gaynor Co-P.P: Ph 8342248
Fr. Paul St. John PC: Ph 086 2250689 Office 01 8369291

Christmas Thank You

The Parish Team would like to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Thank you to all who support our work in the Parish of Ballygall and May the kindness of God be your strength in the year ahead.

Fr. Joe, Fr. Harry & Fr Paul.

Christmas Week Church Arrangements

The Church will open shortly before 10am Mass and remain open each day, including Christmas Day. You are invited to come and spend some time in quiet prayer before the crib. **No 7.25am or 10.00am Mass on Tuesday 26th December.** 10.00am mass only Wednesday to Friday. No 7.25am mass until 7th January.

Family Table Prayer for Christmas Day:

Loving God, on this Christmas day we give thanks that Jesus, your Son, has come into our world bringing us gifts of peace and joy.

Bless us as we sit down together at this table for our Christmas meal.

Bless the food we share and help us to remember those who are hungry.

Be with our neighbours and our friends, those who are lonely, sick or away from home.

We pray that our departed loved ones may now sit at your table in heaven.

May the joy of this feast give us strength and light, now and in the days ahead. We ask this prayer through Christ, Our Lord. Amen

Glasnevin Partnership of Parishes

Our parish has been grouped with four other parishes in the area, Our Lady of Victories Ballymun Rd, Corpus Christi Drumcondra, Our Lady of Dolours Glasnevin and Ct Columba's Iona Road for the last 9 years. Different initiatives have taken place along the way drawing on the different gifts and customs that are to be found in local areas. We have been fortunate to have hosted the Penance Service with the Franciscans last Wednesday here in Ballygall, a tradition established for many years. This year on both St. Stephen's Day and New Year's day the grouping of parishes is holding one special Mass at 11am to celebrate two great feasts of our church. St Stephen, the first martyr and Mary Queen of Peace on 1st January praying God's blessing through our Blessed Mother's intercession for the coming year. You are invited to join Fr Frank in OLV on St. Stephen's Day when many visitors are still at home with family for 11am Mass. Likewise on New Year's Day Fr Martin in Corpus Christi will lead us in a special Mass to begin the New Year.

Recently Deceased

We remember in our prayers, recently deceased Bridie O'Loughlin & Vicky Farrell.

Christmas Dues

Sincere thanks to all who have contributed to the Christmas Offering through the envelopes and 'Tap & Go' machine. Your support is greatly appreciated by not only the priests of the parish but also the priests throughout the diocese including sick and retired priests.

Christmas Mass Arrangements.

Christmas Eve Vigil Masses Sunday	6.30pm	Congregational Singing & family Mass group.	
	8.30pm	Senior Choir	
Christmas Day Monday	10.00 am	Senior Choir	
	11.30 am	Philippino Choir.	
St. Stephens Day Tuesday	11.00	Our Lady of Victories Church.	
27 th December Wednesday	10.00	Michael Murphy	
28 th December Thursday	10.00	Funeral Mass – Patrick Melia	
29 th December Friday	10.00	Funeral Mass – Vicky Farrell	
Saturday	10.00	Funeral Mass – Margaret Gallagher	Confessions available after 6.30pm Mass.
Saturday	6.30pm	Michael Rooney, Anne Quinlan, Gabrielle Reid	
Sunday (New Years Eve)	10.00	Phil Henderson	
	11.30	Anne O'Doherty, Marueen Montgomery & deceased family, Joseph James Dillon, Billy Kelly, Jack & Fred Kennedy. Greta Grogan and deceased members of the Moore & Grogan Families, Sean O'Brien, Vincent Downey.	



Christmas Day LETTER

Series: The Seasons; Christmas Day; 25 December



Meditation is about listening and responding to God. Listening with the ear of the heart and responding with gratitude and praise.

Living the Glory of God

One of my favourite art critics was the late Sr Wendy Beckett, a Carmelite nun from Norfolk who died on St Stephens Day, 2017, aged 87 years. Even though she never owned a TV, she was a TV presenter in the 1990's and has written many books on art and meditation. Sr Wendy was a holy and gifted lady who lived her life devoted to God. She believed that Jesus is the meaning of Christmas. He is its joy.

One of the last Christmas Cards Sr Wendy wrote before her death was to her friend Marguerite Cook (the card is from a painting by Norfolk artist Mary Newcomb entitled 'Sun and Rain for the Lamb'; it's not the usual type of Christmas scene). Sr Wendy wrote the following to her friend.

"It was to bring this glory down to earth that the little lamb renounced his royal state in the heavens and came to live among us, as unprotected as any human baby ever was. From now until his final sacrifice, He moves into His natural brightness, He will not only bring the glory of the Son to earth, but will take us into it. We don't just see, but, in Jesus, we live the glory of God."

Sr Wendy reminds me to make time for contemplation this Christmas and to find a way to live the glory of God. ■

Summary

Less and less do Christmas cards depict religious scenes.

Meditation is about listening with the ear of the heart and responding with gratitude and praise.

Question

How can a religious Christmas card help us travel inward to contemplate the mystery of the incarnation?

Prayer

Lord, may my heart be always turned towards you.



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Christmas Day, 25th December.

When I was a child, one of the things I loved to do with my mother during Advent was hanging up the Christmas cards. These would be lovingly read and placed over the fireplace on a string, pinned with thumbtacks across the chimney breast. Today, this would probably rate as a 'health-and-safety' issue, and rightly so. My memory is that the majority of the cards were nativity or annunciation scenes, some of them taken from great works of art. Of course there were also the glittery snowy ones complete with robins and churches. I still receive a good selection of cards at Christmas but sadly less and less do they depict religious scenes.



Scenes of Bethlehem

Artists throughout history have captured the joy of Christmas, and have shown us, in bright colours, how ...

The Word became flesh, and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

The joy of these words become visible in many great works of art, and find their way to us through a humble Christmas card.

Listening with the Ear of the Heart

In our busy lives, and especially at Christmas, we all know the benefits that meditation can bring. We can use a religious Christmas card to help us travel inward to contemplate the mystery of the incarnation.

As baptised Christians we nurture that dialogue with God that we call prayer. What better way to pray than to take a few moments before a painting or a card, and light a candle and sit with a line from one of the passages of Scripture found in today's readings.