



**Church of Our Mother of Divine Grace,  
Ballygall**

Part of the Glasnevin Partnership of Parishes  
(Ballygall, Ballymun Rd, Corpus Christi,  
Glasnevin & Iona Rd)

**Fourth Sunday of Advent  
24th December 2023**

Parish Website [www.ballygallparish.ie](http://www.ballygallparish.ie) Email

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Registered Charity RCN 20016166

**Parish Team**

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Anyone wishing to contribute to  
**The Crosscare Christmas Food & Poverty Appeal**, can donate online at [www.crosscare.ie](http://www.crosscare.ie), call 01 8360011, or send a cheque or postal order to Crosscare Christmas Appeal, 2 St Mary's Place North, D07 Y768, Dublin

May the kindness of God be your strength in the year ahead.

Fr. Joe, Fr. Harry & Fr Paul.

**Recently Deceased**

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

**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.

**Christmas Mass Arrangements.**

Christmas Eve Vigil Masses Sunday		6.30	Congregational Singing & family Mass group.
		8.30	Senior Choir
Christmas Day Monday		10.00	Senior Choir
		11.30	Philippino Choir.
St. Stephens Day Tuesday		11.00	Our Lady of Victories Church.
27 <sup>th</sup> December Wednesday		10.00	Michael Murphy
28 <sup>th</sup> December Thursday		10.00	Funeral Mass – Patrick Melia
29 <sup>th</sup> 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 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.

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



### Monastic Silence

A few years ago I spent some time in a Cistercian monastery. Monks have choral prayers throughout the day, three of them being at 6 am (not the first of the day!), noon and 6 pm. As they stood in choir, waiting, facing the altar, the Angelus bell rang. I expected that they would recite the Angelus, but instead they stood there in silence for a couple of minutes. It was deeply affecting. The Word became flesh – this flesh. The Word entered our world silently, unobserved.

*When peaceful silence lay over all, and night had run the half of her swift course, down from the heavens, from the royal throne, leapt your all-powerful Word. (Wis 18:14-15)*

### The Annunciation

In Nazareth, Catholics point to Mary's house as the place of the Annunciation, while the Greek Orthodox church indicate the site of the village well. Nobody knows for sure where it took place, but the symbolism of both places is very affecting. The kitchen and the village well are the most ordinary places in a most obscure village.

*"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip asked. Yes, the greatest of all. ■*

### Summary

*The Incarnation comes closer to us than any spectacle; it comes behind the eye, so to speak.*

*The Word entered our world silently, unobserved.*

### Question

*Why do we hanker after religious visions and transparent messages?*

### Prayer

*Lord, help me to see your presence in ordinary, everyday events.*



# SUNDAY LETTER

Series: The Seasons; Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A; 24th December, 2023



## The Incarnation

*When the prophets of Israel spoke about God's forthcoming inter-ventions in human history, they imagined that it would be like another thunderous event ... like the Exodus or Mount Sinai. No one imagined that it would be an event so hidden in ordinariness as the birth of a child.*

*There are many stories in world literature about the disappointment people experience when reality actually happens.*

*The first play I ever saw, long ago, was called "Professor Tim". The main character was an elderly and wealthy relative whose return from America was eagerly awaited by his family. Their disappointment was extreme when he arrived. He staggered around, day after day, with a whiskey bottle, making caustic remarks about everybody. He was quickly ostracised by everyone (with one exception – a local down-and-out).*

*At the end of the play he suddenly revealed that it was all an elaborate game to find out what kind of people they were.*

*He disinherited the lot of them, and left all his wealth, I suppose, to the one person who hadn't rejected him.*

*All such stories have some resonance of the Incarnation.*

A spectacular religious event on a mountain-top or in the skies would compel your attention; it would impress you greatly, but it would not sift your spirit or test your depth. It would match your expectations, and would therefore not bring you any new awareness. It would be 'all out there', and to that extent, only a spectacle.

Even long after all the moving statues stopped moving (remember that?) we still have a great hankering for religious visions and transparent messages. Our religious sensibility has been deeply affected by television and the cinema; but the Incarnation comes closer to us than any spectacle; it comes behind the eye, so to speak.