

Stou(ace

SERIES: ADVENT JOURNEY

Season colour: PURPLE

In this new series, we prepare for Advent & Christmas.

PRAYER & PREPARATION

Today, we set out on a time of prayer and preparation for the celebration of the greatest gift of all, God's gift of his Son and, with it, the gift of new life for us all. What greater love for us could God have shown than to send his beloved only Son to be with us? He, the Son of God, came into the world as a tiny helpless baby, one like us in all things but sin, fully human while fully divine. Why did he come? The prophet Isaiah tells us that he came so "That he may instruct us in his ways, and we may walk in his paths." He came to "let us walk in the light of the LORD." How easily we can lose our way without him. To walk in his way is to walk in the way of life and goodness, peace and love. It is no accident that our Christmas cards are adorned with messages of love and joy, and peace and blessings.

GET BACK ON TRACK

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans urges us to wake up from our sleep and to conduct ourselves properly. As Christians, we bear Christ's name. In baptism, we have "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." Our words and our actions should be true to his name. Advent, like Lent, is a time for us to re-examine our lives and our consciences. Are we living in ways that are true to his name and to his way? Are our

words and our actions worthy of the name Christian? Are we really heading in the right direction? Are there areas in our life where we have gone astray and need to get back on track – his track.

The weeks leading up to Christmas can be so fast and frenetic. There is all the activity that accompanies the end of the calendar year and preparations for the Christmas season and the summer break. As Christians, let us not let the hustle and bustle of the activities and preparations distract us from the mystery of love that we celebrate.

In our gospel today, St Matthew also offers us a sobering reminder: "you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Truly, none of us knows what the future holds, nor when our own time will come to leave this world and go to the world of the Father.

REAL MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

We can so easily lose sight of the real meaning of Christmas and indeed of our lives. We can forget that we give gifts at Christmas in celebration and thanksgiving for the great gift that God has given to us in Jesus. We can also forget that our most important gift to others – and the gift that matters most – is not what we buy for them, but what we give of ourselves in our daily words and acts of loving concern, care and compassion. ■



Today's readings

Is 2:1-5

Rm 13:11-14

Mt 24:37-44

When will he return? It is likely that many of the first disciples believed he would return in a matter of weeks or, at most, a few years after the Resurrection. The destruction of the city of Jerusalem and its temple in 70AD seemed to announce the end of the religion of Israel. Would this be the time when the Son of Man would return?

When the Gospel writers began to order the sayings of Jesus, it became clear that while he had spoken clearly about the 'end times' he had not provided a timetable.

Matthew addresses this question in the fifth great sermon of his Gospel, part of which we hear today. He begins with the example of Noah building the ark. Noah had been warned that a time of crisis was coming. There would be a great flood. Noah alone was ordered to build the ark to rescue people and animals so that a new world could begin when the waters dried up. Noah was the exception. Everyone else went on with the normal business of life, suspecting nothing until the flood came. The coming of the Son of Man will be a similar time of crisis. The short saying about the two men working in the fields and the two women going about the task of grinding corn is difficult. Like the people in Noah's day, they do not expect a moment of crisis. They are ill prepared for it. One will be taken, another left.

The short parable about the thief is more straightforward. No one leaves a house unguarded if they suspect there is a burglar in the locality. Burglars don't send word of their intentions ahead of them, so it is essential to keep watch. It is unlikely then that any dramatic signs will announce the coming of the Son of Man. Those who follow the way of Jesus must be prepared for his coming, whenever it takes place.

GOD'S WORD TODAY

Today's Gospel is taken from the final teaching Jesus gave to his disciples on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem.

Within a few days, he will be arrested and led to the cross. To prepare his disciples for the confusion and loss of confidence that will follow his arrest, he reassures them that death is not the end. Even though he will die, he will rise again but he will also leave them behind until he returns in glory at the end of time.



READY TO GO

For Christians, Advent and the season of Christmas come at the start of the year, not at the end: Jesus' birth marks the beginning of a new era in human history. So, on this first Sunday in Advent, we celebrate the start of a new liturgical year.



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today, Sunday, 27th November 2016

Christ was born into the world to be the light of all people on their way through life. Today we renew our dedication to live as He has shown us, so that when He comes again we will be ready to receive him.

ADVENT JESSE TREE The Jesse Tree is a way of reflecting on the key people who prefigure the coming ('adventus') of Jesus.

Symbols for the Jesse Tree are: This week - WEEK ONE

The Sun and the Moon represent the CREATION

The Tree and the Apple symbols represent ADAM & EVE

The Ark and Dove symbols represent NOAH

The Sword symbol represents ABRAHAM.

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH IN THE HOME:

Lord God, Let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Advent 2016 in Sligo Parishes Cluster

ADVENT SCRIPTURE SHARING GROUPS - SLIGO

With the approach of Advent we invite parishioners to consider hosting Scripture Sharing Groups in their homes over this sacred season. Groups should be kept small and consist of 3 to 6 people to allow all to participate fully in sharing of scripture. Advent Sunday Gospel passages & short reflections now online at www.elphindiocese.ie/advent.

SHORT ADVENT REFLECTIONS by Fr. Niall Ahern available to listen and to podcast at www.elphindiocese.ie/advent-reflections. Series offers a lovely reflective journey through the Advent season.

ONLINE ADVENT CALENDAR has been produced by the Bishops' Conference and is available on www.elphindiocese.ie. It starts this Sunday, the First Sunday of Advent.

THE WAY OF GENTLENESS Led by Fr. Niall Ahern

8pm Strandhill Church on Mondays Nov 28th, Dec 5th, 12th, 19th

ADVENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION FOR THE FAMILY

7.00pm Carraroe Church on Tuesdays of Advent

AN ADVENT JOURNEY WITH POPE FRANCIS: CARING FOR THE EARTH

Guided by Colette Furlong, the Cluster Catechist

10.30am St. Joseph's Parish Centre (45 mins)

Wednesdays Nov 30th, Dec 7th, 14th, 21st

ADVENT REFLECTION At 6pm in Carraroe Church on Tuesday 2nd Dec

WAY OF GENTLENESS SPECIAL Led by Fr. Niall Ahern

At 8pm St. Anne's Day Chapel on Friday 9th Dec

PRAYER AROUND THE WAITING MANGER

At 7pm in The Cathedral on Tuesday 13th Dec

FAMILY AND LIFE TALK – BOYLE Bishop Kevin will speak in King House, Boyle

on Monday 28th November at 7.30pm on "Every Human Life a Gift: Defending the Pro-Life Amendment". Organised by Family and Life. Other speakers include Kate Bopp and Patrick Carr. All are welcome.

What is the 8th Amendment? The 8th Amendment to the Constitution of Ireland introduced a new subsection of Article 40, which now reads: "The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right".

What does the 8th Amendment do? It provides constitutional protection for both mothers and their unborn babies. (produced by Elphin Diocesan Pastoral Council)

CONFIRM OUR CHILDREN ENROLEMENT MASS We welcome the children from our Parish who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2017 to their Enrolment Mass today, Sunday, 27th November at 10.30 a.m.

FIRST FRIDAY - 2nd December is the First Friday. Mass will be celebrated at 7.00pm. Confessions take place before the 8.00 am; 10.30am and 7.00pm Masses.

24 HOUR SILENT EUCHARISTIC VIGIL for the protection of the Unborn Child in the Womb, for all Women and for the Protection of the 8th Amendment will take place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel beside the Cathedral, on Thursday 8th December (the Feast of the Immaculate Conception) from 9.00am until 9.00am on Friday 9th December. Please sign up for an hour by contacting Lisa on 087 6274621 with your specified time, or simply sign the sheet on the Blessed Sacrament Chapel door. Thank you to all those who have given their time to pray for this very important intention.

Sligo Cathedral Children's Christmas Party
 Sunday 4th December 2016 after 10.30 A.M. Mass in the Gillooly Hall
 All the children of our Parish are invited especially our
 Altar Servers, Readers, and those at our Children's Liturgy Group!
To the Grown-Ups: Donations of tasty treats for the party welcomed to the Gillooly Hall from 9.30 A.M. on the day!

St. Mary's Christmas Bazaar
 Here at St Mary's we are bringing back the good old days with the return of the **CHRISTMAS BAZAAR** which will be held on **Saturday 10th December** in the Gillooly Hall. With this in mind please consider donating good quality items, home baked goods, Christmas crafts and gifts etc. All funds raised will go towards the repair works underway on our beloved Cathedral which celebrates over 140 Christmases this year. These costly but essential repairs will ensure the future of our beautiful church and its presence for future generations. If you can donate or contribute in any way please contact Fiona in the Parish Office.

EXAMPLES OF ITEMS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED: Bottles of Spirits, Bottles of Wine, Cakes, Homewares, Beauty Sets/Toiletries, Boxes of Chocolates, Unused Gifts, Handbags, Xmas Puds, Games, Christmas Cakes, Boxes of Biscuits, Art & Crafts, Books, Home Baked Goods, Chinaware, C.D.s, Toys, DVDs, Ornaments, Jewellery, Sweets, Glassware, Selection Boxes, Buns & Other Good Quality Saleable Goods.

SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES
SUNDAY 20th NOVEMBER PARISH ENV: €2,070 PL/STAND. ORD: €1,630
 THANK YOU for your contribution.
ST MARY'S PRESBYTERY ☎ 071 9162670 SACRISTY ☎ 071 9161261
 ✉ email us at news@sligocathedral.ie We welcome your comments.
BINGO - GILLOOLY HALL - TONIGHT, 27th November at 9.00 p.m.
 This week's jackpot is €2,750.

BAPTISMS We welcome into God's family CIAN CLARKE, SEAN LEONARD & POLA BAK recently baptised in our Cathedral.

CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Upcoming EVENTS THE WEEK AHEAD
 Sunday 27th C.O.C. Enrolment Mass at 10.30am & First Sunday of Advent
 Wed. 30th "Wednesday Tea" after 10.30am Mass
 Saturday 3rd Confessions 2.00p.m. - 4.00p.m.

DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER - THE MONTH OF REMEMBRANCE THE FINAL CEMETERY ROSARY FOR NOVEMBER Will be recited in Sligo Cemetery today Sunday 27th Nov. at 3p.m. **ALTAR OF REPOSE** As this is the final Sunday of November you are invited to visit the Altar of Repose which is located in the right transept of the Cathedral.

URSULINE NETWORK - Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 30th November in the Convent (opp Cathedral entrance) at 7.00pm. New members welcome.

HEART SUPPORT GROUP meeting in the Sligo Park Hotel on Wednesday, 30th November at 7pm. Speaker: Dr. Anna Cleminson, Consultant in Palliative Medicine. Topic: Role of Palliative care in Heart Failure.

NORTH WEST STROKE GROUP next meeting Wednesday, 30th November at 8pm at the Irish Wheelchair Association premises in Abbeyville, Sligo.

HSE RETIRED ASSOCIATION GROUP Monthly meeting takes place in St Michael's Family Life Centre on Thursday, 1st December at 3pm. New members welcome.

FAITH & LIGHT SHOP, Wine Street, Sligo are holding a 3 day ½ price sale on Thursday 1st, Friday 2nd & Saturday 3rd December. Please support.

P.T.A.A. SLIGO - Meeting in St. Mary's Presbytery at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, 2nd December immediately after the 7pm Mass.

SLIGO CONCERT BAND GALA CONCERT with special guests IT Sligo Choir, Saturday, 3rd Dec. at 8pm in the Southern Hotel, Sligo. Admission €10/€5. Tickets available at the door

HOLY HILL HERMITAGE Bishop John Fleming will be celebrating Mass on Visiting Sunday, 4th Dec. Mass will be at noon followed by tea and a tour for anyone interested.

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP Sunday 4th December at 3pm in St Michael's Family Life Centre, Sligo.

DRUMCLIFFE CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE & CRAFT FESTIVAL will be held in Drumcliffe Church and grounds from 8th to 11th December. The crafts will be the 10th and 11th. Proceeds will be shared between Drumcliffe Parish Church and the Samaritans in Sligo. The event will close with a **COMMUNITY CAROL SERVICE** on Sunday 11th at 7pm. Opening hours 3-9(Thursday), 11-9 (Friday-Saturday) and 11-7(Sunday). All welcome.

Please note **SLIGO CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE** is being held on Sunday, 18th December at 8.15pm this year. All most welcome.

THANK YOU to all who contributed to the recent church gate collection in aid of the **NORTH WEST SIMON COMMUNITY**. €675.84 was collected at The Cathedral.


WORDS from POPE FRANCIS on the FAMILY

"In and among families, the Gospel message should always resound."

(Amoris Laetitia, Par 58)

Anniversary & remembrances



DAY	8.00a.m.	10.30a.m.
TUES 29 th	TOM SHORTT	JOHN & NORA GALLAGHER
WED 30 th	—	DENIS & AILEEN FOLEY
THURS 1 st	TOMMIE CONLON (Recently deceased)	AGNES TIERNAN
FRI 2 nd	—	1st Anniversary JOE & JACK MAHON 
SAT 3 rd	ALBERT, PATRICK & MARGARET GORMAN	Month's Mind MONICA O'BRIEN 