

# Stou( )space

SERIES: NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

Season colour: WHITE

In this new series, Gerard Moloney CSsR offers tips for being a better Christian in 2018.

**M**ark McKinnon is one of the top political consultants in the United States, having worked for both the Democrats and Republicans as a media strategist.

Some time ago, he wrote about his life and a new wisdom and insight he had gained. He described himself as being one of the luckiest people he knew. He had a good life and a great career; he was at the top of his game professionally and earned lots of money, and, most important of all, he had two daughters and a wonderful wife, named Annie, who was his high school sweetheart.

Then, some years ago, disaster struck. Annie contracted a particularly aggressive form of cancer that left her with little hope of recovery. Her chances of survival were estimated at about 15 per cent. Annie went through every kind of surgery and treatment available, and, against all the odds, she beat the cancer. She was restored to health.

Annie's battle with cancer forced Mark McKinnon to look at his life and what was important to him. He realised that he had been given a precious gift, the gift of time – more time with Annie; time to watch their children grow and have children of their own; time to appreciate life more.

And he decided he was going to make the most of it. So he sat down and looked at his age, his family history, and his own medical history. He calculated that, all going well, he could expect to live for another 10,136 days. Then he went out and bought two glass jars – and 10,136 beads. He filled one jar with the beads, left the other one empty, and put both jars on his desk. Now, every day he takes one bead from the full jar and places it in the other. And that's how he measures his days.

"Every day when I take out a bead, I stop for a moment, close my eyes, and say a prayer of thanks. Thanks for my health. Thanks for my friends. Thanks for

my two incredible daughters. Thanks for a lucky, lucky life. And thanks most of all for Annie."

His wife's illness had led Mark McKinnon to re-examine his life. By any common definition of the word, Mark McKinnon is a wise and intelligent man, as his successful career shows. But he has acquired a deeper sort of wisdom, too – an appreciation of what really matters, an attitude of gratitude.

## LISTS AND RESOLUTIONS

**A**t the start of every new year most of us make plans. We draw up lists and jot down resolutions – maybe to lose weight, or go to the gym, or do better at school, or watch less TV, or cut back on social media, or spend more time with loved ones. Drawing up lists and jotting down resolutions seems to be the thing to do at this time of year. We have had the excesses of Christmas; we are beginning to move out of deep mid-winter – so it's a time for starting over, turning over a new leaf, maybe even changing direction.

We start off with enthusiasm, but very soon that enthusiasm wanes. We drift back into old habits. Perhaps the trick is to not be too ambitious, to settle on one or two objectives and work on them.

It took Annie McKinnon's illness and recovery for her husband to reconsider his priorities, and to put God and his family at the centre of everything. Moving a bead from one jar to the other each morning reminds him of the beauty and importance of each new day, and to make the best use of it.

Today is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. As you prepare to ring in the new year, resolve to appreciate your family more. Resolve to tell them every day that you love them, and resolve to make God part of your family circle, too. ■



# HAPPY FAMILIES

2018 goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**T**his is the time many of us make New Year's resolutions. The feast of the Holy Family is an opportunity for us to think about our own family relationships and what we can do to appreciate and love each other all the more.

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## Today's readings

**Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3**

**Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19**

**Luke 2:22-40**

St Luke blends two Jewish observances in this story. According to one, a first-born boy was regarded as already dedicated to God's service and so had to be bought back or "redeemed" by a special offering. In the other, a woman after childbirth had to undergo a ritual bath and some rites in thanksgiving for her child. In the drama of this reading, the young family of Joseph and Mary and their newborn son meet two representatives of "old Israel". Simeon and Anna represent what is best in that tradition – piety, prayerfulness and fidelity to the ancient hope that God would deliver them. Simeon's prayer is the calm, contented prayer of an elderly person who has seen their dreams fulfilled. It also forms part of the church's official night prayer. To Anna, also an elderly woman, is given the grace of the spirit of prophecy and she becomes, along with the shepherds of Bethlehem, one of the first proclaimers of the Gospel.

## GOD'S WORD TODAY



**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

**31<sup>st</sup> December 2017**

The Feast of the Holy Family: We are reminded today that a holy family will be a happy one because everything is based on God's will of love ... a love that shows itself in patience, forgiveness and sincere gratitude. The spirit of such a family will be the Spirit of God who brings peace.

**Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> December**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 10.30pm  
Special New Year's Eve Mass at 11.30pm

**CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

**NEW YEAR'S DAY MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY**

**MASS FOR PEACE - 11.00 AM**

This is the only Mass that will be celebrated on this day.

**MASSES - TUESDAY - 2<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY - THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup> JANUARY**

**MASSES - 10.30 a.m.**

**MASSES - Friday 5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY**

**10.30 a.m. Vigil 7.30 p.m. for Holy Day**

**SATURDAY - 6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY - FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY**

**MASSES - 8.00 a.m., 10.30 a.m. & Vigil at 7.30 p.m.**

**CONFESSIONS 2.00 - 4.00 p.m.**

**SUNDAY - 7<sup>th</sup> JANUARY**

**MASSES - 8.30 a.m., 10.30 a.m., 12.00 noon and 7.00 p.m.**

**WEEKDAY MASSES FROM MONDAY - 8<sup>th</sup> JANUARY**

**8.00 a.m. & 10.30 a.m.**

**PARISH OFFICE at St. Mary's Presbytery ☎ 071 9162670**

Please note that the parish office will open to the public during the coming week at the following times: Tuesday - Thursday 9.30am - 4pm & Friday 9.30am - 2pm.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**ST BERNADETTE'S CHAPEL**, Rockwood Parade. Mass will be celebrated on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January at 5.15 p.m. All welcome.

**HSE RETIRED ASSOCIATION GROUP** Monthly meeting takes place in St Michael's Family Life Centre on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> January at 3pm. New members welcome.

**P.T.A.A. SLIGO** - Meeting in St. Mary's Presbytery at 8.00p.m. on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> January immediately after the 7.30pm Mass.

**NORTH WEST SIMON COMMUNITY** looking for your support this **Christmas** - Sun 7<sup>th</sup> Jan - Women's Little Christmas Ladies Lunch, Kilonan Castle, Tickets from 087 7708865. North West Simon Community thank all their supporters and volunteers very much. [www.northwestsimon.ie](http://www.northwestsimon.ie)

**WORLD DAY FOR PEACE**  
**NEW YEAR'S DAY - MONDAY, 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2018**  
**11.00 AM - MASS FOR PEACE**

**SATURDAY 6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2018**

**FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY**

Saturday is the Feast of the Epiphany - a **Holy Day of Obligation**.

As we enter a New Year may Christians everywhere celebrate their faith with joy and renewed hope.

**MASS TIMES: SATURDAY, January 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Vigil (Friday) 7:30 p.m.;**

**Saturday: 8.00 a.m.; 10.30 a.m.;**  
**& 7.30 p.m. (Vigil for Sunday)**

\* \* \*

God's plan for the world, the mysterious purpose of existence, is unveiled by the coming of Christ. God wants it to be known, and it will be known, by all who follow the light of the faith leading them to Christ.

\* \* \*

*Father, you revealed your Son to the nations by the guidance of a star lead us to your glory in heaven by the light of faith.*

*Amen.*

\* \* \*

**FIRST FRIDAY** Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> January, is the First Friday. Mass will be celebrated at 7.30pm (which is also the vigil for the Holy Day, Feast of the Epiphany, on 6<sup>th</sup> January). Confessions will not take place today.

**WMOF2018 PETITION BOX** The Petition Box given to the diocese from the World Meeting of Families will visit each parish from now until August 2018. For schedule see [www.elphindiocese.ie](http://www.elphindiocese.ie)

**READINGS for 6<sup>th</sup> January:** 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Is. 60:1-6; 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Eph: 3:2-3. 5-6; Gospel: Matt. 2:1-12.

**SUNDAY READINGS for 7<sup>th</sup> January:** 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Is. 55:1-11; 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 1 Jn. 5:1-9; Gospel: Mk. 1:7-11.

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK** May we experience Jesus as Gift, The gift of the Word to be spoken, The gift of the way to be walked, The gift of the life to be lived, The gift of the love to be loved. Amen.

**NEXT BINGO, GILLOOLY HALL,**

**SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> January at 9.00pm**

With a JACKPOT of €2,950

Raffle at interval with refreshments available. All welcome.



*Visit Our*  
**Christmas Crib**



*Come and pray with us at our Christmas Crib:*

God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Saviour was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.

To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love. Lord, bless all who look upon this manger, may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise up our thoughts to Him, who is *God-with-us* and Saviour of all, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

**CHOOSE LIFE**

"The recent decision by the Oireachtas Committee to recommend the repeal of the Pro-Life Amendment is totally at odds with the fundamental human right to life. There is nothing "liberal" or "progressive" about it. I strongly urge all Catholics in this Diocese - and all people who respect life - to oppose, with energy and with respect, the proposal to legalise abortion." Bishop Kevin

**8.00 A.M. DAILY MASS** Please note that the 8:00 a.m. morning Mass will resume on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> January. Thank you.

**THANK YOU**

The priests of the parish would like to thank all who contributed to the Christmas collection for the Support of the Clergy.

**CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

*Upcoming* **EVENTS**

**THE WEEK AHEAD**

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January **Peace Mass** at 11.00am  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January **"Wednesday Tea"** after 10.30am Mass.  
Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January **Confessions** from 2.00pm to 5.00pm.

**RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP BOXES & 2018 CALENDARS** We thank most sincerely our dedicated Area Representatives who have distributed the Responsible Stewardship Envelopes and Calendars for 2018. Please let us know if you have not receive yours and we apologise for the oversight. We take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all who have joined our parish community during the last 12 months and invite you to contact the Parish Office on 9162670 or email [finance@sligocathedral.ie](mailto:finance@sligocathedral.ie) to join in support, in whatever way you can, of our Cathedral. We would also like to express, once again, our deep gratitude to all who contribute to the upkeep of the parish.

**ELPHIN DIOCESE YOUNG ADULT PILGRIMAGE TO ASSISI AND ANCIENT CHRISTIAN ROME** 23<sup>rd</sup> June - 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2018 OPEN TO YOUNG ADULTS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 35. Cost €599. see [www.elphindiocese.ie](http://www.elphindiocese.ie) for details. For Further Information please contact [Frank McGuinness](mailto:Frank.McGuinness@elphindiocese.ie), Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministry, St. Mary's, Temple Street, Sligo, Tel: [087 9880690](tel:0879880690) Email: [frank.mcguinness@elphindiocese.ie](mailto:frank.mcguinness@elphindiocese.ie)

**"LIVING FAMILY" FAMILY RETREAT DAY** to be held in Summerhill College, Sligo on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018 from 10.00am to 5.00pm. Registration is at 10.00am followed by opening Mass at 10.30am. There are talks, reflections, games & activities throughout the day with separate sessions for all age groups. Guide donation is 70 per family. Dinner & refreshments provided. Spaces are limited. To book email [info@livingfamily.ie](mailto:info@livingfamily.ie) with family details including child ages or phone Therese on 086 8228174. Supported by former leaders of Youth 2000.

**A CALENDAR PRAYER FOR 2018**

*Loving and caring God, in my calendar you document my past, herald my future and focus my now. You remind me of duties, you keep me in touch with friends, and teach me the value of time. I ask your blessing on all my promises and on all my remembering. Bless all that I arrange, all that I do, all that I encounter in this New Year. Amen.*

**ANNIVERSARY & REMEMBRANCES**

DAY	10.30 a.m. Mass
MON 1 <sup>st</sup>	PEACE MASS at 11.00am
TUES 2 <sup>nd</sup>	TERESA CONLON
WED 3 <sup>rd</sup>	PATRICK & MARY WATTERS
THURS 4 <sup>th</sup>	MICHAEL MCDONAGH
FRI 5 <sup>th</sup>	PADDY MCCOLE
SAT 6 <sup>th</sup>	HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION