

SoulSpace

SERIES: AWAITING SOME REAL
GOOD NEWS

Season colour: **PURPLE**

In this new series, Gerard Moloney CSsR takes a deeper look at the great Season of Advent.

Today we begin the season of Advent, the great season of waiting. We are waiting for the coming of the Lord at Christmas; we wait expectedly for the coming of the one who saves us. During this Advent season we contemplate two different comings of Jesus into our world. The first refers to his birth as our Saviour over 2,000 years ago. The second refers to his future return in glory as judge at the end of time. It is really only from the Fourth Sunday of Advent that the coming of the Christ-child at Christmas moves into centre stage.

This season is a reminder to prepare not just to welcome the Lord at Christmas but for an even more wondrous coming – of the Lord at the end time. We wait for the Lord's coming. Advent challenges us to consider how we are preparing for the Lord's coming. What is it we are waiting for? Are we living day-to-day in such a way that we are ready when he comes?

We all know that waiting of any kind is difficult today. We live in a culture of wanting things now. Having to wait at a red light annoys us; being stuck in a barely moving queue frustrates us. If our internet connection isn't working, we get angry. Just like instant messaging and instant coffee, we demand instant results, and we want them now.

It can be the same with our relationships. If my relationship with someone is in difficulty, I can be tempted to give up on it. If things start to go wrong for me personally, I can feel like quitting, or even giving up on life itself.

It's the same with our relationship with God and the church. When God is slow to answer our prayers or doesn't seem to answer them at all, we can be tempted to stop praying or to give up on God altogether. The scandals in the church can leave us angry, disillusioned, and inclined to walk away.

In so many ways and areas of life, patience or stick-

at-it-ness, is very, very difficult. Advent challenges this kind of thinking; it is about patient, hopeful waiting. One of the most striking things about Jesus was his patience. People resisted his message; many opposed him; even his closest friends misunderstood him, but he didn't give up on them. Time and again, he is patient with them. Remember how Peter denied him three times, and yet Jesus forgives him, welcomes him back.

It's how God has always treated God's people. In the Bible, the people of Israel kept turning their backs on God, letting God down. But God never gave up on them; over and over again God forgave them. In the end, God even sent his Son among them to save them, to show them how to live.

AN ASSURANCE AND A CHALLENGE

So as we begin this season of Advent, think about how good you are at waiting. This season offers us an assurance and a challenge.

First, it reminds us of something wonderful and consoling: God never gives up on us; God is ceaselessly patient with us. Even when we let him down; even when we turn our backs on God; no matter what we do or don't do - God forgives us, puts up with us, never abandons us. God is constantly calling us into relationship with him.

Second, this season challenges us to practise patience in every dimension of our lives. Slow down, take time to notice things. Learn to be a little more patient with yourself and with others too. Do something to build up anticipation as you journey through this season: dress a Jesse tree, use an Advent calendar, say a daily Advent prayer. Let the season build momentum.

Advent calls us to persevere on our faith journey, to never give up; for God is true to God's promises. ■

SEASON OF WAITING



Advent is a reminder to prepare not just to welcome the Lord at Christmas but for an even more wondrous coming – of the Lord at the end time.



Today's readings

Isaiah 63: 16-17,

64:1,3-8

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 1: 33-37

Kingdom of David, their answer. Instead what will come before the week's end is death. Even after his death, watchfulness is to be the mark of the Christian. The man who has gone from home on a journey represents Jesus in the time between his return to the Father at the ascension and his return in glory for his Second Coming.

GOD'S WORD TODAY

Today's Gospel is a call to watchfulness that is most appropriate for the season of Advent when we watch for the coming of the Holy Child at Christmas and wait for the Second Coming of the Lord. The words of today's Gospel were originally spoken by Jesus to his disciples just a few days before his death. They were still probably expecting spectacular signs and displays of power from him as the Messiah who would re-establish the



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

3rd December 2017

God comes to those who wait for him. Our waiting needs to be prayerful if we are to be truly ready to receive him when he comes.

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.

CHOOSE LIFE

"Each child has a place in God's heart from all eternity; once he or she is conceived, the Creator's eternal dream comes true. Let us pause to think of the great value of that embryo from the moment of conception. We need to see it with the eyes of God, who always looks beyond mere appearances." Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 168

CONFIRM OUR CHILDREN ENROLEMENT MASS

We welcome the children from our Parish who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2018 to their Enrolment Mass today, Sunday, 3rd December at 10.30 a.m.

**FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
FRIDAY 8th DECEMBER**

Vigil Mass: Thursday 7th December at 7.30pm
Friday Masses: 8.00am, 10.30am and 7.00pm

SAVE THE 8th VIGIL Join us for a very special day of prayer, whilst invoking our Irish Saints and Martyrs, such as, St Brigid of Ireland (Patron Saint of Babies) as we unite together to pray especially for the protection of the 8th Amendment. This vigil will take place on Friday, 8th December (Feast day of the Immaculate Conception) commencing at 9.00am until Saturday 9th December 2017 at 9.00am, in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel beside the Cathedral, Sligo. To sign up for your specified hour please text 087 6274621. Thank you as always for giving your time so generously.

"Protect your families....Be sanctuaries of respect for Life"
Pope Francis

ROSARY IN THE CATHEDRAL Rosary is said daily at 10am, before 10.30am Mass, year round. Please tune in on our website, www.sligocathedral.ie and click on the red "watch us live" button or join us in the Cathedral for this prayerful time.

**BINGO, GILLOOLY HALL, TONIGHT,
SUNDAY 3rd December at 9.00pm**

TONIGHT'S JACKPOT €2,800.
Raffle at interval with refreshments available. All welcome.

SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES

SUNDAY, 26th November **PARISH ENV: €2436 PL/STAND. ORD: €1490**
THANK YOU for your contribution.

ST MARY'S PRESBYTERY ☎ 071 9162670 SACRISTY ☎ 071 9161261

✉ email us at info@sligocathedral.ie We welcome your comments.

CHRISTMAS FAIR IN ST. MARY'S PARISH

A Christmas Fair will be held in the Gillooly Hall on Saturday, 9th December 2017 from 2pm to 6pm. Tickets are currently on sale for the draw. Anyone who is interested in having a stall in the Christmas Fair is asked to contact the Parish Office on 071 9162670. We are also looking for Volunteers to work on the day and donations of unused decorations for the Hall. Please contact the Parish Office if you can assist with any of this.

Thank you.

DATE FOR DIARY

Please reserve Sunday, 17th December for our Carol Service which will be at 8.15pm in the Cathedral.



CLEAN-UP THANK YOU

We thank most sincerely all who participated in the clean-up of the Cathedral on Friday last. Well done to all.

PRO LIFE CAMPAIGN NATIONAL CONFERENCE takes place in the Concert Hall of the RDS today, Sunday, 3rd December from 1.00pm to 4.30pm. Guest speakers include Abby Johnson, former director of an abortion clinic and Lord David Alton, human rights activist along with other inspiring talks and testimonies. It is an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of retaining the 8th Amendment in the challenging months ahead. Registration is important. Call 087 2668702 or email info@prolifecampaign.ie.

NORTH WEST SIMON COMMUNITY looking for your support **this Christmas** - Fri 22nd Dec – Tesco Shopping Arcade Sligo, Sing for Simon from 11am to 4pm with choirs – collection for charity. Sun 7th 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

SLIGO ORPHEUS CHOIR present Carols by Candlelight in Holy Cross friary Sligo on Sunday 10th December at 8.00pm accompanied by organist Charles O'Connor and String Quartet, Ramona Sakalauskaite Concert Harp under the direction of Austin McManus. Singing a wide variety of classic carols and modern favourite's Sligo Orpheus Choir hope to entertain and awaken the spirit of Christmas with Carols old and new. The concert is free with a retiring collection in support of the local Homeless Charity the **NORTH WEST BRANCH OF THE SIMON COMMUNITY**. Carols by Candlelight is a wonderful way for families and friends to get together and celebrate the spirit of Christmas.

SUNDAY READINGS for 10th December: 1st Reading: Is. 40:1-5. 9-11; 2nd Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14; Gospel: Mark 1:1-8.

CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Upcoming **EVENTS**
THE WEEK AHEAD

Wednesday 6th December **"Wednesday Tea"** after 10.30am Mass.
Saturday 9th December **Confessions** from 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

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

Please note that the parish office is open to the public at the following times:
Monday - Thursday 9.30am - 4pm & Friday 9.30am - 2pm.

DATES TO REMEMBER

HOLY HILL HERMITAGE Everyone is welcome for our Visiting Sunday, today, Sunday 3rd December. Fr. Robert Bulbrook will celebrate mass at noon, and there will be tea and a tour afterwards.

ST. BERNADETTE'S CHAPEL, Rockwood Parade. Mass will be celebrated on Monday 4th December at 5.15 p.m. All welcome.

HSE RETIRED ASSOCIATION GROUP Monthly meeting takes place in St Michael's Family Life Centre on Thursday 7th December at 3pm. New members welcome.

PUBLIC ROSARY in Honour of Our Lady on Friday, 8th December (Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary). To be held at 12noon in Wine Street car park, Sligo. All most welcome.

MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIEST CENECLÉ IN NAZARETH HOUSE every Thursday at 7pm. Also prayers to the Arch Angels and guardian angels for our protection and the Protection of Ireland every Tuesday after 10.30am Mass.

THE WAY OF GENTLENESS A personal enrichment journey for Advent. Mondays, 4th, 11th & 18th December at 8.00pm in Saint Patrick's Church, Strandhill. All welcome.

ADVENT SCRIPTURE SHARING GROUPS Reflections available to download at www.elphindiocese.ie/advent and other prayer booklets available from Justin Harkin, phone 087 6171526 or email justin@elphindiocese.ie

ADVENT REFLECTIONS RECORDING Fr. Eugene McLoughlin's presentation 'Advent as a time of anticipation and preparation' available to listen and to podcast at www.elphindiocese.ie/recordings

FINANCE AND ASSET MANAGER The Diocese of Elphin is advertising for a Finance and Asset Manager. Job description is available on www.elphindiocese.ie

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

anniversary & remembrances

DAY	8.00 a.m. Mass	10.30 a.m. Mass
TUES 5 th	1st Anniversary MARTIN SWEENEY ☩	ROSE MCCAFFERY
WED 6 th	MONICA PEGNAM, EDWARD COX, RONAN NADARAJA & JANET ROPER	Birthday Remembrance ☩ JOE MCCANN
THURS 7 th	DECEASED MEMBERS OF BOYLE FAMILY	CLIVE HOWARD
FRI 8 th	HOLY DAY	HOLY DAY
SAT 9 th	ELIZABETH, MICHAEL & MARY KELLY	Month's Mind ☩ TOMMY HARRIGAN

☩ **MONTH'S MIND MASS** for SEAN KEIGHRON will be celebrated at the 7.30pm Vigil Mass on Saturday, 9th December.

rest in peace Your prayers are asked for the repose of the souls of: CIARAN ROUGHAN, Circular Road and JOHN WILLIAN MCCARTHY, Dublin and formerly Sligo Town. *May God grant them eternal rest and comfort and console their bereaved families and friends.*