

CHRISTMAS 2023



You will find a child wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger

**"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT"**

OUR CHRISTMAS WISH FOR YOU!

**"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our
sins to set us free . . ." (Galatians 1:3-4)**

**Fr. Peter Reilly P.P., Fr Mick Cullen, the Parish
Pastoral Council and all our Parish Volunteer Teams**

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE 2023

Saturday 23rd Vigil Mass: 6.00.p.m.

Sunday 24th Morning Masses: 9.30.a.m. and 11.30.a.m.

CHRISTMAS MASSES will be LIVE-STREAMED

Christmas Eve

Family Mass: 6.00.p.m.

Night Mass: 9.00.p.m.

Christmas Day

Morning Mass: 9.30.a.m.

Morning Mass: 11.30.a.m.



You can tune in with your family to any of these Masses

Christmas Week Daily Mass

Tue. 26th – Sat. 30th December: Morning Mass: 10.00.a.m.

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Vigil Mass: Sat 30th December: 6.00.p.m.

Sunday 31st December – Masses: 9.30.a.m. & 11.30.a.m.

New Year's Day – Monday, 1st January, 2024

Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God

World Day of Prayer for Peace

Morning Mass: 10.00.a.m.



Sacrament of Reconciliation Rite 1 (Confessional)

Saturdays 16th & 23rd December 10.30.a.m. – 12 noon & 5.20 – 5.50 p.m.

Tallaght Deanery Advent Penitential Service

The Deanery Advent Reconciliation Service (Celebration of God's Forgiveness with Communal Preparation and Individual Confession and Absolution - Rite 2 of the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be

at 7.30 pm in St Mary's Dominican Priory, Tallaght Village, on Monday 11th December with many priests available for the Individual Confession and Absolution. All are welcome to receive the Lord's Forgiveness before Christmas.

***Glory to God in the Highest Heaven
and on earth peace among people of good will . . .***

 **Parish of Firhouse**
CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Presbytery 1, 1 Ballycullen Avenue, Firhouse, Dublin, D24 DH6N

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Parish Office Opening Hours: Monday – Friday 9.30.am – 4.00.pm

November 2023

Dear Parishioner,

The peace and joy of the approaching Christmas Season be with you as we prepare to celebrate the great Christmas Feast of the Birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Despite the problems of the world, and there are many as I write, as a Christian people we are aware of the presence of the Lord God with us. As a people of faith and hope, therefore, we look forward to the future with optimism.

We are continuing the Building Hope Process in the Diocese of Dublin. As part of that, we are now in Parish Partnership with the Parishes of Bohernabreena/ Ballycullen and Aylesbury/Old Bawn. As a people of hope we are looking at how we can be the People of God in this present time.

As a parish we are presently finding it difficult keeping our head above water financially. Although we have come out of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the financial impact has continued and our overall income has dropped dramatically. With this in mind, any extra contributions or top-ups to the Family Offering Envelope or Standing Order would be very much appreciated. If you do not contribute to the Family Offering presently, you may like to do so. If so, please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements. Alternatively, you may like to use the 'Donate' button on our Parish Website to contribute to this and the other collections. If you traditionally contributed by the Family Offering Envelope, you may like to change to a Standing Order or use the Family Offering Button on the 'Donate' section on the Parish Website.

If you have recently moved into this parish and wish to have your name(s) added to our Parish Database, or if you wish to have your details deleted, please contact the Parish Office.

With every good wish, be careful and stay safe.

Peter J Reilly
Fr. Peter Reilly P.P.





***Wherever you are in prayer
Remember God is there!***

Prayer for Peace—Pope Francis

Lord God of peace hear our prayer!



We have tried so many times and over so many years to resolve our conflicts by our own powers and by the force of our arms. How many moments of hostility and darkness have we experienced; how much blood has been shed; how many lives have been shattered; how many hopes have been buried... But our efforts have been in vain.

Now, Lord, come to our aid! Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts, and give us the courage to say: "Never again war," "With war everything is lost." Instil in our hearts the courage to take concrete steps to achieve peace.

Lord, God of Abraham, God of the Prophets, God of Love, you created us and you call us to live as brothers and sisters. Give us the strength daily to be instruments of peace; enable us to see everyone who crosses our path as our brother or sister. Make us sensitive to the plea of our citizens who entreat us to turn our weapons of war into implements of peace, our trepidation into confident trust and our quarrelling into forgiveness.

Keep alive within us the flame of hope so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last, and may the words "division," "hatred" and "war" be banished from the heart of every man and woman. Lord, defuse the violence of our tongues and our hands. Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be "brother," and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam!

Amen.

An atheist is someone who does not yet know the love of God!

A CALL FOR PEACE FROM OUR BLESSED MOTHER IN MEDJUGORJE

Medjugorje, a parish in Bosnia-Herzegovina, is unique because here, every day for over forty years, Heaven has mysteriously opened and Mary, Mother of Jesus, Mother of God, Mother of the Catholic Church, has appeared face to face with people who grew up there. Always focusing their attention on her Son, Jesus, she has conversed with them, prayed with them, consoled them, encouraged them and given them many important messages both for themselves and to share with the world. This continued throughout the Yugoslavian communist era and the period of war that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia and continues in today's time of peace there. Extraordinary! Of the six original visionaries, five were teenagers and one was aged just ten when the apparitions began. All



are now in their fifties. Our Lady still appears to three of the visionaries every day, wherever they happen to be at the time, and to the others less often but at least once a year. She regularly asks us to pray, fast and offer sacrifices for peace. On 25th February, 2003 (20 years ago!) she said: *"Dear children! Also today I call you to pray and fast for peace. As I have already said and now repeat to you, little children, only with prayer and fasting can wars also be stopped. Peace is a precious gift from God. Seek, pray and you will receive it. Speak about peace and carry peace in your hearts."* On 20th October 2023, after hostilities had broken out between Palestine and Israel, she said in a special message: *"Dear children! Today I invite you to pray for peace. At this time, peace is threatened in a special way, and I ask you to renew fasting and prayer in your families and to encourage others to pray for peace. Dear children, I want you to understand the seriousness of the situation and that much of what will happen depends on your prayer and perseverance. Dear children, I am with you and I invite you to seriously start praying and fasting, Thank you for responding to my call!"* Then on 25th October the following was her monthly message: *"Dear children! Winds of evil, hatred and peacelessness are blowing through the earth to destroy lives. That is why the Most High sent me to you, to lead you towards the way of peace and unity with God and people. You, little children, are my extended hands: pray, fast and offer sacrifices for peace – the treasure for which every heart yearns. Thank you for having responded to my call."*



Why does she still need to ask us to pray and fast for peace? Maybe we have not been listening. What will it take before we do what she asks?

Whenever you are in prayer
Remember God is there!

Do Our Lives Have an impact on others?

How do our thoughts and our words, what we have done and what we have failed to do affect ourselves deep down and either directly or through a ripple-effect have an impact for better or worse on others too. St. Paul gives some guidance about love that might help us aim for higher standards . . .

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

- ***“Love is patient,*** (But am I patient and if not what are my priorities and do I need to change them?)
- ***love is kind.*** (But am I consistently kind to others and to myself?)
- ***It does not envy,*** (But do I wish for something that I would like to have and don't have but that someone else has?)
- ***it does not boast,*** (But do I show off what I do, or have, or rate myself better than others because of either?)
- ***it is not proud.*** (But do I give myself credit for what I have done or achieved or what I have as if it all came from just me?)
- ***It is not rude,*** (But am I always respectful of others encouraging and uplifting them and sensitive to what might upset them?)
- ***it is not self-seeking,*** (But am I greedy, focused on gathering things or benefits for myself?)
- ***it is not easily angered,*** (But do I get angry easily, and if so with whom and why, and is there a better way to resolve situations?)
- ***it keeps no account of wrongs.*** (But do I carry resentments even when I don't want to and does that really bring me peace?)
- ***Love takes no pleasure in evil,*** (But do I behave badly towards others or ignore evil or find it amusing rather than the opposite?)
- ***but rejoices in the truth.*** (But do I try to water down or camouflage the truth or get away with a “half-truth” and why?)
- ***It bears all things,*** (But do I face up to difficulties and challenges, seeing them as God's will or do I fear and run away from them?)
- ***believes all things,*** (But when things get difficult do I fall into doubt or deceive myself rather than remain honestly faithful?)
- ***hopes all things,*** (But am I pessimistic or optimistic, do I just grumble or complain or do I just “throw in the towel”?)
- ***endures all things.”*** (But do I rely on myself in difficult situations and risk buckling under pressure or do I rely on God's help?)

Rather than feel guilty about any of these things let's just acknowledge, confess and fix them . . . with God's help!

THE CRUCIFIX – THE BOOK OF LIFE

If you would like to know God, look at the Crucifix!
 If you would like to love God, look at the Crucifix!
 If you would like to serve God, look at the Crucifix!
 If you hope for eternal happiness, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder what you are worth, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much you are worth, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much God loves you, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much He wants you in heaven, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much He tries to prevent you from the yawning jaws of hell, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much He will help you to save your immortal soul, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much you should forgive others, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much you should do for the salvation of souls, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how much your faith demands of you, in humility, poverty, charity, meekness and every virtue, look at the Crucifix!
 If you want to know what unselfishness and generosity are, look at the Crucifix!
 If you wonder how far your own unselfishness should go to bring others to Christ, look at the Crucifix!
 If you want to understand the need for self-denial and mortification, look at the Crucifix!



A GOOD REASON TO LIVE BY HIGH STANDARDS?

1. *"My Jesus, can I be fool enough to live by any other standard than Yours? Let me embrace Your standards in my daily life. Though I may find life harder, I will not complain as long as I know that Your Will is guiding me. Through the Church and the Scriptures You promise to lead me to a happy judgement and a joyful eternity. I hope to be a loyal follower of Yours each day of my earthly life. Amen." . . .*
2. *"My child, follow My Will in your daily life, and you need never fear hell. In fact you have every reason to be joyful and merry if you are following My commandments and using My sacraments. Do not condemn yourself to hell by refusing to obey My directions. I love you dearly. Do not prevent Me from taking you to Heaven." . . .*
3. *"Hell is a fact. Christ, Our Lord, pointed this out time and again during His earthly life. Whoever rejects this fact is simply denying the word of Christ. He is God. He proved His divine power many times during and after His earthly life. His word is truth. He preached the truth of hell and continues to preach it today . . ."*
(Anthony J Paone S.J.: "My Daily Bread")

THE ROSARY



The Rosary is a powerful prayer to counter evil and rebuild faith in a world, which in many respects has lost its way. During the dark period of Penal Laws in Ireland, when priests were regularly killed, imprisoned or in hiding and Holy Mass was seldom celebrated apart from secretly on Mass rocks around the country, the Rosary helped fill the spiritual void and encouraged people to hold onto their faith and not abandon it.

The Rosary can be prayed by focusing on the words of the familiar prayers or by focusing on the amazing mysteries they commemorate and celebrate. While some people are plagued by distraction during the Rosary and some people consider it boring or tedious, by thinking of the mysteries involved or looking at images of them they can overcome these problems to a great extent.

If you find it difficult to say the Rosary on your own there are several options that can help:

1. On the [Firhouse Parish website](#) Home Page you can scroll down to the [Prayer Space](#) button and click on it, then select the third option [Prayer Videos](#) and then scroll down to the selection of Rosary videos. By tuning in to these videos and praying the Rosary as they play, it is much easier to stay focused.
2. After 10.00.a.m. Holy Mass on weekdays in Firhouse parish church (apart from Fridays when there is Eucharistic Adoration) a short version of the Rosary without “trimmings” is recited and anyone who wants to join it is most welcome.
3. Every Monday at 6.00.p.m. you can join the Rosary in the parish church (entrance by the parish office), primarily prayed for the return to faith of our children and grandchildren as well as other intentions.
4. A live Zoom “Rosary for Healing and Peace” is prayed every evening at 9.00.p.m. and can be accessed by anyone by smart phone or other device. The link to join this Rosary, either occasionally or more regularly, can be got by texting Seán at 086 8496460.

THE MYSTERIES

Mon. & Sat. – Joyful

The Annunciation to Mary
The Visitation to Elizabeth
The Nativity of Jesus
The Presentation in the Temple
The Finding in the Temple

Tue. & Fri. – Sorrowful

The Agony in the garden
The Scouring at the pillar
The Crowning with thorns
The Carrying of the cross
The Crucifixion of Jesus

Thur. – Mysteries of Light

The Baptism of Jesus
The Wedding feast at Cana
The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
The Transfiguration of Jesus
The Institution of the Eucharist

Wed. & Sun. – Glorious

The Resurrection of Jesus
The Ascension of Jesus
The Descent of the Holy Spirit
The Assumption of Our Lady
The Coronation of Our Lady