

# St. Fachtna's Parish Newsletter

2nd January 2011

Readings Sunday © C Weekday © 2 Psalter week

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We pray for our dead - and all whose anniversaries occur at this time. May they rest in peace.

## Church Services

### Masses this weekend and during the week

Date	Time	Intentions / Anniversaries this week
Sat Vigil 1st.	8:00 p.m.	Neilie & Julia Dennehy - Castletownbere
Sun 2nd.	10:30a.m.	John & Katie O'Sullivan & Maureen Mc Avoy
Mon 3rd.		
Tue 4th.	7:30 p.m.	Jack & Kit O'Shea - Faha West
Wed 5th.	8:00 p.m.	Vigil Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord Sr. Elizabeth Abbott - Dromgarvan & London (Month's Mind)
Thu 6th.	10:30 a.m.	Holyday of Obligation Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord Patrick & Mary T. O'Sullivan - Roosk
Fri 7th.	7:30 p.m.	Deceased members of the O'Sullivan - Downey Family

### Masses next weekend

Sat 8th.	8:00 p.m.	Ronnie O'Shea - Faha West
Sun 9th.	10:30 a.m.	Deceased members of the O'Sullivan - Coomgira
Confessions		Before weekend Masses or any time on request

### Prayer for These Times

*Loving God, in these disturbing days, meet us in our fear and hear our prayer: to be a tower of strength amidst the shifting sands, and a light in the darkness; help us receive your gift of peace, and fix our hearts where true joys are to be found, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*May you have God's abundant blessings of love, care and peace throughout 2011*

### Christmas Dues

Please remember to hand in your Christmas Dues this weekend and next weekend. **Any parishioners who have dues outstanding please submit them as well.** Thank you.

### Items for the Newsletter by Thursday

Items for the Newsletter can now be received by email at the following email address: [adrigoleparish@gmail.com](mailto:adrigoleparish@gmail.com)  
Please include you name and a contact phone number for clarification if needs be.

### The Deep End - God leaps into the world

The entrance antiphon for today's Mass taken from the Book of Wisdom, talks of the Word leaping down from heaven to earth. "When peaceful silence lay all over, and night had run half of her swift course, your all-powerful word, O Lord, leaped down from heaven, from the royal throne"

It is a lovely image to describe how eagerly the divine presence moves towards us, as if God can't wait to be present on earth with his people. Today's First Reading talks about Wisdom 'pitching a tent' and 'taking root' in Israel. It is this very mystery we reflect on in today's Mass and in the Christmas season, the mystery of God's presence with people.

The Gospels are rich with attempts to put into words the mystery of the incarnation, of God taking on human form. Today we hear from the beginning of the Gospel, often described as the most 'theological' of the Gospels. Rather than beginning with stories of the birth of Jesus, the Gospel of John opens with a prologue that leaves us in little doubt as to who Jesus is and where he came from: he is the eternal word who became flesh, the divine saviour, the light of the world.

This 'word' here is not simply a spoken word, but comes from the Greek *logos*, the principle of reason that gives order to everything. John identifies the word with God: 'the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. Jesus is the one who brings this divine life into the world.

Triona Doherty

### Collectors for the Month of January

**Vigil Mass:** Donal O'Reilly, Faha,  
Gerard McCarthy, Curragh  
**Morning:** Partick O'Neill, Droumlave.  
Patrick Jim O'Sullivan, Roosk

### Special Collection this Weekend Needs of the Holy land

### A Reflection for the feast of the Epiphany

"Heavens' embroidered cloths"

In his poem 'He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven', WB Yeats describes the skies as 'the heavens' embroidered cloths':

*"Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,  
Enwrought with golden and silver light,  
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths  
Of night and light and the half-light.'  
How often do we look up to the sky  
and take account of its stars and clouds,  
its changing colours?"*

From the very beginning of the Old Testament, there are stories of God acting through nature - from the pillars of cloud and fire that guided the Israelites out of Egypt, to the parting of the Red Sea. Through the central events of the history of salvation, God has been there to guide his people to freedom.

In today's Gospel it is the star that leads the wise men to Jesus. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage,' they say. When the star halts over where Jesus is, it fills them with delight. They fall to their knees before him, offering up their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The hero of Yeats' poem has no such gifts to offer, not 'the heavens' embroidered cloths' nor the elaborate riches of kings; he has only his dreams.

*'But I, being poor, have only my dreams;  
I have spread my dreams under your feet.  
Tread softly, because you tread on my dreams.'*

### On the Back Page

**Statement on the economic situation in Ireland by the Irish Bishops' Conference**  
*"In Helping each other, there is Hope"*

### Altar Society this week

Mary Corkery, Bridie Abbott, Mary O'Sullivan (Inch) & Mary O'Sullivan (Chounshanavoe)

**Statement on the economic situation in Ireland by the Irish Bishops' Conference**  
***"In Helping each other, there is Hope"***

The scheduled Winter 2010 General Meeting of the Irish Bishops' Conference was postponed last week due to bad weather. In its place a special one day meeting was held today in Maynooth. Bishops Issued the following statement on the economic situation in Ireland:

As we meet today we are conscious that the recent dramatic events in our national economy have given rise to exceptional levels of fear, anger and disillusionment. Demands for assistance with basic things like food, fuel and clothing from organisations such as Saint Vincent de Paul are up as much as 35% from this time last year. In Northern Ireland, the number presenting as homeless has almost doubled in the past six years, while in the Republic it has doubled in the past sixteen years. Organisations working with the homeless are expressing concern about their ability to respond to the level of need. The spectre of high levels of unemployment confronts our nation once again, with its demoralising impact on individuals and communities and the upheaval of emigration facing many Irish families. Large numbers of people have also become weighed down by unexpected levels of debt, the fear of losing their home, the prospect of losing their job, the dread of their business failing or the impact of cuts to their pay, pension or benefits. In many homes across the country the outward appearance of wealth and comfort masks exceptional levels of anxiety and material need.

Faced with these challenges it would be easy to descend into a culture of negativity, defeatism and despair. While important questions have to be asked about how this situation has arisen, a preoccupation with blame and recrimination alone would be futile and distract from the urgent task of building a more just,

sustainable and prosperous future. We believe the inevitable pain of the current situation should be shared justly, with a special concern for the most vulnerable and least well off.

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, St. Paul appeals: "Encourage one another and build one another up ... For this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess. 5:11,13). As Christian leaders, we echo this call to the Irish people today. As we prepare for the coming of 'God-with-us', in the celebration of Christmas, we pray for a spirit of national solidarity and hope. We pray for a renewal of confidence in our ability to work together for the good of all and to address the adverse circumstances that confront our nation at this time. The people of Ireland have always shown resilience when faced with situations of great challenge in the past. We believe in our ability as a nation to address the challenges that confront us now. We also recognise that in an interdependent global economy, addressing our present economic difficulties involves responsible cooperation with European as well as other international governments and institutions. This engagement is part of a wider solidarity in which we participate, both as contributors and recipients, in the development of the global common good. Our current financial circumstances do not remove our responsibility as a nation to provide assistance to others. We express the hope that Ireland will maintain its renowned and respected commitment to international development aid.

One of the strongest grounds for hope is that Ireland is blessed with people of extraordinary generosity, good neighbourliness and social concern. Knowing that someone cares, that someone is willing to listen and help can mean as much to a person or family in financial distress as the help they receive with material needs. There is no substitute for good neighbourliness and

human friendship. We take this opportunity to appeal for a new mobilisation of good neighbourliness and practical care for others in our local communities, of people giving generously of their time and talents as well as their money and goods to tackle poverty and social exclusion. We ask people to become involved in the many Parish organisations, such as their local Society of St. Vincent de Paul, that provide vital support to those enduring hardship as part of the Christian mission of a Parish community. Mindful of the practice of the early Church of the sharing of goods so that no-one was in need (Acts 2:44), we ask individuals and parishes to reflect on how they can contribute to a practical 'communion of goods' at this time, sharing with others not only money but also food, clothing and other material goods they are not using or have to spare.

The elderly are among the most vulnerable in any community. Spending time with the elderly and ensuring that they are safe, warm and receiving sufficient food and other necessities is also a vital expression of our Christian neighbourliness and solidarity.

Our relationship with God and with each other gives us strength for the future. Prayer and solidarity are an essential part of hope. In Advent we pray for the coming of one 'who will reign as true king and be wise, practising honesty and integrity in the land' (Jer. 23:5). On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2011, the first Sunday of the New Year, the Gospel of St John will proclaim that the 'light has come into the world, the true light that gives light to everyone', a light which the darkness has not overcome. We ask Parishes across the country, North and South, to dedicate this first Sunday of the New Year to prayer for the needs of our whole island at this time. We ask them to pray for politicians, civil servants, economists and those who order our commercial, economic and financial life that they will receive the

wisdom and courage to build our economic future on the principles of justice, solidarity and the common good with a particular concern for the vulnerable and the poor. Christian leaders will be coming together to plan additional days of prayer across the island in the months ahead. We encourage the political community itself and all Irish citizens to rally the human, social, intellectual and spiritual resources of our country in a united effort to build our financial economy and ensure it achieves its human and social ends.

In responding constructively to the present crisis we have an opportunity to build an economy in which profit and growth are at the service of people, an economy which brings benefit to all our citizens, especially the children of our nation, the elderly and the most vulnerable. As Ireland prepares to host the Fiftieth International Eucharistic Congress in 2012, let us acknowledge our urgent need for 'Communion with Christ and with one another' the theme of the Congress. It is in such communion and solidarity that there is real cause for hope.

**Prayer for the New Year**

**O** God of new beginnings and wonderful surprises, thank you for the gift of a new year. May it be a time of grace for me, a time to grow in faith and love, a time to renew my commitment to following Your Son, Jesus.

**May** it be a year of blessing for me, a time to cherish my family and friends, a time to renew my efforts at work, a time to embrace my faith more fully.

**Walk** with me, please, in every day and every hour of this New Year that the light of Christ might shine through me, in spite of my weakness and failings.

**Above** all, may I remember this year that I am a pilgrim on the sacred path to You.