

# Ardmore Parish Newsletter

**SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER 2020**

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

## **Advent 7pm daily evening Services at St Mary's Church, Ardmore**

Advent Season is a season of great expectation and hope at good news in many level this 2020 year.

There is the recent hope of the vaccine to assist all from the Covid 19 infection. This year has been a different year from many others at many levels in our lives. This year has indeed been a time to reflect more deeply on life's journeying and our safety at more than one level, covid 19 yes, but also on the nature of our life's journeying.

At a deeper level there is in the Advent season a greater expectation and Christian hope given to us by Christ's birth celebrated. To mark this expectant joy and hope which our Saviour brings to our lives, and to enable us to live life at a deeper level than superficial, we through each of the 7pm daily services at Ardmore, are preparing ourselves spiritually, to look at life under a different lense than maybe we have been for a long time.

The daily 7pm services are approx. 30mins or less. Feel free to participate through social media, if not able to attend physically in these evenings via Church Media. T.V. or on the Ardmore Parish Web page with Facebook.

## **GOSPEL: PREPARE A WAY FOR THE LORD (ST MARK 1:1-18)**

Fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament, John the Baptist was the one sent as the messenger of God to announce the coming of the Messiah. We are told in St Mark's Gospel today that John appeared 'in the wilderness' preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

There may be times when we find ourselves in a 'wilderness' in our faith journey and, perhaps, based on what might be going on in our lives, we may feel lost, or even deserted by God. Advent, starting at the beginning of a new liturgical year, is a great opportunity for us to embark on a fresh journey that will get us back on a straight path of true discipleship. To do so, we ask God today for the grace and inner strength to respond positively to the call of John the Baptist to the people for repentance and conversion in heart and mind. We pray that our renewal will draw, not just ourselves, but others, out of the wilderness on to the path that leads to the everlasting Light of Christ.

- **First Reading**

*Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11*

Isaiah tells the people to prepare a way for the Lord.

- **Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 85:9-14*

The Lord's salvation is near.

- **Second Reading**

*2 Peter 3:8-14*

Peter teaches that we must always be holy because the return of the Lord cannot be predicted.

- **Gospel Reading**

*Mark 1:1-8*

John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized the people, in preparation for the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

## **6 DECEMBER, FEAST DAY OF ST NICHOLAS, PATRON SAINT OF CHILDREN**

*Loving God, we pray through the intercession of St Nicholas  
that You will guide and protect our children. Keep them safe from all harm.*

*Help them grow to become loving disciples of Jesus in Your sight.*

*Give them strength to always mature into deeper faith I You,  
and to keep alive joy in Your creation.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

***St Nicholas, pray for us.***

**Season of Advent:** An Advent wreath symbolises this season. The wreath is made of evergreen or holly. The origins of the Advent wreath are obscure, but it is said it was a family custom widely practised in northern Europe during the 19th century. It is a simple way to start a tradition of family prayer in the home. The wreath is the shape of a circle which represents eternity, since a circle has no beginning or no end. Like God's love, which is everlasting. The evergreen, which is always green, illustrates life, growth, hope and the never changingness of God. There are five candles on the wreath, three purple, one pink and one white in the centre. This weekend we light the second purple candle continuing our journey in anticipation of the birth of the Christ-child.

Advent is the season four Sundays before Christmas in which we prepare for the coming of Christ. The word Advent comes from the Latin word 'adventus', which means 'coming'. Advent is a time of waiting, conversion and of hope. Advent has a two-fold character - it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities' of the Christmas Season, in which the first coming of the Son of God to humanity is

remembered, and in its turn in anticipation of Christ's Second coming at the end of time. (Advent Season - Year B)

Join the journey through Advent this year at [www.catholicbishops.ie/advent-calendar](http://www.catholicbishops.ie/advent-calendar) ***'Lord our God, help us to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son. May He find us waiting, eager in joyful prayer. 'Come, Lord Jesus'.***

**Prayer Resources for Advent:** A series of Prayer resources for Advent has been created by the Diocese, in conjunction with the Northern Pastoral Network and the Catechetical Centre, for family prayer at home during the season of Advent as we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. These resources contain lots of creative ideas and tips to help families and parishes during Prayer resources for Advent the Season of Advent. A family prayer booklet has been compiled specifically with families in mind. The Gospel for each Sunday of Advent is accompanied by a family activity, prayers and a reflection. The booklet can be downloaded at this link: <https://www.derrydiocese.org/news/advent-prayer-service-for-use-at-home> Family activities for Advent including prayers, how to create a Jesse Tree, an Advent Wreath and lots more are available to view on the Catechetical Centre website at: <https://catecheticalcentre.org/family-resources/preparing-our-hearts-for-christmas-adventresources>.

**An Advent Prayer** - Lord Jesus, you came among us, to share our humanity and transform our lives. We are people of hope and joy, because we know You will always be with us. Encouraging and supporting us in every part of our lives. We will never be alone again. We want to prepare our minds and hearts to celebrate your coming, in a spirit of gratitude for all you have done and continue to do for us. Send your Holy Spirit to us, so we can spend these weeks of preparation thinking about what your coming among us truly means. And about the mystery of your love for us, which surpasses all our hopes and expectations. Amen.

**Sacraments of Initiation:** [MyFaith.ie](http://MyFaith.ie) is a parish-based programme of preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. It releases new modules every two weeks or so as the children and their families prepare for the Sacraments. Each module begins with a short lesson - for parents - on the content of that module before the next item, a taught lesson for the children. The programme is highly interactive and learning is reinforced through challenges, quizzes and interactive games which are scored but can be repeated indefinitely. This is offered to parents/guardians as a format of instruction during the pandemic.

**Face Coverings/Numbers at Services:** The wearing of face coverings are now mandatory upon entering and leaving the church. Some people are exempt from the wearing of face coverings, even in situations which would otherwise be mandatory. Please continue to observe social distancing, to use the hand sanitiser on entering and leaving each of our churches. Also, with immediate effect the

number of people who can attend funerals and weddings are restricted to twenty-five people.

**Diocesan Paper 'The Net':** The December edition of The Net is now available online, on [www.derrydiocese.org](http://www.derrydiocese.org). As always, it features a wide variety of news, interesting and inspiring interviews, articles and photos from parishes across the diocese. You are invited to read The Net, on the diocesan website, at your convenience.

**ACCORD Virtual Interactive Marriage Preparation Programme - 2021**  
Course Dates: 12th/ 13th January 9th/ 10th February and 9th/ 10th March.  
Booking now online at [www.accordni.com](http://www.accordni.com).

**Sisters from the St. Elisabeth Convent:** (Minsk, Belarus) are launching the very first Online Christmas Market, so that people from all over the world can purchase Christmas presents and souvenirs made with love and continuous prayer. Please, click here to participate: <https://catalog.obitel-minsk.com/christmas-market> Every item purchased at the Online Market is a donation towards one of the Convent's ministries.

## **Radio Maria**

Thank God and sincere thanks also to our many listeners and supporters as Radio Maria Ireland continues to grow. As an Irish-run Catholic Talk-Radio Station we enjoy commercial free broadcasting – Prayer, Catechesis, Uplifting Music, Talks, Interviews and Testimonies – do join our growing faith family! Here's how you can listen:

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5. Via Phone – get live radio feed by calling +353 (0) 1 437 3277 (no extra charges apply)

Why not drop a line to our Priest Director, Fr. Eamonn McCarthy, or come and pay us a visit at Radio Maria Ireland, St. Anthony's Business Park, Ballymount Road, Dublin 22.

*Advent Christina Georgina Rossetti*

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,  
These Advent nights are long;  
Our lamps have burned year after year,  
And still their flame is strong.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" we cry,  
Heart-sick with hope deferred:  
"No speaking signs are in the sky,"  
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,  
The servants watch within;  
The watch is long betimes and late,  
The prize is slow to win.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" but still  
His answer sounds the same:  
"No daybreak tops the utmost hill,  
Nor pale our lamps of flame."

One to another hear them speak,  
The patient virgins wise:  
"Surely He is not far to seek,"—  
"All night we watch and rise."  
"The days are evil looking back,  
The coming days are dim;  
Yet count we not His promise slack,  
But watch and wait for Him."