

PARISH OF TERMONAMONGAN (AGHYARAN)

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SUNDAY 10 JANUARY 2021 – BAPTISM OF THE LORD: GOSPEL – ST MARK 1:7-11

The Baptism of Jesus was a defining moment in His life, marking the start of His public ministry. When we receive the Sacrament of Baptism, it too is a defining moment in our lives – the beginning of a life-long journey of growing as members of the Body of Christ, and growing in responsibility as members of the family of the Church. In celebrating the Baptism of the Lord today, we reflect on how we, as adults, live out our responsibilities as baptised Catholics.

We pray the blessings of the Christ-Child on the children of our parish who were baptised in the last year and for their parents and Godparents, that they will be guided by the Holy Spirit in the responsibilities they have undertaken.

MASS SCHEDULE FOR THE REMAINDER OF JANUARY

As you are probably already aware, our churches are closed, once again, for public worship. While they are scheduled to reopen on Saturday 6th February, there will be a review at the end of January. Churches will remain open for private prayer. You are welcome to call in and to light a candle. We continue to remember each other in prayer in these very worrying times.

Weekend Masses in St Patrick's, Aghyaran

Vigil 7.30pm (every Saturday)

Sunday morning 11.00am (17 and 31 January).

Weekday Masses: Tuesday 10.00am, Thursday 10.00am.

You are invited to participate in these masses via webcam: www.parishofaghyaran.com

Weekend Masses in St Patrick's, Castlederg will be as follows: Vigil 6.00pm (every Saturday)

Sunday 11.00am (10 and 24 January)

Weekday Masses in St Patrick's, Castlederg: Monday, 7.30pm, Friday, 10.00am

You are invited to participate in these Masses by webcam: www.castledergparish.com

THANK YOU for your generosity in last week's collection which amounted to **£623** and the Church Restoration Fund Collection totalled **£516** Envelopes can continue to be left through the door of the Parochial House

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU In this past week Veronica and Danny Dolan marked a milestone in their service of the Parish. For the past 40 years they have looked after the church and overseen everything that has taken place in it. Everyone who visits this church remarks on its beauty and on the way it is kept. I would like to thank Danny and Veronica on behalf of the whole parish community for their commitment and to congratulate them on the fabulous work they continue to do every day.

Please note, I will continue to be available at the Parochial House, as normal. Please feel free to contact me. While there will be no routine visitation of the sick, I can do house calls, by arrangement, in the case of an emergency or where there is a particular worry or concern.

'YEAR OF ST JOSEPH'

In a new Apostolic Letter "Patris Corde" ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis marks the 150th anniversary of the declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church by proclaiming a "Year of St Joseph" (8 December 2020 - 8 December 2021). The Holy Father wrote *Patris Corde* against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of "ordinary" people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble St Joseph, "the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence" who, nonetheless, played "an incomparable role in the history of salvation." At the conclusion of his Letter, the Holy Father encourages us to pray this Prayer to St Joseph:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

To you God entrusted His only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life.

Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.

NEXT SUNDAY, 17th January, is the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time. The Gospel we will listen to is St John 1:35-42: 'Come and see'. You can access the Readings on catholicbishops.ie/readings.

**Statement issued by the Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland:
“As many people as possible *stay at home* for the sake of health, life
and the Common Good”**

“Faith and prayer can be a tremendous support to individuals and society during these difficult times”

Statement

Following further briefing today by the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Officer, and in consultation with The Executive Office, we are very concerned at the current serious public health position in which Northern Ireland finds itself: with the extremely high level of transmission of the Covid-19 virus; the continuing escalation of numbers in hospital and intensive care; the number of associated deaths; and, the increasingly unsustainable pressure on our healthcare staff. The clear message from health officials is that this situation is going to worsen significantly over the coming weeks.

We recognise the efforts of so many in our parishes who have been working to ensure that our gatherings for public worship are as safe as possible and we welcome the continuing engagement between the faith communities and the NI Executive which has led to consensus between us on the importance of people being able to gather in person for worship. At this time, however, we acknowledge and support the unequivocal message from public health authorities that the movement and gathering of people should be minimised and that as many people as possible *stay at home* for the sake of health, life and the Common Good.

In light of our ongoing consultations and of the current serious and worsening situation, and in line with clear public health guidance that people should *stay at home*, we have decided that for a limited period (from midnight on Thursday 7 January until Saturday 6 February 2021, subject to review in late January), the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgies should take place without the physical presence of the faithful - with the exception of marriage, funeral, baptismal liturgies and drive-in services (subject to regulations). Arrangements for recording and/or livestreaming, and making individual visits for private prayer are also permissible in accordance with regulations. We encourage parishes, where possible, to continue to broadcast the celebration of Mass - and other devotions and prayer services - online and on other media, knowing that faith and prayer can be a tremendous support to individuals and society during these difficult times.

We make this decision reluctantly, conscious that not being able to gather for public worship can cause pain for all the faithful, but in the hope that this limited period of sacrifice will be for the protection of life and health and for the greater good of all. We once more ask for prayers for the sick, the bereaved and all those whose livelihoods have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. We keep in our prayers all health workers, carers, chaplains and other essential workers. We welcome the announcement that a similar position is being taken by the leaders of the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland and many other denominations and faith communities in response to the unequivocal message from public health authorities that as many people as possible stay at home at this time.

Most Rev Eamon Martin DD

*Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of All-Ireland
Apostolic Administrator of Dromore*

Most Rev Noel Treanor DD

Bishop of Down and Connor

Most Rev Donal McKeown DD

Bishop of Derry

Most Rev Larry Duffy DD

Bishop of Clogher

Most Rev Michael Router DD

Auxiliary Bishop of Armagh