

Christmas Wonder

Priests often count the number of years they have served in a parish by the number of Christmastimes that they have spent there. I can't believe that this Christmas is my fourth Christmas in Cabinteely. It makes me realise how fleeting is our time on this Earth. I am a pilgrim who is passing through and who will ultimately not be rooted here. There is a great freedom that comes from being a wandering soul who is on a journey of discovery, a journey in faith towards our real homeland.

Always at Christmas, I am filled with that sense of mystery and wonder. One gets that sense of wonder in Patrick Kavanagh's poem "A Christmas Childhood":

Outside in the cow-house my mother
Made the music of milking;
The light of her stable-lamp was a star
And the frost of Bethlehem made it twinkle.

Somehow, at this time, the ordinary events are extraordinary because the birth of Jesus changes everything. I truly love Christmas because it brings me back to the basics of why I am a priest and why I still remain a priest when it is so counter cultural. We believe that God so loved us and has such a great plan for humanity and all life that God became fully human and took on the vulnerability of an infant and embraced the human condition. The God who created this wondrous universe became a tiny infant. Wow! We will never fully understand or appreciate the profound love that God has for us and the great possibilities God sees in each one of us and in humanity itself. We have within us such an ability to love and to challenge the way we structure society on this planet.

May I express my deepest thanks to all of you who continue to support our parish in these challenging times. In particular, I would like to express my thanks to those who have and who continue to support our efforts to renovate our beautiful St Brigid's Church. May I wish you a very peaceful and wonder-filled Christmas and every blessing for the journey of 2020.

Fr. Aquinas T Duffy



Christmas Services 2019

Christmas Penitential Service 2019

7.30pm – Wednesday, 11th December, in Johnstown Parish

7.30pm – Tuesday, 17th December, in Foxrock Parish

Please note there is no penitential service in St. Brigid's Church, Cabinteely

CHRISTMAS VIGIL at Cabinteely – 24th December

5 pm Parish Church – Families with young children

6.30pm The Park Mass Centre – Families with young children

8.00 pm Parish Church – Carols @ 7.30pm

CHRISTMAS DAY at Cabinteely – 25th DECEMBER

10.00am Parish Church – Choir

12.30pm Parish Church – Gospel Group

On St. Stephen's Day, Thursday 26th, and on Friday 27th, morning Mass will be at 11am.

No morning Mass on Saturday 28th. On Monday & Tuesday, 30th & 31st December,

Mass is at 10am. The Parish Office closes on Monday, 23rd December, and re-opens on

Thursday, 2nd January 2020.

**A VERY HAPPY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS FROM THE
ST. BRIGID'S PARISH TEAM.**

St. Brigid's choir at Christmastime

It is almost 25 years since the present St. Brigid's choir made its debut, and since that time it has enhanced the liturgy both at Sunday mass and at the major ceremonies and liturgical celebrations during the year. Christmas is a very special time for our choir, as each year it prepares a programme of music which adds greatly to the Christmas celebrations in St. Brigid's. Christmas is a time of nostalgia and a time for traditions, and we never seem to tire of them. In fact, we look forward to those rituals and traditions of the festive season, including the tradition of carol singing. Carols such as 'Adeste Fideles' and 'Hark the Herald Angels' are firm favourites and guaranteed to lift our

spirits as we celebrate the Saviour's birth. In contrast, 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' and 'Silent Night', to name just a few, help us to reflect, contemplate and meditate on the Christmas story. But perhaps the piece of music which so many look forward to hearing at Christmas each year is the 'Cantique de Noel', otherwise known as 'O Holy Night'. The piece was composed by French composer Adolphe Adam in 1850 to original French lyrics and subsequently translated into the English version we are so familiar with today. 'O Holy Night' is a reflection on the birth of Jesus and his coming on earth as Saviour of all, in a musical setting for solo voice and chorus.

Once again St. Brigid's choir will play its part in the Christmas musical tradition this year with its programme of Christmas carols and music for the liturgies and, of course, its very own rendition of 'O Holy Night'. The choir will sing at the vigil mass on Christmas Eve, with carol singing before mass, followed by the 10am mass on Christmas morning. We look forward, once again, to raising our voices in celebration of this most wonderful time of the year and invite our parishioners and the many visitors to St. Brigid's over Christmastime to join us in making it a truly musical celebration.

Tara Bolger



A word from Tomás

I started volunteering in Cabinteely parish in 2011, manning the desk in the parish centre on Friday afternoons from 2pm till 5pm. Before that I was in the gospel choir, which I joined in 2010, and before I joined the gospel choir I was doing the collections in the church. Now I am part of the Sacristan Support Team. Before the support team was set up, I would give former Sacristan Liam O'Lonergain a hand at the different masses at Easter and Christmas. I would like to thank Liam and Fr Arthur for giving me the opportunity to help out during their time in the parish. When Ken Heffernan came to the parish, he set up the Sacristan Support Team. It's great to be part of that team as it helps bring you more closer to God, and it's also great to see what goes on in the background and to play a role in it. If you're interested in joining the team (and the more people we get the better), please give your name to Ken. Training will be given by Ken, and it involves duty just once a month when Ken is off.

Tomás Murphy



Care for our common home in Cabinteely

In his recent encyclical **Laudato Si – Care for our Common Home**, Pope Francis explores the moral and spiritual challenges of confronting the worldwide ecological crisis. He asks us to be mindful that "our vocation as Christians is to be protectors of God's handiwork... this is essential to a life of virtue. It is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience." We want to invite our community to explore where we can make a start.

One way we can begin is by recognising the people on the ground (literally!) in our parish community who have already made significant steps to address and take responsibility for caring for our local environment. For example, thanks to the hard work and focus of those who work in the Parish Pastoral Centre, our parish grounds include two water butts, two bicycle racks, a compost heap, a beautiful garden to the back of the community centre and new planting to the front of the church that is flourishing under the care of our dedicated parish team.

Recently our Pastoral Council received an inspirational email from a member of our Tidy Towns Committee which helped us realise how the local committee is already a valuable witness to so many of Pope Francis's themes in **Laudato Si**:

"I joined Cabinteely Tidy Towns as a volunteer nearly ten years ago and brought with me no outdoor or gar-

dening skills and such scant knowledge of nature and the natural environment that I even wondered if I'd be allowed in! But what rewards I've received by working alongside a group of enthusiastic, energetic and fun volunteers who've shared their appreciation of the wonder and beauty of nature, the environment and wild and plant life so very freely. Getting a job done is important to us but having a catch up, a chat and a well-earned coffee together after is equally important to the group – caring for the environment and caring for community and friends are naturally intertwined in our work."

The efforts of our Tidy Towns Committee over many years have resulted in many prime awards at the National Tidy Towns Competition and we cannot fail to notice the beauty of improved planting, bio-diverse and sustainable projects and community outreach now in place due to their ongoing commitment. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Cabinteely Tidy Towns volunteers.

And further volunteers are always most welcome – even an hour when time permits is so helpful. What better way to start to put Pope Francis's words in **Laudato Si** into action in our local parish! The Tidy Towns Committee can be contacted through their website at cabinteelytidytowns.com

Mary Delaney Chair, Parish Pastoral Council



Cabinteely Gospel Group presents a cheque for €3,000, the proceeds of their concert in St Brigid's church in June, to Fr Aquinas as a contribution to the cost of the church refurbishment. Thanks to all of them for this very successful fundraiser.



Harry Peter Anderson, baptised on 10 November, with his parents.



Ryan Daniel Monaghan, baptised on 16 November, with his parents and godparents. Ryan is a grandchild of **Marian Monaghan** in the Parish Office.



Isabelle Ruth Glynn, baptised on 10 November, with her parents and family.



Cabinteely Tidy Towns volunteers on the Bray Road.