

Nollaig Shona Daoibh



Christmas 2016

The Birth of Christ Within Me

What good is it to me
If this eternal birth of the divine Son
Takes place unceasingly
But does not take place within myself?

And

What good is it to me
If Mary is full of grace
And if I am not also full of grace?
What good is it to me
For the Creator to give birth to the Son
If I do not give birth to him

In my time
And my culture?

This, then,
Is the fullness of time:
When the Son God is begotten
In us

(Meister Eckhart OP 1260-1327)

Throughout the season of Advent, the Church has reflected on God's promises, made through the prophets, to send a saviour to the people of Israel who would be Emmanuel, that is, God with us. "The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light: on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone" (Isaiah 9:1). In proclaiming these words on Christmas night, the liturgy is reminding of God's light shining in our world of sin and darkness.

When the Cold War ended, people believed that the world had become a safer place. But new conflicts have arisen. Syria has been engaged in a civil war for nearly five years. More than 250,000 people have been killed, 11 million people displaced and more than four million people have left their country. Hospitals and schools have been bombed.

We see injustices committed against the seriously threatened communities of the Middle East, in areas where there have been Christian communities since the first century.

Desperate people who have been driven out of the homes by war are forced to make dangerous journeys seeking sanctuary. Yet many countries are closing their borders and putting up barbed wire. The dreadful events in France have deeply shocked people: the horrific attacks in Nice on Bastille day,

People now feel there is no place safe from terrorists' attacks.

Who is this Child whose birth we celebrate at Christmas? The prophet Isaiah spoke about the one who would come as "Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace". These titles indicate somebody of great power.

Here in Ireland, even in recovering economy, we can see many injustices. As disciples of a poor and vulnerable Saviour we are challenged to care and

love the poor. As Christians, we also need to challenge the causes of poverty.

Looking at the Church in Ireland today we are certainly in a period of decline. We have falling congregations. We see few teenagers in church. Those falling away are unlikely to return. The Church has lost many of the debates on the social, moral, and cultural issues of our day. The power and influence of the Church has declined and its voice is regularly ignored with inevitable shrugging aside of values which are considered to be obsolete and restrictive. The visit of Pope Francis in 2018 will be significantly different in style from that of Pope John Paul II in 1979. While we are in a period of decline, we must not lose hope. But if there is to be a new springtime for the Church we need people who are committed disciples. People are inspired by those who prove themselves credible witnesses. The message of Christmas surprises us because it turns many accepted values upside down.

The four weeks of Advent are meant to be a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We are called to prepare the way of the Lord. We watch and reflect on who we are. We are to keep awake looking and listening to the God who is always coming to us. We look for Christ in all the unexpected places of everyday life, in the poor, the homeless and the needy. But we are often trapped in the busyness of life, shopping, buying presents, parties, cooking, travelling, visiting, and decorating.

When we speak of the Christmas story we think of the principal characters, Mary, Joseph, Jesus, angels, shepherds, and the wise men. But where do we place ourselves in the Christmas story? For if Christ is not born in the everyday circumstances of our lives, he is not born anywhere. What are the circumstances of our lives? What concerns us? Maybe we have suffered loss, and are experiencing emptiness and lack of meaning, perhaps we are holding guilt and resentment. No matter what the circumstances of our lives, the Child lying in the manger gives us new hope, new possibilities, and new life. Anytime your life has been nourished or you have offered or received forgiveness or whenever you experienced a deeper meaning to your life or because you are loved not because of what you have done but simply because you are you: then it's Christmas and Christ has been born in your place and in your life.

"We are all meant to be mothers of God...for God is always needing to be born."

— Meister Eckhart

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PARISH OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The Parish Office closes at on
Friday 23rd December 2016 at 1.00pm and will
reopen after the Christmas break on Tuesday
3rd January 2017 at 9.30pm.

THANK YOU'S...

As this is the final edition of the Parish Newsletter for 2016, sincere thanks to Eddie Brennan for distribution of Parish Newsletters in all weathers.

To John Wilson for all his work putting the newsletter together.

To Graph Print. A big thank you to all our newsletter distributors who week after week give so much of their time, thank you also to our many kind sponsors. The Parish Newsletter is an important way of communicating the week to week events of the life of the Parish, so we really do appreciate your support. The newsletter will return on the weekend of the January 14th/15th. 2017.

Patricia Dunne. Parish Secretary.

Patricia Dunne, Parish Secretary.

The Priests of the Parish will visit the sick
and housebound before the Christmas.

Rest in Peace



From December 2015 to December 2016. The following:
Brendan Brennan: Betty Perry: Joan Malone: Mark Buckley:
Laurence Leniston: Ronnie Regan: Patrick Kelly: Peter
Dunne: Patricia Walsh: Jim Mc Donnell: Christina Mullen: Phil
O'Brien: Ann Mealy: Edward Quinn: Paddy Dolan: Paddy
White: Paddy Shadlow: Mildred Askin: Phyllis Keegan: June
Kelly: Des Byrne: Tony Kane: Margaret Hennessy: Declan
Huet: Mary Stokes: Joe Connolly: Mary Maher: Alan Galvin:
Michael Walsh: John Howe: Rosaleen Weldon: Bernard
Begley: Michael Feery: Maura Burke: Tony Cleary: Patrick
Byrne: Catherine Kenny: Noel Halpin: Betty Ingle: John
Boland: Rose O'Sullivan: Michelle Daly: Anthony Lynch: Tony
Delaney: Elizabeth Fogarty: Betty Byrne: Berni Murdoff:
James Bermingham: Anthony Byrne: Paddy Tuite: James
Quinn: May they rest in Peace.

CHRISTMAS DUES

There is only one collection at all Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day which is the Christmas Dues collection for the support of the priests of the parish and the diocese. Thank you.

CURRENT NEWS

Many thanks to Eileen Nolan for organising the Parish Christmas Lunch, which was held in the Old Mill on Wednesday December 14th. It was as usual a great success for the Parish.

News Flash.... News Flash

There will be no Lotto draw on Sunday,
25th December 2016 & Sunday, 1st
January 2017
The Lotto returns on Sunday, 8th
January 2017

The Parish Lotto Committee would like to wish you all a happy Christmas and to thank you for your continued support throughout the year as part of our fundraising efforts. The proceeds of the Parish Lotto goes towards our ongoing Parish Development Fund. A special thanks to all the Lotto sellers for their hard work during the year week after week.

PARISH LOTTO

11th December 2016

Numbers Drawn:

10 - 15 - 28

No Jackpot Winner

€65 Winners:

A. Land, E. Riordan, D. Cooney, J. Halpin

€32 Winners: E. Brennan, M. Short

10 Winners of €25: N. Regan. D. Dunne.
A. Mahon. C. Prendergast. A. Mahon. P. Smith.
K. Keane. L. Higgins. C. Mc Auley. K. Meier.

Next Week's Jackpot approx: €1,650.00

