

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE CATHEDRAL THIS WEEK

Mon. 11am	Martin & Mamie O'Regan	8pm No Evening Mass
Tues. 11am	Alice & Alison Fahy	8pm No Evening Mass
Wed. 11am	Anna, Albert & Hanorah Grant	8pm No Evening Mass
Thurs. 11am	Cyril Connaughton	8pm No Evening Mass
Fri. 11am	Private Intention	8pm No Evening Mass
Sat. 11am	Larry & Mary Lee	8pm Trevor Clarke
Sun. 10am	Theresa Moran	12noon The Sheilds family

These Masses will be offered up privately and are available on live stream at www.loughreacathedral.ie and www.churchservices.tv

Baptism: We welcome into God's family Jack Whelan, Masonbrook, Loughrea.
R.I.P: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Mike Keary, Donnellan Drive, Loughrea and Frederick Lynch, Kilnadeema who died recently.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE CARMELITE ABBEY THIS WEEK

Mon. 8am	Private Intention	10am	Donal O'Callaghan
Tues. 8am	Margaret O'Dea	10am	May, James & Nora Callinan
Wed. 8am	Mary Keane	10am	Patrick Burke
Thurs. 8am	Anne O'Dea	10am	Maisie & Vincent Fahy and decd. members of the Burke family
Fri.		10am	Christopher Niland
Sat.		10am	Nellie Casey
Sun. 9am	Christina Reynolds & decd. members of the Reynolds & Casey families	11am	Owen Comer
		6pm	Decd. members of the Moran family

8am Masses are offered up privately and 10am daily Masses and 9am Sunday Mass is broadcast on 106.9FM

Donations Sincere thanks to all who have continued to make financial contributions to the Parish. There is an online facility for contributions on www.loughreacathedral.ie. It provides a secure payment option through PayPal. Another option is to make a payment through your bank using the details below.

ACCOUNT NAME: Cathedral Account, Bank of Ireland, Main St., Loughrea.

A/c no.: 76373954 – S/C 90-38-91. IBAN: IE36 BOFI 9038 9176 3739 54 - BIC: BOFIE2D

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LOUGHREA CATHEDRAL & CARMELITE ABBEY

The Presbytery 091 – 841212 The Abbey 091 – 841209

Website – loughreacathedral.ie clonfertdiocese.ie

Newsletter online: loughreacathedral.ie clonfertdiocese.ie

Email: cathedral@clonfertdiocese.ie

Sunday 27th December 2020 – Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

2020 Christmas Greetings:

This time last year could any of us have imagined the world as it is today? Since last March we have been living under the most unusual circumstances. People have become ill and people have died as a result of the Coronavirus, Covid-19. The world has been turned upside down and the normality of life has changed utterly. No handshakes or hugs. Keeping social distance, sanitising our hands and wearing face coverings have become the norm. Masses online or with limited numbers and the restrictions around funerals have made life difficult for so many people. But we are coping as best we can. Ordinary people have become heroes by the ways they have adapted and looked out for each other. We have found new ways of being a support to one another and we will continue to do so until this pandemic becomes history and we can look back on it as a historic event that we lived through.

As we celebrate Christmas let us remember the words of the Angels to the Shepherds - "Do not be afraid, I bring you news of great joy, today in the town of Bethlehem a Saviour has been born to you, he is Christ the Lord." We celebrate God with us, the Word made flesh, the Incarnation and more than ever we need God with us. In the midst of uncertainty, we need the assurance of His presence in our lives. We call upon Him and ask for strength and inspiration. We give thanks to Him for the goodness that has manifested itself in the people who are helping in families and communities, in the health services and in the area of medical research and pharmaceuticals. We give thanks for the "light that shines in the darkness" knowing that there is light and hope for a better future.

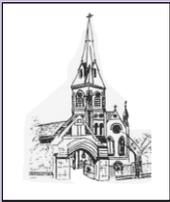
Keep safe and keep each other safe and keep the Faith. God bless you and your families, especially those who cannot be with us this Christmas.

Happy Christmas.

Monsignor Cathal Geraghty, P.P.



Sincere thanks to McD's Garden Centre for the donation of the Christmas lights at front of the Cathedral.



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Sunday 3rd January 2021 – Second Sunday of Christmas

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE CATHEDRAL THIS WEEK

Mon. 11am John, Mary & Mattie Healy and Owen & Margaret Stankard and decd. family

8pm Martin & Bridie Conroy

Tues. 11am Katie Regan

8pm Michael & Sarah Walshe and deceased family members

The Epiphany of the Lord

Wednesday 6th January

Wed. 11am The Bishops & Priests of the Diocese of Clonfert

8pm Paul Reilly

Thurs. 11am People of the Parish

8pm Margaret McGrath

Fri. 11am Ann Benson

8pm Mary Bernadette McPartland

Sat. 11am Personal Intention

8pm Patrick & Kathleen Niland

Sun. 10am Stanley O'Flaherty

12noon Patrick & Bridie Clarke (néé Forde)

These Masses will be offered up privately and are available on live stream at www.loughreacathedral.ie and www.churchservices.tv

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE CARMELITE ABBEY THIS WEEK

Mon. 10am Carmel O'Shea

Tues. 10am Mary, Ellen & Rita Burke

The Epiphany of the Lord

Wednesday 6th January

Wed. 9am Ann & Miko Burke

11am Patrick, Ann & Maura Benson

6pm John & Ellen Hession

Thurs. 10am Michael & Dora Casey

Fri. 10am Ena Kelly

Sat. 10am Theresa Culkin

Sun. 9am Paddy, Mary K. & Dymrna Sylver

11am John & Kate Barnicle and decd. family members

6pm The Burke family decd.

Christmas Greetings from Bishop Michael Duignan

This time last year no one could have imagined what lay ahead in 2020. Who would have thought that a tiny virus would bring this world of ours to a standstill? Who would have thought that within months we would have become fixated with hand washing and cough hygiene, wearing face coverings and keeping apart? Who would have thought that it would have gone on for so long and continues to go on as I write this message with but a faint hope of an end in sight? Who would have thought that so many lives would be lost and so many livelihoods changed? It is a year, when our lives were upended in so many ways. When our priorities were questioned and, in many instances, changed. I cannot help but think that in a strange sort of way the Pandemic has stripped back so many things in our lives to the essentials.

Maybe more than any other year in recent memory, these days of restrictions have the potential to bring us closer to the real meaning of Christmas. The story of the events in Bethlehem those many years ago is a story about people – ordinary people like you and me – Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds, the Inn Keeper. They were trying to live their lives as best they could under somewhat difficult circumstances when God reached out to them and through them to humanity in a way we could never have imagined. In Jesus our lives have been profoundly enhanced. His message has brought into focus the fundamental importance of our relationship with God and with one another. Material possessions or money or positions or power, even all the toys that Santa Claus could ever bring, will never make us truly happy – only living life in love with God and one another will. This is the secret of a life well lived. This is what life is all about.

After the year that has been, perhaps this Christmas, it is easier to see the truth in all of this. Perhaps, this year allows us a unique opportunity to cherish more the presence of God in our lives and to better appreciate the people around us. I invite you in the next few days to take time to acknowledge the reality of a higher power and to chat with God in your heart. Take some time to thank God for the people in your life. Try and find ways to safely reach out to them as best you can. Husbands, be thankful for your wives. Put your arms around them and tell them what they mean to you. Wives do the same. Small children give Mammy and Daddy a hug. Parents tell your children, those who are still small and those who have grown tall and made their way in life, how much you love them. Remember that sons and daughters are never too old to tell their parents, even from a distance, that they love them. Grandparents reach out as best you can to your grandchildren. It might only be a hand pressed against a pane of glass, a little gift left at a distance or a telephone call but do something nonetheless. Grandchildren reach out safely to your grandparents – facetime them, write to them, call them on the telephone. Brothers and sisters, both small and grown up, make some safe quality time for each other. Let us pick up the phone to an Aunt or an Uncle. If there is disagreement or time has gone by not talking, perhaps, this is the Christmas to bring all that to an end.

Let us remember those who sat with us last year at table but who are not with us this year. Perhaps they sit at the heavenly table, perhaps they could not make it home or perhaps they stayed away so as to not bring the virus with them. Let us reach out as best we can, while trying to safely stay apart, to our neighbours – to our friends. Let us have a bigger smile and a kinder word and a more willing helping hand for everyone we meet this Christmas time. Let us remember and find creative ways to generously reach out to those less well off than ourselves – the lonely, the sad, the sick, those who mourn the loss of loved ones, the poor, the hungry, the homeless and those that are in need of any kind.

Perhaps, this extraordinary Christmas of 2020, might be a time of resetting our priorities in life. A refocusing on what truly matters – God and the God-given gift of family and friends and those strangers that are but friends we haven't yet met. This is my wish for you all this Christmas and throughout what will, please God, be a better and a brighter New Year.

To end, I would like to thank all those who have generously given of themselves in service of others during the year – our frontline workers, medical staff, teachers, priests, religious, parish volunteers, civic leaders and scientists. You have truly been a light in these darkened days.

Le gach dea- ghuí i gcomhair na nollag agus na h-ath bhliana!

+ Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert
Loughrea, 23 December 2020

