

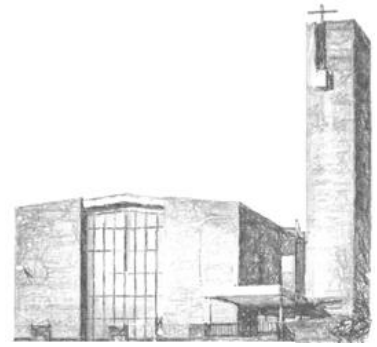
OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

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Father Frank Dougan, Deacons Bill McMillan & Kevin Kirby, Sr Sophie McGinness



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR B 23rd and 24th December 2023

CHRISTMAS - THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Sun	17:00	Children's Christmas Mass
	20:30	Carol Service and Mass
Mon	10:00	Christmas Day Mass

Tue	10:00	NO MASS
	19:00	Mass – St Stephen
Wed	10:00	Mass - St John Evangelist
Thu	10:00	Mass - Holy Innocents
	18:15 - 18:45	Confessions
	19:00	Mass - Holy Innocents
Fri	10:00	Mass
Sat	09:00 - 09:45	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
	09:15 - 09:45	Confessions
	10:00	Mass
	16:15 - 16:45	Confessions

HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH - YEAR B 30th and 31st December 2023

	17:00	Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sun	09:00	Sunday Mass
	11:00	Sunday Mass

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

ISA 61:1-2A, 10-11

I exult for joy in the Lord.

LUKE 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54

My soul glorifies the Lord.

1 THESS 5:16-24

May you all be kept safe, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of the Lord.

JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

David is challenged by the Lord through Nathan to make a suitable dwelling for God. We are temples of the Holy Spirit; are we suitable dwellings? Part of preparing for an important date is making a space suitable, whether a visitor or a dinner party. What state is our heart in, and is it suitable for God to be born in there? If not, there is still time to do something about it.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

THE SICK

Margaret Gannon.

RECENTLY DECEASED

John MacDonald (funeral 9th January), Ernie Robson (funeral 10th January), Stephen Molloy, Kathleen Haveron, Lewis Thomas McDermott.

ANNIVERSARIES, MONTH'S MINDS, BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCES

Josephine Carr, Kathleen McGinn, Emma Harkinson, Campbell McAdam, Jim and Annie Flanagan, Ann and Jim Flanagan jnr, John McQuillan, Robert Dunlop, Ian Porter, John Clark, Gertrude Branagan, Tommy, Annie and Thomas Flaherty, Betty Sweeney, Winnie Howarth, Frank and Mary McWilliams, Teresa Woodside, Ann Little, Christina Samson, Edgar Croser, Catherine McIntyre, Peter Gallacher, Bridget O'Hara

COLLECTIONS & DONATIONS - THANK YOU

Cash	£2,108
Envelopes	£267
Standing Orders	£905
Estimated Gift Aid	£265
	£3,545

Stall received **£175** and votives **£183**.

BISHOP TOAL'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At Christmas we enjoy singing Christmas Carols. We also enjoy listening to others singing them, particularly children and those in our parish and Diocesan Choirs. I express a special word of thanks, therefore, this Christmas to all our musicians and singers, and acknowledge the time and effort you put into preparing for the Carol Services, and most especially for the Christmas Liturgies.

In the Sacred Liturgy we celebrate the Mystery of the Incarnation, the Birth of Our Saviour, Christ the Lord, at Bethlehem. In recalling his birth, as we celebrate the Holy Eucharist we renew our faith in his living presence within and among us, and place our hope in life in Christ in its fullness in eternity. As Christians we desire to be "other Christs" as we journey through life and seek to show the love of Jesus in our relationships and activities. What we celebrate at Mass we strive to put into practice in who we are and in all that we do.

This year Christmas falls on a Monday. We have two important religious days – the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas – on top of one another. We have a fine opportunity to make it a particularly spiritual and holy Christmas by attending two Masses, from the time the Vigil on Saturday Evening to Christmas Day itself. We always have plenty to pray for and this Christmas will be a particularly good time to do so. St Paul offered us great words of encouragement last Sunday in his letter to the Thessalonians:

"Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus."

Our Christmas Carols often refer to Bethlehem, O Little Town of Bethlehem being especially well known and loved. Our thoughts and prayers at Christmas this year are particularly for the people of the Holy Land, Palestinians and Jews, and for a lasting peace to end the war and hatred. May the Angels' song as they appeared to the shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem ring true:

"Glory to God in the highest Heaven,
and peace to men who enjoy his favour".

I wish you all a holy, and peace-filled Christmas, and the blessing of God for 2024.

Yours in Christ



+ Joseph Toal

NEW BISHOP OF GALLOWAY – FR FRANK

Pope Francis has nominated me as the next Bishop of Galloway. My ordination as Bishop will take place at some point within the next three months. As well as my feelings about taking on this office I am particularly sad to be leaving the parish. I will remain here for most of January and will give you more information as soon as I can. Please keep me in your prayers.

OTHER NOTICES

CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE

Our recent raffles raised £700 for SPUC and £750 for High School Retreats. Thank you so much.

PARKING AT CHRISTMAS

The Christmas Eve Masses could be quite busy, so it would be good to plan ahead. Could you park a little bit further away and walk to the church to allow the more frail to park nearby?

This is a good time to remind each other to avoid parking in such a way as to inconvenience those who live near the church.

