

**Joint Christmas Message by Church of Ireland Bishop of Limerick Bishop Kenneth Kearon and Catholic Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy**

Through the dark of winter, a bright shining message pierces the gloom – a message of hope and reconciliation to a divided world. We surround the story of Bethlehem with tinsel and golden stars, but that shouldn't cloud our understanding that this is an ancient and true story of a baby born to parents in the Middle East who at that moment were homeless, who soon became refugees in Egypt, fleeing persecution. The story itself is true, and it conveys an even deeper message, that through this child God became real in the world; through his teaching he changed the world, and through his death and resurrection he transformed our relationship with God. Here in Ireland we know all about homelessness; we encounter refugees, and we are all in need of the transforming love of God. Our divided world needs that message of wholeness and reconciliation. Each of us needs hope, lasting hope that only the Christ-child can bring. We both wish you a very happy and joyful Christmas, and through it all may you be able to keep before you the hope and the love that lies at the heart of the Christmas message.

**Mass intentions**

**7pm** Edward & Kate Reilly and deceased family members

Philly & Donie Cusack, Cratloe  
John Ruane 26 Cryle view / Mayo  
Mary Enright, Caherlane

**9.30am** Codye & Quinn Family  
John Walshe  
Geraldine Woulfe

**12noon** Jim Lane New Street Anniv.  
Joe Cotter, Upper Purt 2nd Anniv.  
John Riordan Upper purt Anniv.

**9pm** Pro Populo

**Christmas Day** 9.30am & 12noon Pro Populo

**Tues. 11am** Joan Aherne & Nora Keane

**Wens. 11am** Denis (Larry) Collins, Convent St.

**Thurs. 11am** Ann Keating Dublin/Main St.

**Fri 11am** Christine Morgan

**Sat 1am** Christmas Mass intentions

**Birthday wishes**

Congratulations to Mrs Rita Hernon whose will be celebrating her 100th birthday on St Stephen's day. We wish her a very Happy Birthday.

The Adult Church Choir will give a Carol recital before Mass on Christmas Eve starting at 8.30 pm. On Christmas Day there will be a recital starting at 11.45 am. before the 12.00 noon Mass.

**Christmas Arrangements**

**Christmas Eve Morning Mass Sunday 24th**

**9.30am & 12noon**

**Vigil Mass Sunday @ 9pm Carols at 8.30pm**

**Christmas Day Mass @ 9.30am & 12noon**

**St Stephen's Day Mass @ 11am**

**Morning Mass for the week @ 11am.**

**New Years Day Mass Monday @ 11am**

**Adoration** There will be a special hour of adoration in the small chapel on Christmas day from 5-6p.m. Adoration will resume on Tuesday 9th Jan 2018

**Christmas Dues** can be handed in at all Masses during Christmas.

**Welcoming the Divine Migrant**

Christmas the season of the Divine Migrant come among us;

Bringing with him the culture of His heavenly homeland;

Love for one another, mercy and tenderness.

Christmas the time to listen again to his consoling words

"I have come so that you might have life"

"be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful"

Christmas the opportunity to believe in mercy

And hand over the burden of sin to the One who burns it away in the fire of his love.

Christmas the occasion to begging again to love to see the stranger and welcome her

To notice the hungry and give them to eat.

Christmas the chance to encounter others in the valley of darkness offering them light:

In lonely abandonment standing by them

Christmas the season of mercy to be received

graciously to be shown generously.

**Deaths**

We offer our sympathy to the families of Madeline Murphy, New Street / Leens whose funeral took place on Monday

To the family of Timothy L Collins, Dromtrasna Collins whose funeral took place on Tuesday.

To the family of Eileen Cahill, Knockbrack, Knocknagoshel and New Street whose funeral took place on Thursday.

May they rest in the peace of Christ.

**Christmas Tree**

If you wish to remember someone away from home this Christmas please take a silhouette near the tree and write the name of the person you wish to remember this Christmas, which will be placed on the branches of the tree.

**Holy Water is in the large black container behind the church near the sacristy window.**

**Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi Mhaise Daoibh.**

A peaceful and blessed Christmas to all our parishioners. We welcome all who are visiting the parish and all who have returned home to spend time with family. We hope that it will be a time when the bonds of family will be strengthened. Christmas with its heightened sense of family, makes absence all the more painful. There are also empty places at the tables of all who have lost loved ones during the year. We will remember our emigrants and our departed and those who miss them in our Masses and prayers over Christmas time.

As Parish Priest I am very grateful for the support and encouragement that I receive from so many parishioners. I do not take that support and encouragement for granted and greatly appreciate it. Over 300 people are actively involved in Parish life through our Choirs, Ministers of the Word and Eucharist, Altar Servers, Youth Group, Collectors, Distributors, Flower Arrangers, Church Cleaners, Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Committee, Members of School Boards of Management, St Vincent de Paul, Youth Clubs and many other various Parish support groups and committees.

A big 'thank you' to Anne and Maurice our Parish Secretary and Parish Clerk and all who assist them in their work who provide a great service to the Parish and the Community of Abbeyfeale.

At Christmas we remember that God has come near to us in Jesus Christ, our 'Emmanuel'. It is a time when we are reminded of the hope that we experience through the coming of our Saviour.

The heart of the Christmas story is that in Jesus 'God has visited his people'.

Let us make him welcome. I pray for all that the grace of the Christmas message will brighten our lives, renew our faith and strengthen our bonds of friendship.

We wish all our parishioners at home and abroad a happy and peaceful Christmas.

We pray that all in our community will be enriched by the hope that this holy season brings us.

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

Tony Mullins P.P.



**TV Church Services**

One of the great innovations in the parish in recent years has been the instillation of the TV Church Service broadcast system on the World Wide Web, which gives immediate access to all our Church services.

(www.churchservices.tv/abbeyfealeparish).

The Church Webcam continues to attract huge audiences from around the world with regular feedback from those living around the Country and those living abroad stating how wonderful it is for them to be able to watch family events such as Christenings, First Communion, Confirmation, Weddings and Funeral Masses. The one predominant comment from everyone is how they felt like they were part of the event or part of the Mass and how much it meant to them.

Our Church in the past 12 months has had viewers from 89 Countries tuning in just over 30,000 times. The top six Countries for numbers of people tuning in are; Ireland, UK, USA, Australia, Poland and Germany. Who would have thought that our Church in Abbeyfeale would have such a World-Wide reach.

**SVP** A work of thanks to all who supported the recent Vincent De Paul Collection it is very much appreciated. A huge thanks to all the volunteers in the Vincent De Paul. Society. A special word of thanks to the secondary school students who prepared the hampers. May God bless the conference and all who supported it.

**Mass Times changes for 2018**

**Mass times in Abbeyfeale will change from the 1st Jan 2018**

**Saturday evening Mass will now be @ 6.30pm and**

**Sunday Morning Mass will be at 9.15am .**

**Holy days morning Mass @ 11am & 6.30pm. (Saturday Little Christmas )**

Tickets for sale at the usual outlets in town

**Contact**

**089/4356981 leave a message**

**Contact:**

**Fr Tony Mullins**

**087-2600414**

**Parish Clerks Collection**

will be taken up on the weekend of 6th & 7 Jan 2018

**The Fourth Connie Harnett Memorial swim** will

take place on New Year 's day at 1pm in

Ballybunnion. All monies raised goes to Charity.

**Dee Harnett memorial** run/walk St Stephens Day

@ 11am in aid of the cancer society.

**Convent Building:**

Abbeyfeale Community Council have organised a Public Meeting regarding the Research undertaken to date and proposed Plans for the Convent Building.

This meeting is being held at the Glórach Theatre on Thurs 28th Dec @ 7pm. All are Welcome.

**Scoil Mháthair Dé** would like to thank all who

contributed so generously to our Fundraiser for the Simon Community over €2,000.00 was raised.

A big thank you to Mary Barrett's Pre-School children who joined us for Carol Singing in Tesco.

**Christmas Greetings and Plan giving:**

We thank all people who organized and distributed the calendars, Christmas greeting and plan giving

envelopes to your homes. We ask each household to use the envelopes for the offertory collection, if you

did not receive a box and wish to do so please contact the sacristy. 068/51915 during Mass times. We thank

you for your support to the church throughout the year. The expected CHY3 returns this year will be

€26,985.05 We appreciate your consideration in returning the CHY3 forms and making this cheque

possible. I also wish to thank our collectors who are here every Sunday to help with the collections.

Wishing you every blessing for 2018

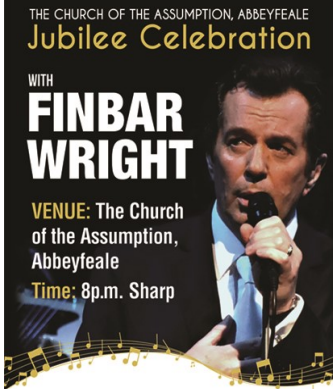
**Readers for** Christmas Vigil/ Day Team 7

**Readers for** Dec. 31st Team 1

**Priest on Duty for Emergency only (Sunday)**

**Fr. Duhig (087) 6380299**

**The office will be closed next week**



**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2018**

**Tickets: 089 4356981**