

These two phrases have something in common – being alert and being attentive.

What is this attentiveness like? Is it noticing the peace that comes when we create the right environment – no phone or radio or T.V. – some gentle music – a candle – a quiet place or are feeling more chilled out as the season moves forward. Is it about hearing God crying from the wilderness of our mindlessness – speaking words of promise, encouragement and renewal? Is it paying attention to the people in our lives who we might take for granted? This attentive standing back sometimes reveals the other person in a new light – their presence illuminated by the glow of their constancy, the warmth of their support or the unnamed security of their being there. As we count our gifts we are mindful for ways to offer what we have received. ‘You received without charge, give without charge’.

May this Advent retreat be a time to notice and to celebrate the joy of love in our families. May this Advent retreat be a time for paying attention to ways that might make the paths of our relationships more smooth. May this Advent retreat be a time to become aware of the value of peace and moderation as we look forward with hope. (Source: Dublin Liturgical Office)

**Fr. Michael Carey**

#### Mass intentions for Next Week

<b>Mon</b> 8.00am Dec members of Legion of Mary	<b>Sat</b> 10.00am Fiona Burke (1st An)
<b>Mon</b> 10.00 John, Lucy & Johnny Melia	Helen Brophy (MM)
<b>Tues</b> 8.00am Special intention	
<b>Tues</b> 10.00am Philip Markey	<b>Sat</b> 6.30pm Joe & Margaret Prendergast
<b>Wed</b> 8.00am Kathleen & John Kelly & deceased members of Kelly family	Stefania Zeleva (MM)
<b>Wed</b> 10.00am Ann Yorke	<b>Sun</b> 8.30am Patricia O'Reilly
<b>Thurs</b> 8.00am Kathleen & Patrick O'Reilly & deceased members of O'Reilly family	<b>Sun</b> 11.00am Joseph, Mary, Tommy
<b>Thurs</b> 10.00am Phil Sheridan	Joey & dec members of Gerrard Family
<b>Fri</b> 8.00am Liam Spencer	
<b>Fri</b> 10.00am Connor & Farrell Family	<b>Sun</b> 6.30pm Des Becton

#### **Church of the Visitation Drynam The Visitation of the BVM**

##### **Mass Times for Drynam: Sun, 10.00am, 11.00am (Irish Mass)**

There will be a Pastoral Team Meeting on Tuesday 12th at 8:00pm to discuss Christmas liturgies and other matters. There will be no 12:00 Mass next Sunday 17th. From now on there will just be Mass at 10.00am and the Irish Mass at 11:00 am on Sundays.

#### **Advent Wreath-week 2**

The Advent wreath is significant in that unlike holly or floral wreaths, it has candles standing upright, representing the four Sundays of Advent and the thousands of years that God's people awaited the Messiah.

The round ring of the Advent Wreath represents eternity-time without end. As the circle is never ending, so time with God goes on and on. The evergreens are for eternal life, life without end. Evergreens do not die in the winter and like them God is always fresh and new. The candles remind us of Christ 'Light of the World'.

#### **2nd CANDLE – (purple) THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF PREPARATION**

– God kept his promise of a Saviour who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to “get ready”. Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! “As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: ‘A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God’s salvation.’ (Luke 3:4-6)

**Fr. Michael Carey-8403378: Fr. Peter McCarron-8405948.**

**Parish Secretary: Colette Stokes - Parish Office, Seatown Road-8407277**

**(Mon to Fri 9.15am-12.30pm & Tues-Thurs 2pm-4pm)**

**Sacristy: -8400547 (Mon –Sat 9.30am-9.55am and 10.30am to 10.50am)**

**Website: www.swords-parish.com Email: stcolmcilleschurch@gmail.com**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

### **Advent Stillness before Christmas**

*“O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations”*

#### **Newsletter Sunday 10th December 2017**

**Advent** is a season that looks back and looks forward at the same time. We look back to the birth of Jesus in simplicity over 2000 years ago. We also look forward with hope to the unfolding of the kingdom of God as Jesus comes in tenderness and love to meet us face to face.

Advent is a season of **waiting**. What is that waiting like? Is it calm and tranquil as each day flows in simplicity from one to another – as the season's customs become as comfortable as your favourite sweater – no pretension – just a good warm fit....Others might want you to take it off and put on something more festive – ‘not yet’, you say – ‘I’ll wait a while’....

You might take more time with prayer during these weeks – sitting comfortably with the prophets - Isaiah and John the Baptist – open yourself to their challenges they might cause some discomfort as you hear their words.....’let every cliff become a plain’ – what does that mean for you? – is it a smoothing out of a relationship that has become rough? - think about it – give it time.....’the eyes of the blind will see’....what fresh insights await you over the next few weeks....’I am not fit to undo his sandal strap’ – what humility – is that an insight that came to John in the distraction free zone of the desert? – have you got some desert islands to go to?...where are you not distracted....what does humility mean concretely to you?

Or maybe you attend on Elizabeth and Mary as they wait in expectation...in your quiet accompaniment some of their joy...graciousness...acceptance...trust might rub off...’the child in my womb leapt for joy’....’let what you have said be done to me’... All these possible people in the waiting room of Advent of the Bible.

Who else might be there?...the doctor with the test results...a relative after the job interview...an asylum seeker looking out for news about the future...a homeless person looking for a place for the night...for the moment you hand them over to God...you wait and see what you are asked to do in the situation...you may be called to be a rock for someone or to allow another to take care of you.

Advent is a season of **patience**. It is like the Advent Calendar with its daily thoughts and treats - one at a time – a surprise each day – no need to rush ahead – I can wait until tomorrow. What does that patience feel like? Is it a struggle not to anticipate – to take a peak at what's ahead – to slip into the future without opening up the gift of the present - the now. What is that now like? ....is it comfortable...secure...calm... is it something I want to escape...to avoid...to run from...anywhere but here and now. Patience...stay with it... you are not alone...do not be afraid.

Advent is a season of **attentiveness**. We wait in a spirit of calm expectation, with our eyes wide open in gentle alertness, for the unfolding of the gifts that Jesus has prepared for us. A Christmas song tells children ‘**you better watch out**’. In the Gospel of Mark, for the first Sunday of Advent, Jesus challenges us to ‘**stay awake**’.



## ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN

*How much better our family life would be if we used the words....  
Please...Thank you...and I'm sorry...Pope Francis*



### Gifts for Advent - Gift 2 – God's Word of Comfort

The gift for the second week of Advent is that God speaks a reassuring word of comfort in the midst of our discontent and longing. In this quiet season (a season we tend to fill up with a lot of noise and frantic activity) make time daily to listen for the comforting words of God in your life. Probably the quickest way to begin hearing those words is to create a daily gratitude list. Set aside five minutes each morning or evening and take a few deep breaths. When you are settled, start jotting down whatever comes to your mind that you are grateful for. With a heart full of gratitude, everything else in our lives will change. We will begin to see, even in the demands of our Christmas preparations, the real purpose of those efforts - celebrating the Lord's arrival in our life and the lives of those we love

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is not about a guilt-trip. Rather, it is about unburdening. The Lord invites us to receive from him 'rest for our souls' (Mt 11:29) so that he may set us free (Lk 4:18) that we may continue to seek to live 'life to the full' (Jn 10:10). Jesus is encountered in and through the Sacrament.

The Advent/Christmas Reconciliation service takes place in **St. Colmcille's on Monday 18th December at 7.30pm**. It will take place in St. Finian's River Valley on Tuesday 19th December at 7.30pm

### Christmas Cards

The Christmas cards are now ready for distribution – I need your help to have these cards dropped onto people's letterboxes. If you can take a road or an estate it would be greatly appreciated. Thank You

### Christmas Draw

Congratulations to Mona Murphy (sister of Bernie Campbell) who won 1st prize in our Christmas Draw. The Christmas draw was held last Sunday in the Parochial house. A big thank you to all who attended. It was a lovely afternoon. And I thank the hospitality team for the light refreshments. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank most sincerely the Fundraising Committee who undertook this onerous task. They arranged for loads of things including: ticket sellers; setting up of the table, in order to sell tickets in the Church (*money changers in the Temple!*) and they arranged for ticket selling in JC's Supermarket, to whom I offer on behalf of the Parish a big 'thank you'. Thanks to all who sold the tickets in the Church and JC's and thanks to all who took books of tickets to sell to family and friends. Paddy Gerrard sold over 100 books of tickets! Thanks to those who donated prizes:

Kathleen Power for the beautiful a cake & pudding, Total Produce for a lovely basket of fruit and JC's for donating bottles of wine, & vouchers, John Campbell, Noel & Bernie Moore, Colourtrend Swords, Forty Four Hotel & Dunnes Stores

Whilst I don't have the final figure to hand as I write this newsletter the income over expenditure in terms of surplus is circa €4000. A fantastic amount for our first draw. The list of the twelve prizewinners, in order are as follows:

- *Mona Murphy, June Galvin, Terri Ward, Sylvia Bond, Joe Kane, Bernard Reynolds, Pauline Gargan, Jenny Roantree, Pat Lynch, Nancy O'Rourke, Peter Counihan, Karen Connell.* Congratulations One and all!

### • Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The annual Diocesan Collection for the local conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul takes place this weekend Sat/Sun **December 9th/10th**. It will be the second collection replacing Share.

Members of the local Conference will speak at all Masses and will address the issue of the spiralling number of families in our Parish who are finding themselves on the 'breadline'. The Conference depends on your generosity to meet requests for assistance for these families. We would like to thank you for your generosity to date and hope that you will be equally generous this year.

*Our love should extend in a very practical way to the poor. Our Lord was not born in a palace or even a semi-detached. He was born in a stable. Jesus once drew attention to his own poverty. "The birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Lk. 9:58)*

### • Christmas Mass Bouquets

Special Christmas Mass Bouquet cards are now available in the Sacristy and Parish Office for both churches. All Masses on Christmas Day and St. Stephens Day will be offered for the intentions of the donors of these cards. They cost €5 per card and would make a 'lovely stocking filler' for your nearest and dearest.

### • Lambay Singers – coming to St. Colmcille's

The ladies of the Lambay Singers will perform their Christmas concert in **St Colmcille's Church on Friday 15th December at 8pm**. Tickets €10. For more information call Eric Duffy at 086 2555751 or email [lambaysingersinfo@gmail.com](mailto:lambaysingersinfo@gmail.com).

• Swords Parish Bethany Bereavement Support Group seeks Volunteers to provide support to our Parishioners and the People of Fingal who are grieving after the loss of loved ones. A training programme will commence at the end of January 2018 in All Hallows', Gracepark Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. If you feel your life experience would be an asset to you in helping the bereaved and if you are interested in learning more about the group you are invited to attend (without commitment) our support group meetings on 11th December and / or 8th January 2018 at the Parochial House, Seatown Road, Swords, beginning at 7.30pm. This Ministry will celebrate it's 20th Anniversary in our Parish next year. Without new volunteers we will be unable to continue provision of this free, confidential and valuable service.' *Teri Ward Bethany Support Group*

### • JESSE TREE-week 2

This tree is named after Jesse the father of David, the great king of Israel. '*A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse and from his roots a bud shall blossom*' (Is 11.7). The symbols represent the promises God made throughout the Old Testament concerning the birth of His only Son. Some of the most important promises of all were made to Jesse and his son David. They were promised that God's only Son would be born in their family. Today is the second Sunday in Advent and we now add three more symbols to the Jesse tree in both our churches.

**Star of David** - Jesus was born into the house of David, the great king of Israel. This symbol also reminds us of the star the magi followed to find the baby Jesus

**Jacobs Ladder** - Jacob had a dream of a ladder reaching from earth to heaven. Jesus opened the gates of heaven kingdom for all of us

**David's Crown** - David was King of Israel for many years, and it was promised that the Messiah would come from the house of David. Because Joseph became Mary's husband. Jesus was born into the house of David

### • We welcome the following newly Baptised to our Parish Community:

Tyler Josh Flood, Oalaf Wojciech Banaaszak, Filip Leszek Banaszak, Doireann Anni Rathei, Brook Amber Ashleigh Harford Santini

