

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*



Do This in Memory

Next weekend the boys and girls and their families will be present at the 6.30pm Saturday Vigil Mass as part of their Parish based preparation programme for the Sacrament of First Eucharist. We look forward to seeing them and praying with them.

Next Saturday

Next Saturday 13th January there will be no 10.00am Mass. As something new for 2018, The Parish Council is introducing Morning Prayer. This is the Prayer of the Church and will be led by Parishioners. I thank the team of ten people who have volunteered. Each Saturday a team of two people will lead this prayer. I invite you to pray for the success of this initiative and why not drop along to see what it's like. For any of the regular Saturday Mass goes, if this is not for you and you would like to participate in the Saturday Morning Mass then you may do so in Brackenstown at 10.00am and River Valley at 11.00am

Confessions

For the year 2018 confessions are available on the FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH after the 10.00am morning Mass and every Saturday evening from 6.00pm to 6.20pm before the Vigil Mass

The Baptism of the Lord

Today the Church celebrates that point in Jesus' life when he went public, so to speak. He began to reveal who he was. There is another revelation in today's liturgy. It is that God is Trinity. At his baptism when Jesus the Son came up out of the water the Spirit descended on him and the voice of the Father declared that Jesus was his Son. (Source: St. Paul's Missal)

World Meeting of Families (WMOF)

Fr. Gareth Byrne, a Priest of the Diocese has written a lovely little book called 'Love one another as I have loved you'. It is a series of Prayers, Meditations and reflections on Family Love. I will quote from it as we enter the year of the WMOF to be held in Dublin this August.

'True love is always contemplative, and permits us to serve the other not out of necessity or vanity, but rather because he is she is beautiful beyond mere appearances' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 199)

The Bible's Most Important People

Sarah – the name God gave Sarai, wife of Abram (Abraham), after He promised she would bear a child. Though she was ninety years old, God repeated the promise to give Abraham a son be her. When Sarah heard this, she laughed. ('May God laugh' is abbreviated to Ytzhag/Isaac) A year later she bore Isaac. When Abraham's son Ismael – child of Sarah's maid – Hagar – mocked Isaac, Sarah feared for her own son and had Hagar and Ishmael sent out of Abraham's camp. When Sarah died, Abraham bought land from the Hittites and buried her in the cave of Machpelah.

What kind of a Church do you dream of?

As we begin 2018, this reflection by Pope Francis on the Church is quite thought provoking "I see clearly that the thing the Church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the Church as a field hospital after battle. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else. Heal the wounds, heal the wounds.....and you have to start from the ground up.

The church sometimes has locked itself up in small things, in small-minded rules. The most important thing is the first proclamation: **Jesus Christ has saved you.** And the ministers of the Church must be ministers of mercy above all.

How are we treating the people of God? I dream of a Church that is a mother and shepherdess. The church's ministers must be merciful, take responsibility for the people and accompany them like the good Samaritan, who washes, cleans and raises up his neighbour. This is pure Gospel. God is greater than sin. The structural and organisational reforms are secondary—that is, they come afterward. The first reform must be the attitude. The ministers of the Gospel must be people who can warm the hearts of the people, who walk through the dark night with them, who know how to dialogue and to descend themselves into their people's night, into the darkness, but without getting lost.

Instead of being just a Church that welcomes and receives by keeping the doors open, let us also try to be a Church that finds new roads, that is able to step outside itself and go to those who do not attend Mass, to those who have quit or are indifferent. The ones who quit sometimes do it for reasons that, if properly understood and assessed, can lead to a return. But that takes audacity and courage".

Brackenstown Bible Study 2018

During 2018 we will study *Matthew: The King and His Kingdom*, a Catholic Bible study that brings the history of Christ to life through St. Matthew's Gospel. You will see Jesus as the awaited Messiah who fulfills the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, establishes the New Law, and inaugurates the Kingdom of Heaven. The study runs for a total of 24 weeks, there will be 14 classes in Spring 2018 and 10 classes in Autumn 2018.

The class size will be limited to 50 people, 38 people have already booked. To register for the study call Louise at 01-8401188 or via email brackenstownparish@gmail.com

Course Duration: Classes commence Monday 22/01/18. **Course Cost:** €20.00 to cover the cost of the DVDs & the study book **Course Time:** Monday evenings from 7.30 to 9.00 p.m. **Venue:** St Cronan's Parish Pastoral Centre.

Bethany Bereavement Support Group

Help is at hand. Bethany trained members are available to provide support to those grieving after the loss of a loved one. This is a free, confidential service. The Group meet on the last Monday of each month from 7.30 - 8.30 p.m. at the Parochial House, Seatown Road - Next Meeting 8th January 2018 For further information please 'phone Mary 8402652 or Brid 086 6006397 after 6 p.m. Open to all Fingal Residents - You are most welcome to attend.