



Christmas

If you were to put together a guest list for the birth of the Messiah 2000 years ago one might expect political leaders like Caesar Augustus and religious leaders such as the chief priests and the Pharisees to be included. Yet for Luke, the shepherds are some of the first to welcome Jesus into this world and are the first preachers' of the Good News. Many would find it completely shocking that Shepherds would be included. It was a disreputable trade and shepherds were considered 'unclean' because of their profession. At first they were terrified, but the angels reassured them: 'do not be afraid'. The response of the shepherds was immediate: 'let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing which has taken place'.

The poor, the marginalised, the outcast will be the first to experience the abundance of God's hospitality through Jesus and the shepherds come in their name. We are told that people were amazed by the shepherds and their words. Their journey didn't end in Bethlehem, for them it was perhaps only the beginning as they returned 'glorifying and praising God'. We are invited to Bethlehem today, to open up our hearts to the one who has come to bring hope and joy. And we return, like the shepherds, 'glorifying and praising God for all they have seen and heard'. We must allow that love to penetrate our hearts and celebrate with our family and friends the joy that lives amongst us. And when we have finished celebrating we remember that the real work of Christmas begins once again: 'When the song of the angels is stilled. When the star in the sky is gone. When the kings and princes are home. When the shepherds are back with their flocks. The work of Christmas begins; to find the lost; to heal the broken; to feed the hungry; to release the prisoner; to rebuild the nations; to bring peace among people; to make music in the heart' Howard Thurman. (From Intercom by Jane Mellet)

Weekday Masses: Monday, Keadue 7p.m.; Tuesday, Arigna 10a.m.; Friday, Ballyfarnon 10a.m.

Adoration Before the Blessed Sacrament: There will be no Adoration in Keadue on Monday 26th December 2016 and also on Monday 2nd January 2017.



*Wishing you every Happiness
and Blessing this Christmas
and in the New Year.*

Anniversary Masses, Keadue.

Mon. 26th Michael Hennessy 7p.m.

Sat. 31st Breege Bruen & D.M.F.

Sun. 1st Shane Barry & nephew Cian.

Anniversary Masses Arigna

Sun. 25th Josephine & Michael Cassidy.

Michael, Mary B. and James Earley.

Sun. 1st Michael McManus

Anniversary Masses Ballyfarnon

Sat. 31st John Charles Lyons

Ballyfarnon: Minister of Holy Communion: Sat 31st. Tony McDonagh. Reader: Sat 31st. Veronica Sheeran. Altar Society: Caroline Bruen & Fiona Lynam. Collectors: Peter Kerrigan & P.J. Healy. Grounds: Martin McNamara, Michael Kerrigan. Offertory Collection, €390.00

Arigna: Minister of Holy Communion: Sun 1st. Sean Guihen, Margaret McPadden, Reader: Sun 1st. Aoife Duignan. Altar Society: Amanda & Grace McPartland. Offertory Collections, €540.00

Keadue: Ministers of Holy Communion: Sat 31st. Moira Doyle. Sun 1st. Imelda McCabe. Readers: Sat. 31st. Chloe McCabe, Sun. 1st. Eileen Barry. Collectors: Sat. 31st. Margaret Kelly. Sun. 1st. Colm O'Donnell. Altar Society: Imelda McCabe, Stephanie McCabe, Rita McGreevy, Joan Connolly. Grounds: Paul Kelly, Arthur Boyle. Offertory Collections, €500.00

St Ronan's Lotto Congratulations to Michael & Anita Rogan, Arigna, winners of the Jackpot last weekend. The numbers drawn were 7, 10, 18 and 27. The jackpot this week will be €2,000 and the draw will be held in Killoran's on St Stephen's Night. If the jackpot is not won there will be five €100 consolation prizes

Bonus Ball Bash: Last week's winners of €45 were Peggy Rogers & Fr. Cathal Faughnan. Get your €2 entry at The Harp & Shamrock or O'Donnell's.

Rest in Peace

Philomena Wynne, Cartron.

Charles McNabola, Kilnagross,

father of Dympna Wynne,

Carrowanalt

Elizabeth McManus,

Drumshanbo and formerly,

Arigna.

Keadue Sportsfield are holding a 8km fun run/ walk on St. Stephen's Day. Registration at 11.30 am in St. Ronan's Hall Keadue. Run/Walk commencing at 12 noon.

The annual James Keaveny Memorial Cup takes place on New Years Day at 2pm in Kilronan Park Ballyfarnon.

Keadue Social Services Centre will be Closed from Friday 23rd December until Tuesday 3rd Jan 2017. Thank you for your continued support throughout the year.

Special thanks to Marie, Staff, parents & children from Keadue National School who invited us to be part of their Christmas Mass, Nativity Story & party on Wednesday 21st December. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from Julie, Pauline, Martina, Viv, Peter, and our board of management.

Parish Calendars with Parish events for 2017 are now available in all the churches. Please take a calendar for each home.

Christmas Message 2016

Christmas is a time when we gather with family and friends. Family is about connection; we are connected in varying ways to our immediate and wider families. Some of our family members are in far flung corners of the globe; although far away they are close to our hearts. Christmas is also a time when we recall the story of God's close connection with us, his Son born of Mary in Bethlehem and grew up in a family. The gospel of midnight Mass has this reassuring passage "Do not be afraid, listen I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord". The connection between us and God is very close, he shared our human life and our family life; he wants each one of us to share his life now and in eternity. Christmas reassures us that God is close to all and especially those who are in need of hope. The news of Jesus is good news, it is news that brings joy and peace to all. We had the good news a few weeks ago that Pope Francis hopes to attend the World Meeting of Families in August 2018. It is an event that highlights the importance of family life. I wish you and your family and your friends a Christmas that is joyful and peaceful because of the birth of Jesus, God among us.

Francis Duffy

Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois.