Parishes of Newry & Saval

Wednesday 25th December 2024 Christmas Day

There is a kind of timelessness about Christmas: it takes us out of our routines; suddenly all the rush of preparation is over and there is nothing more to do. This could be the moment to experience something different from the perpetual motion that is our ordinary life. But what happens? Perhaps we turn on the TV, which is what we may have been doing every evening since last Christmas. No change. Then we say Christmas is boring, or sad, or too commercial... Of course it is; it is just like all the other days. We have not allowed change to happen. We have not allowed space for anything new to appear. Paradoxically, all the flashing lights, the incessant television, the emailing and text-messaging... all have the effect of filling our lives and so leaving no space to move, no space for anything really different to appear; so we are enclosed in a cave of artificial lights that never lead us to the sun.

"The light shines in the darkness." But it does not shine in artificial light. We have to turn something off. We have to leave space and time for the new thing to appear.

The Child born today is God's new deed: the newest, the youngest, the latest.... But this is not announced in the excited voice of the advertisers; it is a silent deed. He is the Word made flesh, but he lies there as helpless to speak as any other infant. Only in silence can this silent Word be heard. The new blade of grass does not make a scene or a noise; neither does the Word made flesh.

The Saviour is born! – not only in Bethlehem long ago, but now today in our world, in our hearts. That birth long ago, said Meister Eckhart, has this new birth as its purpose; he was born then so that he could be born now. The Light has come into the world; even darkness itself helps to announce it

Fr Donagh O'Shea, O.P., www.goodnews.ie

Mass Times

The Cathedral of SS. Patrick & Colman, Hill Street Weekend Mass Times Saturday (vigil Mass) 6.00pm Sunday: 9.00am, 10.15am (Po-Polsku), 12noon & 5.30pm Weekday Mass Times Monday – Saturday 10.30am

www.newrycathedralparish.org

St. Brigid's Church, Rooney's Meadow Weekend Mass Times Saturday Evening (vigil Mass) 7.30pm Friday: 7.30pm

St. Colman's Shinn Saturday: 6.00pm

NOURISHED BY WORD AND SACRAMENT WE SEEK TO BECOME CHRIST FOR EACH OTHER.

St. Mary's Church, Chapel Street Tuesday: 7.30pm Sunday: 10.30am

St. Joseph's Sheeptown Sunday: 10.30am St. Catherine's Church, Dominican Priory, Dominic Street Mon-Sat: 7.30am & 11.00am & 7.30pm Sunday Masses – VIGIL [SAT] 7.30pm 8.00am, 9.30am, 11.00am & 12.30

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INTRODUCTORY RITES

Congregation stands

Entrance Hymn or Entrance Antiphon

ls 9:1, 5; Lk 1:33

All: Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for us; and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages: and his reign will be without end.

GREETING

- Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- All: Amen
- Priest: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- All: And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

- Priest: Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
- Priest: Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
- Priest: Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins: Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
- Priest: Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
- Priest: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
- All: Amen

GLORIA

All: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

> We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

THE COLLECT

Priest: Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer

(Night Mass)

Priest: O God, you have made this most sacred night radiant with the splendour of the true light, grant, we pray, that we, who have known the mysteries of his light on earth, may also delight in his gladness in heaven. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

(Day Mass)

- Priest: O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully restored it, grant, we pray, that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
- All: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Congregation Sits

FIRST READING

(Night Mass)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

9:1-7

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian. For all the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt and consumed by fire. For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Péace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity. From this time onwards and for ever, the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

(Day Mass)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

62:11-12

This the Lord proclaims to the ends of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Look, your saviour comes, the prize of his victory with him, his trophies before him." They shall be called "The Holy People," "The Lord's Redeemed." And you shall be called "The-sought-after", "City-not-forsaken."

All: The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 95:1-3. 11-13. R.Lk 2:11

(R) Today a saviour has been born to us; he is Christ the Lord.

- O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth.
 O sing to the Lord, bless his name. (R)
- Proclaim his help day by day, tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. (R)
- 3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise, let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord for he comes, he comes to rule the earth. (R)
- 4. With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth. (R)

SECOND READING

(Night Mass)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus 2:11-14

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

	The word of the Lord
All:	Thanks be to God.

(Day Mass)

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

1:1-6

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

All: The word of the Lord **Thanks be to God.**

Congregations stands

ACCLAMATION

Lk 2:10-11

All: Alleluia, alleluia! I bring you news of great joy: today a saviour has been born to us, Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

(Night I	Mass)	
Priest:	The Lord be with you.	
All:	And with your spirit.	
Priest:	A reading from the holy	
	Gospel according to Luke	2:1-14
All:	Glory to you, O Lord.	

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn. In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, "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. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour".

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

(Day Mass)

Priest:	The Lord be with you.	
All:	And with your spirit.	
	A reading from the holy	
	Gospel according to Luke	2:15-20
All:	Glory to you, O Lord.	

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

All: The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

Congregation sits

HOMILY

Congregation stands

THE CREED

All: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

> I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(bow your head up to the words 'and became man')

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Congregation sits

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Offertory Procession

The gifts of bread and wine which will become the Lord's body and blood are brought to the altar.

The celebrant raises the host on the paten saying:

- Priest: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.
- All: Blessed be God for ever.

The celebrant pours wine and a little water into the chalice, saying quietly:

Priest: By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

The celebrant then raises the chalice above the altar and says:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Bowing, the celebrant says quietly:

Priest: With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.

Then the celebrant washes his hands, saying quietly:

Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

All: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

(Night Mass)

Priest: May the oblation of this day's feast be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we may be found in the likeness of Christ, in whom our nature is united to you. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen

(Day Mass)

- Priest: Make acceptable, O Lord, our oblation on this solemn day, when you manifested the reconciliation that makes us wholly pleasing in your sight and inaugurated for us the fullness of divine worship.
- Through Christ our Lord.
- All: Amen

Congregation stands

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER II

Priest:	The Lord be with you.
All:	And with your spirit.

- Priest:Lift up your hearts.All:We lift them up to the Lord.
- Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. All: It is right and just.

PREFACE (Nativity II)

Priest: It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For on the feast of this awe-filled mystery, though invisible in his own divine nature, he has appeared visibly in ours; and begotten before all ages, he has begun to exist in time; so that, raising up in himself all that was cast down he might restore unity to all creation and call straying humanity back to the heavenly Kingdom.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:

ACCLAMATION

All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Congregation kneels

Priest: You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion, he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT: FOR THIS IS MY BODY WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT, FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT, WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

Priest:The mystery of faith.All:My Lord and my God.

Priest: Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you.

> Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the world, and bring her to the fullness of charity, together with Benedict our Pope and N our Bishop and all the clergy.

Remember also our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection, and all who have died in your mercy: welcome them into the light of your face. Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.

- Priest: Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.
- All: Amen.

Congregation stands

THE COMMUNION RITE

- Priest: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:
- All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
- Priest: Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
- All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

- Priest: The peace of the Lord be with you always. And with your spirit. All:
- May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Priest: Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.
- All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Congregation kneels

The celebrant says quietly: May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to judgment and condemnation, but through your loving mercy be for me protection in mind and body and a healing remedy.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

- Priest: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
- All: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.
- May the Body of Christ Priest: keep me safe for eternal life.
- Priest: May the Blood of Christ keep me safe for eternal life.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Cf. Zec 9:9

All: Rejoice, O Daughter Sion; lift up praise, Daughter Jerusalem: Behold, your King will come, the Holy One and Saviour of the world.

Purifying the chalice the celebrant says quietly:

What has passed our lips as food, O Lord, may we possess in purity of heart, that what has been given to us in time may be our healing for eternity.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Congregation kneels

(Night Mass)

- Priest: Let us pray. Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, that we, who are gladdened by participation in the feast of our Redeemer's Nativity, may through an honourable way of life become worthy of union with him. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
 - All: Amen

(Day Mass)

Priest: Let us pray. Grant us, O merciful God, that, just as the Saviour of the world, born this day, is the author of divine generation for us, so he may be the giver even of

immortality. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen

THE CONCLUDING RITES

- Priest: The Lord be with you.
- And with your spirit. All:
- May the God of infinite goodness, who by the Priest: Incarnation of his Son has driven darkness from the world and by that glorious Birth has illumined this most holy night (day), drive far from you the darkness of vice and illumine your hearts with the light of virtue.

All: Amen

Priest: May God, who willed that the great joy of his Son's saving Birth be announced to shepherds by the Angel, fill your minds with the gladness he gives and make you heralds of his Gospel.

All: Amen

And may God, who by the Incarnation Priest: brought together the earthly and heavenly realm, fill you with the gift of his peace and favour and make you sharers with the Church in heaven.

All: Amen

And may the blessing of almighty God, Priest: the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. All: Amen

Then the celebrant, with hands joined and facing the people, says:

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life. Priest: Thanks be to God. All:

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MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Word becoming flesh is the zenith of God's self-revelation. God who spoke earlier through the prophets now speaks through His Son, and lives among us. The Word who dwelt with God now dwells with 'us', becoming a human being like us and thus bridging the great chasm between God's world and our world. The God who once dwelt among them in the Tabernacle and the Temple, now chooses to dwell among them in the Person of Jesus. In the Old Testament, Moses was not allowed to see the face of God. Now, however, we are called to see Jesus' glory – and His face. Thus, the Father is fully revealed to us, because 'whoever has seen the Son, has seen the Father'.

This Christmas morning when we celebrate the victory of light over darkness, the Gospel of John introduces Jesus as the true light who came from Heaven into our world of darkness to give us clear vision.

We are asked to welcome Christ's Kingdom into our lives by allowing Him to be born in us, by recognising Him in others and by courageously going forth with His grace to build His kingdom of love, justice, peace and holiness in our world.

There is tremendous work done in the parishes of Newry and Saval by the various groups. It is the various individuals, groups and societies that are the backbone of both parishes.

We extend our sincere thanks to the members of staff of the Parish Office of Newry and Saval, the Parish Pastoral Council and the Finance Council in each parish for the great work they do. Thanks also to the Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, the Organists, Musicians and Choir Members, those who arrange the flowers each week and enhance the celebration of the Eucharist. Thanks to the Sacristans and the Stewards who do great work and those who clean the Churches. Your support is invaluable.

Thanks to the Knights of St. Columbanus, the Online Media Team, the Parish Screen Team, the Youth Director and her Team, the Bereavement Ministry Team, the Baptism Ministry Team, the Team working with the schools to help parents and pupils prepare for the Sacraments of First Penance, First Communion and Confirmation. I have no doubt that the parishes are further enriched by the contribution of each of these groups. The placing of screens in the Cathedral means that parishioners can join in the singing of their favourite hymns.

Sincere thanks to those who work in the Cathedral garden and enable people to come in and have their lunch. The construction of the lovely grotto in the garden is appreciated very much. Many people come in and say a prayer to Our Lady and St. Bernadette. This beautiful Grotto in the Cathedral garden has become a focal point. The garden is now a place for people to come in for some quiet time and soak in the atmosphere of this beautiful space.

The 'Giving Tree' in the Cathedral is a tremendous success. Many young, and not so young, people have benefited this Christmas, thanks to your generosity.

I extend a special thought to the sick and housebound. We are pleased to be able to visit you. It is also good for us to know that you join us on the webcam daily and participate in the celebration of the Mass.

Pope Francis has chosen the Feast of the Holy Family to mark the opening of the Year of Jubilee 2025 in all the Dioceses of the world. The theme of the Jubilee year is 'Pilgrims of Hope'.

On behalf of Archbishop Eamon Martin, Fr. Alphonsus, Fr. Wojciech, Fr. Carlos, Rev. Anthony Moffett, student for the priesthood for the Diocese of Dromore, and me, I take this opportunity to wish all our parishioners in Newry & Saval a joyful and peace-filled Christmas. May you enjoy an opportunity to relax with your family and friends. May you have many blessings in the Holy Year, 2025.

Canon Francis Brown



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