



The Catholic Parish
of
Celbridge
and
Straffan



The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception has caused a lot of misconceptions! Perhaps the most common one is that it celebrates the conception of Christ in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. That the feast occurs only 17 days before Christmas should raise questions about that!

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception celebrates the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the womb of Saint Anne; and nine months later, on September 8, we celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

When the Feast arrived in the West, around the 11th century (it had been celebrated in the Eastern Church since the 7th century), it was a source of controversy. Because of the doctrine of Original Sin, some in the West began to believe that Mary could not have been sinless unless she had been saved from Original Sin at the moment of her conception (thus making the conception "immaculate"). Others, however, including St. Thomas Aquinas, argued that Mary could not have been redeemed if she had not been subject to sin – at least, to Original Sin. The answer to St. Thomas Aquinas's objection, as Blessed John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) showed, was that God had sanctified Mary at the moment of her conception in His foreknowledge that the Blessed Virgin would consent to bear Christ. In other words, she too had been redeemed – her redemption had simply been accomplished at the moment of her conception, rather than (as with all other Christians) in Baptism.

Masses on the Feast day are 8am, 10am, 7pm on the 9th Dec in Celbridge and 10am in Straffan.

Spiritual Preparation for Christmas

The third session of 'Expecting Christ' will continue next Wed after the 10am Mass and Wednesday evening after the 7pm Mass in St. Patrick's Church and Thursday mornings after the 9.15am Mass in St. Brigid's Straffan. The session lasts 1hr. This week we will be thinking about how Christ can surprise us and meet us in prayer. Everyone Welcome.

Parish Choirs Carol Service

Sunday 15th December @ 4pm

- * Favourite Carols
- * Mince Pies
- * Mulled Wine
- * Soft Drinks

Everyone Welcome

Pope Francis's Questionnaire: Copies of the questionnaire on family life which the Holy Father is seeking the views of Catholic members is available at the back of the Church and can be returned in the next couple of weeks to the sacristy/ parish office.

Diocesan food appeal: Food can be left at the back left hand side in the baskets provided.
See brochure (on table) for guidelines on foods suitable.

PLANNED GIVING: Weekly Envelope Collection: €3,439. Your continued support is very much appreciated. Thanks also to the collectors. The Planned Giving Envelopes for the New Year have now been circulated. If you have not yet received your box, or if you do not already have a box and would like to support our parish, please text your name & address to 085 7021882. A standing order may also be used. Receipts showing the total amount donated in the year to 30/11/2013 will be issued in Jan 2014.

Pope Francis on ... being a bouncer, and deaf priests

In addition to having worked sweeping floors as a teenager, Pope Francis revealed he also used to work as a bouncer. Nowadays, no longer kicking troublemakers out of clubs, he says he looks, instead, for ways to give reasons for people to come back in, this time to the church. The best way, he says, is to be a witness of hope and, as St. Peter said, "always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope."

Also, recounting how he discovered his vocation to the priesthood after confession with a priest he had never met before, the pope joked it was common knowledge that the best confessors are priests the penitent does not know and priests who are deaf! On our mission as a Church, Pope Francis reminded us that "hypocrisy is a grave sin," underlining how important credibility was in helping the church grow, not through proselytism, but by attraction. He also confided that he prayed "for the grace of simplicity for me and the church" when he prayed at the tomb of his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, Oct. 4.

1. Twitter page of Pope Francis @Pontifex
2. *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), described as the 'I Have a Dream' speech of Pope Francis, is causing quite a stir. In January we hope to use it as our 'Food for the Soul' Book Club offering. Copies will be made available in the church. Watch this space.

Weekend Mass Intentions

St Brigid's Church

Saturday 6pm Christina Cully,
Patrick & Peggy McCormack

Sunday 11am Peter Buckley

St. Patrick's Church

Saturday 6.30 pm Tom Lynch, Patricia Lynch,
Michael Bolger

Sunday 8.30am Michael Allen

9.30am James Adams, Flynn Family, Hughes family

11am Elizabeth Kavanagh, Nellie Meade

12.30pm Michael & Maureen Donohoe, Peggy & Frank Browne

7pm Special intention

Benefit Night for the victims of Typhoon Haiyan in Barberstown Castle

Sunday December 15th 2013

Dinner and entertainment €40 per ticket

All proceeds will be given directly to the relief effort. To purchase tickets or make a donation contact Gretchen at 6288157 or sales@barberstowncastle.ie

Advent Wreath Candle—2nd Sunday In this season of hustle and bustle we are tempted to get frantic and join the panic to shop our way into the Christmas spirit. In this moment, we resist that temptation and choose instead to be at peace.

On this second Sunday of Advent

we light the second candle as an

act of preparation for Christmas

and call it ... 'PEACE'.



Weekday Mass Intentions St. Patrick's Church

Monday 9th 8am Nancy Fahy **10am** Eileen Ferguson **7pm** Claire O'Brien

Tuesday 10th 10am James Mangan **7pm** Tom & Peggy Lenihan

Wednesday 11th 10am Rose Fitzgerald **7pm** James Kavanagh

Thursday 12th 10am Brady & McKenna Families **7pm** Chris Donovan

Christopher Barrett

Friday 13th 10am Val Farrell **7pm** Margaret & Con Gaffney & Donovan family

Philip Wright

Saturday 14th 10am Michael, Mary, Billy, & Tommy Dunne

St Vincent De Paul

The Christmas Appeal takes place this weekend instead of the Share collection Thank you for your support and co-operation over the past number of years. The success of our appeal is in no small measure due to your assistance and support. A successful Christmas Church Collection is vital in enabling us to expand our programmes of assistance to those in need. On behalf of the members of the Society, I offer you our sincere thanks.

"Remembering a loved one at Christmas" in aid of St. Brigid's Hospice.

Please support our fundraising event by sponsoring a Light in Memory of a deceased loved one this Christmas. Pick up a special envelope at the back of the church. Envelopes can be placed in the church collection baskets at all masses up to and including Sunday the 1st of December; or in the special drop-box in Celbridge Credit Union. Your support is greatly appreciated.

A Lighting of the Tree Remembrance Service & Carol singing takes place in St. Patrick's Church, Sunday the 8th of December at 5pm. You can donate online at <http://www.mycharity.ie/event/rememberingalovedone2013>

Christmas Mass Intentions

Christmas Cards: All Masses (12 Masses) will be offered on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day for the intention of those named on the special Mass cards. Each Mass card cost €5 and can be purchased in the parish office or in the sacristy after all Masses.

When purchasing the card please give the name of the person for whom the Masses will be said.

CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES AND EVERYONE IN OUR PARISH



To our Candidates

Thank you for coming to our Enrolment service. It was a great sight to see all of you together. Congratulations on becoming Candidates. As you know, the *You Shall Be My Witness* programme begins next week (9th December). This journey of preparation should be a time of faith, fun and friendship. By taking part you will be able to find out more about your faith, and whether or not you are ready for Confirmation. Hopefully it will help make the decision easier for you and your family.

To everyone in our Parish

Traditionally, unless we had a family member for Confirmation, we often presumed that it didn't involve us. But this was a limited understanding. There's a new family that Jesus often talks about. This is the family not joined by *blood* but joined by *spirit*. It is the family we all belong to from the day of our baptism, as adopted sisters and brothers of the Lord. All those preparing for Confirmation are part of this family, and it's why they need us. We help them by the *faith* of our prayer, and by the *joy* of our witness. As they prepare to confirm their faith in Jesus Christ, our prayer and our witness will be very important to them.