

# ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION CHURCH KILLYBEGS



## CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2016



*Lord Jesus, come into our world with your gift of joy and peace.*

*As we journey by the light of the star of Bethlehem,  
may God wrap us in integrity, clothe us in hope and fill us with joy.*

***Beannachtaí na Nollag  
agus na Bliana Úire oraibh uilig***

## Dear Parishioners and Friends,

*The good news of Pope Francis' planned visit to Ireland in August 2018 has just been announced. Many may recall the last Papal Visit in 1979 by Pope John Paul II, as he was greeted warmly in the Phoenix Park, Galway, Knock, Maynooth and elsewhere, but was unable to travel to the North because the 'Troubles' were at their worst. Ireland has changed so much since then, in so many different ways, and the church has been brought to her knees in the intervening years. The moral authority of the Catholic Church in Ireland and in many parts of the world has been seriously undermined by the clerical child abuse and its mishandling. It is in that context that the church's voice is uttered today. It is no longer the assertive and arrogant voice of forty years ago. It is a voice crying in the wilderness, a humble and less arrogant voice that needs to be expressed in a constructive way if it is to be given a fair hearing. Pope Francis speaks profoundly and with simplicity and humility of 'The Joy of Love' (his latest exhortation) and leads by example. He is a truly inspirational leader, for the family that is the Church as well as the global human family. As we prepare for the world meeting of families in Dublin in August 2018 and for his pastoral visit, may we allow him to inspire, motivate and guide us in living the joy of the gospel.*

*There were two unpredictable developments during the course of 2016 that will have profound implications for our world and for our people, at home and abroad. Brexit was a bombshell, and what was perceived on this side of the Atlantic as Trump's toxic triumph in the U.S. was a greater bombshell. The fear of the threatening stranger was a major factor in both unforeseen developments. Those who felt marginalised by the political establishment unleashed such a right wing backlash that has left us in a very muddled and uncertain new dispensation. We can only yearn and pray that more compassionate and measured voices will emerge in the New Year.*

*On the domestic front Fr Peter McVerry has brought the scandal of homeless individuals and homeless families to the national consciousness in a forthright and determined manner. Bethlehem experienced a similar scandal 2000 years ago. In such circumstances our Saviour was born, Christ the Lord.*

*Our sincere thanks to everyone who was actively engaged in different ministries and tasks in the parish throughout the year. And we are grateful for all the financial support received for the general administration of the parish, for the Restoration Fund and for specific projects, particularly the installation of the stained-glass window entitled 'God the Father' from the Harry Clarke Studios. May God the Father look after us, protect us and care for all of us this Christmas and throughout the New Year.*

*Wishing you every blessing this Christmas and throughout 2017.*

**Fr Colm, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

# CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS 2016

## Christmas Carol Service

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00pm.**

Young people from the local schools join the Parish Choir.  
The collection will go to the Donegal/Galway Cancer Bus.

## Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December

Masses at 7.00pm (Vigil), 9.00am & 11.00am

## Service of Reconciliation

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00pm**

## Christmas Masses

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Eve**

**7.00pm:** Children's Christmas Mass

**11.00pm:** Christmas 'Midnight' Mass

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Day**

Masses at **9.00am** and **11.00am**

## Practices for Children's Mass (Christmas Eve 7pm):

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 5pm & Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 5pm

## Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

in the Adoration Room every Sunday 6pm to Monday Midnight  
(except 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> December and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> January).

## Rosary & Divine Mercy

every Tuesday in Adoration Room 6.30pm (Summertime 7.30pm)  
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on last Tuesday of the month.



## ‘God the Father’ finds a home in Killybegs



This delightful three-panel Stained Glass Window, entitled ‘God the Father’, was installed above St Catherine’s Altar and unveiled by Anne Kinsella at a Mass celebrating the Feast of St Catherine of Alexandria on Friday, 25th November, 7pm.

The window is signed ‘Harry Clarke Stained Glass Ltd’. Harry Clarke (1889-1931) was Ireland’s greatest stained-glass artist. In the 1960s the ‘God the Father’ window was designed in the Harry Clarke Studios in Dublin (which closed in 1973) for a church in New Zealand but never delivered for whatever reason. It had been on display at All Hallows College, Dublin, and was subsequently purchased at public auction by Eugene Collins of Downings Antiques on behalf of Killybegs Parish and beautifully framed by Doherty Joinery, Killybegs. This striking, cosmic figure of God the Father, with its spectacular colours, is a worthy addition to our church, complementing the Holy Family Painting above Our Lady’s Altar.

*May Christmas infuse our hearts with trust  
and encircle us with hope*

*and*

*A New Year's Blessing:*

*May your inner vision be transformed so that you can  
see more clearly your own journey with all humankind  
as a journey of peace, hope and bondedness.*

*May your God be someone you can lean on in your weak or painful  
moments. May you know God as your rock, your shelter,  
your strength, your wing of comfort and support.*

*May you not be afraid of the questions that press upon your mind  
and heart. May you welcome the questions and wait patiently  
for the day when they will have their answers.*

*May yours be the gift of reverence for all created things.  
May you face bravely and enthusiastically the responsibility  
to preserve and care for the beauty of the earth.*

*May the wellsprings of compassion flow deep within you,  
until you can taste the tears of your sisters and brothers.*

*May you awake each morning with thank you on your lips and  
in your heart, recognizing that all is gift, that all is blessing.*

*May your friendship with God be strong and healthy.  
May that love be both a comfort and a challenge  
as you struggle to find your way in the New Year.*

*May your spirit be open and perceptive in discovering  
the will of God for you. May your prayer be that of wisdom,  
guidance, and a deeper understanding of God's way for you.*

*May your life in the New Year be a living legacy to your God.*

## From the Parish Office: some ideal Christmas Gifts



A magnificent aerial photograph of St Mary's Church, Killybegs, in its beautiful idyllic setting. A3 size (16 x 12 inches), mounted on canvas: €40 each.

- **The 'Murillo' Prints: €5    Framed Prints: €15**
- **St. Mary's Christmas Cards:** Pack of 6: €2.
- **Killybegs Parish Calendar 2017:** complimentary copies available.
- **Religious Objects of Devotion, Cards, Cribs & Books**
- **Mass Cards & Christmas Mass Bouquet Cards,** signed by Fr Colm.
- **Sunday Missal 2017.** Special Price €5.
- **Ten Pilgrimages to Sacred Places in Killybegs, Summer 2013**  
Contains over 250 photographs. Price: €10.

### Money Matters

We are sincerely grateful to everyone who supports the parish financially, contributing to the general administration of the parish and contributing to the Restoration Fund.

- The upkeep and maintenance of the parish, in terms of buildings, programmes and personnel, are carried out in a cost-efficient manner. The restoration work involved obtaining a bank loan of €950,000. Our current monthly repayments are €9738. The loan balance on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 was: €675,472. The loan balance on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016 was: €585,975. We are grateful for your ongoing support.
- *Weekly or monthly or annual* contributions are very much appreciated. And a number of fundraising efforts are necessary during the year.
- Many people use the weekly envelopes for their contributions. We are delivering two sets of envelopes (Parish Envelopes and Restoration Envelopes) to each household which has been in receipt of envelopes. If you do not intend to use both, discard what you do not need. It makes it much easier, for administration purposes, to do it this way. It means just one delivery of envelopes, with matching numbers.
- If you wish to receive a set of envelopes or if you have any queries, please contact Fr Colm or Ann at the Parish Office (074 9731013).

## Guidelines for Getting Married

*“Marriage is a precious sign, for when a man and a woman celebrate the sacrament of marriage, God is, as it were, mirrored in them; he impresses in them his own features and the indelible character of his love. Marriage is the icon of God’s love for us”. Pope Francis*

Each partner must complete the **Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form**.

The following documents are required to complete this form:

1. Baptismal Certificate
2. Confirmation Certificate
3. Pre-Marriage Course Certificate. (Pre-Marriage Courses: [www.accord.ie](http://www.accord.ie))
4. Letter of Freedom
5. Receipt of three month notification from the Civil Registrar of Marriages. (Stranorlar Registrar: Marie Greene on 074 9189554 / 9189558)

**The Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form** is completed for both parties (includes those who are not Catholic) in two stages:

**Section A**, which deals with the freedom to marry of both parties, to be completed as soon as possible after the couple have provisionally booked their wedding. Section A needs to be completed before the booking is confirmed.

**Section B** is completed after the Marriage Preparation Course has taken place and it establishes that the individuals understand what Christian Marriage is and accepts it.

**Letter of Freedom:** establishing one’s freedom to marry.

There are a number of options:

A letter from each parish the party lived in for six months or more since the ages of 18.

**or** statement of freedom to marry from a family member, witnessed by a priest or a deacon

**or** a sworn affidavit made in the presence of a Commissioner of Oaths where the party states that he/she has never been married before, either civilly or religiously.

- The required age for a lawful marriage in Ireland is 18 years of age. This also applies to both witnesses.
- The Church and the State require a minimum of three months’ notice.
- The official Church texts should always be used for the Liturgy of Marriage so as not to jeopardise the validity of the marriage (couples are not permitted to write their own vows)
- If either party has been previously married, no marriage arrangements can be made until permission (for a remarriage) has been given by the local bishop.

Fr Colm will gladly advise couples on the above.

## The Sacrament of Baptism:

Parents may arrange the baptism of their child with Fr Colm or Ann in the Parish Office. Two members of the Parish Baptism Team will arrange to visit the family, one half-hour visit, to arrange readings, prayers and go through the ceremony. If a home visit does suit, this can be done in the Parish Office. The usual times of Baptism are the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 12.30pm.

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## Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Raphoe

St Mary's Parish in Killybegs has adopted the Diocese of Raphoe Policy Statement and everyone working with children in the parish is required to comply with it. The two Parish Safeguarding Representatives are: Kathleen O'Donnell, Fintra Rd and Pat McGee, The Glebe.

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## Dates for 2017

**Sacrament of Confirmation:** Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 11.00am

**First Holy Communion:** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00am

**Mass Rock Mass:** Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00pm

**Graveyard Mass:** Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July at 7.00pm

**Blessing of the Fleet:** Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> August at 7.00pm

**Mass at Croaghlin Mass Rock:** Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August at 7.00pm

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**Sunday Masses:** 7.00pm (Vigil), 9.00am & 11.00am.

**Weekdays:** Monday, Tuesday & Friday 10.00am; Thursday 7.00pm.

*Weekday Masses subject to change. Consult weekly Newsletter.*

**mcnmedia.tv:** All Masses and all church services from St Mary's are streamed live on the internet. Go to *mcnmedia.tv* and then *St Mary's, Killybegs* or, easier still, go to our website and click on *Live Webcamera*  
Marriages and Funerals can be recorded, on request, free of charge, and can also be downloaded from our site.

**Induction Loop** is available for hearing-aid users, switch to T position.

**Gluten-free Bread** for Holy Communion is available on request.

**Website:** The Parish Weekly Newsletter is posted every Saturday evening on our website: *killybegsparish.com*

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**The Parish Office** is located on church grounds, opposite main door of the church

**Hours of Opening:** Monday to Friday 9.15am - 2.45pm. **Tel:** 074 9731013

**Email:** [info@killybegsparish.com](mailto:info@killybegsparish.com)

**Website:** [killybegsparish.com](http://killybegsparish.com)

**Parish Secretary:** Ann O'Donnell

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Colm Ó Gallchóir: Tel: 074 9731013 / 9731030