

Twas the Night before Christmas - by Clement Clarke Moore

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tinny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky.
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!



He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

23rd December 2018 - No. 4

Year C

St Mary's Church Bocan

Advent

Weekday Masses

Monday, Christmas Eve:

6 pm & 9 pm;

Christmas Day, 10 am.

No Mass for the rest of the week

Confessions

Christmas Eve: 12 pm—1 pm.

Saturday 7.15 pm—7.45 pm.

Anniversary Mass this weekend:

Sunday 11 am: Margaret McCauley & Sister Assumpta, Moneydarragh.

Next Weekend:

Sunday 11 am: Maeve Harkin, Falmore

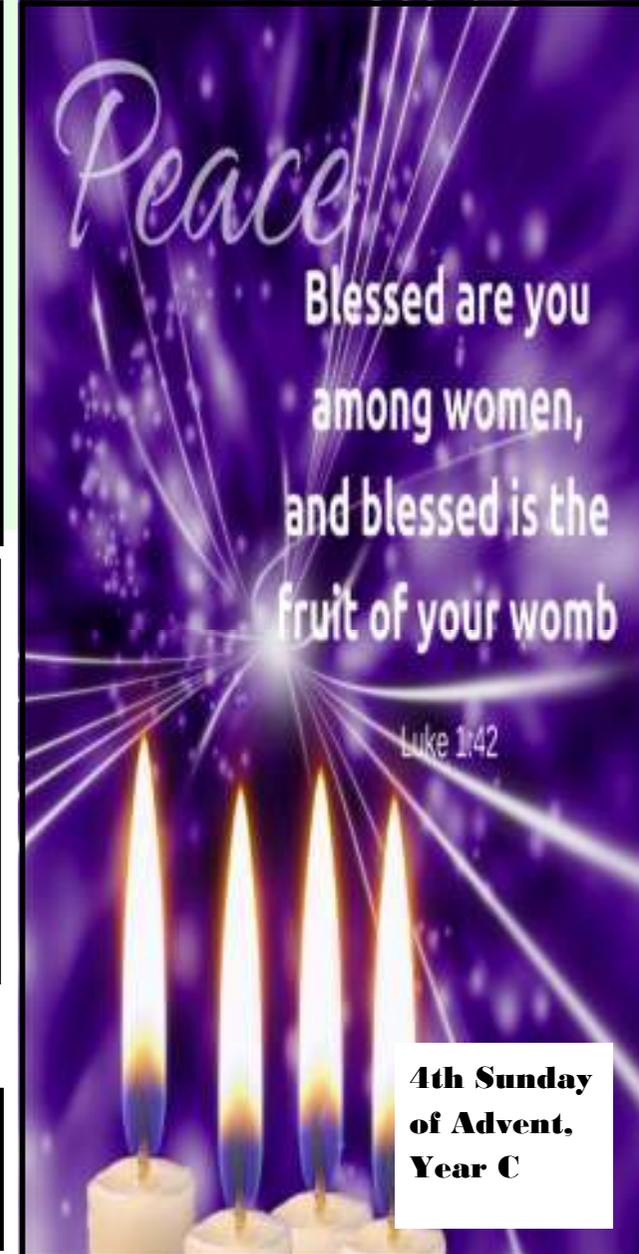
Responsorial Psalm

God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

Peace!
Blessed are you
among women,
and blessed is the
fruit of your womb

Luke 1:42

**4th Sunday
of Advent,
Year C**



Fr. Brian Brady, P.P., V.F 9376264

Fr. Karl Haan C.C. 9379107

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Collections Weekly Offering : €1,150;
Development Collection €425. Your
generosity to our collections is much
appreciated.



First Reading

Micah 5:1-4

The ruler of Israel is
promised to come from
Bethlehem.

Second Reading

Hebrews 10:5-10

Through his obedience to
God's will, Christ
consecrated all.

Gospel Reading

Luke 1:39-45

Mary visits Elizabeth, who
sings praise to Mary and her
child.

The Priest's Christmas Collection will be taken
up at Mass on Christmas Eve (Vigil) and at all
Masses on Christmas Day. You will find a
special envelope for this collection in your
box.

Counters for the Month of Dec: : Tommy
Lafferty, Brian Lafferty, Brian Deeny, Hugh
Diver, Patricia Harkin, Mary McLaughlin

There will be a carol service in
Glacknadrummond Methodist Church on
Sunday 23rd December at 7.30pm followed
by mince pies, shortbread and a cup of
tea. Everyone is welcome. '

Whist

1st Eileen Gormley 2nd Patrick McLaughlin, 3rd
Betty Doherty

Tickets Kevin Lafferty, Pat Porter, Carmel
McLaughlin, Eileen Gormley, Charlie Doherty

Other Winners

John Doherty, Eamon Donaghy, Charlie
Doherty, Bridgid McCauley, Carmel
McLaughlin, Treasa McLaughlin, Vera Deeny,
Vincent Lynn, Annie McBride

Whist next Friday at 8 pm in Bocan Hall.

Snowball next week: €110 on 184 or better

THE DEEP END: Reaching out

Have you ever wondered why Mary travelled to
visit Elizabeth? At first it is the excitement that
comes through. Caught up in her wonderment at
being pregnant and the news that her cousin is also
expecting, Mary hurries off as quickly as she can.
Perhaps the journey gives her time to reflect on
everything that is happening. The precious moment
when Elizabeth greets her is a lovely glimpse of the
close friendship between the two women.

We know that Elizabeth is advanced in years,
and that she and her husband Zechariah had not
expected to ever have a child. After this encounter,
we are told that Mary stays on with Elizabeth for
three months; as a younger woman, it is fair to
assume that she is there to help and support her
cousin.

Pope Francis has described the visit as a lesson
in service and joy, as well as demonstrating great
courage. 'Being of service and reaching out to
others both require going out from themselves:
going out to serve and meet others, to embrace
another person. Through Mary's service towards
others, through that encounter, our Lord's promise
is renewed and makes it happen now, just as it did
then.'

With just two days to go until Christmas it is a
busy time. But it is also a time that offers many
opportunities to reach out, whether it is to build
bridges with family members, offer our time to
someone who is lonely, or support a friend or
neighbour who finds this time of year difficult. –
Triona Doherty

THE MYSTERY OF DARKNESS - In the northern hemisphere this is the season of
the longest nights. Because of the tilt of the earth the sun seems far distant from us, and
the hours of darkness are long. But in this darkness are hidden gifts of insight for those
who wish to look.

Light and darkness have, over the centuries, been cast as enemies: light has become a
sign of the holy and the good and the darkness a symbol of evil and ignorance. Yet it
was at night, in the surrounding intimacy of darkness, that some of the greatest religious
events in our tradition occurred: the Passover meal, the birth of Jesus and his Last
Supper. Since Christ was absent from the tomb at dawn on Easter, he must have risen in
the darkness. We are told he went into the mountains to pray at night or before dawn,
and these were the times of Jesus' most intimate communion with the Divine Mystery.
This love of night by God should not surprise us, for is night not the time of lovers?

We need to appreciate darkness as the soft companion of prayer and love. With a gentle
touch, darkness closes our eyes to the world of work, shrinks our cosmos to a close
circle and produces an inner prayerful proportion. The mystery of night not only allows
us to feel closer to each other but closer to God as well. Perhaps this is why night vigils
are practiced by persons of all religious beliefs.

Jesus said, " I am the light of the world" (Jn. 9.5). We would probably have more
difficulty saying "Jesus is the night-time darkness", yet this alone is also true. Perhaps
these final days of Advent could be a time of atonement for our failure to love night as
we love the day, for our sin of prejudice against the darkness, for our failure to see how
darkness and light play together in the circle of God's wholeness. And when our day is
finished, our work at rest, with a sense of accomplishment and gratitude, we open our
arms, as the French poet, Peguy would say, to the embrace of God's dark-eyed
daughter, night.

For darkness is more than the absence of light. As we consider the opening words of
Scripture in the book of Genesis, we see that "the earth was a formless waste of
darkness covered by abyss" (Gen. 1:2). The darkness of space covered the earth. There
was just darkness and God, intimate in their ageless embrace. And when God said, "Let
there be light!" (Gen. 1:3), from the very heart of darkness light appeared.

Advent is the ageless season of waiting for the birth of Emmanuel into the world. And it
is appropriate, for those of us who live north of the equator, that Advent comes at the
darkest time of year. For Advent's silent sister, the dark, holds the gift that allows us to
wait quietly for the Light of Lights.

Let us use these Advent days around the Winter Solstice, earth's darkest day, to wait in
open stillness for the "light that shone in the darkness" (Jn. 1:5)

**Bocan Saint Vincent de Paul Christmas Church Gate collection 2018 raised
€1,030 . Thank you so much for your generous donations**

We wish every family in our Parish a very Happy and Holy Christmas 2018 and
remember all those who were with us last year and are no longer here.