

**Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone (Diocese of Derry)**  
**St. Patrick's, Greencastle**      **Our Lady of the Wayside, Broughderg**  
**Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudate Sunday) [Year B] (11<sup>th</sup> December, 2011)**  
 The Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU  
**Website:** greencastleparish.com    **Tel:** (028) 8164 8474    **Email:** greencastlepp@yahoo.com

Today is **Gaudate Sunday** which, taken from the first word of the Entrance Antiphon, means "rejoice." Penitential violet is replaced with rose, a colour of joy. The priest may wear rose vestments; rose may be woven into the liturgical decorations; and the third candle on the Advent wreath (traditionally rose) is lit. Even in the liturgical colours we sense a shift in the liturgies of the season. This shift will be especially noticeable beginning Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December, but even today's liturgy gives a hint that something is on the horizon. Possibly dating back to the Middle Ages, when the season of Advent bore an overly penitential character, the rose colours signalled joyfully that the church was closer to Christmas. Although today the rose colour is still a sign of the anticipatory Christmas joy, we understand the continuity of Advent as a season of 'devout joyful expectation.' Today's liturgy helps to heighten the expectation, which will carry through to the celebration of Christmas.

**Liturgy Schedule for the Third Week of Advent [Year B] (12<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 – 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2011)**

<b>Saturday Evening (10<sup>th</sup> December)</b>	St. Patrick's	<b>5.30pm</b> Confessions <b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass for Sunday: <b>9:00am</b> Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
<b>Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Sunday of Advent [Year B] Gaudate Sunday	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	<b>10.30am</b> Confessions <b>11.00am</b> Mass: Gerard, Gerry and Mary McCrory
<b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December</b> St. Finian (priest) and Our Lady of Guadalupe	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December</b> St. Lucy (virgin and martyr)	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December</b> St. John of the Cross (priest and doctor of the Church)	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>8.00pm</b> Mass
<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Saturday Evening (17<sup>th</sup> December)</b> Do This In Memory	St. Patrick's	<b>5.30pm</b> Confessions <b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass: Katy Fox (Month's Mind) <b>9:00am</b> Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent [Year B]	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	<b>10.30am</b> Confessions <b>11.00am</b> Mass

**Weekly Offerings:** Thank you for your generosity to last week's collection which amounted to **£1,020**. Please support your parish by using your envelope each week and especially if for some reason you must attend Mass outside your parish. Our parish depends upon your envelope contribution for our material support, thank you. Please remember the parish when making your will. If you are a taxpayer please consider a Gift-Aid declaration, your contribution will be worth 25% more to your parish.

**Invitation to Mass:** If you are a homemaker or retired you are invited to make time in your schedule to attend Mass daily during Advent, this is the best way to prepare for Christmas.

**Remembering Our Dead:** We pray for **Patrick Joseph Devlin** and **Gerard, Gerry and Mary McCrory** whose anniversaries occur at this time

**If you or anyone you know has a child safeguarding concern** or wishes to report an allegation directly to the statutory authorities, please contact the PSNI or local Health and Social Care Trust. If you are contacting the latter, ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker. Alternatively if you have a child safeguarding concern in relation to any member of Church personnel and wish to report it to Church authorities, please contact one of the diocesan designated persons, who will in turn report your concern to the relevant statutory authorities.

**Child Safeguarding Policy:** Please familiarise yourself with it by reading the noticeboard as you leave Church today.

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July):** Gift vouchers are available from the Thornhill Centre ((028) 7135 1233) and The Diocesan Pastoral Centre ((028) 7136 2475).

*Vouchers can be used as part or full payment towards the pilgrimage*

**Next Sunday's Readings:** 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14; Psalm 88:2-5, 27, 29; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38;  
(Lectionary I, page 70) (Sunday: Year B) (Weekday: Year 2)

**Lotto Results:** L – K – O – Q – W (2 people with 3 letters – £25 each) **Next Jackpot:** £6,400

<b>6.00pm Saturday Vigil</b> Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> December The family of <b>Oisín Coyle</b>	<b>Offertory Gifts Rota</b> Third Sunday of Advent	<b>9.00am Sunday Morning</b> Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> December The family of <b>Ryan Gumley</b>
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> December The family of <b>Aoife Conway</b>	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> December The family of <b>Kira Donnelly</b>
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> December (8.00pm Vigil) The family of <b>Caitlin Clarke</b>	Feast of Christmas	Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> December (11.00am) The family of <b>Megan Coyle</b>
To celebrate the Feast of Christmas the Vigil Mass will be at 8.00pm with carols beginning at 7.30pm. 11.00am Mass will be in St. Patrick's, Greencastle and 9.00am Mass will be in Our Lady of the Wayside, Broughderg.		
Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> December The family of <b>Joseph Warnock</b>	Feast of Christmas	Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> January The family of <b>Alannah Coyle</b>
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> January The family of <b>Niamh Conway</b>	Feast of Christmas	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> January The family of <b>Aidan Conway</b>

As the whole parish community we thank these young people and their families for this important task.

**Trócaire:** You are invited to give someone special in your life a very special gift this Christmas by choosing from their offer of the nine life-changing gifts. *A leaflet is available at the church door*

**Do This In Memory Programme:** Our parish First Holy Communion programme will continue at the Vigil Mass in Greencastle next weekend (Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December). *In preparation there will be a practice in the Church at 7.00pm on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December.* Our next gathering will be at the Vigil Mass for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (14<sup>th</sup> January).

**The Carmelite Retreat Centre (Termonbacca, Derry):** *Calling the Carmelite Fathers Office on (028) 7126 2512 to book*  
**Advent Weekend Residential Retreat:** From 7.30pm on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December until after lunch on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December

**"Follow the Star" to the Celtic Garden Christmas Trail at the IOSAS Centre, Muff:** An interactive family experience to recapture the true spirit of Christmas and learn about some of the Christian stories behind our favourite Christmas traditions. Facilitated by the YARD Project, Derry it is taking place Friday 9<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December and Friday 16<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> Dec at 4.00pm, 5.30pm and 7.00pm. PRE-BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL.  
*For tickets and information contact the IOSAS Centre (00353) 74938 4866 or the YARD Project (028) 7126 9113*

**50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress:** Bookings to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress are live on [iec2012.ie](http://iec2012.ie). You can book for 7 days, for 3 days or for a single day. You can decide to come as an individual, as a family or as a group. Clergy bookings are live as well. Do not leave it to the last minute! Read more about the different possibilities of booking for the Congress and book now!  
 Teresa Menendez | Senior Marketing and Publications Officer | 50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress 2012 Sandymount Building | RDS | Simonscourt Road | Dublin 4. T: +353 1 234 9904 (Direct) | T: + 353 1 234 9900 ( Main )  
 F: + 353 1 667 5050 (Fax). E: [marketing@iec2012.ie](mailto:marketing@iec2012.ie) | W: [www.iec2012.ie](http://www.iec2012.ie)

**Sacred Heart Church, Omagh – University of Ulster Choir:** Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 8.00pm. Led by Choir Director, Shaun Ryan, the 70 strong Choir and Chamber Choir, renowned throughout Northern Ireland, will perform a programme including Howard Goodall's "Eternal Light", "Sleep" by Eric Whitacre, and Ralph Vaughan William's popular setting of "O be joyful in the Lord" ("The Hundredth Psalm"), together with a range of Christmas Music.  
*Everyone is warmly invited to come along*

**Celebration of Arts and Crafts Work in Rouskey Community Centre:** Rouskey Management Committee invites everyone to Rouskey Community Centre on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December from 2.00pm to 5.00pm to see all crafts and art work that has been done in Rouskey since September. Childrens and Adults Art, Flower Arranging, Sculpture Making, Painted Crafts, Felt –making. Refreshments will be served.  
*Contact Bridie on 07847 459 428 or (028) 8164 8706*

**Wizard of OZ Production:** We would thank all children/young people who took part in the show. Thanks to Cíodhna Fullen, producer and director of the show. Thanks who everyone donate prizes were much appreciated. Thanks to everyone for their support and help before and during the show. Thanks everyone who came along to the show. Hire of Rouskey Community Centre and equipment.  
*Contact Sheena on (028) 8164 8186*

**Green Elves Playgroup:** Anyone wishing to start a child in playgroup September 2012 contact Roisin for an application form on (028) 8164 7104 between 9.00am and 1.00pm.

<b>Greencastle Youth Club Rota</b>		
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	6.30pm – 8.00pm	P6 and P7 (Rosie Morris)
	8.00pm – 9.30pm	Years 8, 9 and 10 (Liz Conneely)
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	6.30pm – 8.00pm	P4 and P5 (Caroline McCann)

<b>An Bruach Dearg Community Centre Upcoming Events</b>	<b>Every Friday Night</b>	Card playing at 8.30pm
	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> December at 8.00pm
	<b>Beginning February, 2012</b>	Pilates/Yoga classes

**Final Offers – anyone who wishes to make an offer for the old Roman Altar Missals that we no longer use for Mass should send them to Father Hasson as soon as you can.**

**Pope Benedict XVI's Intentions for December (please remember these in your personal prayer)**

**General:** That all peoples may grow in harmony and peace through mutual understanding and respect.  
**Missionary:** That children and young people may be messengers of the Gospel and that they may be respected and preserved from all violence and exploitation.

**Family Care Society – Adoption:** Could you make a child happy again after a difficult start in life? Family Care Society is presently seeking adoptive families who would be interested in parenting children aged under 8 and who need the love and attention of a caring and understanding family. Could this be you?

For more information contact Family Care Society on (028) 9069 1133 (Belfast) or (028) 7136 8592 (Derry)  
 email@familycaresociety.org familycaresociety.net

**Vincent's, Castle Street, Omagh:** Vincent's is the only SVP shop in this district. It depends on donations from you. Our customers really appreciate your gifts, especially good quality clothing. The shops profits are a steady source of income towards the work of SVP (St. Vincent DePaul Society). We realise there is a lot of competition from commercial and charity sources for your donations. We thank you for your ongoing support and appeal to you to continue to support SVP work in the seven SVP conferences in Omagh and district.

Please leave your donations at the shop or place them in the blue bin near St. Patrick's Church, Greencastle.  
 Our SVP van can collect larger amounts of goods or furniture. Our shop number is (028) 8224 9839.

**ACCORD – Time for a New Challenge:** ACCORD is a voluntary agency of the Catholic Church providing services to couples preparing for or seeking a deeper commitment within the sacrament of marriage. The Omagh Centre is seeking new members to train as facilitators. We are looking for people who are currently married 5 years in the Catholic Church or currently in a marriage recognised by the Catholic Church, have the ability to convey a positive attitude to marriage, have an openness and commitment to working within a Catholic organisation, relate easily to people, are able to be part of a team and are sensitive, warm, caring and accepting. An Information evening regarding this will be held in Mount St. Columba Pastoral Centre, 48 Brook Street, Omagh on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 8.00pm. Please feel free to come along, no commitment needed, have your questions answered and learn more about what ACCORD can offer you. Tel: 028 82242439

**Knock Marriage Introduction Bureau:** The aim of the Bureau is to introduce people considering marriage to a suitable marriage partner. Over 800 marriages have taken place as a result of these introductions. If you are searching for a suitable partner, why not consider applying? For further information contact the Bureau at Knock, Co. Mayo. Phone 00353 94937 5960 or visit our website at [www.knockmarriagebureau.com](http://www.knockmarriagebureau.com) and read about the workings of the Bureau.

**Foyle Hospice – Free Adult Counseling Service:** Offered on Tuesdays to help support those with a life limiting illness and their families / carers. Counseling is also available for the bereaved and there is a children's bereavement support group. For more info please contact the Hospice on (028) 7135 1010

**Catholic Schools Week 2012 – Diocesan Mass for Catholic Schools Week:** This will be held in St. Eugene's Cathedral, Derry on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 10.00am.  
 The theme is *Catholic Schools – Christ's Body Active in Our World*

**Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes:** In 2012 the diocese will be going on pilgrimage to Lourdes from Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> to Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July. The cost is £599. There are early payment schemes available in the Pastoral Centre, Bishop Street, Derry; Pastoral Centre, Maghera; St Eugene's Cathedral; Thornhill Centre and Strabane.

For further details contact Thornhill Centre at (028) 7135 1233 or email [thornhillcentre@derrydiocese.org](mailto:thornhillcentre@derrydiocese.org).  
 Gift vouchers are also available for purchase through Thornhill Centre.

**Camara:** This is a charity which takes in used computers, refurbishes them and sends them to schools and colleges in Africa. In 2011 we will refurbish over 10,000 computers which will be supplied to schools in Uganda, Lesotho, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia, Tanzania and Rwanda. Every summer Camara sends teams of Volunteers for four very Telephone/Email on busy weeks to Africa to assist our local partners deliver essential training to teachers in the schools we supply. The assignment is for four or five weeks, departing Ireland in early July or early August depending on destination.

Camara Belfast, Unit 23 and 24 Townsend Enterprise Park, Townsend Street, Belfast BT13 2ES  
 Tel: (028) 9033 2470 Email: [belfast@camara.ie](mailto:belfast@camara.ie) Online: [camara.ie](http://camara.ie)

**Important Dates for the Diary in 2012**

<b>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	St. Patrick's	<b>6.30pm</b> First Confession
<b>Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Our Lady of the Wayside	<b>5.00pm</b> Sacrament of Confirmation (Bishop Hegarty)
<b>First Week of Lent</b>		
<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Our Lady of the Wayside	<b>11.00am</b> First Holy Communion
<b>Feast of the Ascension</b>		

**Solemn Annual Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**

<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May</b>	St. Patrick's
<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September</b>	Our Lady of the Wayside

**Derry Diocesan Society Masses in our Parish**

Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> February	Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> March
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> July	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> August
		Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> October

The weekday Masses will be celebrated at 10.00am in St. Patrick's Church unless a Requiem is needed on the date

**Public Prayers for our Deceased (Cemetery Sunday) (30<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July)**

<b>Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June</b>	St. Patrick's	Directly after <b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass
<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July</b>	Our Lady of the Wayside	Directly after <b>11.00am</b> Mass
<b>Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November</b>	St. Patrick's	<b>8.00pm</b> Commemoration of All Souls (remembering all who died during the year)

'Do This In Memory' liturgies for candidates preparing for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion

<b>Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass
<b>Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass
<b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Second Sunday in Lent	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass
<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b>		<b>6.30pm</b> First Confessions (Reconciliation)
<b>Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	Palm Sunday	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass
<b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Fifth Sunday of Easter	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Feast of the Ascension of the Lord	<b>11.00am</b> First Holy Communion
<b>Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Feast of Corpus Christi	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass

Parish Liturgy for December, 2011	St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)	St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)	Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)
Readers	Martin McCullagh	Mary Clarke	Brendan/Helen McKenna
Prayers of the Faithful	Aileen Tuohy	Emmett Bradley	Volunteer needed
Eucharistic Ministry	Frankie Bradley	Maria Bradley	Josephine Clarke
Collectors	John Bradley Colm Devlin	Eugene Tracey Brendan Conway	---
Altar Society	Mary Bradley and Helen Tracey		Anne McDermott Carmel McCrory

**The 50th International Eucharistic Congress 2012:** This will take place in Dublin from 10<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> June under the theme 'The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with one another' and expects 25,000 pilgrims to participate each day, both from Ireland and from overseas.

It is an international gathering of people, which aims to promote an awareness of the central place of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Catholic Church; help improve our understanding and celebration of the liturgy and draw attention to the social dimension of the Eucharist.



These aims are achieved through a programme of pastoral preparation in the years leading up to the Congress and the actual week of the Congress that consists of a programme of Prayer, Eucharist, workshops, discussion groups, catechesis and testimonies, cultural events, a youth space, tours, exhibitions, a Eucharistic Procession, a massive closing ceremony in Croke Park and more.  
 For more information visit [iec2012.ie](http://iec2012.ie)

**ACCORD Marriage Preparation Courses (St. Columba's Pastoral Centre, 48 Brook Street (028 8224 2439)):**  
 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> January, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March,  
 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June  
**Couples are encouraged to complete their course six months before their wedding date**

### Introduction of the new edition of the Roman Missal:

**Posture during Mass:** Bishop Hegarty commends the following common posture, as set down in the *General Instruction* (43) for observation throughout the diocese:

1. Standing from the beginning until the end of the Collect;
2. Standing from the *Orate Fratres* (pray brothers and sisters...) until the end of the *Sanctus*;
3. Standing from Concluding Prayer until the end of Mass.
4. The practice of kneeling during the Eucharistic Prayer and Communion is laudably retained.

**Silence:** Attention is drawn to articles 45 and 56 of the *General Instruction* which commend the observation of sacred silence at certain times before and during Mass.

### Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre News

- A new Diocesan Youth Co-Ordinator, Dominic O'Reilly has been appointed to replace Justin McMahon.
- Annual Award Ceremony for Pope John Paul II Award will take place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February in the Millennium Forum Derry.

### Volunteers urgently needed for the 50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress 2012:

The 50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress 2012 (IEC2012) will take place in Dublin from 10<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> June. Volunteers will have an integral role to play in the success of the Congress. Between two and three thousand volunteers will be needed during the week of the Congress and also to assist in preparations in the months leading up to the Congress. The Congress is now recruiting volunteers for a wide range of roles such as administration, data entry, stewards, marketing, transport, meet and greet, multimedia, pastoral preparation and much more!

If you would like to get involved please visit the IEC2012 website [iec2012.ie/volunteer](http://iec2012.ie/volunteer) and fill out an online application or request an application form from the Congress office. Induction training sessions will begin 19<sup>th</sup>

**November in the RDS.** For more information please contact the IEC2012 offices on (01) 2349900.

**Age NI First Connect Service:** First Connect offers emotional and practical support at difficult times to people later in life. The First Connect Coordinator will visit each client at home or at an alternative suitable venue, to discuss their needs and provide them with information on the services that are available. This could be as simple as involving them in the community by organising access to a day centre or community group, a benefits check to ensure they are getting what they are entitled to, providing home safety measures, etc. In agreement with the client, the First Connect Coordinator will signpost them to the services and make sure they are in place.

For more information or to make a referral to the First Connect service contact Age NI at:

Freephone 0808 808 7575. Alternatively you can contact the First Connect Coordinator for the Western Area, Eimear McKearney on 07425 620 194 or email [eimear.mckearney@ageni.org](mailto:eimear.mckearney@ageni.org)

### Seeing your life through the lens of the gospels – *John 1:6-8, 19-28*:

1. John the Baptist came to bear witness to Jesus. Who have been the people who have borne witness to you of the good news of the gospel that God loves you - a friend, a parent, a teacher, etc? To whom have you borne that witness?
2. John appears in the story as one who had the courage to be himself in the face of loud and aggressive people. He was also a person who knew his own value, did not make exaggerated claims and was content with his mission. Can you recall times when you have been able to be yourself, even in the face of criticism from others?
3. John was 'the voice of one crying out in the wilderness' – announcing confidently to those in the wilderness that they must not despair because God's grace will come to them at any moment. Have you had the experience of being in the wilderness, feeling lost? From whom did you hear a voice that gave you hope? Have you been able to give hope to other people when they were in the wilderness?

*John Byrne OSA (john@orlagh.ie)*

### Questions people ask:

- A. Why did they have to put big words like 'consubstantial' into the new translation of the Creed? A priest friend of mine told me the word isn't even in his dictionary!
- A. There is no simple English word to express the deep theology of the unity of Jesus Christ with God the Father. The old translation was 'of one Being with the Father'. Being is a shorter word than consubstantial but it is a philosophical term not easy to understand. The former translation was just as difficult as the new. As for your priest friend, get him a decent dictionary for Christmas!

*Fr. Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap (silvesteroflynn@gmail.com)*

### Samaritans' comment on Jeremy Clarkson's Sun column

[tinyurl.com/bwogjph](http://tinyurl.com/bwogjph)

Reacting to Jeremy Clarkson's comments in today's Sun newspaper, Catherine Johnstone, Samaritans' Chief Executive said: "The insensitivity of Jeremy Clarkson's comments in his Sun column today about people who die by suicide on the railways truly beggars belief. While purporting to express sympathy for people who die this way, his remarks about their bodies constitute gross intrusion into the grief and shock of bereaved families and friends. "His notion that suicide is a selfish act shows how little he knows about the subject because, if he did, he would know that when a person attempts suicide they are so distressed that they genuinely believe their families will be better off without them. The concept that their actions could be construed as selfish is the furthest thing from their mind. Fortunately, most of us will never experience the mental torture that leads someone to die by suicide. "Furthermore, if Jeremy Clarkson knew anything about suicide he would also know that insensitive media coverage of the subject could trigger so-called 'copycat' deaths. The fact that he has chosen to add fuel to the flames of the comments he made earlier this week on the BBC One Show again beggars belief. It's one thing to joke about people on strike, it's in an entirely different realm of poor taste to joke about suicide. "We have already made a complaint to Ofcom about his remarks on the One Show and we will now be taking up today's comments with the Press Complaints Commission. "We want remind anyone who has been distressed by Clarkson's comments today that Samaritans' volunteers are on hand 24/7 on 08457 90 90 90 to offer support."

In January 2010, Samaritans launched a five-year partnership with Network Rail to reduce suicides on the railways.

Find out more at [tinyurl.com/cp7qkqs](http://tinyurl.com/cp7qkqs)

Listen to train driver Paul Trigwell talking about his experience of a rail suicide and the partnership between

Samaritans and Network Rail at [tinyurl.com/cyto7a7](http://tinyurl.com/cyto7a7)

*For advice on how to report this story sensitively see [tinyurl.com/yzufhkv](http://tinyurl.com/yzufhkv)*

*Samaritans' out-of-hours press phone number is 07943 809 162*

### This Week's Calendar of Saints and Feasts:

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December – St. Finnian (bishop)** Studied in Idrone, Co. Carlow and later in Wales, on his return he settled in Clonard, Co. Meath around 520, where he established a famous school. His pupils, among which were Canice, Columcille and Brendan, were initiators of the great monastic expansion in Ireland. Died in 549 and is remembered as the tutor of all the saints of Ireland. *Feast not celebrated this year.*

**Our Lady of Guadalupe** Patron Saint of the Americas. This memorial recalls the apparitions in December, 1531 to Juan Diego Cuahtlatotzin on Tepeyac Hill, near Mexico City. Mary appeared as a symbol of wisdom and peace. Her image as a *mestiza*, a woman of native American and European heritage, remained in Juan's cloak (*tilma*). She appeared as "the little brown one," affectionately called La Morenita, who gives great dignity and holiness to the native and mestizo peoples of America. The tilma that Juan Diego presented to his doubtful bishop was filled with roses and is now enshrined in Mexico City in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Nowhere else does she appear as a pregnant woman as she does here, wearing the blue sash traditionally worn by expectant Aztec women. She also has a flower on her womb, an Aztec symbol of new life and a new era. Blocks the sun and stands on the moon. *Feast not celebrated this year.*

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December – St. Lucy (virgin and martyr)** Suffered much for her desire to remain consecrated to Christ alone. She was martyred in 304 in Sicily in the persecution of Diocletian. Her name means *light* and her intercession has been sought for eye trouble.

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December – St. John of the Cross (priest and doctor of the Church) [1542-1591]** A Carmelite who, despite opposition and imprisonment, worked for the reform of the Carmelites. He was a man of prayer, an outstanding poet and a spiritual writer. Declared Doctor of the Church.

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December – St. Flanan (bishop)** Lived during the 7<sup>th</sup> century and was the son of a king of Thomond. Entered Molua's monastery at Killaloe and became Abbot there. He is remembered as a great preacher. *Not celebrated this year*

**Seeing your life through the lens of the gospels – Mark 1:1-8:**

1. John the Baptist is presented as a messenger to prepare the way for Jesus. Who have been messengers to you, preparing the way for the Lord by alerting you to ways in which you could improve your life? To whom have you been such a messenger?
2. John calls the people to repentance (a change of heart), as a way to a new life. Can you recall times when you had a change of heart, and the change led to new life for you?
3. John baptised people with water as a gesture to mark their change of heart. Sometimes we perform an action to symbolise our change of heart – write a letter, throw away our last cigarettes, etc. Can you remember a symbolic gesture with which you marked a change of heart?

*John Byrne OSA (john@orlagh.ie)*

**The Deep End – Think Pink:**

Today is GAUDATE Sunday which means 'Rejoice'. We light the pink Advent candle and perhaps we should THINK PINK or even wear pink as St Paul says to us: 'Brothers and Sisters: Rejoice always!' These final days of preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth are sacred. There is much darkness around us in society, in our church community and Advent expresses the complexity of the world, the yearning for the Light. We could easily become cynical but today we are asked to REJOICE (think pink!), to be thankful for those who come as witnesses for Christ (think pink!) whether they be the Mother Teresas of this world or in the words of Margaret Silf: 'The teacher who helps a child solve a problem; the teenager who stops to share a word and a sandwich with a homeless person; the activist who insists on justice for the asylum seeker—they are all reflecting the glory of the Lord.'

Today, THINK PINK, remember we are all called by the Lord. Remember the great things he has done and continues to do for you. Remember how your goodness and compassion can bring the Light of Christ to others. And of course, remember to THINK PINK.

*Jane Mellett (janemellett@yahoo.com)*