

<b>Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone, Diocese of Derry</b>	
Saint Patrick's Church, Greencastle	Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Broughderg
The Third Sunday of Advent – Year C (13 <sup>th</sup> December, 2009)	
The Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU	
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Today is **Gaudete 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 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 (14<sup>th</sup> December – 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2009)**

<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Sunday of Advent	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	<b>9:00am</b> Mass: 'Misso Pro Populo' <b>10.30am</b> Confessions <b>11:00am</b> Mass: (Gerard, Mary and Gerry McCrory – Anniversary)
<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>11.00am</b> Requiem Mass for <b>John McNulty</b> , a native of Aughaboy who died in Chicago.
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>8.00pm</b> Mass: Fr. Joseph Morris P. Em (Clonmany) A recently deceased native of Greencastle
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December</b> Third Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	<b>10.00am</b> Mass
<b>Saturday Evening</b>	St. Patrick's	<b>6.00pm</b> Vigil Mass for Sunday: (Margaret Daly – 1 <sup>st</sup> Anniversary)
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	<b>9:00am</b> Mass: 'Misso Pro Populo' <b>11:00am</b> Mass

**Confessions and Penitential Services Schedule**

<b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Followed by a Penitential Service with several priests in attendance for individual confessions</i>	Christ the King Church, Strathroy	<b>7.30pm</b> Mass
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Penitential Services with several priests available for individual confessions</i>	St. Patrick's, Greencastle Sacred Heart, Plumbridge	<b>3:30pm</b> <b>7.00pm</b>
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December</b> <i>Followed by a Penitential Service with several priests in attendance for individual confessions</i>	Sacred Heart Church, Omagh	<b>7.30pm</b> Mass

**Weekly Offerings:** Thank you for your generosity to last week's collection which amounted to **£1,010. Please support your parish by using your envelope even if you must attend Mass outside your parish, thank you.** Envelopes received from visitors coming to Mass in Greencastle are returned to those parishes. Thank you also for the further **£30** received for the **Retired Priests' Fund** bringing it to the current total of **£980.**

**Remembering Our Dead:** We pray for **John McNulty, Chicago (formerly Aughaboy)** who died this week and for **Gerard, Mary & Gerry McCrory, Patrick Devlin and Mary and James Duffy** whose anniversaries occur at this time.

**'Do This In Memory of Me':** Our parish programme in preparation for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion continues at the Vigil Mass in Greencastle tonight (Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December).

**Youth 2000 – National Christmas Youth Retreat:** Newbridge College, Newbridge, Co. Kildare from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2009. Please take a *Lectio Divina* bookmark, available at the church door. [youth2000.ie](http://youth2000.ie)

**Next Sunday's Readings:** Micah 5:1-4; Psalm 79; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-44      Lectionary I, page 73

**Lotto Numbers:** 7, 13, 16, 22 (1 winner with 3 numbers – £50) **Next Jackpot:** £1,200

<i>Serving Our Faith-Community in Greencastle Parish</i>			
<b>Parish Liturgy for 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2009</b>	<b>St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)</b>	<b>St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)</b>	<b>Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)</b>
<b>Prayers of Intercession</b>	James McCullagh	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>
<b>Offertory Gifts</b>	The family of <b>Shauna Morris</b>	The family of <b>Noel McKenna</b>	

**Pilgrimages and Retreats**

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (16<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2010):** Cost £629 – payable in instalments. Application forms are now available in the sacristy (Greencastle). Forms for those in need of special care or those aged 80 or over are available only from the Pilgrimage Office, Derry. Telephone: (028) 7126 0293.

**IOSAS Centre and Celtic Prayer Garden – Lenamore Road, Muff, Co. Donegal:** You are welcome to visit our gift shop where Christmas gifts, cards and handmade items are on sale. Tea and Coffee shop also available. Everyone welcome.

**St. Anthony's Retreat Centre, Dundrean, Burnfoot, Co. Donegal:** A space of quiet, prayer and solitude. Available for individual retreats and spiritual guidance. Residential accommodation and meals in the Centre's hermitages. Promotions offer €45 per night. "Come away by yourself to a desert place and rest for a while." Contact Fr. Neal Carlin on 00353 74936 8370 or [sacre@eircom.net](mailto:sacre@eircom.net) for enquiries and bookings.

**Foundations in Liturgy:** A 12 week Liturgy course led by the Thornhill Centre team will be held in Sion Mills Parish Centre beginning Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 from 7:30pm to 9:30 pm. This course is designed to foster an understanding of the richness of the Liturgy of the Church, examining core elements and symbols of our ritual and worship. Course cost: £100. For further details, please contact Thornhill Centre at (028) 7135 1233.

**Trócaire – The Gift of a Goat helped people like Nafunesi Nyamasauka to provide food for her family:**

I am Nafunesi Nyamasauka, a single mother from Malawi. I struggled to provide for my family and when Trócaire gave me two goats through a Global Gift community project, life changed for the better. I now have nine goats and can earn an income by selling their offspring at our local market. I can also provide meat and milk for my children and this year I was able to buy soil to start a vegetable garden. Now my five children don't have to go to bed hungry anymore and I can pay to send my youngest children to school. Thanks to Trócaire, for the first time, I have hope for the future.

**Remember Trócaire's Global Gifts this Christmas**

**NWE Broadband Meeting:** An important meeting to be held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 8.00pm in Broughderg Centre with regard to Broadband connections in all areas that cannot get it at present. It has been called by a company called North West Electronics from Derry. They are holding this public meeting to explain their service and how they are providing broadband in areas like ours. Costs are reported to be less expensive than current satellite provision.

**Institute of Irish Leadership (20 The Diamond, Pomeroy) – Volunteer Walk Leader Training Course:** Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December from 9.30am to 4.00pm. Contact [kathleen@instituteofirishleadership.ie](mailto:kathleen@instituteofirishleadership.ie) Tel: (028) 8775 7800.

**Tonicity Christmas Carol and Song Workshop:** "Singing has many positive benefits for your spirit, health and mood. Tonicity presents a festive morning of Christmas carols and songs in St Columb's Hall, Orchard Street, Derry on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December from 10.00am to 1.00pm. Price: Adults £20, Children £5 (adult price includes CD of easy voice exercises, a Health Tip Sheet and one free ticket to Tonicity Voice and Song Weekly Classes). No Talent Required! Come along and experience a Christmas present for the soul! Contact Siobhan Heaney on 07743 365 971 if you have any queries.

**BADA An Bruach Dearg Community Centre – Upcoming Events:**

**Every Friday Night** | Card game from 8.30pm

**Parent Rota:** Assistance from parents will be needed on both cinema trips

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December    Cinema Trip (bus leaves hall at 6.30pm)    Years 8, 9 and 10

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December    Cinema Trip (bus leaves hall at 6.30pm)    P4, P5, P6 and P7

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January      Youth Club re-opens

**Greencastle Youth Club Organisers wish everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas**

*Items for inclusion should be forwarded to the Parochial House by the Wednesday evening prior to publication*

#### **This Week's Calendar of Saints:**

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

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December – St. Flannan** Lived in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and was the son of a king of Thomond. He entered Malua's monastery at Killaloe and became abbot there. He is remembered as a great preacher.

#### **Seeing your life through the lens of the gospels – Luke 3:10-18:**

1. 'What should we do?' The common thread in John's answers was to encourage his questioners to be other-centred rather than self-centred, each in the context of their own circumstances. In your experience what difference has it made for you when you changed your attitude in this way?
2. John told the people in a direct and honest way what they should do. Perhaps you have had friends who did not beat about the bush but have told you honestly what they thought about your behaviour when you asked them? In gratitude recall such friends.
3. The humility of John comes out in this passage, happy to acknowledge that he only had a minor role in relation to the Messiah. At the same time he was enthused by his mission to 'proclaim the good news to the people'. What difference has it made for you when you were able to see the good in yourself, and use your gifts without having to score by portraying yourself as greater than someone else?

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

#### **Questions people ask:**

- Q. How does one explain the difference in the preaching of John the Baptist and that of Jesus? John was far more severe and promoted the fear of an impending judgement.
- A. There are two ways of correcting: the stick of punishment or the candy of reward for improvement. John the Baptist came from a people who expected a Messiah who would immediately rid the world of all evil and sin. Hence the need for complete renunciation of wrongdoing or else facing instant condemnation. The approach of Jesus did not expect instant perfection. He put less emphasis on condemnation and more on fanning into flame the possibility of goodness hidden in people.

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

#### **The Deep End – Pitch Battles:**

Had there been footballers in the days of John the Baptist what would he say to them if they came to him for advice, as those in today's Gospel do? (Luke 3:10-18) 'Play the man and keep your courage high'? (Joshua 1:18, depending on translation) Or, 'Leave your knives at home'? Maybe not then, but today he might have to if a recent newspaper report is true.

Footballers in France's amateur leagues are being encouraged to leave their knives, scissors and even pistols at home because of a riot of on-pitch violence. Of the 700,000 matches played in the 2007-08 season 12,000 had serious incidents of physical or verbal abuse. Hot-headed players, aka warm-hearted sportsmen, were responsible for 90 percent of the violence, involving kicking (not the ball), punching and brawling.

Being a sportsman isn't easy, it seems. Being a thug comes easier. Doing what a Christian does isn't easy either: sharing food with those who have none, acting honestly in dealing with others, respecting them and never bullying or being greedy. John the Baptist makes no extraordinary demands. Unburdened by degrees in theology, philosophy or psychology, or by diplomas from courses in spirituality, dream analysis or tree hugging he knows instinctively – as most of us do – what's needed: generosity, honesty and gentleness. These bring peace.

Christmas may ooze platitudinous peace. The real thing does not come cheap. Tinsel and mistletoe can never replace the word of God. That word brought Jesus to his death and resurrection. As we celebrate Advent let's ask: Where is it bringing me?

*Fr. Tom Cahill SVD, Divine Word Missionaries, Donamon, Co Roscommon (tomcee@eircom.net)*

**Help to contain the swine flu impact:** Everyone can play their part, and simple measures such as regular hand-washing and using a tissue can go some way towards mitigating this pandemic's impact.

*Irish News (18<sup>th</sup> July, 2009)*