



<div><div></div><div><h1>Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone (Diocese of Derry)</h1><div><div>St. Patrick's, Greencastle</div><div>Our Lady of the Wayside, Broughderg</div><div>Fourth Sunday of Advent [Year A] (22nd December, 2019)</div><div>Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU</div><div>Website: greencastleparish.com • Email: greencastlepp@yahoo.com • Tel: (028) 816 48474</div></div><div></div></div></div>			
<p>Thought for Christmas: “Ensure that Holy Christmas is never a celebration of commercial consumerism, of appearances or of useless gifts, or of excessive waste, but that it is a celebration of joyfully welcoming the Lord into the crib and into the heart.” <i>Pope Francis (Meeting with the personnel of the Holy See, 2014)</i></p>			
<p>Liturgy Schedule for Fourth Week of Advent [Year A] (22nd December – 29th December)</p>			
Saturday 21st December	St. Patrick's	6.00pm	Vigil Mass: Peggy Coyle (25 th Ann.)
Sunday 22nd December	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
Fourth Sunday of Advent	Our Lady of Wayside	11.00am	Mass: Peter Daly (7 th Anniversary)
Monday 23rd December	St. Patrick's	10.00am	Mass followed by Confessions
St. John of Kanty (priest)			
Tuesday 24th December	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass • 11.00am to 12 noon Confessions
		7.00pm	Carol Service • 7.30pm Christmas Vigil Mass
Wednesday 25th December	Our Lady of Wayside	9.00am	Christmas Morning Mass
Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ	St. Patrick's	11.00am	Christmas Morning Mass
Thursday 26th December	St. Patrick's	NO MASS	
St. Stephen (first martyr)			
Friday 27th December	St. Patrick's	NO MASS	
St. John (Apostle and Evangelist)			
Saturday 28th December	St. Patrick's	6.00pm	Vigil Mass
Holy Innocents			
Sunday 29th December	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
Holy Family	Our Lady of Wayside	11.00am	Mass
<p>Christmas Message: This week we will celebrate Christmas with much festivity and rightly so. If our reason for all the special effort at gifts for loved ones and friends, dinner and dessert like no other, lights and decorations, new clothes and most especially those Christmas Carols and songs is to acknowledge God's greatest gift to the world in Jesus His Son then it will all have been worth the effort. We often speak of the struggle to keep the Christ in Christmas but if we, both personally and as families and a parish can keep the focus on the humble crib of Bethlehem then there is hope after all that we will not be swallowed up by the tsunami of the commercial and secular side of Christmas. May all the families of Greencastle Parish and all those living in far off places and who call Greencastle home ensure that the Christ Child remains the reason for this season and keep our eyes focussed on that same Jesus, the humble babe of Bethlehem who came to save His people from their sins.</p> <p>Nollaig shona dhaoibh • A happy and blessed Christmas to you all <i>An t-Athair Eamon O'Gallchoir SP / Fr. Edward Gallagher PP</i></p>			
<p>Baptism: We offer our best wishes and prayers to the family of Shea Cathal Meenan who was welcomed into the family of God through the Sacrament of Baptism in St. Patrick's Church on Sunday 15th December.</p>			
<p>Remembering our Dead: We pray for the happy repose of the souls of Bridie Tuohey (Formil) and Sean McCrory (Beleek) who were buried this week. We also pray for the repose of the souls of Barney McCrory (2nd), Peter Daly (7th) and Ann Rose McCullagh (19th) whose anniversaries occur at this time.</p>			
Weekly Collection: £995		<i>Thank you for your generosity</i>	
<p>Sick and Housebound: Fr. Gallagher will visit those in his care for a pre-Christmas visit on Monday 23rd December beginning at 11.00am. <i>Some visits may be earlier than normal</i></p>			
<p>Greencastle Youth Club Carol Singing: Our Youth Club members will be singing carols outside the churches at all masses this weekend and taking up a collection to support their very important work with our children and young people. <i>Please support</i></p>			
<p>Next Week's Readings: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 • Psalm 127:1-5, R/ cf. v 1 • Colossians 3: 12-17 Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 • Lectionary 1:114 Sunday [Year A] • Weekday [Year 2]</p>			

6.00pm Saturday Vigil	Offertory Gift Rota	9.00am Sunday Morning
21 st December • Emma Conway	Fourth Sunday of Advent	22 nd December • Mary-Jo Morris
Tuesday 24 th December (7.30pm) Daire Brogan	Christmas Eve / Day	Wednesday 25 th December (11.00am) Lee Coyle
28 th December • Caoimhe Coyle	Feast of the Holy Family	29 th December • Tadhg Clarke
If you cannot attend please ensure that you have arranged with another family for the gifts to be presented		
Trocaire Christmas Gifts: Looking for a gift with a difference that will help people in the developing world? Please consider the range of Christmas Gifts available. There are a small number of brochures available in the porch of the church as you leave. <i>Visit trocaire.org/christmas/appeal for more details</i>		
Children in Crossfire would like to wish parishioners a happy Christmas and peaceful new year. We will collect all the Advent box donations over the weekends of 11 th and 12 th January and 18 th and 19 th January. We thank you in advance, your support will make a huge impact on the lives of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition in Ethiopia. childrenincrossfire.org • (028) 7126 9898		
Thornhill Ministries, Derry – Holy Land Pilgrimage Retreat (applications now available): Thursday 24 th September to Thursday 8 th October. Tel: (028) 7135 1233 • Email: thornhillministries@derrydiocese.org • Website: thornhillministries.co.uk		
Marriage Enrichment Weekend – The Joy of Love in Marriage: Offers married couples of all ages in a good relationship, private time to rekindle the joy of their love. The next (residential) Weekends (Friday, 8.00pm to Sunday, 4.30pm) will be held at the Dromantine Conference Centre, Newry from 13 th to 15 th September and at The Lake Hotel Killarney from 15 th to 17 th November. <i>For info and to book visit marriageencounter.ie or call (087) 784 0408 [ROI] / 0770 281 2321 [NI]</i>		
Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2020: Thursday 2 nd to Tuesday 7 th July. Applications are now being sought for the 2020 Youth Pilgrimage, from those who will be age 17 at time of travel. Forms can be requested through schools or directly from the Lourdes Pilgrimage Office, 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ (email derrypilgrim@outlook.com). <i>Gift Vouchers for all pilgrims to the value of £25 and £50 can be ordered via these same contact details</i>		
Catholic Marriage Encounter Ireland – Marriage Enrichment Weekend: Friday 31 st January at 8.00pm to Sunday 2 nd February at 4.30pm in Dromantine Retreat Centre, Newry. Offers married couples of all ages in a good relationship, private time to rekindle the joy of their love. <i>For more info and to book visit marriageencounter.ie or call 0770 281 2321 [NI] / 00353 (87) 2162436</i>		
Greencastle Community Association – Cards: Sunday 22 nd December at 7.00pm in the Community Centre.		
Towards Peace: A spiritual support service designed for those who have experienced sexual, physical, emotional or spiritual abuse by Catholic Church personnel in Ireland. Support is also available for family members of abuse survivors. The vision of Towards Peace is to provide a safe supportive space, where people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context can be accompanied as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace, one step at a time. Towards Peace provides spiritual support through one-to-one spiritual direction sessions, with a qualified spiritual companion. Up to 9 sessions are offered and they are free. Website: towardspeace.ie • Tel: 01 505 3028 • Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie		
Medjugorje Irish Centre Pilgrimages: April – October. 7 night stay and airport shuttle service from Dubrovnik or split for €266 per person sharing. Book any flight - any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service. Call us for more info and book the dates that suit you. 0144 345 10 • reservations@med-irishcentre.com		
Annual Pilgrimage to Medjugorje: Tuesday 1 st to Tuesday 8 th September. £545 (includes half-board, tax and insurance) if paid in full by Wednesday 6 th December – £100 extra after that date. <i>For more info call Maria on (028) 8164 8357 or 07768 395 038. An ideal Christmas present!</i>		
Catechetical Centre – Derry Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage to Medjugorje: Tuesday 28 th July to Tuesday 4 th August (ages 16 to 18). A unique experience for young people and an opportunity to engage with peers from around the world in a faith context. Up to 50,000 young people attend the Medjugorje Youth Festival each year. Cost is £599 and there will be a budget plan to help with this. Names and a deposit of £100 are due by Sunday 1 st December. <i>For more info or to book email lizzie.rea@derrydiocese.org or call 00 44 2871264087</i>		
St. Vincent de Paul Helpline: For those in need of assistance please call 07738 837 992		

<p>Pope Francis' Intention for December (please remember this in your personal prayers) The Future of the Very Young: That every country take the measures necessary to prioritise the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering.</p>
<p>Accord Counselling Services: Ireland's leading agency supporting marriage and relationships, nationwide through its 60 Centres. Our aim is to help couples prepare for, achieve and sustain their marriage and family relationships, offer ongoing support and assist them in times of difficulty or crisis. Available to couples regardless of their faith, denomination or none. <i>To avail of this service call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com</i></p>
<p>Trócaire – Recruiting Volunteers: To support their fundraising, campaigning and education work in Ireland. <i>If you are interested in volunteering visit trocaire.org/getinvolved/volunteer or call (028) 9080 8030 for more info</i></p>
<p>Foyle Hospice – Become a Compassionate Neighbour: Do you have 1-2 hours free once a week to support Foyle Hospice's Compassionate Communities 'Reach Out' voluntary befriending service. It might be as simple as calling in for a cup of tea and a chat, or taking someone out to do a bit of shopping. A volunteer's visit is invaluable to someone who is feeling lonely and isolated due to an illness. Full training and ongoing support with additional training opportunities are offered to all volunteers. <i>Call Tracy Gray, Volunteer Coordinator on 07841 101 932 or email tracy@compassionatecommunitiesnw.com</i></p>
<p>ASPIRE Employability Programme – Free CSR Card and Forklift Licence Training To be eligible you must be unemployed or working less than 16 hours a week. Omagh Office: (028) 8224 6535 • Enniskillen Office: (028) 6632 6478 • Facebook: Aspire Employability Programme <i>The Aspire Employability Programme is part funded by the European Social Fund and Department for the Economy</i></p>
<p>Strule Arts Centre – Irish Cultural Activities Every Wednesday Sean-Nós and Set Dancing 6.00pm to 7.00pm • Singing in Irish 7.00pm to 8.00pm Irish Language Classes for Beginner, Improver and Advanced Levels 8.00pm to 9.30pm Email: kevin.goodwin@fermanaghmagh.com • Tel: 07747 899 249</p>
<p>MARA (Maximising Access in Rural Areas): Find out if you're missing out on benefits, services or grants by booking your FREE home visit. Referrals can be made for benefits checks, home safety visits, occupational therapy assessments as well as others. You'll also receive a FREE bag containing £25 worth of items to help keep you warm this winter. <i>Call Carol on (028) 8225 1559 to book</i></p>
<p>Commercial Free Catholic Talk-Radio Station for Ireland – Radio Maria Ireland (RMI): Prayer, catechesis, uplifting music, talks, interviews and testimonies <i>Listen via the app 'RADIO MARIA IRELAND' on mobile devices, streaming on radiomaria.ie or listened to on the phone via a live radio feed by calling +353 (0) 1 437 3277 (no extra charges apply) • Join our faith family!</i></p>
<p>Accord Counselling Services: Available to couples regardless of their faith or denomination. <i>If you would like to avail call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com</i></p>
<p>Join the Derry Youth Community (DYC) Adventure: If you are between the ages of 18 and 25 and considering a Gap Year experience why not consider one with a difference? The DYC are a community of faith and service located in the heart of Derry City and serving the young people of the Diocese of Derry. <i>If faith is important in your life, and you are attracted to the ideal of service, you can find more information by visiting derryyouthcommunity.com or emailing dyc@derrydiocese.org</i></p>
<p>Support Foyle Hospice by hosting a Coffee / Tea Morning with friends, family, groups or work colleagues: All funds you raise will play a vital role in funding the essential care and support Foyle Hospice provide to people in our communities affected and living with terminal illness <i>For a free pack and more info call Michelle McGinn on (028) 7135 9888 or email michellemcginn@foylehospice.com</i></p>
<p>Drink Wise, Age Well: Are you over 50? Are you worried about your own or someone else's alcohol use? <i>For confidential information, advice and support call (028) 8283 9240</i></p>
<p>ACCORD – Relationship Counseling: A service which facilitates couples and individuals to explore, reflect upon and resolve difficulties in their marriages and relationships in a confidential, sensitive, respectful and non-judgmental setting. <i>An appointment can be arranged by calling the Omagh Centre on (028) 8224 2439 or emailing omagh@accordni.com</i></p>

Parish Liturgy for December, 2019	St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)	St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)	Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)
Readers	Martina Hughes	Monica Coyle	Anne McDermott
Eucharistic Ministry	Frankie Bradley	Maria Bradley	Josephine Clarke
Prayers of Intercession	Shona McKenna	Michelle O'Brien	Daniel McCrory
Collectors	Francis McLaughlin Mary Bradley	Eugene Tracey Brendan Conway	Brian McGillen Perry McCrory
Altar Society	Margaret McCrory and Patricia Donnelly		Anne McDermott and Carmel McCrory

Armchair Exercises: Continues every Monday night in the Community Centre at 7.30pm. *Suitable for all ages*

Rural Support: We could help you with financial stress by
 Providing free, confidential face-to-face support • Easing the burden of dealing with debt
 Helping you identify a way forward • Supporting you to take action
Email: info@ruralsupport.org.uk **Website:** ruralsupport.org.uk
 To speak with someone in confidence call our helpline on 0845 606 7 606

The Spiritual Benefits of Weekly Eucharistic Adoration
 It helps us to grow in holiness. Jesus is ready to lavish on us, many extra graces and blessings, when we come and spend time with Him in Adoration. It helps us to appreciate Priesthood. Remember, "No Priests, no Eucharist". It is an established fact that where Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is worshipped and adored vocations flourish. When we spend time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration each week or more often, we experience a great peace and contentment.
 "...of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the Sacraments themselves". *Pope St. John Paul II*

Eucharistic Adoration Prayer Intentions for each hour of weekly Adoration
12noon – 1.00pm Vocation to Priesthood and Religious Life
1.00pm – 2.00pm Married couples and those preparing for Marriage
2.00pm – 3.00pm Sick and the Housebound • **3.00pm – 4.00pm** Strengthening of Faith in our young people
4.00pm – 5.00pm Parish Unity • **5.00pm – 6.00pm** Protecting life and the Earth
6.00pm – 7.00pm The Holy Souls and the Bereaved

The Millennium Forum – Changing Place Facility: This is a space which provides a private area for people who require an adult changing bench, hoist and toilet. Over ¼ million people need Changing Places toilets to enable them to get out and about and enjoy the day-to-day activities many of us take for granted. The Millennium Forum Changing Place is open to all members of the public, not only people attending the theatre.
Call our Access and Inclusion Officer Lisa Heaney on (028) 7126 4455 (choose option 1) or email lisah@millenniumforum.co.uk

Kindercare Fostering NI: Could you help a child in need? Northern Ireland is currently experiencing a severe shortage of foster carers and particularly carers from the Catholic Community. We are a not-for-profit organisation which works to find safe, secure and loving homes for children and young people in need in Northern Ireland. If you are interested in finding out more:
Tel: (028) 90941690 • **Email:** gillian.devlin@kindercare.co.uk • **Website:** kindercareni.co.uk

Volunteer at White Oaks Acorn Organic Farm: If you have an interest in organic growing and have a few hours to spare, why not spend them with us? Contact us using the details below.
Address: IOSAS Centre and Celtic Prayer Garden, Lenamore Road, Derryvane, Muff, Co. Donegal
Tel: (00353) (0) 74 9384866 • **Website:** celticprayergarden.com • **Facebook:** IOSASCentre • **Twitter:** IOSASCentre

Catholic Marriage Encounter, Ireland Weekend: Friday 15th to Sunday 17th November in the Lake Hotel, Killarney.
For more information and / or booking visit marriageencounter.ie or call 07702 812 321 or (087) 784 0408

Medjugorje Irish Centre Pilgrimages (April to October): 7 nights B&B and Airport

Shuttle service from Dubrovnik or Split for €279 per person sharing.

any flight, any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service.

Call us on 01 4434510 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com for further info and book dates that suit

Accord Counselling Services: Ireland's leading agency supporting marriage and relationships, nationwide through its 60 Centres. Our aim is to help couples prepare for, achieve and sustain their marriage and family relationships, offer ongoing support and assist them in times of difficulty or crisis. Available to couples regardless of their faith, denomination or none. *To avail of this service call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com*

Epilepsy Action NI: Are you, or someone you care for, living with epilepsy or brain injury? Epilepsy Action NI and Headway work in partnership to deliver a community-based counselling service in Omagh. The Counselling service is for people over the age of 18 who are affected by epilepsy and / or brain injury or are caring for someone with epilepsy / brain injury and would like some emotional support.

Mid Ulster Agewell: Are you over 50 years old? Do you live in the Mid Ulster Council area? Would you like a free phone call in the morning to reduce the feeling of loneliness and isolation, reassurance and a listening ear and help keep you up to date with social activities in your local area? A phone call can be arranged between 8.30am and 12.30pm from Monday to Friday.

*For more info call Marie Devlin on (028) 796 32170 or email marie.devlin@agewellpartnership.org***Eucharistic Adoration** Prayer Intentions for each hour of weekly Adoration**12noon – 1.00pm** Vocation to Priesthood and Religious Life**1.00pm – 2.00pm** Married couples and those preparing for Marriage**2.00pm – 3.00pm** Sick and the Housebound • **3.00pm – 4.00pm** Strengthening of Faith in our young people**4.00pm – 5.00pm** Parish Unity • **5.00pm – 6.00pm** Protecting life and the Earth**6.00pm – 7.00pm** The Holy Souls and the Bereaved

Red Cross: Can you spare 1 hour a week? Would you like to help the Red Cross care for people in your local community? We are looking for volunteers for our wheelchair service and volunteer drivers to help with deliveries and collections. No experience necessary. Full training provided and volunteer expenses reimbursed.

*Call Julie White on (028) 7186 3764 / (078) 0302 4011***The Spiritual Benefits of Weekly Eucharistic Adoration**

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String Instrument Music Lessons: Every Thursday evening in Greencastle Hall

For kids to learn banjo, guitar and violin with qualified tutor Frank Nugent

Beginners: 6.00pm to 6.45pm • **Advanced:** 6.45pm to 7.30pm • Call Sinead on 07788 266 387 to book a place

2018	PARISH STATISTICS	2017
(16) 7 Boys • 9 Girls	Baptisms	(26) 10 Boys • 16 Girls
(14) 8 Boys • 6 Girls	First Communion	(14) 8 Boys • 6 Girls
(17) 10 Boys • 7 Girls	Confirmation	(15) 7 Boys • 8 Girls
3 within parish • 3 outside parish	Weddings	2 within parish • 3 outside parish
10	Deaths and Burials	12

Guidelines on Use of Modern Technology when Working with Children – Use of Photography and Video:

The use of photography and video is an issue of great concern among those working with children. The Diocese recognises that every parish has their own arrangements in relation to its use in schools, youth groups and for the sacraments however the guidelines have been devised below to aid parishes and diocesan groups:

- It is always good practice to seek *written* permission from a parent or guardian before taking any photographs or video footage of children. This written permission must be sought from the parent/guardian or the person who owns the photograph before it can be displayed on promotional materials or websites. This can be incorporated in the registration form when a child joins a group (template permission Resource 10);
- Neither names nor any personal information should be displayed alongside any photographs;
- Special consideration should be given where taking photographs or video footage might be misinterpreted, or the images could be seen as provocative (e.g. beach trip or gymnastics display etc.). It is not to say, however, that with the right planning, these events cannot be recorded and enjoyed.

Photography and video recording are important methods of recording social activity and providing an historic record – illustrating and validating important moments in people's lives. This process is a powerful and personal one, and therefore we must respect the rights of all to make the choice whether or not to be photographed.

*From Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, published on behalf of the **Diocesan Safeguarding Committee***

Child Safeguarding: If you or anyone you know has a concern or wishes to report an allegation directly to the statutory authorities, please contact the PSNI / 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. *See poster at entrance*

Pope Francis' Message for World Day of Peace 2019*Charity and human virtues: the basis of politics at the service of human rights and peace*

'Pope Benedict XVI noted that "every Christian is called to practise charity in a manner corresponding to his vocation and according to the degree of influence he wields in the polis... When animated by charity, commitment to the common good has greater worth than a merely secular and political stand would have." This is a programme on which all politicians, whatever their culture or religion, can agree, if they wish to work together for the good of the human family and to practise those human virtues that sustain all sound political activity: justice, equality, mutual respect, sincerity, honesty, fidelity. In this regard, it may be helpful to recall the "Beatitudes of the Politician", proposed by Vietnamese Cardinal François-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận, a faithful witness to the Gospel who died in 2002: "Blessed be the politician with a lofty sense and deep understanding of his role. Blessed be the politician who personally exemplifies credibility. Blessed be the politician who works for the common good and not his or her own interest. Blessed be the politician who remains consistent. Blessed be the politician who works for unity. Blessed be the politician who works to accomplish radical change. Blessed be the politician who is capable of listening. Blessed be the politician who is without fear." Every election and re-election, and every stage of public life, is an opportunity to return to the original points of reference that inspire justice and law. One thing is certain: good politics is at the service of peace. It respects and promotes fundamental human rights, which are at the same time mutual obligations, enabling a bond of trust and gratitude to be forged between present and future generations.'

In the Footsteps of St. John Paul II – 10 Night Pilgrimage to Poland: Tuesday 21st April to Friday 1st May, 2020.

Follow in the footsteps of St. John Paul II, visit the capital of Divine Mercy, venerate the messenger of Mercy, St. Faustina's relics, see the cell that imprisoned St. Maximilian Kolbe (martyr) as well as visit the largest Marian shrines and sanctuaries in Poland – daily Mass and spiritual activities. Flights from Belfast, luxury coach travel and excellent accommodation.

*For more info, a detailed itinerary and price email Fr. Micheál McGavigan at michealmcgavigan@icloud.com***Family Care Adoption Services** *Presently seeking to recruit adoptive families for babies and young children*For free info contact us **Tel:** (028) 7136 8592 / (028) 9069 1133 (Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm)**Email:** anne.ohagan@familycaresociety.org • **Website:** familycaresociety.co.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous: Can't stop? There is a solution.
Call AA on (028) 9035 1222 or email csoofaa@btinternet.com. alcoholicsanonymous.ie.

Deanery of Tyrone Statistics

17 Parishes in West Tyrone and East Donegal. An estimated Catholic population of 65,670 people are currently served by 20 Derry Diocesan priests under retirement age with assistance of 3 priests in residence and a chaplain to the Polish community.

8 parishes (47%) have a Catholic population of less than 3,000

6 parishes (35%) have a Catholic population of 3,000-7,000 people

3 parishes (18%) have a Catholic population of greater than 7,000 people

The largest parish serves an estimated 11,500 Catholics

7 parishes have 1,500 parishioners or less (7,900 combined) each with a resident priest. Is this sustainable?

In 2008 there were 27 diocesan clergy under retirement age ministering in the Tyrone Deanery, as of 2018 that number is 20. 7 Parish Priests currently serving in the deanery will reach 75 before 2025.

The maximum number of ordinations across the Derry Diocese by 2025 is 3.

Age profile: 1 priest is in his 30s, 1 in 40s, 7 in 50s, 6 in 60s and 5 in 70s

The clergy population has dropped 26% between 2008 and 2018 and by 2025 will have dropped by 52%

Diocesan Catechetical Centre – Training Opportunities for Young People / Adults:

The Diocese in conjunction with Youthlink NI are offering an exciting training opportunity for young people aged 16-18 interested in Youth Work and Leadership Training. An OCN Level 1 Award in Practical Youth Work / Ministry Skills. Saturday 18th January, Sunday 2nd February and Saturday 7th March in Maghera Pastoral Centre.

The Diocese are also offering a training course for adults interested in Parish Pastoral Ministry. A Level 2 Certificate in Youth Work Practice and it will run over 5 Saturdays and a few evenings beginning Wednesday 4th March, 6.00pm to 9.00pm in Maghera Pastoral Centre.

If interested call Yvonne Rooney, the Diocesan Pastoral Youth Leader for more details or an application form on 0044 28 7126 4087 or email yvonne.rooney@derrydiocese.org

PARISH EVENTS IN 2018

Thursday 1st February Service of Light for P7

Thursday 8th March First Confession for P4

Monday 12th March 5 Parishioners receive Pope John Paul Awards in Armagh Cathedral

Sunday 22nd April Confirmation by Bishop McKeown | **Saturday 19th May** First Holy Communion

Thursday 14th June P7 attend Fan the Flame Mass in Celtic Park Derry

Thursday 21st June Presentations to P7 Leavers and Mr. Noel McGinn on retirement as principal

Saturday 30th June and Sunday 1st July Cemetery Prayers in Parish Cemeteries

Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th August Parishioners, along with Fr Gallagher

attend Festival of Families in Croke Park and Papal Mass in Phoenix Park

Saturday 1st September Mr. Neil McCloy officially takes up role as principal of Our Lady of Lourdes PS

Sunday 2nd September All-Ireland Final – Tyrone v. Dublin | **Friday 2nd November** Mass for Parish Deceased

10th November Sr. Bride Counihan makes Mission Appeal

Wednesday 21st November Inaugural Meeting of Parish Pastoral Council

Sunday 16th December Advent Penance Service | **Saturday 22nd December** 2 New Altar servers welcomed

31st December Large congregation gathers for Mass at final sunset of 2018

Some Important Dates

Thursday 6th February at 7.30pm Service of Light for P7 Confirmation children

Thursday 26th March at 7.30pm
First Confession for P4 Children

Sunday 26th April at 2.00pm
Confirmation

Saturday 6th June at 12noon
First Holy Communion

Institute of Irish Leadership, Pomeroy – Upcoming Events: saconlon15@hotmail.co.uk • (028) 8775 7800

Reading Group | Every Tuesday (10.30am – 11.30am) *Please donate your old books / magazines*

Ciorcal Comhrá Gaeilge / Irish Language Conversation Circle: | Every Thursday (10.30am – 11.30am)

Walking Group: | Continues every Monday (11.00am – 12.00 noon). Meet in Pomeroy forest car park.

This Week's Calendar of Feasts and Saints:

Monday 23rd December – St. John of Kanty (priest) [1390-1473] Taught Theology and Scripture in the university of Kraków, Poland. He is also remembered for his austerity of life and generosity.

Wednesday 25th December – The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

THE PROCLAMATION OF CHRISTMAS

Today the twenty-fifth day of December, unknown ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image.

Several thousand years after the flood,

when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant.

Twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;

thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges;

one thousand years from the anointing of David as king;

in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel;

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;

the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome.

The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;

the whole world being at peace,

Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,

desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming,

being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and nine months having passed since his conception,

was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary,

Today is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

Thursday 26th December – St. Stephen (first martyr) The first Christian martyr, was one of the disciples who was in charge of the poor and needy. He is outstanding for forgiveness of his enemies. Patron Saint of deacons, stonemasons and bricklayers.

Friday 27th December – St. John (Apostle and Evangelist) John was the brother of James, son of Zebedee. The disciple whom Jesus loved, is traditionally said to have died in Ephesus. He is considered to be the author of the fourth Gospel, the book of Revelation and three letters. The letters especially teach us the law of love; John is said in his old age to have preached only one message: 'love one another'.

Saturday 28th December – Holy Innocents Also called Childermas, or Innocents' Day, festival commemorating the massacre of the children by King Herod in his attempt to kill the infant Jesus.