

Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone (Diocese of Derry)
 St. Patrick's, Greencastle Our Lady of the Wayside, Broughderg
 Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ [Year A] (25th December, 2016)
 Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU
 Website: greencastleparish.com • Email: greencastlepp@yahoo.com • Tel: (028) 8164 8474

Thought for Christmas: The Nativity is a blessing of consolation when Christmas is a difficult time. The Nativity is a blessing of solidarity for those who know the absence of a home at Christmas. The Nativity is a blessing of hope when people have experienced the sadness or the loss of love.
Fr. Gallagher extends greetings and blessings to all parishioners and friends at home and abroad for the Christmas season and the New Year

Liturgy Schedule for the Christmas Octave [Year A] (25th December – 1st January, 2016)

Saturday 24th December Fourth Week of Advent	St. Patrick's	8.30pm Carol Service 9.00pm Christmas Vigil Mass <i>Please note that there is no Mass at 6.00pm</i>
Sunday 25th December Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ [Year A]	Our Lady of the Wayside St. Patrick's	9.00am Christmas Morning Mass 11.00am Christmas Morning Mass
PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE NO MASS ON MONDAY 26TH AND TUESDAY 27TH DECEMBER		
Wednesday 28th December Holy Innocents	St. Patrick's	7.30pm Mass
Thursday 29th December St. Thomas Becket (pope)	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass
Friday 30th December Holy Family	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass
Saturday 31st December St. Sylvester (pope)	St. Patrick's	12 noon Wedding Mass 6.00pm Vigil Mass:
Sunday 1st January Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God [Year A]	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	Packie Vincent Morris (Month's Mind) 9.00am Mass (Missa Pro Populo) 11.00am Mass

Weekly Collection Amount: £1,000
If you are a taxpayer please consider a Gift-Aid declaration, your contribution will be worth 25% more

Remembering our dead: We pray for the repose of the soul of **Anna Rose McCullagh** whose anniversary occurs at this time. At Christmas time we pray for and remember all our dear loved ones who have died especially those who died during this past year. *May the Christ Child bring comfort to those who mourn at this time*

We offer congratulations and prayerful support from our parish community to **Emmett McFadden (Cappagh) and Amy McCullagh (Greencastle)** who committed themselves to each other in the sacrament of Christian Marriage on Friday 16th December in St. Patrick's Church, Greencastle

Pilgrimage to Medugorje: Wednesday 6th to Wednesday 13th September
 £619 for half-board • *Price increase due to falling rate of sterling*
 Contact Maria ASAP on (028) 8164 8357 or 07768 395 038

World Meeting of Families: As you pray at the crib this Christmas time please take some time to pray the Prayer to the Holy Family which we will pray in preparation for the World Meeting of Families in Dublin in August, 2018 at which it is hoped Pope Francis will be present. There is a bookmark copy of the prayer beside the crib which you are encouraged to take home and place near your family crib and pray each day until the World Meeting of Families takes place.

Pope Francis' Intention for January (please remember this in your personal prayers)
Christian Unity: That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.

Next Week's Readings – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God: Numbers 6:22-27 • Psalm 66:2-3, 5, 6, 8, R/ v 2 Galations 4:4-7 • Luke 2:16-21 • Lectionary 1:139
Sunday [Year A] • Weekday [Year 1]

Parish Liturgy for January, 2017	St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)	St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)	Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)
Readers	Roisin Hood	Siobhan McKenna	Sean Clarke
Eucharistic Ministry	Brigid Keenan	Eugene McCullagh	Patricia Donnelly
Prayers of Intercession	Maeve McCullagh	Lauryn Hollywood	Cara-Rose Brogan
Collectors	Mary Bradley Raymond Bradley	Colm Keenan Michael Clarke	Brian Gillen Pat McGuigan
Altar Society	Mary Conway and Paula Meenan		Anne McDermott Carmel McCrory

6.00pm Saturday Vigil Saturday 24 th December The family of Charles Conway	Offertory Gift Rota Feast of the Christmas Nativity	9.00am Sunday Morning Sunday 25 th December (11.00am) The family of Eoin Bradley
Saturday 31 st December The family of Lee Coyle	Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God	Sunday 1 st January The family of Nicole Cahill
Saturday 7 th January The family of Danielle Gumley	Feast of the Baptism of the Lord	Sunday 8 th January The family of Niamh Clarke
If you cannot attend please ensure that you have arranged with another family for the gifts to be presented		

Special Charity Concert in Memory of the Late Bishop Daly: Saturday 4th February in St. Columb's Hall. All proceeds from the concert will go to Bishop Daly's chosen charities of Children in Crossfire, Foyle Hospice and Foyle Search and Rescue. Hosted by renowned comedian Jean Fitzpatrick, the evening will include entertainment from a variety of well-known local artists.
Tickets can be purchased through the Millennium Forum box office by calling (028) 7126 4455

New Indoor Cycle (Spin) Classes: Begin Monday 2nd January in Greencastle Community Centre • **Cost: £25**
 Over 50s at 6.00pm [2 places remain] • Advanced at 9.00pm [3 places remain]
For more info call Darryl McCullagh on 07979 378 732

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School – Application Forms: Now available for pupils born between Monday 2nd July, 2012 and Monday 1st July, 2013 (inclusive) who are due to start in September.
Please call the school for a form on (028) 8164 8732 if you haven't received one from the Green Elves Playgroup

Parish Graveyards – Ice Warning: During these winter months in particular it is important we take particular care in the parish graveyards, especially on these frosty mornings. While there have been major improvements in some of these graveyards it is impossible to salt them every time there is a major frost.
 So please be careful at all times, thank you *Fr. E. Gallagher PP*

Rouskey Community Centre – Upcoming Classes:

Computers Level 1: Begins in January. Must have a basic knowledge of computers. *Classes are free*

Low impact Dance Exercise: Begins Friday 13th January at 10.30am. Rebecca instructor from Hollywood Fitness will be taking the class. Dance fit is a dance and fitness programme put to a variety of music. Rebecca will adjust for all different abilities in the class and it's a fun way to keep fit. *£20 for 4 weeks*

Bride: 07591 047 556 / 07847459428 / (028) 8164 8706 • **Clare Ann:** 07798 941 452
Email: rouskeycommunity@yahoo.com

Cruse Bereavement Care: Applications to the Awareness in Childhood Bereavement Care volunteer training course running over 4 weekends in Spring 2017
Email: maria.mcentee@cruse.org.uk • **Tel:** (028) 9079 2419 • **Deadline:** Tuesday 10th January

CHILDREN IN CROSSFIRE: Website: childrenincrossfire.org • Email: events@childrenincrossfire.org • Tel: (028) 7126 9898
Advent Appeal: Children in Crossfire would like to wish everyone in the Parish a happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year. The Advent box donations will be collected over the weekends of 7th and 8th January and 14th and 15th January. Please leave the box or envelope in the parish collection basket on any of those Sundays. We thank you in advance as your support will make a huge impact on the lives of children and families living in Ethiopia.
Camino De Santiago Walking Challenge: Thursday 30th March to Tuesday 4th April. Walk the way of St. James.
Places are limited

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

Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre – MA in Catholic School Leadership: In Partnership with St. Mary's College, Twickenham beginning Autumn 2016. This is a post-graduate degree dedicated to the professional development and spiritual formation of Catholic school leaders. It is a great opportunity for those who aspire to, or have an interest in, leadership roles within the Catholic School system.
For more info call The Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre on 0044 28 71264087 or email tferry@derrydiocese.org

Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants – Emigrant Information Pack: Contains practical information for intending Irish emigrants, such as visa requirements, advice on health insurance, gaining employment, accommodation and other information pertaining to each of the main receiving countries. It also provides information for Irish emigrants planning to return to Ireland after a period living abroad as well as other articles and information on the theme of emigration.
If interested in receiving a free copy(s) of this booklet please contact Teresa at the Derry Diocesan Office
Email: t.mcmenamin@derrydiocese.org • **Tel:** (028) 7126 2302 • **Website:** catholicbishops.ie/tag/emigrants

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.
An appointment can be arranged by calling the Omagh Centre on (028) 8224 2439 or emailing omagh@accordni.com

Sacrament of Reconciliation / Confession: The Sacrament of Reconciliation better known as Confession is very important and vital part of our lives as Catholics. The times for Confession will be as follows.
St. Patrick's: Eve of First Friday from after 10.00am Mass until 11.00am when mass is celebrated with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during that time except when there is a funeral or no mass
 First Saturday of each month from after mass until 11.00am with Adoration unless there is a 12noon wedding
 Each Saturday Evening 5.30pm-5.45pm and after Vigil Mass
Our Lady of the Wayside: Each Sunday 10.30am to 10.45am and after 11.00am Mass

Drink Wise Age Well: Are you over 50? Are you worried about your own or someone else's alcohol use?
For confidential information, advice and support call (028) 8283 9240

Family Care Society: We are presently seeking to recruit adoptive families for babies and young children.
 For more information contact us via the following details (offices open weekdays from 9.00am to 1.00pm)
Tel: (028) 9069 1133 or (028) 7136 8592 • **Email:** email@familycaresociety.org • **Website:** familycaresociety.co.uk

St. Michael's Apostolate of Prayer for Priests: The co-ordinators in the Derry Diocese wish to raise awareness of the Apostolate of Prayer for Priests and to invite people from across the diocese to join in this prayer initiative. The Apostolate prayer card offers us a special opportunity to spend ten minutes each day in pray for a priest.
 The co-ordinators for the diocese and their contact details are: *prayerforpriests.com*
Rosemary Johnson 07810 387 825 - brendan_rosemary@yahoo.co.uk • **Ethna Hill** 07528 249 838 - ethna776@yahoo.com
Siobhan Sweeney 07880 588 041 - siobhanswen1@yahoo.co.uk • **Eamon Cassidy** 077435 02165 - e_cassidy@hotmail.com

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

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.
Call Carol on (028) 8225 1559 to book

Family Care Society – Interested in Adoption? We specialise in finding forever families for children aged 3 years old and upwards and for brothers and sisters. This year we have successfully placed more brothers and sisters together and half of them were over the age of 3. Many more children need forever families. Could you be their new family? We are also seeking families who would be interested in becoming concurrent carers for babies under 2 years old. If you want to talk to one of our specialist adoption practitioners contact.
Rachael (Belfast Office): (028) 9069 1133 • **Julie or Brian (Derry Office):** (028) 7136 8592
Email: email@familycaresociety.org • **Website:** familycaresociety.co.uk

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 entrances*

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

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2015 Parish Statistics			
Baptisms 6 Boys 8 Girls	Confirmations 8 Boys 8 Girls	First Holy Communion / Reconciliation 10 Boys 9 Girls	Marriages 10 within parish 5 outside parish
Station Masses in October 7	Induction of Fr. Edward Gallagher as 13th Parish Priest of GREENCASTLE Celebrated by Bishop Donal McKeown, Bishop of Derry on Thursday 17 th September in St. Patrick's Church, Greencastle		
Funerals 13	Farewell Concert and Presentation Night for Fr. Eugene Hasson Former Parish Priest of GREENCASTLE and now Parish Priest of the Parishes of Lavey and Greenlough took place on Friday 13 th November in GREENCASTLE Community Centre		

Seeing your life through the lens of the gospel – John 1-18:*John Byrne OSA (jpbymeosa@gmail.com)*

1. John opens his Gospel with a profound reflection on the meaning of creation, of life and of Jesus. Remember when you had a special awareness of the gift of life that filled you with gratitude to God for creation, and the beauty and wonder of the world: 'All things came into being through him and without him not one thing came into being.'
2. We hear the gospel message frequently. Sometimes it goes in one ear and out the other. Then there are occasions when it made us feel more alive, times when it helped us see the way ahead, like a light that shines in the darkness. Recall when the gospel gave you hope in the midst of anxiety or sadness and helped you to see what action would be most life giving for you and for others
3. Bring to mind people who have had a prophetic voice in the world – speaking the truth for the world to hear, like as a witness to testify to the light. Some of these may have been public figures. Others were ordinary people who have helped you see the 'light' by the witness of their own lives and words.
4. 'No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son of God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him know.' Jesus came to us to teach us about God and put a human face on God for us. For the people of his day, and for us, that was a mission of getting us to think again about how we see God, and to believe in a God who is a God of love. Recall how the life and ministry of Jesus have changed your picture of God.

Musings – Midnight Mass (Luke 2:1-14) – And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son... (Lk 2:7):*Fr. Iomar Daniels (Loughrea, Co. Galway)*

In the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth we don't hear anything of what Mary, might have gone through giving birth in a smelly, cold stable on that starry night. We have sanitised it. Why? To emphasise pain and holiness are not good bedfellows; to claim sweat and blood are unholy things? We're well aware of how women were treated by our Church after giving birth in the past. We don't sanitise the death of Jesus. We hear his last agonised cries from the cross. Pain is an essential step along the path to glory. God wants us to know that holiness comes through living life to the full which will bring joy and sorrow. In charitable love there is great satisfaction but it comes at a price. For Jesus, it was death on the cross. The pain of childbirth is a bonding moment. The death of Jesus is, also, a bonding moment for us with the God who came to save us. Through pain a fierce and tender relationship is established. Ask any mother! So, as we gaze into the crib this Christmas may we wonder at the beauty of our being and the unbreakable bond God wants with us.

The Deep End – Christmas Day:*Jane Mellett (mellettj@gmail.com)*

If you were to put together a guest list for the birth of the Messiah 2000 years ago one might expect political leaders like Caesar Augustus and religious leaders such as the chief priests and the Pharisees to be included. Yet for Luke, the shepherds are some of the first to welcome Jesus into this world and are the first 'preachers' of the Good News. Many would find it completely shocking that Shepherds would be included. It was a disreputable trade and shepherds were considered 'unclean' because of their profession. At first they were terrified, but the angels reassured them: 'do not be afraid'. The response of the shepherds was immediate: 'let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing which has taken place'.

The poor, the marginalised, the outcast will be the first to experience the abundance of God's hospitality through Jesus and the shepherds come in their name. We are told that people were amazed by the shepherds and their words. Their journey didn't end in Bethlehem, for them it was perhaps only the beginning as they returned 'glorifying and praising God'. We are invited to Bethlehem today, to open up our hearts to the one who has come to bring hope and joy. And we return, like the shepherds, 'glorifying and praising God for all they have seen and heard'. We must allow that love to penetrate our hearts and celebrate with our family and friends the joy that lives amongst us. And when we have finished celebrating we remember that the real work of Christmas begins once again:

When the song of the angels is stilled. When the star in the sky is gone.
 When the kings and princes are home. When the shepherds are back with their flocks.
 The work of Christmas begins; to find the lost; to heal the broken; to feed the hungry; to release the prisoner; to rebuild the nations; to bring peace among people; to make music in the heart.

*Howard Thurman***This Week's Calendar of Feasts and Saints:****Sunday 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.

Monday 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.

Tuesday 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'.

Wednesday 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.

Thursday 29th December – St. Thomas Becket (pope) Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 until his murder in 1170. Engaged in conflict with Henry II of England over the rights and privileges of the Church and was murdered by followers of the king in Canterbury Cathedral. Soon after his death, he was canonised by Pope Alexander III.

Friday 30th December – Holy Family Celebrates the human family unit, as well as the ultimate family unit of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Usually celebrated on the Sunday after Christmas. If Christmas is a Sunday, then the feast is celebrated on 30th December.

Saturday 31st December – St. Sylvester (pope) Died in 335 after being Pope for 21 years. Being elected in the year after the Edict of Milan he was free to build many churches in Rome.

Sunday 1st January – Mary, the Mother of God At the message of the angel, the Virgin Mary received the Word of God in her heart and in her body, and gave life to the world. Hence she is acknowledged and honoured as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer.

Lumen Gentium (52)