

Christmas Day
Grace before meals.



Loving God,
On this Christmas Day we
give thanks that Jesus, your
Son, has come into our world
bringing us gifts of peace and
joy.

Bless us as we sit down
together at this table for our
Christmas meal.

Bless the food we share and
help us to remember those who
are hungry. Be with our
neighbours and our friends,
those who are lonely, sick or
away from home.

We pray that our departed loved
ones may sit now at your table
in heaven.

May the joy of this feast give us
strength and light, now and in
the days ahead. We make this
prayer through Christ Our Lord.

Christmas Day
Prayer for the Family



Dear God,
On this special day when we celebrate the
birth of Jesus, we come together as a
family with thanksgiving and praise. We
praise you for the gift of salvation, for
loving us as we are. We thank you for our
family and friends who love and care for
us.

Forgive us for all our sins, for hurting you
and hurting people around us. Give us a
forgiving heart to forgive those who hurt
us in the past. May your Holy Spirit
reconcile and unite our family from this
day forward.

We pray for healing of our bodies, our
minds, emotions and relationships. We
pray for each member of our family, for
your love and peace to surround us, for
your Holy Spirit to guide us, for your
loving arms to comfort us.

We pray for families who are suffering and
in need. Give us loving hearts to reach out
to love them. We dedicate this day to you.
We pray for your blessings upon our
home. Through Christ our Lord.



Family Prayer

We give you thanks Lord God,
who has blessed us with life and love.

You have given us the gift of the family.
Help us to nurture and protect, to guide and to love each other.

Through the intercession of the Holy Family,
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, protect us.

Give us wisdom and courage, joy and faithfulness
in responding to our special vocation as
a Christian family,
so that we may help each other to grow in grace and love
to the Glory of God. Amen.



St. Aidan's Parish, Ferns
Christmas Newsletter 2023

C
H
R
I
S
T

I
S

B
O
R
N



H
A
L
L
E
L
U
J
A
H

*Wishing all in the Parish a very Happy and
Peaceful Christmas and every
Blessing in 2024*

CHRIST BORN IN A STABLE

Christ born in a stable is born in
me.



Christ accepted by
shepherds accepts me.

Christ receiving the
wise men receives me.

Christ revealed to the nations be
revealed in me.

Christ dwelling in Nazareth You
dwell in me.

Christ, grant that people may look
at me and see Your Presence.

Our Church, Crib & Dead

I thank all who worked so hard in
preparing the Church buildings so splendidly
for Christmas and the Crib.

When you visit the Crib pray in
thanksgiving to God for the gift of **Life** and
Faith and remember those who have guided
us in the ways of faith and left us with
precious memories, they are now enjoying
their eternal reward and have left us very
precious gifts. Especially remember those
who died since last Christmas. May they
enjoy the rewards of the Resurrection and
may their families be consoled at Christmas
time.



*Parochial House,
Ferns.
25th Dec. 2023*



Dear Parishioner,

Today we celebrate the Birthday of the **Son of God - The Incarnation**. This is the day we have been preparing for, both spiritually and materially, and the day children have been looking forward to and are full of joy and excitement that it has arrived.

It is a great blessing to be able as a Christian Community to gather with our families to celebrate in freedom from virus or oppression, something other parts of the world cannot enjoy. We gather to honour our God and thank him for his blessings

Before the first Christmas, people waited expectantly in hope of the Saviour, we are blessed with faith, knowing he has come and will lead us in Peace and Love, if we wish to follow and eventually inherit eternal life.

My wish is that **Jesus Christ** will be welcomed into our homes, hearts and world this Christmas and **His Love and Peace** will be celebrated and evident in our lives and homes. If the manger is empty at Christmas in our lives, then our lives may be full of **earthly things**, but be full of anxiety, fear, lack of hope and emptiness

Our gift of memory is a great gift and it can be most helpful and reassuring if used properly. This Christmas we remember the babies that brought great joy to families and the large number of Baptisms and Sacramental Marriages we celebrated in our Churches. We remember in a special way our departed loved ones, family members and friends who meant so much to us, they have left us with great memories of people who reflected for us the love of the Saviour and the peace and friendship they brought. We were blessed to have them, thank God, and now they are safe with Him. We are especially conscious of those who have been bereaved in the past year, especially through tragic and unexpected causes, it is not easy to face the first Christmas without a loved one, be mindful they are shining down on you. We really loved them and they us. Let us never forget them in the Eucharist and prayer. There will be a void, that can be eased, with God's help and be given meaning.

We are blessed with the schools and teachers we have guiding the children who will be the future of our nation and church. Let us cherish our youth and guide them to the Saviour by a meaningful faith. The Parish Programme "Grow in Love" is up and running in preparation for First Penance and First Communion, and the schools and parents are joining to celebrate Confirmation during the coming year. The Parish Pastoral Centre is a great asset to the parish and is used every day, for Eucharistic Adoration, Prayer Groups and various activities in the parish.

On the Financial front Sunday Envelope contributions were once again the best on record. A balance sheet for all areas will be sent out early in the new year. If you would like to contribute please contact the Parish Office, many are now paying by Standing Order which is very beneficial to all Churches. The Church fabric depends on the Sunday envelopes for all maintenance.

As we look forward to the New Year, we do so with renewed **hope and confidence**. **We look forward to peace in our world, please constantly pray for Peace**. I am most grateful to Fr. Pat Stafford for his invaluable help and support, he is a great blessing to me and the parish.

Grateful thanks is extended to all involved in various ministries and all parishioners. Your generosity and support is something I greatly value and appreciate.

Wishing all, a very Happy, Holy and Peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick B. Cushen P.P.

**News of Great Joy
The Conception of the Son of God**

The virginal conception is a story of divine intervention because the child of Mary is

a person who already existed. "In the beginning was the word ... and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

JOSEPH COULD NOT HAVE FATHERED A PERSON WHO ALREADY EXISTED.

St Augustine marvellously summed up the theological argument thus:

"If a God had to be born, he could only be born of a virgin and if a virgin had to give birth, she could only give birth to a God."

Fr. Sylvester O'Flynn OFM Cap.



Mass Time & Intentions

For Christmas Eve &

Christmas Day

24th & 25th December 2023

FERNS CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE

6.15pm: ~~~

CHRISTMAS DAY

8.30am: ~~~

11.00am: People of the Parish

BALLYDUFF CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE

7.30pm: ~~~

CHRISTMAS DAY

9.30am: ~~~

CLOLOGUE CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE

8.00pm: Marie Gleeson,

Ballyfoley.

CHRISTMAS DAY

9.45am: ~~~



Mass Time & Intentions

Next Weekend

30th & 31st December 2023

FERNS CHURCH

6.15pm: James Carley, Coolroe & Camolin

Gerard Murphy, Main Street

8.30am:

11.00am: Mary Breslin, Coolbawn

**Thomas & Bridget Kearney & their son Gerard,
Bolinadrum, Ferns**

BALLYDUFF CHURCH

7.30pm: Maggie Hall, Kiltomas

CLOLOGUE CHURCH

9.45am: John Power, Forties

30th & 31st December 2024

Ministers of the Word

6.15pm: Ena Gray

8.30am: Denis Kinsella

11.00am: Eleanor Hawkins

Ministers of Holy Communion

6.15pm: Margaret Maguire & Mary Fortune

8.30am: A Volunteer

11.00am: Ann Swaine & Michael Breen



Welcome Home - Our Emigrants - Our Sick - Our Living Alone

This is a very special time for all family members. Over the past days a limited number of family members have been travelling home to be with family and friends. We welcome our visitors and pray that those away will be happy. Please remember in your prayers those from our Parish who are sick both at home and in Hospital. Be mindful also of those living alone and call to visit them. May the child of Bethlehem comfort them and all the sick.