

Parish of Malin (Clonca) Sunday 29th November 2020
First Sunday of Advent (Year A Week 1)



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*In November
We Remember*

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Details on the times of online Masses and Prayers for the Covid 19 Crisis: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie>

Holy & Saints Days: 29th – 5th December: Thursday: *St. Francis Xavier*, Friday: *St. John Damascene*

Sincere Thanks to those who have sent in their collection envelopes, cheques and donations for the Parish during the past week. Please make cheques payable to “Malin Parochial”.

Public Masses in our Churches: We are hoping that we can return to public masses again this week, hopefully beginning on Tuesday 1st December.. Full details will be on the parish Facebook page and website.

Weekend Masses will be at the normal times, beginning Saturday 5th December.

Weekday Masses: St Patricks Aughaclay: Tuesday to Friday 6 30pm

Star of the Sea: Tuesday 10am, Friday 7 30pm.

St Mary’s Lagg: Wednesday and Thursday 9.30am

Anniversary Mass: Sarah and John Sexton, Moneydarragh, Gleneely on Sunday 6th December at 9am in St Mary’s Lagg

Advent Mission - The Fulfilment of All Desire: Renewal Ministries are hosting an advent retreat lead by Ralph Martin. Starting on Sunday Ralph will be sharing an online mission based around his book - Fulfilment of all desire. Check out the video preview below. The mission is on each Sunday in Advent, from 1-2 a.m. GMT. To register to go to <https://www.renewalministries.net/advent-mission/>.

The Season of Advent: We wait patiently and hopefully for the Saviour to be born for us.

1st Reading: Isaiah 63:16-17, 64:1-8

The prophet admits his people’s sinfulness but recalls God’s mercy too

For you are our father,
though Abraham does not know us
and Israel does not acknowledge us;
you, O Lord, are our father;
our Redeemer from of old is your name.
Why, O Lord, do you make us stray from your ways
and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you?
Turn back for the sake of your servants,
for the sake of the tribes that are your heritage.
that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence –
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil
– to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37 We do not know the day or hour when the Master will return, to assess us

Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.

Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Reflections on the Readings:

May your words, O Lord, enlighten our inmost heart. May they guide us through the storms of life and keep us near to you.

Like people at airports

There are various themes to explore as Advent begins. Isaiah calls us to confess our sins and hope for better days. Paul’s thanksgiving to God is upbeat about the future. Jesus warns us against complacency, for the end is coming sooner than we expect. We might go mainly with the first and third readings, about being prepared for the day of the Lord.

Advent invites reassessment of where our ways are leading us. This annual reminder that the world as we know it will one day end, sounds more appropriate in the northern Wintry season, when daylight is short and darkness seems to be winning over the light. But the positive side of this is that a new Spring day is dawning over the horizon, when Christ will come again into our lives with power to save us.

Do you ever watch people at airports, waiting for loved ones to arrive from a flight? They often seem excited, eager for the first appearance of the familiar face, ready with the broad smile of greeting to embrace the returning traveller. We too wait for the Lord’s coming with eagerness, because we long for his presence. The waiting is important because, during our life’s pilgrimage, we are incomplete. As Augustine once said, “You have made us for Yourself, o Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.” At some deep level of our personhood we are in need, a need that only God can fill.

This is a time to open our hearts and invite the Lord to bring us to completion. We begin Advent, yearning for his coming. Today’s first reading puts this yearning into an image, that “We have all withered like leaves... blown by the wind.” The whirling, withered leaves of autumn are a familiar scene these past few weeks. Isaiah proposes the dead leaves as symbols of all that is dried up and withered in our lives. But he also calls us to look for a better day. God is still in charge of creation, and our personal lives are under his loving care. We pray this Advent, “Come, Lord Jesus,” and make our own the words of the psalm, “Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has chosen.” It is a central plank of our faith that the Lord never abandons His people.

Back to the people at airports waiting for loved ones to arrive. It is an alert, active waiting – keeping an eye on the time. In today’s gospel Jesus says, “Be on your guard, stay awake.” He wants us to focus on our task here and now. We are to grow more mature in our relationship with others and with him, paying attention to prayer, and living with his message in our hearts. That’s what waiting for him should be like. And while we wait, we can enjoy his gifts, as promised, for as Paul assures us: “You will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ.”