

## CHURCH SERVICES

### THE EUCHARIST

**Sunday:** Saturday 6.00pm  
Sunday 10.00am and 12.00 noon  
**Weekdays:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 10.00am  
Tuesday, Thursday 7.30pm

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:** After 10.00am and before 6.00pm  
Mass on Saturdays and on request.

**Baptism:** Normally on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 1.00pm.  
Enquiries to the parish office.

**Marriage:** By arrangement with one of the Priests.

### Evening Weekday Mass availability in our Deanery:

- St Brigid's, Blanchardstown, 7.30pm Mass on Mondays
- St Luke's, Mulhuddart, 7.30pm Mass on Wednesdays
- St Patrick's, Corduff, 7.30pm Mass on Fridays

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Fr. Damian McNeice** – Phone: 089 445 3987

**Fr. Denis O'Connor CSsR** –Phone: 01-8214003

**Parish Office** – Monday to Thursday, 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Phone: 01-6409601 Email: [parishoffice@castleknockparish.ie](mailto:parishoffice@castleknockparish.ie)

**Church Sacristy** – Phone: 01-8214652

**Our Lady's Parish Centre** – Phone: 01-8209907

**Parish Website** – [www.castleknockparish.ie](http://www.castleknockparish.ie)

**Parish Newsletter** – Notices may be emailed to

[ourladysparish@gmail.com](mailto:ourladysparish@gmail.com) Written notices may be handed in to the  
Parish Office. The deadline for submissions is Thursday evening.

### THE DONATE BUTTON ON OUR PARISH WEBSITE

This button, which can be found on the website homepage, is a convenient online way to donate to our parish or to contribute to Dues. You can also contribute to the usual weekend 1st and/or 2nd collections, towards our parish running costs, and also our Third World Partnership (TWP) project.



## OUR LADY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH CASTLEKNOCK

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PARISHES OF  
ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, LAUREL LODGE  
AND ST MOCHTA'S PORTERSTOWN.

**BAPTISM OF THE LORD  
FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME.  
7<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2024**

CLOSENESS, MERCY IS GOD'S WAY.

Today we are celebrating the Baptism of the Lord. We left Baby Jesus being visited by the Magi; today we find him as an adult on the banks of the Jordan. The Liturgy has us take a leap of some 30 years, about which we know one thing: they were years of hidden life, which Jesus spent with his family – some, firstly in Egypt, as a migrant to escape Herod's persecution, the others in Nazareth, learning Joseph's trade – with family, obeying his parents, studying and working. It is striking that the Lord spent most of his time on Earth in this way: living an ordinary life, without standing out. We think that, according to the Gospels, there were three years of teaching, of miracles and many things. Three. And the others, all the others, were of a hidden life with his family. It is a fine message for us: it reveals *the greatness of daily life*, the importance in God's eyes of every gesture and moment of life, even the simplest, even the most hidden.

After these 30 years of hidden life, Jesus' public life begins. And it begins precisely with his baptism in the River Jordan. But Jesus is God; why does Jesus get baptized? John's baptism consisted in a penitential rite; it was a sign of one's willingness to convert, to be better, asking forgiveness of one's sins. Jesus surely did not need it. In fact, John the Baptist tries to prevent it, but Jesus insists. Why? Because he wants to be with the sinners: for this reason he gets in line with them and does the same thing they do. He does so with the attitude of the people who, as a liturgical hymn says, approached "with bare soul and bare feet". A bare soul, that is, without anything covered, a sinner. This is the gesture Jesus makes, and he goes down into the river to immerse himself in the same condition we are in. Indeed, baptism actually means "immersion". On the first day of his ministry, Jesus thus offers us his "programmatically manifesto". He tells us

that he does not save us from on high, with a sovereign decision or act of force, a decree, no: he saves us by coming to meet us and taking our sins upon himself. This is how God conquers the world's evil: by humbling himself, taking charge of it. It is also the way that we can lift up others: not by judging, not by suggesting what to do, but by drawing near, empathizing, sharing God's love. Closeness is God's way with us.

After this gesture of compassion by Jesus, an extraordinary thing happens: the heavens open and the Trinity is finally revealed. The Holy Spirit descends from the heavens in the form of a dove (cf. *Mk 1:10*) and the Father says to Jesus: "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased" (v. 11). God manifests himself when mercy appears, because that is his face. Jesus becomes the servant of sinners and is proclaimed the Son; he lowers himself upon us and the Spirit descends upon him. Love calls upon love. It also applies to us: in each act of service, in every work of mercy we perform, God manifests himself; God sets his gaze upon the world.

But even before we do anything, our life is marked by the mercy that was laid upon us. We have been saved freely. Salvation is free. It is the freely given gesture of God's mercy toward us. Sacramentally this is done on the day of our Baptism; but even those who are not baptized always receive God's mercy, because God is there, waiting, waiting for them to open the doors of their hearts. He draws near, allow me to say: he caresses us with his mercy. May Our Lady, to whom we now pray, help us to cherish our *baptismal identity*, that is, the identity of being shown mercy, which lies at the base of faith and life. [*Pope Francis*]

#### WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2024.

Our parish has the honour this year of hosting the Inaugural Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 8pm when we will be joined by our own Archbishop, Dr Dermot Farrell, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Michael Jackson, and many other Christian leaders from the greater Dublin area, entering into Christ's prayer on the night before he died that all his disciples would be one [John 17:21]. All are welcome. That night the evening Mass will take place at the earlier time of 6.30 pm and there will be no Holy Hour, with thanks in anticipation for your understanding. There is of course a Holy Hour in our parish partnership the night before, Wednesday, from 8 to 9pm in St Thomas', Laurel Lodge, to which all are welcome.

TAIZÉ FRIDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 7PM: Our January Taizé evening is on next Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> January, at 7pm. All are welcome, with a special welcome for our Confirmation candidates.

**CROÍ MHIURE FOODBANK:** We wish to express our sincere thanks to all those parishioners who kindly donated non-perishable food items for the foodbank over the last months. The collection of food will resume over the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January. May we wish you and all parishioners a Blessed New Year. Thank you, Martin. 086 1591188

**LOST AND FOUND:** Two items of jewellery were found before Christmas. Please contact the sacristy or parish office for further information.

**ETERNAL REST RIP:** Please pray for the soul of Ann Whitty, whose funeral took place in our Church last Tuesday. May the Lord sustain all who mourn, especially over these holy feast days.

From GOAL. Many thanks to the families and individuals who came out to support GOAL's annual Christmas Day Mile in the Phoenix Park. Your generous donations on the day and online raised over €10,700 for GOAL's humanitarian work among the poor in developing countries.

**Our Church:** Our heartfelt thanks to all who have worked diligently and consistently in so many ways in our parish during 2023. May the Lord reward you according to His Wisdom and Providential Care..

**Lectio Divina:** Our spiritual reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation of the Gospel for the following Sunday, an opportunity to listen, share, discuss and pray the Living Word, has resumed, from 10.30 to 11.00am, every Wednesday. For information, contact Marian on 087 295 8363. We hope to see you next Wednesday.

**Children's Rosary, 4pm Saturdays:** The children's rosary has resumed, at 4pm every Saturday in our Church. We are looking forward to seeing our young children next Saturday. All are welcome.

**Carol Sessions on the Greens:** A "big thank you" from Ellen Troy and Colleagues for your excellent participation in "Carol Singing on the Greens" and also for contributing so generously to the food banks. Míle buíochas.

**Nóta Beag:** Is fiú an t-alt -- "CLOSENESS, MERCY IS GOD'S WAY" -- sa Nuachtlitir seo a léamh go cúramach.