

13th December 2020, Third Sunday of Advent
(Gaudete Sunday)

Priests: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Jim Killeen, P.P., V.G. 021-4631750
V. Rev. John Ryan, P.E., C.C 086-2697503
Rev. Mark Hehir, C.C. 021-4621670
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Eamon Goold, P.E., 021-4633659

Deacon: Rev. Edward Mulhare

Parish Office Hours: Monday to Thursday – 10.30am to 1.00pm. Friday 10.30am to Noon. Phone 021-4636508.

Mass Times: Sundays Saturday Vigil 6.10pm
Sunday Morning 8am, 10am and Noon
Weekdays: Monday to Friday 8am; Monday to Saturday 10am; televised and with congregation of 50.
The Saturday Vigil and Sunday Masses are open for 100 people; details at the back of Holy Rosary Church.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday and Friday from after 10 Mass until 5pm

Confessions: Confessions will be heard on Saturdays from 10.30am to 11.30am in the Adoration Chapel, entry from Our Lady's Chapel.

Feast days this week: Sunday 13th St. Lucy, Patron Saint of the blind and visually impaired. (Not celebrated liturgically this year); Monday 14th St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) a Carmelite who, despite opposition and imprisonment, worked for spreading the reform of the Carmelites. He was a man of prayer, an outstanding poet and a spiritual writer declared doctor of the Church. Friday 18th St. Flannan, lived in the seventh century and was the son of a king of Thomond. He entered Malua's monastery at Killaloe and became abbot there. He is remembered as a great preacher.

Anniversaries around this time: David Conway, Mary Fitzgerald, Bea Cashman, Dermot Sheedy, Brian Sheedy, Jim Lane, Marie Hennessy, Eileen O'Keeffe, Fritz Schafer, Sam Bolton, Gerard Murphy.

“Bible Corner” – Today’s Gospel is taken from Chapter 1 of St John. It contains the verses from that chapter that look at John rather than Jesus. It highlights for us the link John is between the Old and the new testament through the reaction of those who question him and allows us see that John is well aware of his role, *‘I am not the Christ’, ‘I am as Isaiah prophesied, a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord’*

Pope Francis, "Fratelli tutti" - I am looking at Chapter One nn.9-24 today. The title of the chapter is 'Dark Clouds over a Closed World'. The headings within the chapter give a sense of how it develops - 'Shattered Dreams'; 'Lacking a Plan for Everyone'; 'Globalization and Progress Without a Shared Roadmap'; 'Pandemics and other Calamities in History'; 'An Absence of Human Dignity on the Borders'; 'The Illusion of Communication'; 'Forms of Subjection and Self-Contempt'; 'Hope'.

Under the heading 'Shattered Dreams' he looks at the hope that developed after the Second World War but has now been lost in so many different ways and in different places. He sees a regression that is caused by a number of things including: *"Opening up to the world" is an expression that has been co-opted by the economic and financial sector and is now used exclusively of openness to foreign interests or to the freedom of economic powers to invest without obstacles or complications in all countries.*" (n.12). He speaks of the end of historical consciousness and a 'cultural colonization'. In n.14 he says: *"One effective way to weaken historical consciousness, critical thinking, the struggle for justice and the processes of integration is to empty great words of their meaning or to manipulate them. Nowadays, what do certain words like democracy, freedom, justice or unity really mean? They have been bent and shaped to serve as tools for domination, as meaningless tags that can be used to justify any action"*.

'Lacking a Plan for Everyone' goes from n.15 to n.31. It speaks of various ways basic rights are ignored, trampled on and violated. A couple of things stood out for me here that capture the essence of what Pope Francis considers contrary to fraternity and social friendship: he speaks of a 'throwaway world' and under that heading he includes this statement - *Some parts of our human family, it appears, can be readily sacrificed for the sake of others considered worthy of a carefree existence. Ultimately, "persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, 'not yet useful' - like the unborn, or 'no longer needed' - like the elderly. We have grown indifferent to all kinds of wastefulness, starting with the waste of food, which is deplorable in the extreme"* (n.18), and also, this statement - *Today, as in the past, slavery is rooted in a notion of the human person that allows him or her to be treated as an object... Whether by coercion, or deception, or by physical or psychological duress, human persons created in the image and likeness of God are deprived of their freedom, sold and reduced to being the property of others. They are treated as means to an end... [Criminal networks] are skilled in using modern means of communication as a way of luring young men and women in various parts of the world" A perversion that exceeds all limits when it subjugates women and then forces them to abort. An abomination that goes to the length of kidnapping persons for the sake of selling their organs. Trafficking in persons and other contemporary forms of enslavement are a worldwide problem that needs to be taken seriously by humanity as a whole: "since criminal organizations employ global networks to achieve their goals, efforts to eliminate this phenomenon also demand a common and, indeed, a global effort on the part of various sectors of society"* (n.24). Being a small island at the edge of Europe and a tiny fraction of the billions of people who share this planet with us, it is difficult to picture the harshness experienced by many in our world. As I reflect on the Encyclical I am beginning to see it on two levels - the universal level and our own level here in Ireland. What are the equivalents in our country? (Next time - will look at Chapter One nn.25-55)

- Quote: *"we are the objects of undying love on the part of God. We know: he has always his eyes open on us, even when it seems to be dark."*

John Paul I, from the Angelus reflection on Sunday 10th September 1978