

Middleton Parish Newsletter
14th January 2024 – Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Clergy in the Parish:

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.

Priest on Duty: 087-246 8234 (For emergencies and also arranging wedding bookings)

Parish Office: The Parish Office is open Monday to Thursday 10.30am to 1pm and Friday 10.30am to Noon. Parish website is middletonparish.ie and you can gain access to the webcam for Masses by logging on to the website.

Parish e-mail is middletonparishoffice@gmail.com

Sunday Masses: Holy Rosary – Vigil 6.10pm; Sunday morning 8am, 10am and Noon. Ballintotis – 10.30am.

Weekday Masses for this week: Monday to Friday 8am and 10am. Saturday 10am.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Monday to Friday 9am to 10pm

Closing Time of the Church: Holy Rosary is closed at 5pm.

Anniversaries: John O'Donovan, Thomas Deady, Ted Murphy, William Hennessy, Derek Lehane, Eileen Ronayne (nee Barry).

The Pope's Intentions for January 2024: *For the Gift of Diversity in the Church:* We pray that the Holy Spirit may help us to recognise the gift of different charisms within the Christian community and to discover the richness of different traditions and rituals in the Catholic Church.

Details regarding donations for the upkeep and running of the parish – if you wish to donate using standing order, please contact the parish office for the relevant details.

Feast Days: Monday, 15th January, *St. Ita*, was born in Co. Waterford of noble and Christian parents. Early on she set her mind on serving Christ in religious life. She founded a monastery in Killeedy, Co. Limerick, which attracted a great variety of young people. She was given the title 'foster-mother of the saints of Ireland'. She died in 570. Wednesday, 17th January, *St. Antony*, died in 356. 'Father of monasticism', he lived a life of solitude but also attracted many others to form communities of hermits.

Quote for the Week: *"It is my prayer at the start of the New Year that the rapid development of forms of artificial intelligence will not increase cases of inequality and injustice all too present in today's world, but will help put an end to wars and conflicts, and alleviate many forms of suffering that afflict our human family."* – Pope Francis

Lectio Divina: Lectio Divina re-commences this Wednesday night, 17th January in the Parish Office @ 7.30pm.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
(from the Liturgical Calendar 2024, p.45)

"You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27)

The theme for 2024 is based on a text from the Gospel of St. Luke, with material prepared by an ecumenical team from Burkina Faso, facilitated by the local Chemin Neuf Community, whose members have a special commitment to Christian unity.

Burkina Faso, in the Sabel region of West Africa, is a country of 22 million people, with a Christian population of 26 per cent. Its political and social situation is unstable, with many threats to peace and social cohesion. The theme, leading to the parable of the Good Samaritan, and the material prepared during such a precarious period in the country's history helps us to recognise that the love of Christ unites all Christians and is stronger than their divisions.

Material for the week is jointly published by the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity (www.christianunity.va) and the Commission on Faith and Order of the Council of Churches. These source texts have been further adopted and added to by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and are available in English and Irish at <https://ctbi.org.uk/>. The prayers and material written for the Week may also be used throughout the year."

The week begins on Thursday 18th January and finishes on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

As 2024 progresses and we encounter the different elements of the liturgical year as we move forward, we need to remind ourselves also of things that we have been asked to keep in our prayers – one in particular is the continuation of the Year of Prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood in Ireland which began on Vocations Sunday last year. It can be very easy to let it slip out of the mind as other things come to the fore.

The continuing fall in active numbers of priests in the country highlights the need to pray and ask that those whom the Lord is calling will hear him through the noise of the world around us. We hope that the year will bear fruit and if it does over time instead of experiencing the number of active priests falling, we may see them begin to rise again. Will that happen? Will the world we live in arrive at a point where the faith will begin to take root again in the hearts, minds and souls of people who have let the faith slip away.

Another area that we need to remember in our prayers is the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC). Since the new one has come into being it has been looking at a few areas that we need to explore. The nature of the PPC is to look to where we would like to see development happening in the pastoral, faith life of the parish community. Different topics and ideas have been discussed and as we begin 2024 we hope to draw on some of that discussion and take the next step of looking at what we need to tackle and the best way of tackling the areas that are deemed necessary to deal with.

As we enter that stage of the PPC's work it could be quite possible that there would be sub-committees set up to look at particular topics. These committees would be formed of PPC members and parishioners who may have an interest in the topics that are to be looked at. So, keep the prayers up for the group and ask the Spirit to guide us. One other thing I would add to our thoughts in relation to the PPC and its work is that it is an example of what Pope Francis calls synodality. It is reflection, discussion and, in time, action in relation to the needs of the parish as a whole.

NEW COLLECTION SYSTEM

Envelopes are now available for our new collection system.

The system works as follows:

You are asked to take a box of envelopes all of which have the same number, for example number 102. There are two envelopes for each Sunday, corresponding to the two collections we have already. The first is for the running expenses of the parish, and the second for the development fund, which will go mainly to specific projects such as running our new parish centre, a new lighting and alarm system in the church as well as providing various courses for people. On certain Sundays the second collection will go to Diocesan special collections.

You will be asked to fill in your name and address on a card which you place in the first envelope and your envelope number will be recorded against that name and address and kept confidential.

Each week your envelope will be opened by a team of counters and the amount will be recorded against the number, such as 102 as mentioned above,. The counters will not know who each number belongs to.

At the end of the year, if your total amounts to €250 or over, the parish will send you a form to sign, in which you must include your PPS number, and we can then claim back the tax at no cost to you. This information will be kept confidential to a small number of people.

You can also pay by standing order every so often, or by cheque once a year, but we must have a record of who you are to claim back the tax.

Please do sign up for this system next year, it will be a great help to the parish at no cost to you. So to be clear:

- **You will not pay any more tax than you have already paid**
- If your donations amount to €250 or more and you are a taxpayer, the parish can get back around 45% of the amount you have given at no cost to you. For example if you give €5 a week that comes to €260 in a year and the parish can get €117 refund from the revenue. €300 would give us €135 and so on. **You cannot claim this money back for yourself, only the parish as a registered charity can get it.**
- If you prefer to donate by cheque or standing order please contact the parish accounts department at midletonparishacs@gmail.com or ring the parish office at 021 4636508 and we will send you the necessary details.
- You can also donate to the parish online through the diocesan website at www.cloynediocese.ie or by continuing to put your offering in the collection basket, but we can't claim the tax in these situations as we will have no record of who donated what.

HOW TO SIGN UP FOR THE NEW SYSTEM

1 TAKE A BOX OF ENVELOPES

2. FILL IN YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE CARD YOU WILL FIND IN THE BOX AND INCLUDE IT IN THE FIRST ENVELOPE MARKED JANUARY 7TH

3. PLACE YOUR WEEKLY DONATION IN THE ENVELOPES PROVIDED AND PUT THEM IN THE COLLECTIONS DURING MASS. THE AMOUNT WILL BE RECORDED EVERY WEEK AGAINST YOUR ENVELOPE NUMBER.

4. LATER IN THE YEAR THE PARISH WILL CONTACT YOU WITH A FORM TO FILL IN YOUR PPS NUMBER AND SIGN. THIS WILL ALLOW THE PARISH TO CLAIM THE TAX REFUND AT NO COST TO YOU.

5 IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO BE AT MASS ON ANY GIVEN WEEKEND YOU CAN BRING THE ENVELOPES FOR THAT WEEK THE NEXT TIME YOU ARE AT MASS, OR ASK SOMEONE ELSE TO BRING THEM FOR YOU.

THIS SYSTEM IS USED BY MANY PARISHES AROUND THE DIOCESE AND AROUND THE COUNTRY AND HAS PROVED VERY WORTHWHILE. WE THANK YOU VERY SINCERELY FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH.