

3rd Sunday of Advent



Mass Times

Monday-Friday

7.30am, 8.30am,
10.15am, & 4pm

SATURDAY

8.30am, 10.15am

Mass for the Sick

3.00pm

SUNDAY

9.00am, 11.15am

& 7.30pm

CONFESSIONS

MONDAY & FRIDAY

10.45am-12 Noon

3.00pm-4.00pm

SATURDAY

10.45am-12noon

2.30pm-4pm



St. Augustine's Church Child Safeguarding Representatives.

Fr. Flor O'Callaghan O.S.A.

Fr. John Lyng O.S.A.

Ms Geraldine van Dam

Mr. Robert Ryan

Ms Charlotte Gleeson

Mr. John Doyle



St. Augustine's Church Limerick 3rd Sunday of Advent 17th December 2023

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Christmas Putting Shape on Life

I was often in Butts Green and never knew what the name meant. Worse, I never wondered. But even the culpably incurious can stumble on an answer to the unasked question. I lately heard that the Butts was the place to practise your archery, to fire your arrows at leisure so that you'll make a mark on the day you must do it in anger. An important place:

The Archer was extremely important to the war lords of the Middle Ages..... Archery was not just a sport. Lower Class men were required to practise archery by law ... training at the Butts was important to the Medieval archer. (Medieval Life and Times).

So, to a story I read long ago: The son of the local prince was held in dangerously low esteem by his father. All because he was near enough the world's worst archer. With his crossbow he'd more likely hit the corner flag than the cross-bar. This worried him, as well it might, since the parent was volatile and often violent. One day the young man, with attendants, was out riding and passed by a mud mound or wall or bund—we now know it was the local butts—and noticed several round targets drawn in charcoal thereon. But, here's the thing: in each circle, dead centre, an arrow was embedded. This stirred again the princeling's unease at his own incompetence as well as admiration for the unknown marksman, or perhaps markswoman. He wondered if this paragon of precision could transmit the skill. He might even take him on as his personal tutor and all would change. Local peasants were ordered to find and bring the sharpshooter. He came—an unimpressive, even shifty, youth unaccustomed to audience with the great. The young royal questioned him: was he the one who fired the arrows? He was. Could he teach someone else how to do it? He could. Come with us! He came. At the palace he was led to the royal butts where his interrogation by the young prince resumed. Soon the secret of his impeccably accurate archery was laid bare: "I fire the arrow first and draw the target afterwards."

People try to put shape on their doings and their lives. For us, Christmas is the way to do so.

Happy? The angels sing good news.

Hard up? Mary and Joseph in sub-standard accommodation.

Bad timing and bad luck? Baby born away from home in middle of a hard journey.

Danger? Herod showing interest.

Kindness of strangers? Unknown visitors turning up with gifts.

Fear? Ran away to a foreign country.

Hope? "Blessed is she who believed the promises made by the Lord would be fulfilled".

All human life and hope is there, rolled up in a little child, just as today. God too, just as today.



J.L.



Christmas at St. Augustine's

Christmas Eve

Sunday , 24th December,
9.00am, & 11.15am
Christmas Family Mass 5.00pm
Christmas Mass 8.00pm

Christmas Day

Monday, 25th December
Masses 9.00am, 11.15am.
No evening Mass

St. Stephen's Day

Tuesday 26th December
Masses 10.15am & 4.00pm


Confessions:

Monday 18th -Wed 20th
10.45am -12 noon
& 3.00pm-4.00pm
Thursday 21st-Sat 23rd
10.00am -4.00pm



Christmastide: - A Time of Pondering Mysteries!

The Bethlehem Nativity scene still dominates our thoughts. Strange, but the four Gospels do not tell us any word spoken in the crib. Silence all round. Yet we are told that Mary pondered all things and treasured them in her heart. So much had happened and during these days before Christmas this is a good time to do, as Mary did: ponder. We will never get our head around the mysteries that happened - we don't have to; but there is wonderful prayer in pondering, wondering, being amazed, and lost for words. Mary's journey to Bethlehem, King David's birth place, the wonder of the birth of the Infant Lord, the singing of the angel choir, the sudden arrival of the shepherds with their tale, the coming of the Magi, the three Wise Men from the far away East with their gifts, the message about king Herod's plotting to kill, the quick flight into Egypt - what memories Mary must have had - what did she make of it all? **She pondered.** That is the invitation to all of us—**Spend time pondering. That is prayer at its best.**



Christmas Healing Mission

Redemptorist Church
18th -22nd December
10.00am & 7.15pm

Led by the Redemptorist Community

Advent at the Abbey A Season of Opportunities

The Glenstal Advent Talks continue this Sunday 17th at 4.30pm in the Abbey Library.

Fr. Simon Sleeman will conclude the series with his reflection 'Advent: *The Call Room for Christmas*'.

The talks will be followed by refreshments and the opportunity to attend sung Evening Prayer in the Abbey Church at 6pm. The talks are available afterwards from the website as recordings. Donation €20
Call 061 621005 Bookings- Email events@glenstal.com

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

In the words of John's Gospel, John the Baptist came as a witness, to speak for the light, the true light who was coming into the world. In this season of Advent, the Baptist points us towards the coming one and he invites us to reflect on our need of the light of Jesus in the darkness of our lives. Darkness means many things: a sense of being lost, a lack of direction, helplessness, sin or indeed lack of faith. This Christmas, may the God who said "Let light shine out of darkness," shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Prayer: We come before you in the darkness of our lives, aware of our need of Christ, the light of the world. Let us receive him in faith so that we may become witnesses to that light which has truly come into the world.

Source: www.tarsus.ie/Sunday_readings



Limerick Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes



The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage is back in its full capacity for 2024, bringing a full team of workers and assisted pilgrims. If you know someone (family member, neighbour, friend etc) who would like to travel as part of our assisted pilgrim section please let them know. Christmas may even be an opportunity for people to give a gift of a trip to Lourdes to a family member. Further information available from Limerick Diocesan Office on 061-350000.