

4th Sunday of Advent



GOD WITH US

Divinity in the straw
Advent longings
fulfilled.
Love made human
in a stable.
Circle of adoration.
A homeless couple
shaping history.
Memories clutching
at the heart.
Prodigals coming
home
Emmanuel,
God with us
in our wonder child,
In the angels' song,
in hungry hearts
Divinity in the straw



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 4th Sunday of Advent 22nd December 2024

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Longing for Light

This year's event is tomorrow as I write and will be yesterday as you read. At this time every year people leave well-lit and well-heated houses at ungodly hours to go to cold, dark and often wet Newgrange in the valley of the Boyne. It's the winter solstice. They hope cloud will clear and the rising sun will show them a beam of light come through the roof-box and extend through the burial chamber bequeathed to us by our Stone-Age ancestors. Access to the chamber is reserved for winners of an October lottery. Losers are welcome to stand outside. Often enough they see nothing and feel only cold. The Board of Works with admirable honesty says *the event is entirely weather-dependent*. At a rare best there will be seventeen minutes illumination in the 5200 year old man-made cave. There's a lot of watching and waiting involved.

Hear, courtesy of the Irish Independent, some of the visitors and ticket holders of a recent year speak: *A rather chilled professor from the university of Sydney said "the first time we saw it, it was a very emotional experience, it is a cultural confirmation of a culture so old." Outside, incense burned as some watchers saluted the rising sun. A 49 year old healer and member of Pathway of the Heart heralded the first ray of sun by blowing on an instrument made from a bull's and ram's horn. He was part of a large group of New Age and Pagan celebrants who formed human circles holding hands at the base of the monument. "It's difficult to feel in any way negative about anything right now" he told our reporter. A cabinet minister, who was dashing off to see his son in a nativity play "- nice bit of culture-blending, or simple each-way betting there - said "it was a real privilege and a once in a lifetime experience." A thirty-three year old Dubliner claimed no high spiritual motivation, saying it was curiosity that brought her as much as anything else...."Every other evening this week has been spent at Christmas parties and this was one way to make sure we went to bed early last night."*

People have always looked to light as the abode of what is good and free. So even in the modern world, where day or night you'd be hard-pressed to find a dark corner in town or country, they still head for places like Newgrange in a half-understood attempt to experience a bit of liberation.

John's gospel of Christmas Day proposes a different light-source: "The Word is the true light And he was coming into the world."

Pope Francis says the Church is a field-hospital. He'd probably agree also that the world is a waiting-room. Current public discourse suggests that hospital and waiting are synonymous. By nature and necessity we're all waiters and so Advent is the season which reflects what we are. Our lives are a long Advent and our goal is an eternal Christmas. Even the rich must wait. That we wait is unavoidable: How we wait is partly up to ourselves. If, as our liturgy opines, *we wait in joyful hope*, we are truly blessed.

Happy Christmas. JL.



Fourth Week of Advent Meditation



The angel Gabriel said to Mary, "Do not fear, Mary, you shall conceive and bear a son and give him the name Jesus. Great will be his dignity and he will be called Son of the Most High..." Lk. 1

O Jesus, I believe you were born of Mary and are God's Son. Your mysterious coming is beyond understanding. Yet like your holy mother, Mary, I wish that you come to me, for you promised you will. Let me serve you in any way I can and know that you are with me day by day as my life goes by. Like Mary, your mother, though I know you only by faith, may my whole being proclaim your greatness and my spirit rejoice in your favour to me. O Wisdom, holy Word of God, Jesus Christ, holding all things in your strong yet tender hands, come and show us the way to salvation.



Christmas Mass Times at St. Augustine's

Christmas Eve

Tuesday 24th December,
Masses: 7.30a.m. , 8.30a.m. & 10.15a.m.
Christmas Family Mass 5.00pm
Christmas Eve Mass 8.00p.m.

Christmas Day

Wednesday, 25th December
Masses: 9.00a.m. & 11.15a.m.

No evening Mass

St. Stephen's Day

Thursday 26th December
Masses: 10.15a.m. & 4.00p.m.



Confessions

Friday 20th & Saturday 21st
Monday 23rd & Tuesday 24th
10.00am - 4.00pm

We invite you to take one of our 2025
New Year Calendars as you leave.



Online Bereavement Information Evening

Anam Cara - supporting parents
after bereavement, are hosting their first
Online Bereavement Information Evening
of 2025 on **Tuesday 7th of January 2025.**

This online talk is for bereaved parents only.

Details of this **ONLINE** event

Date: Tuesday 7th of January 2025

Time: 7pm - 8:30pm

Guest Speaker: Níamh Finucane

www.anamcara.ie /085 288 88 88

Poster on the notice board at the back of the church



Civic Carol Service by Candlelight

at St. Mary's Cathedral
Sunday 22nd December at 7.00pm



Carols by Candlelight at Knock Basilica

Join us for an evening of Christmas carols
and festive favourites in the candlelit
surroundings of Knock Basilica on Sunday,
December 22nd at 8pm.

This event is free of charge and will also
be streamed live on our [website](http://www.knockshrine.ie) at
www.knockshrine.ie/watch-live



Thank You

*The Augustinian Community would like to thank you for all your support
and prayers throughout the year. We wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas
and with every blessing on the New Holy Year 2025.
May God continue to bless us as we journey on together.*

