



# Mount Merrion PARISH NEWS

*Church of St. Thérèse, Mount Merrion*

December  
2017



## PARISH CONTACTS

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helps out with weekend Masses

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## PARISH OFFICE

Open Mon. to Fri. — 9am-11.30am

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parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie

**PARISH WEBSITE**  
[www.mountmerrionparish.ie](http://www.mountmerrionparish.ie)



Find us on Facebook

## WHAT ABOUT US?

**A**ll across our world today, we witness much strife, violence and conflict. There is also uncertainty; some created by Brexit, and other by global issues that seem far away and yet impact us. Jesus was born into such a world in his own time. His own life was threatened when he was a child and his parents moved quickly to protect him. Rather than give in to despair, Jesus brought words of good news, quickly followed by action, that demonstrated the uniqueness of each person especially highlighting the dignity of the poor. In his life, he exemplified, love, forgiveness, non-judgement and hope. These Christian values are timeless and needed more than ever today. As Jesus left the earth he said he would never leave us, but indicated that more or less it's up to us now!



As I write this piece I am conscious that young adult mental health is an important issue across our country today. Many young adults feel lost in the world I described above. They need to be listened to. They need to feel understood. They need patience and time. As each of us is unique, therefore each of us has our own way of approaching life, and its challenges. It can be frustrating for loved ones who can feel at a loss as to how to respond. Just be there.

To anyone who struggles and who feels alone look for help. Often to look for help is a sign of strength and not of weakness. I finish with words in a poem called, **Yes, We can Talk**, by Mark Nepo:

*Having loved enough and lost enough,  
I am no longer searching,  
Just opening.  
No longer trying to make sense of pain  
But trying to be a soft and sturdy home  
In which real things can land*

I wish you and all your loved ones peace and happiness this Christmas.

**Fr. Tony**

# Hello!

A warm welcome to our Christmas Parish News.

And a very special welcome to you if you are new to our faith community!

At the moment we are journeying through the Season of Advent, with our spirits lifting as we make our way towards Christmas and all the hope it offers to each one of us.

Our Parish has been very busy since our Summer issue last May. Highlights included the **INSTALLATION OF OUR JUBILEE WALL HANGING** in late July, our **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** in September, at which we elected the members of our new Parish Pastoral Council for 2017-2020; making our **HANDPRINTS BANNER**, marking the beginning of our preparation for the World Meeting of Families and the usual **ENROLMENT CEREMONIES** for those making their First Holy Communion and Confirmation in 2018.

Remember our Parish Website and Outside Notice Board keep us updated on all Parish events as they are about to happen.

Wishing everyone a **HAPPY CHRISTMAS** and **EVERY BLESSING IN 2018.**

The Editorial Team

## MOUNT MERRION PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL UPDATE



### PARISH AGM

The Parish AGM took place on 26th September 2017. An overview of the events during the term (2014-2017) of the outgoing Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) was presented by Fr Tony and the outgoing members were thanked for their commitment and dedication. Fr Brian Grogan SJ discussed the discernment meetings, which he had facilitated, towards the formation of our new Parish Pastoral Council 2017-2020. Resulting from this process, the matters agreed at the Parish AGM, and the co-options from the previous council, the new members of the PPC for 2017-2020 are;

*John Barry, Fr. Tony Coote (President), Jennifer Kelly,*

*Martina McNamara, Alec Moore, Conor O'Doherty,*

*Kathleen [Kay] O'Donnell, Susanne O'Reilly,*

*Clodagh O'Reilly-Boyles, Audrey O'Sullivan (Chairperson)*



**Mount Merrion Parish Pastoral Council 2017-2020**

*Back row left to right: John Barry, Alec Moore, Conor O'Doherty, Jennifer Kelly, Audrey O'Sullivan (Chairperson), Fr. Tony Coote, Clodagh O'Reilly-Boyles.*

*Front Row: Susanne O'Reilly, Kay O'Donnell and Martina McNamara.*

### NEW PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The newly formed Council held the first meeting of its three-year term on 7th November 2017 and will hold its second on 5th December as this article goes to print. The new Council is very excited about participating with the parish and working to promote faith, spirituality and prayer in our parish in the coming months.

### THE THEME OF THE FAMILY AND VISIT OF POPE FRANCIS

At its first meeting, the Council focused on the theme of 'The Family' and what that means for us. We are all part of the human family, connected to each other by our humanity and we know that Family today takes many shapes and forms. The Council plans to run a number of events during 2018 in which we can all participate as part of the God's Christian Family, to help us grow in faith and greater understanding and appreciation of our diversity and difference. The Council is also beginning to plan with regard to the likelihood of the Pope visiting Ireland for the **World Meeting of Families** in August 2018.

The Parish Pastoral Council welcomes your questions, ideas, suggestions and/or observations via envelope left into the Parish Office or at [parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie](mailto:parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie) or Tel: 288 1271.



# Parish Seasonal Gatherings

1

**We are Family**  
and ALL are WELCOME!

Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 November  
After the Vigil and Sunday Morning Masses

2

**Advent Christmas Reflections**  
Fr. Michael Screene, MSC

Thursdays – November 23 & 30  
December 7 @ 11.00am-12.30pm

3

**Mark My Words**  
Dr. Kieran O'Mahony, OSC  
Diocesan Biblical Studies Co-ordinator

Tuesdays – November 21 & 28  
December 5 & 12 @ 7.30pm

4

**Moments of Stillness**  
Caroline Keogh, Parish Catechist

Tuesdays – November 28  
December 5 & 12 @ 10.45am

5

**Advent Wreath-Making**  
Parish Floral Art Group

Sunday 3 December – First Sunday of Advent  
10.45am & 12 Noon

6

**Journeying to Christmas in Song**

Sunday 10 December –  
Second Sunday of Advent at 4.30pm

This Autumn we ran a beautiful seasonal program guiding us gently towards Advent and Christmas with scripture, reflections, opportunities for stillness and song alongside all the joy and laughter of the 'hand-painting' parish family.

## ADVENT IN THE PARISH

### Wreath Making



## FAITH SPACE

Check out the Faith Space in the Church and watch it evolve over the four Sundays of Advent.

BY ORDER OF THE EMPEROR  
HOUSE OF DAVID

**CENSUS**

Localities	Males
Nazareth	100
Capernaum	17
Bethsaida	130
Cana	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>
Total for whole of Galilee	64,127
Total for other countries	773
<b>Total Jewish population</b>	<b>64,900</b>

The sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young.

PREPARING  
FOR A  
BABY

The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps





# WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES: DUBLIN 21-26 AUGUST 2018



## LOVE IN THE FAMILY – GOOD NEWS FOR TODAY’S WORLD!!

Every three years the Church brings together the largest international gathering of families in the world. Ireland will have the joy of hosting the next World Meeting of Families, on behalf of Pope Francis, from the 21 to 26 August, 2018! As a nation we will be playing host to thousands of families and pilgrims from all around the globe at one of the largest events of the year. BE A PART! BE THERE!

The **PROGRAMME** will be as follows:

### PREPARATION:

A period of preparation, reflection and catechesis. The *'AMORIS: Let's talk family! Let's be Family!'* Programme has been prepared by the Church in Ireland for use by families, communities and parishes in Ireland and across the world [www.amoris.ie](http://www.amoris.ie)

### NATIONAL OPENING

**Tuesday 21 August 2018** Opening events will take place in each diocese throughout the country.

### 3 DAY CONGRESS

**Wednesday – Friday, 22-24 August 2018.** This will take place in the RDS and will include a programme for ADULTS of keynote speakers, workshops, talks, testimonies and discussions. There will also be an engaging and exciting programme for YOUNG PEOPLE as well as fun activities for CHILDREN. The Congress will also include daily celebration of the Eucharist, prayerful activities, exhibitions, cultural events and music performances.

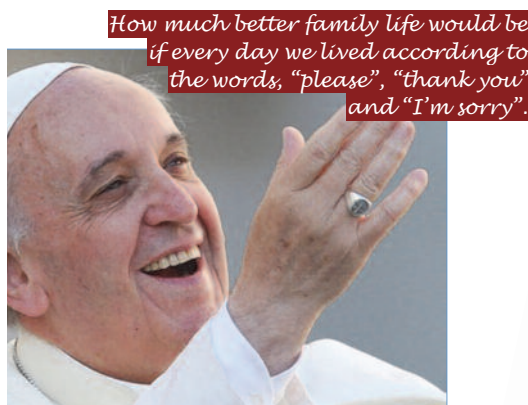
### FESTIVAL OF FAMILIES

**Saturday 25 August.** This will be a special concert style event within a prayerful and joyful atmosphere, in which personal stories of faith will be shared by families from many continents.

### FINAL MASS

**Sunday 26th August** will gather thousands of people from Ireland and all over the world. The main celebrant for the final Mass will be Pope Francis, should he be able to attend. Venue: To be advised subject to Pope Francis' attendance.

ALL EVENTS WILL REQUIRE A TICKET FOR ENTRY. SOME EVENTS ARE FREE WHILE SOME ARE SUBJECT TO A FEE. HOWEVER, TICKETS ARE NEEDED FOR ALL EVENTS. Registration is now open for the Congress from 22-24 August (to include the possibility of booking free tickets for the Festival of Families and the Final Mass).



*Why not  
volunteer to host  
a family or help  
out at an event.*



Keep an eye out for updated leaflets at our church doors and on line at [www.worldmeeting2018.ie](http://www.worldmeeting2018.ie)





## WE ARE FAMILY & ALL ARE WELCOME!

**W**hoever you are and wherever you find yourself you are welcome to join the Mount Merrion parish family at any or all of the events which will be scheduled during 2018. We understand family in its richness, complexity, diversity, sorrows, joys and laughter. We, like you, understand family insofar as we each live it daily. We hope that we broaden and deepen our understanding as we journey towards the World Meeting of Families, Dublin, 2018. In this edition of Parish News, in particular, we rejoice and celebrate all things family! Enjoy!

### “WE ARE FAMILY” HANDPRINTS

**O**n Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th November, people arrived to put their hand print on a (very) long canvas which will shortly be hanging from the Bell Tower of the Church.

Parishioners of all ages made their way to the Community Centre, where they rolled up their sleeves and dipped their hands in a multitude of coloured paints. The result – a vibrant portrayal and a creative celebration of family in our Parish.

Look out for it hanging from the Bell Tower!!



### THE STORY OF OUR PARISH LOGO

As part of the preparations for the World Meeting of Families, we also decided to create a banner emphasising joy and inclusivity: the “nuclear” family is no longer the only type! At the lower edge, a group of people of varying colour, age and ability stretch forward and outwards while remaining linked to a spiral representing the Eternal Trinity. The logo will be used on all communications related to the World Meeting of Families. Check out the new logo flags fluttering outside the church and see photos page 6 & 7 as we join together creatively as one parish family!



### Supporting Good Communication within the Family

**O**ur recent talk from guest speaker David Coleman (*see poster*) was very well attended.

Approximately 350 people gathered to brush up their communication skills within their family, with many deeming the evening ‘helpful’ and ‘very practical’. The evening was rounded off with a cuppa and a chat in the Gathering Area at the back of the church.

As part of Mount Merrion, Kilmacud and Clonsilla parishes, Supporting Families and our Schools, this year we warmly welcome David Coleman to speak on the topic.

**"Effective Communication with Children and Teenagers"**

**9 Thursday November 7.30pm**

**DAVID COLEMAN**  
Clinical Psychologist,  
TV and Radio Broadcaster,  
Author and Columnist

David gives lectures and workshops to groups all around the country on topics ranging from parenting to communication. Speaking in person to thousands over the last five years, David enjoys the engagement with a live audience and his entertaining style is always acknowledged.

**Church of St. Thérèse,  
Mount Merrion,  
Blackrock,  
Co. Dublin.**

Cost: €5 (to be paid at the door)  
Website: [www.mountmerrionparish.ie](http://www.mountmerrionparish.ie)  
For further information please  
Call: 01 286 1271







# MAKING OUR MARK





# DID YOU MAKE YOURS?





# MOUNT MERRION PARISH SUPPORTING FAMILIES

## FAMILY MASS GROUP



**T**here is a large number of young families in our parish and we always welcome those who want to join us. We meet to arrange the liturgy and regularly look for children to read (lots of prayers – from short ones to longer ones!), carry the gifts to the altar and take part in our special liturgies throughout the year. Our choir has over 100 members now, aged 4 to 17. Over the past few years, we have taken part in choral festivals in Kilkenny, Limerick and Cork, coming 2nd and 3rd in the under 25's category in the International Cork Choral Competition in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Other events have included carol singing for the Irish Guide Dogs, the 60th Anniversary Concert for our church, and the Television Mass on RTÉ on Christmas Day in 2010. If you'd like to get involved on a regular basis or every now and again, we'd love to hear from you.

## MOUNT MERRION PARISH VISITORS

**T**he Mount Merrion visitors offer a regular visit from a friend from the Parish for those who are housebound, sick or living alone. We would like to hear from people who might have a family member, or someone they know, who would welcome a visit from one of our volunteers.



## BAPTISM TEAM



Members of the Baptism Team

**I**n our Parish we are fortunate to have a Baptism Team, who work alongside the priest, to prepare the family and their child(ren) for the Sacrament of Baptism. Baptisms are held, normally, on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month.

It is a community focused sacrament in which up to four families can be involved and is celebrated around the baptismal font at the entrance to the Church.

Before the Baptism takes place a member of the Baptism Team will call out to you, at home, to meet with you. We look forward to celebrating your child's Baptism.

Every year we invite back those who were baptised in the previous year to one of the Family Masses in January. With over 100 Baptisms every year now – it can be a big celebration! The next Baptism Mass is on **21 January at 11.15am**.

## HOSPITALITY – ALL WELCOME!



Call over to the Community Centre for a cup of tea and a chat on the third Sunday of the month after morning masses.

## YOUTH MASS GROUP



**T**his group provides music, readings etc at Sunday 7.30pm Mass and other parish occasions. It also organises fundraising events and social meet-ups for its members throughout the year. The group runs from early September through to the beginning of June and always welcomes new members aged 16+ (i.e Transition Year) to join. Many members can fulfil their "community involvement" requirement for programmes including the Gaisce President's Award. The Group Co-ordinators are Conor O'Doherty and Marita Staunton.

Any queries? Contact the Parish Office: T: 288 1271 or E: [parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie](mailto:parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie)



# A YEAR IN THE FAITH SPACE

It's hard to believe that it is almost a year since we began our 2016 Advent Journey, led by the Star, to Bethlehem. Yet, here we are again, this time focusing on the preparations of Joseph and Mary for the birth of Jesus. We hope that it will have relevance to all of us, specially as our journey towards the World Meeting.

In the past year, as usual, we have been guided by the seasons, liturgical and temporal, for many of the installations. We began after Christmas with the theme of Hope, pinning up positive quotations among images of new flowering shoots, and we asked



**November – Remembering our Loved Ones**



**Lent**

parishioners to pin up THEIR heartfelt hopes for the New Year. Many people hoped for peace.

For Lent, we adopted and adapted the theme of Operation Transformation, our emphasis being on improving our spiritual fitness!

Over the Easter season, we used images of a Pilgrim People, the Eucharist, the Holy Spirit, and the Trinity.

We “rested” in the summer, then, this being the year of the new Parish Council election, we posed the question: What is Parish to You? Various options, such as Serving, Welcome and Dialogue were fixed to mirrors, suggesting we can all look at how some of these might be meaningful for ourselves.

In the autumn, we simply said “Thank You” to God.

November, the season of remembrance, brought the return of the Circle of Life, when parishioners were invited to tie a



**Easter**



**Advent 2016**



**Parish Pastoral Council Discernment**

ribbon to the Circle in memory of a loved one. By the end of the month, it was festooned with a multitude of coloured knots!

Throughout the year we meet regularly to discuss and plan the Faith Space (with, we hope, the guidance of the Holy Spirit!), trying to make the

reflections presented relevant and contemporary.

Our aim is “provocation, not decoration”, so we hope that it may sometimes make you pause and wonder.....please let us know what you think.

**The Faith Space Team**

# While in Ireland



Coming to Ireland, I was filled with joy but not without some anxiety and fear of uncertainty. However, relief came when I got a placement in Mount Merrion Parish, to also serve in Kilmacud and Clonskeagh Parishes. Thanks to Archbishop Diarmuid Martin.

I must say that the way I was able to integrate into the parish was smooth, quick and easy. This wouldn't have been possible if not for the open-mindedness and support of the Parish Priest, Fr. Tony Coote, Frs. Paddy, Brian and Conleth. Also, the warm reception I got from the parishioners was helpful. Thanks to you all.

I have not only come to Ireland for studies, I have also come to learn about and experience the land and people of the missionaries who brought the catholic faith to South-Western Nigeria where I am from. Many thanks to the Fathers of the Society of African Missions (SMA), Irish Province whose missionary endeavours produced the likes of me.

It was a great delight for me to have served in the parishes of Mount Merrion, Kilmacud and Clonskeagh for the past two years. I have been enriched through the pastoral administration of the parishes, people's appreciation of the Sacraments and the faith history of the people of Ireland.

Going back to Nigeria is filled with mixed feelings. I am happy to go home to my family and friends, but I am not so happy to leave the people of God in Ireland, whom I am getting used to already. It is not easy to say good bye, but it must be said. I thank everyone who has made my stay in Ireland worthwhile. I thank especially all the parishioners of the three parishes for allowing me to journey with them, teaching me few Irish words. Go raibh maith agat.

Fr. Clement Femi Olaniyan

## QUIET MOMENTS

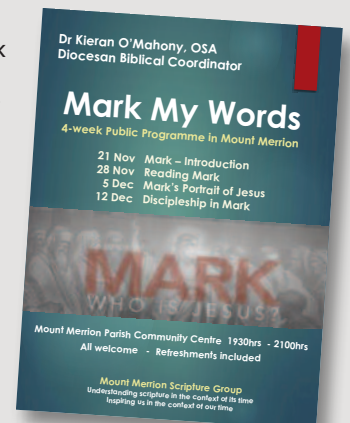


### A BREAK FROM THE BUSYNESS OF LIFE!

Run by the older outgoing members of the Sunday Evening Mass Group, two lovely evenings of Prayer, Reflections, Music and Song took place this Autumn: one honouring our Parish Patron, ST. THÉRÈSE and another during early November REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES WHO HAVE DIED [See photo]. Suitable for all ages, the next evening 'A MOMENT OF QUIET IN A VERY BUSY WEEK' will take place on **Thursday December 21st** from **7.15 pm to 8.00pm** and will include Music, Readings, Reflections and Song for the last week of Advent in preparation for Christmas. [Entrance through the side door of the church under the Bell Tower].

## EXPLORING OUR FAITH

Over the last 4 weeks a group has gathered to explore the Gospel of Mark (our Gospel for much of the new liturgical year which commenced at the start of Advent). Under the direction of Dr Kieran O'Mahony, OSA, Diocesan Biblical Co-ordinator, our interest was sparked further and our understanding deepened. Our parish Scripture Group will offer more opportunities for all of us, regardless of where we find ourselves in life, to begin or to continue to nourish our faith in 2018. Keep an eye on the weekly newsletter and on our website [mountmerrionparish.ie](http://mountmerrionparish.ie)



## JUST FOR FUN!



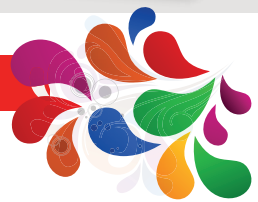
### Wordsearch

### Joy to the World

ADVENT  
ANGEL  
BETHLEHEM  
BIRTH  
BLESSINGS  
CAMELS  
FRANKINCENSE  
INFANT  
JESUS  
JOSEPH

MAGI  
MANGER  
MARY  
MIRACLE  
MYRRH  
NATIVITY  
REJOICE  
STABLE  
STAR  
THREE KINGS  
WISE MEN

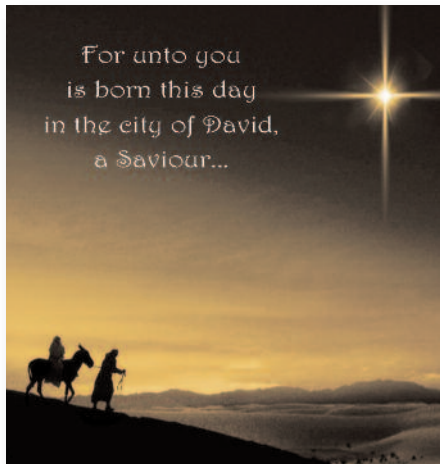
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E	H	S	C	M	G	A	J	A	J	S	N	H
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R	H	N	N	S	T	X	J	Z	N	A	T	S
I	A	R	E	J	O	I	C	E	M	R	S	J
M	B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	F	X	S





# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME



### CHRISTMAS EVE: SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER

**10am Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent**

**No 11.15am Mass**

**4pm: 'Happy Birthday Jesus'**

**6pm: Vigil Mass for Christmas**

**7.30pm: Youth Mass for Christmas**

**9.30pm: Christmas Carols (Senior Choir)**

**10pm: Mass for Christmas Night**

### CHRISTMAS DAY: MONDAY 25th DECEMBER

**10am: Morning Mass (Senior Choir)**

**11.15am: Family Mass for Christmas Day**

**No Evening Mass**

### ST. STEPHEN'S DAY: TUESDAY 26th DECEMBER

**10am: Morning Mass**

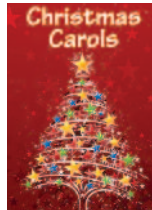
### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: MONDAY 18th DECEMBER 7.30pm:

Joint Kilmacud/Mount Merrion  
Communal Celebration in the  
Church of St. Thérèse, Mount Merrion

### INDIVIDUAL CONFESSIONS

**Christmas Eve:**

**10.30pm-12 noon & 1.30pm-2.30pm**



**Join the Youth Mass Group  
for Christmas Carols:**

**Saturday 23rd December  
at 4pm**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)** is the document written by Pope Francis after the Synod on the family. It is the central document to read in preparation for the World Meeting of Families in Ireland in August 2018. It addresses issues relating to family life today, relationships and the meaning of love. **Fr. Tony will facilitate three evenings, Tuesday 16, 23 and 30 January 2018.** The purpose of the meetings is to allow a free discussion of modern issues relating to marriage and indeed all our relationships. More details will follow in early January.



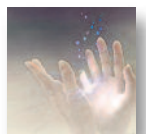
### LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

The parish will host an event on **Thursday 8 February at 7.30pm** for all those celebrating wedding anniversaries, recently married or engaged, partners and friends and anyone you love for an evening of music, poetry, re-commitment and refreshments. Please put it your diary now, and tell your friends.



### CEREMONY OF HEALING

This will take place on **Sunday 4 March at 3.30pm.** Healing is central to the ministry of Jesus and the church today. We invite everyone afflicted by illness of body, mind or spirit to come for a blessing with holy oils. Bring loved ones and let's make this a huge event for all the parish.



### MASS WITH THOSE BAPTISED IN THE PARISH DURING 2017:

**Sunday 21st January at 11.15am**

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CEREMONIES 2018



**MOUNT ANVILLE JUNIOR  
SCHOOL:**

**Saturday 28th April**

**SCOIL SAN TREASA:  
Saturday 19th May**

**OATLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL:  
Saturday 26th May**



**Friday 13th  
April at  
11.15am**

### NEXT DO THIS IN MEMORY MASS

(Preparation for First Holy Communicants and their families)

**SUNDAY 14th JANUARY – 11.15am**

# Celebrations, Comings and Goings...



## CONGRATULATIONS FR. CLEMENT!

As Fr. Clement prepares to take his leave of us, [See Page 10] we congratulate him on his recent graduation from the Pontifical University of Maynooth with a Masters in Pastoral Theology.



## WELCOME OUR NEW ALTAR SERVERS

During the Summer, ten new Altar Servers joined our Team.  
Above: Eight of them pictured with Fr. Jerry on their Induction Night.



## THANK YOU KEVIN!

After serving as Director of our Parish Senior Choir for two years, Kevin O'Regan has moved on to other opportunities.

Left: Fr. Tony makes a presentation to him on behalf of the parish.



## Thank You!

Many thanks to all who contributed to our Christmas Parish News and to our dedicated team of Parish Deliverers. As always we extend a warm welcome to you should you wish to volunteer and share your gifts within a parish group or if you have ideas to share.

**HAVE A GREAT CHRISTMAS AND  
EVERY BLESSING DURING 2018!**



Check out the Parish website: [www.mountmerrionparish.ie](http://www.mountmerrionparish.ie)

### MOUNT MERRION

#### WEEKEND MASSES:

SATURDAY 6.00pm

#### SUNDAYS

10.00am [Parish Choir]

11.15am [Family Mass]

7.30pm [Youth Group]

#### MON, WED, THURS, FRI & SAT:

10.00am

#### TUES: 10.00am

Liturgy of the Word Service  
with Holy Communion

### MASS TIMES

#### CLONSKEAGH

#### WEEKEND MASSES:

SATURDAY 6.30pm

#### SUNDAYS

10.00am and 11.30am

MON TO SAT: 10.00am

### KILMACUD

#### WEEKEND MASSES:

SATURDAY 6.00pm

#### SUNDAYS

10.00am and 11.30am

#### MON, TUES, WED, FRI & SAT:

10.00am

#### THURS: 10.00am

Liturgy of the Word Service  
with Holy Communion

Mount Merrion Parish Communications Team delivers Parish correspondence to all houses in the parish area unless otherwise advised. If you do not wish us to deliver programmes or newsletters please contact the Parish Secretary at 01 288 1271 or email: [parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie](mailto:parishoffice@mountmerrionparish.ie)