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Dunamaggan,
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Ireland
12 – 12 – 2014

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Dear Parishioner,

As we approach Christmas once again it is important that we realise why we celebrate and what it is that we are celebrating. We are celebrating a birthday – the Birth of Jesus. If Jesus had not been born then there would be no Christmas to celebrate. Part of our celebration of Christmas is of family celebrations. It is a time of welcome, of togetherness, of reunions, of good humour, etc. It is also a time for each of us to reflect upon our own lives and through the Sacrament of Reconciliation ensure that we have the right relationship with Our God and genuine self-love and acceptance.

Once again we are approaching the time of Christmas. I wish to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a very happy, peaceful, joyful, holy and enjoyable Christmas. I wish to express my gratitude and thanks for your great support during the past year. Each year new residents come to the Parish of Dunamaggan, you are all very welcome. It is hoped that you will integrate fully into the parish community and take an active part within the parish in whatever activity/activities attract you most. The parish facilities are for the service of the parish community. Thus **St. Eoghan’s Centre in Kilmoganny and St. Leonard’s Hall in Dunamaggan are for the use and benefit of the community.** You are very welcome to make use of them. I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to all groups who use these facilities for the respect they have shown to them, especially in ensuring that the facilities are clean and tidy after each function. I would like to thank John Kelly for his availability at all times and his work in ensuring that St. Eoghan’s Centre is not only available but prepared for each function which takes place. I wish to thank Noel McDonald for his care of St. Leonard’s Hall in Dunamaggan. The many volunteers within the parish who care for the Church and participate in the numerous parish activities which benefit the community are owed a great debt of gratitude. John Walsh’s dedication to maintaining the grounds of St. Leonard’s Church and other areas within the parish is a great example of parish commitment. Both John Walsh and Noel McDonald unselfishly give generously of their time to ensuring that the village of Dunamaggan is at all times attractive and litter free.

Your weekly support of the DKK Parish Lotto which supports the facilities in the villages of Kells, Dunamaggan and Kilmoganny as well as the G.A.A. ensures that these facilities are not a financial burden. The **DKK Lotto**, which is independent of parish finances, is a great example of community self helps and supports. I would like to express my thanks to the many ticket sellers and the lotto committee for their dedication and weekly commitment to the venture. It is hoped that you will continue to support then by purchasing the weekly DKK Lotto tickets in the future. Your support for the DKK LOTTO ensures that there is no charge for the uses of St. Eoghan’s Centre in Kilmoganny or St. Leonard’s Hall in Dunamaggan. The DKK Lotto also ensures that many worthwhile activities happen throughout the parish. Without your support for the Lotto this would not be possible.

New material is continually being unearthed for the **History of Dunamaggan Parish**. The process of compiling the material in its final edited form is much slower than anticipated. Part of this delay is due to promised material, which is relevant, not being submitted. At each of the over 70 meeting which have taken place to date something new is related at each meeting. Over 250 pages of material are now in typed format. A significant amount of additional material is in the process of being compiled for typing. The quickness with which material is submitted will determine the date of publication. **I would appeal to any of you who have relevant material, photographs, documents, old stories, recollections of past-times in former generations etc. to contact any member of the group compiling the material or come along to any of the monthly meetings.** Material from the past 50 years is required as the recording of recent events is of great value for future generations. The group is

very interested in any material which reflects the social history of the parish. The dates of meetings are published in the Parish Newsletter and in the Dunamaggan Notes in the Kilkenny People and on the DKK Parish website. You are very welcome to attend any meeting, even if you just want to listen.

Photograph's which are relevant to the material submitter are very relevant.

The Parish Pastoral Council would also welcome new members so if you have the desire (calling) or you know of someone who is suitable to serve on the Pastoral Council then contact any member of the Pastoral Council. The work load of members is not strenuous so why not volunteer and make a difference.

An increase in Vocations to the priesthood is important at this time. At present one man from the Diocese is due to be ordained to the priesthood next Summer. The number of priests who will reach retirement age within the next few years is in double figures. Regular ordinations to the Priesthood will ensure that Mass is celebrated in our Churches into the future. **Hence it is important that we not only pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life but actively encourage suitable family members and neighbours to consider such a vocation and also encourages young people to listen to the way God is calling them to live out their lives.** Hence an increase in vocations is important. If that call is of service in the priesthood or religious life then it is important that they are encouraged and supported to respond to the call. We are all called to live out our Christian commitment whatever our vocation. It is important that we recognise that whatever way God call us to serve in the Church and live in the world is for us our vocation and way of making Christ's Love alive where we live out our lives. **There is a variety of vocations, each one is necessary for the well being of the Church. Each vocation** (the way we are each called to live out our lives) **has equality but is different.**

Agreement has been reached with Dunamaggan G.A.A. Club re the sale of land behind the Council Yard in Kilmoganny for use as a Juvenile Field. (This was the request from Dunamaggan G.A.A. Club). The Diocesan Building & Properties Committee has agreed the sale. The finalising of legalities should be completed soon.

Wills: It is important that Wills should be made and updated when circumstances change. Such decisions make it much easier for family members to know and carry out the wishes of their loved ones. **It is important that due consideration is given when drawing up a Will to family members.** If it is the desire of the person making a Will to bequeath something to Charity then why not consider the Dunamaggan Parish or St. Joseph's Care Home for the Elderly in Kilmoganny or the L'Arche Community. Such donations would be very much appreciated.

Charitable Donations and Claiming a Tax Rebate: As and from January 1st 2013 there was a significant change in legislation re Tax Rebates. Since then ***it is only the Charity and not an individual who may claim a tax rebate on any donation in excess of €250 in a given year.*** This change could have significant benefits to the Parish of Dunamaggan as the Diocese and its parishes have charitable status. Thus any person, who donated €250 or more in any calendar year, if they sign the appropriate documentation, may allow the Parish to reclaim the tax deducted. This development could have a positive effect on parish finances.

The Changes from the Old System are as follows: (1) The Tax refund is from all donors regardless of tax status (PAYE or Self Assessed) will now go to the Charity in all cases at a blended rate of 31%. The refund claim will only be rejected if the donor has not paid sufficient tax or inaccurate details are given.

The way the refund is calculated is by this formula:

A donation of €1,000: $1,000 \times 100/69 = €1,449.27$ thus €449.27 is refunded to the Charity

A donation of €250: $250 \times 100/69 = €362.32$ thus €112.32 is refunded to the Charity

The Parish Finance Committee has discussed the matter and relevant documentation was circulated to homes during the past year. If your documented contributions to the Parish, the six Priests Collections and the envelope collection exceed €250 in a calendar year then if the signed documentation is returned to the Parish it will be entitled to reclaim the tax and benefit from it. Your cooperation would be very much appreciated.

Thanks to all who have returned the completed Forms. If you have mislaid the Form a new Form is attached at the end of this letter. Your co-operation in completing the Forms would be appreciated. Where it states on the Form the year of commencement enter **2013. The Forms are valid for 5 years.**

The six envelope collections for the clergy are for the upkeep of parish clergy in Dunamaggan and also contribute, where necessary, to the clergy in the diocese and to retired clergy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous support of all parish collections. In addition I am indebted to those who distributed parish envelopes and other material to the houses of the parish during the past year.

Envelopes may be handed in during the collections at weekend masses, to the presbytery or to Bob's the Shop in Kells.

First Fridays: If you or a member of your family or a neighbour would like that I call on First Fridays with Holy Communion then contact me at any time.

Visiting the Sick: If any member of your family is sick or housebound and would like me to visit them, please let me know.

Baptisms are celebrated, as far as possible, at a time which is suitable for the parents and family of the child. Please contact me at any time to arrange a suitable time for the celebration.

House Blessings and/or House Masses for special occasions are a deep rooted Irish tradition. If you wish for either during the coming year then contact me at your convenience.

Corpus Christi Procession will take place on **Sunday 7th June after 11.00 a.m. mass in Dunamaggan.**

Cemetery Masses are celebrated in **Kilmoganny on Friday 10th July; in Kilree on Wednesday 15th July and in Dunamaggan on Friday 17th July. All masses are at 8.00 p.m.**

The Annual Mass of Celebrating Family and Welcome will be celebrated at the **Grotto**. It will incorporate the **Mass of Healing**. It will be celebrated during the Ossory Pilgrimage to Lourdes on **Thursday 21st May 2014**. It will be followed by the usual picnic, sing-song and chat in the grounds of St. Leonard's Church. It takes place at **7.30 p.m.**

Additional Eucharistic Ministers, Readers and Choir Members are always required. If you are willing to engage in either of these ministries, you would be very welcome. If you are aware of others who are suitable for these ministries please encourage them.

Voluntary participation in activities in the Parish is deep rooted. It is your Parish; I hope that additional volunteers will come forward for these important ministries at weekend masses. I wish to thank very sincerely those who undertake these ministries of service in the Church and look forward to

others joining them in the near future. Please contact me or any member of the Parish Pastoral Council, if you are interested.

The Parish Website is www.dkk.ie

Dunnamaggin, Kells and Kilmoganny villages have a website. Its address is www.dkk.ie. It provides a very important link and source of information for all our parishioners, living here or that are now resident over-seas. It provides information like weekly news, parish newsletter, Clubs and Societies, Churches and Schools along with much more. If any club/society/group or individual would like to add information to the website simply contact James Rossiter on (056)7728836 or dunawebsite@gmail.com.

Dunnamaggin GAA Club: Dunnamaggin Hurling & Kilmoganny Football clubs along with a very popular Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/dunnamaggin.gaa>) also have a twitter account (@DunnamagginGAA). Please check out either to keep up to date with match scores and all the news in the club. The club also informs members by text message and Email of matches and other relevant events. New members are always very welcome.

Items for inclusion in the weekly Parish Newsletter should be ‘phoned, emailed or handed in to the presbytery not later than the previous **Friday night**. The parish newsletter is available in St. Leonard’s Church, Dunamaggin and in St. Eoghan’s Church, Kilmoganny at all week-end masses. Copies of the Newsletter are also available in **Bob’s the Shop in Kells**.

Items for inclusion in the Dunamaggin Notes in the Kilkenny People should now be ‘phoned, emailed or handed in **not later than Sunday evenings**. The Kilkenny People now has a new deadline.

The Celebration of Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus. **It is a celebration of Peace, Love Self-Acceptance, Joy, Acceptance of Each Other, Humility, Our Need for Others, Community etc.** We celebrate the event which is central to our faith. We celebrate God’s chosen way of communication His love for each one of us. Through Mary God, in Jesus, made Himself humanly present in our world. In the creation story **God saw all that he had made and indeed it was very good**. God sees the goodness in each of us. It is important that we recognise the positive and potential in ourselves and in others. Building on the positive it should be possible to accept and recognise any shortcomings we may have and to ask God for healing and peace within ourselves. The Commandments are summed up by the Commandments of Love: ***Loving God and Loving our neighbour as we love ourselves***. It is important that we do not forget the final two words ‘... love ourselves.’ **The sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is an opportunity** for each of us to have the right relationship and acceptance of ourselves, family & neighbours and God if it does not exist at present.

Christmas is also a time of home-coming. It is a time when family members are welcomed home. In our broader family of Parish and Church you are also very welcome. If for some reason or circumstance you have not been at week-end celebrations of the Eucharist (Mass) just remember you are always very welcome. **Christmas is a time for coming to the Home of Jesus. It is a Home which is always Open. Jesus is awaiting your visit in the Church. He is present in the Tabernacle.** Why not join the Parish Community in praying for each other (those alive and deceased) during the weekly celebration of Mass. Jesus said “***Let the little children come to me***” Christmas is a great opportunity to bring children to the Celebration of Mass in the Parish. Together in celebrating the Birth of Jesus let us endeavour to make his message of Peace, Love, Joy, Hope, Optimism, Acceptance, Happiness, Forgiveness and Love a reality in our lives and in the lives of those we meet.

The weekly celebration of the Eucharist (Mass) is the occasion when we as a parish community come together and pray together. At each mass we listen to the word of God in the Scriptures, we ask

for God's forgiveness and help, to offer ourselves to God and through the reception of the Eucharist (Holy Communion) to receive Jesus' Body (Jesus as the Head and each of us as the Members of His Body) – a free gift of Jesus and of each other, to pray quietly and to pray for one another living or deceased. Every member of the community, no matter how young or old, is always very welcome to the celebration of mass. If you have any suggestions as to how the celebration of mass could be more meaningful for you then please give them to any member of the Parish Pastoral Council.

The members of the Parish Pastoral Council are: Ned Kirwan (Chairperson), Pascal Grace (Secretary), Noel McDonald, Paddy Reade, Siobhán O'Donovan, John O'Brien, (Rev.) Nicholas Flavin.

If you are willing or know of others who would be willing to serve on the Parish Pastoral Council, contact any member of the above.

The Church is a special place of prayer as Jesus is present in the Tabernacle. It is important that each of us respects the sacredness of the church with respectful silence and prayerfulness. The churches in the parish are open each day and you are encouraged to visit the church and pray silently in the presence of the Lord. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to visit the church on occasions when they are passing by the church. Jesus, present in the tabernacle in the church, is always waiting and welcoming for your visit. Drop in for a quiet prayer and chat with him.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

| | Kilmoganny | Tullahought | Windgap | Dunamaggan |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Sun 14th | | 9.00 a.m. | 10.00 a.m. | |
| Sat 20th | 7.00 p.m. | | | |
| Sun 21st | | | | 11.00 a.m. |

MASS TIMES FOR CHRISTMAS ARE:

| | Tullahought | Kilmoganny | Windgap | Dunamaggan |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Christmas Eve | 6.00 p.m. | 7.15 p.m. | | 9.00 p.m. |
| Christmas Day | 9.00 a.m. | | 10.00 a.m. | 11.00 a.m. |

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Nicholas A.P. Flavin P.P.