

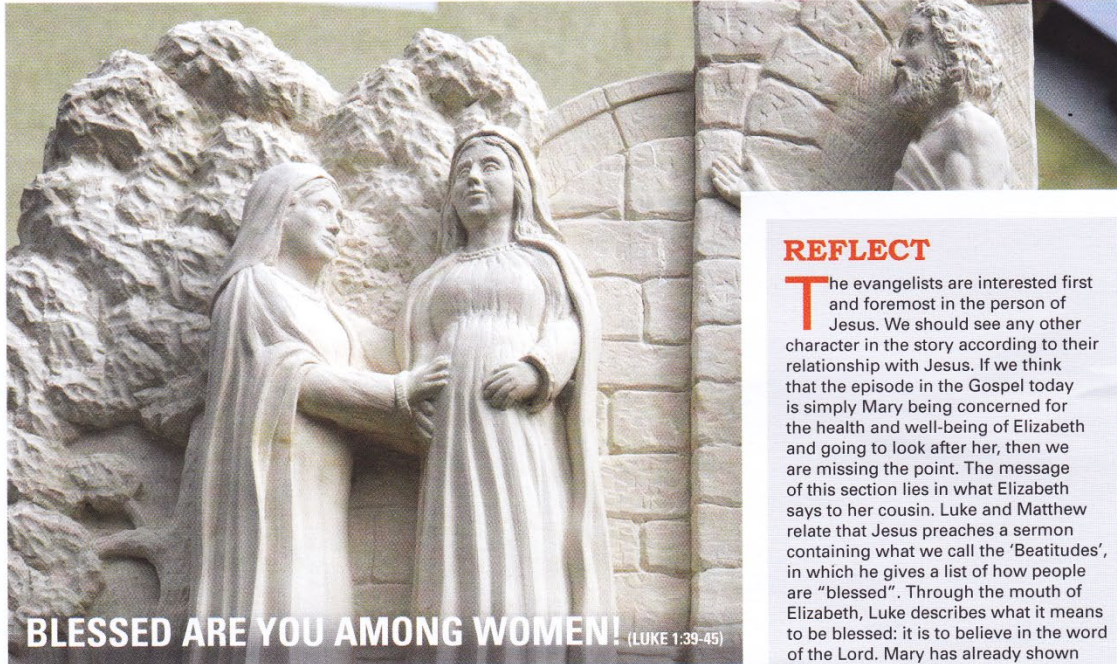
23 DECEMBER 2018

# Sunday Message

4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: Purple • Psalter Week 4



**BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN!** (LUKE 1:39-45)

*Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mary's Way in Klenovnik, Croatia*

The first two chapters of the Gospel according to Luke deal with the conception and birth of Jesus (and John the Baptist) and we usually refer to them as the Infancy Narrative.

There are five scenes, and the third of these is related in today's Gospel extract, the Visitation, in which Mary goes to visit her elderly and pregnant cousin, Elizabeth. The angel Gabriel has just told Mary that she is to be the mother of Jesus, and any message of this kind is always accompanied by a sign in the biblical story. Though Mary has assented to the angel's message, she wants to see the sign that confirms it, that Elizabeth is expecting a child herself.

In this scene, the two mothers and the two children are brought together, and John the Baptist performs his first act of witness to Jesus. Elizabeth recognises in the joyful movement of her unborn child the identity of Mary's baby and she bears witness by calling Mary "blessed" and "the mother of my Lord".

Luke emphasises in his Gospel the importance of listening to the word of the Lord. Elizabeth attributes Mary's blessedness to the fact that she believed (or trusted) that what the Lord had spoken would be fulfilled. Later in the Gospel we hear a woman in the crowd exclaiming to Jesus, "Blessed is she who bore you!" Jesus replies, "Blessed, rather, are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice!" However, we know that there is no distinction intended here, no diminishing of Mary's importance, but rather Jesus is presenting his mother in her true light. ■

### SAY

**Blessed is she who believed that the promise of the Lord would be fulfilled.**

### DO

Say the second Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Visitation. Take your time over it and insert consecutive lines from the Gospel account in between the Hail Marys.

### REFLECT

The evangelists are interested first and foremost in the person of Jesus. We should see any other character in the story according to their relationship with Jesus. If we think that the episode in the Gospel today is simply Mary being concerned for the health and well-being of Elizabeth and going to look after her, then we are missing the point. The message of this section lies in what Elizabeth says to her cousin. Luke and Matthew relate that Jesus preaches a sermon containing what we call the 'Beatitudes', in which he gives a list of how people are "blessed". Through the mouth of Elizabeth, Luke describes what it means to be blessed: it is to believe in the word of the Lord. Mary has already shown this when she said to Gabriel, "let it be with me according to your word".

For Luke, Mary is the model disciple, who listens to the word of the Lord, meditates upon it and puts it into practice. In this way, she is the model for every Christian. She cannot be a model for us through her physical motherhood: but she can be our model through her obedience to the Word of the Lord and playing her part in God's plan for human beings. Luke holds up Mary and Jesus' relatives as examples of what it means to be a disciple: someone who hears the word of God and puts it into practice. To describe Mary in this way is to show her true importance and to give her proper honour and respect. ■

### LEARN

The Infancy Narratives (the first two chapters) of Matthew and Luke present the evangelists' understanding of who Jesus is.

Elizabeth's pregnancy is the visible confirmation of Gabriel's message to Mary.

For Luke, Mary is the model disciple.

The true disciple of Jesus is one who listens to God's word, meditates upon it and puts it into practice in their daily life.

**SWINFORD MEELICK MIDFIELD**  
**Fr Dermot Meehan Phone: 094-9251790/Urgent Calls: 087-1338200**

**PARISH OFFICE- OPENING HOURS: Mon, Thurs, Fri: 9.00am-2.00pm; Phone: 094 - 9253607**  
**Email: swinews@hotmail.com 23<sup>rd</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> 6.30pm Swinford:** John Hennigan, Cloonlara  
 Joe & Josie Maloney, Pat McHugh & Paddy Kelly,  
 Santa Maria

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> 12 noon Swinford:** Dec'd of kilgallon & Keane Families, Carnacul &  
 Longford  
 Tom & Bridgie Byrne, Derryronane

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Swinford:** Annie & James Munnelly, P.J, Joan, Eileen & babies  
 Josh & Reuben & dec'd Family, Ballina  
 Eileen Greaney, Church View House

**SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> 9.00pm Swinford:** First Mass of Christmas

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> 12.00am Swinford:** Christmas Day Mass

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Swinford:** Jim & Agnas Roughneen, The Courthouse & dec'd  
 McGivern & Roughneen Families & Michael & Bridie  
 Ronayne, Park Rd & dec'd Kelly & Ronayne Families  
 Paddy Oliver, Larch Hill

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Swinford:** Tom McNulty, Ozanam Place/Cloongullane (1<sup>st</sup> anniv),  
 his brother John & parents Brian & Kathleen & dec'd  
 Family  
 Padraic Durkan & parents Paddy & Mary, Forth village

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Swinford:** Frank Carolan, London  
 Martin Nyland & dec'd Family, Sweetwell

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Swinford:** No Intention

**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Swinford:** Bea & Willie Mellett & Mary Mellett & dec'd Mellett &  
 Roddy Families & Mary Hopkins  
 John & Winnie Sheridan & son Padraig, Cloonlumey

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> 12 noon Swinford:** Michael O'Boyle, Osmond Place/Lisheenabrone  
 Maureen Mullarkey, Brabazon Heights

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**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> 9.00am Meelick:** No Intention

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> 9.00am Meelick:** Christmas Day Mass

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> 9.00am Meelick:** Thomas Mulroy, laughtadurkin  
 Edward & Mai Horkan, Ballintample

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**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.30am Midfield:** James Peyton (MM), his mother Nano, Midfield &  
 her cousin Jim Murtagh, Woods  
 Michael Regan, Johnny Healy, Derry O'Keafe & Mary  
 Basquil & dec'd Durkan,Regan, Philbin,Basquil Families

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Midfield:** Christmas Day Mass

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Midfield:** The Kennedy, Jordan & McDonagh Families, Brackloon  
 & Kinaffe  
 John & Kate Morley, Midfield & John & Margaret  
 O'Brien & their son Michael, Ballymote

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**Mass times for Christmas:** The First Mass of Christmas will be celebrated in Swinford Church on Christmas Eve, December 24th, at 9p.m. On Christmas Day Mass will be in Meelick Church at 9a.m., in Midfield Church at 10.30a.m. and in Swinford Church at 12 noon.

**Mass on Christmas Eve** in Swinford Church at 9p.m will be signed by Michelle McNulty for members of the deaf Community whom we warmly welcome to our parish community for the occasion.

**Mass during Christmas Week:** From St Stephen's Day until Saturday, December 29<sup>th</sup> morning Mass will be at 11a.m. each day.

**Anam Cara Galway**, the organisation that supports bereaved parents, is holding a Parent Evening on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January at 7.20pm in the Clayton Hotel, Old Monivea Road, Ballybrit, Galway. This event is free and open to all bereaved parents regardless of the age your child died, the circumstances of their death, or whether their death was recent or not.

**GAA 50/50:** This week's draw was held in Horkans and one of our youngest winners Conor Broderick of Rathdubh, Swinford won €548. There will be no draw at Christmas the next draw is in Whitehouse on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> December.

**Swinford GAA club** wishes all its members, players, managers, coaches and supporters a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

**Swinford & District Gardening Club** fundraiser for the new Down Syndrome Regional Centre on the Kilkelly Rd raised €2,540.00. The club would like to thank all those who supported this worthy cause.

**Swinford Community Lotto:** Results for 17<sup>th</sup> December Numbers 03 06 16 22; €70 Local Shopping Voucher Winners; Aisling McGinty, Midfield; Martina McLoughlin, Midfield; 3 Number winners; Louis Horkan, Swinford; Caroline Goldrick, c/o Moore's Pub; Jackpot €8,200; Next Draw on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> December.

**Swinford Killasser Ladies GFC Lotto Committee** would like to wish all our supporters and supporters of the Amenity Park a very happy Christmas.

**Annual St Stephen's Day Walk:** This year the annual walk in Killasser Parish will begin at Callow Church at 12pm. This is always a popular

and fun event and a great opportunity to meet with friends and enjoy a cup of tea afterwards. Donations to church fund. All contributors will be entered in a draw for spot prizes. See you there.

**Nollaig na mBan:** Ladies why not have a much-deserved fun night out? Swinford 250 celebrates Nollaig na mBan on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2019 in the Gateway Hotel at 7.30pm. Mulled wine reception, dinner and music. Spot prizes, surprises and great fun on the night. Raffle proceeds will go to Mayo Women's Refuge Centre. Tickets priced at €30 available from the Gateway Hotel or email [swinford250@swinford.ie](mailto:swinford250@swinford.ie)

***A very happy and peaceful Christmas to all parishioners and to all who are visiting our parish to be with family and friends over these special days.***