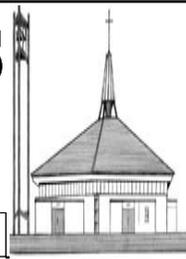


Aughavas & Cloone Parishes

Fr. Peter Tiernan: 071-9636016
Mobile: 086 3500114
Web Page aughavascloone.ie
E-mail: aughavascloone1@gmail.com

29th November 2020



1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Pray for the happy repose of the soul of Maura Reynolds (nee Kilkenny), Strokestown, Co Roscommon and formerly of Meiltron, Aughavas and Tooman, Gortletteragh who died on 9th November in Strokestown.

Masses:

Cloone: Sat. 28th Nov. 8.00 pm.
Aughavas: Sun. 29th Nov. 11.30 am. Pro. Populo.
Cloone: Mon. 30th Nov. 10.00 am.
Cloone: Tues. 1st Dec. 10.00 am. Kathleen & Packie Maguire & D.F.M., Gubbs.
Cloone: Thurs. 3rd. Dec. 8.00 pm. Sean Mollahan, Leganomer.
Cloone: Fri. 4th Dec. 10.00 am.
Cloone: Sat. 5th Dec. 8.00 pm.
Cloone: Sun. 6th Dec. 10.00 am.
Aughavas: Sun. 6th Dec. 11.30 am.

SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 2020.

CLOONE: Reader: Saturday Evening: Seamus Tiernan.
Sunday: Madeline Murphy.
Eucharistic Ministers: Saturday Evening: Teresa Slevin & Mary McGovern.
Sunday: Monica McHugh & Madeline Murphy.
Counters: Seamus Tiernan & Eugene McNamara.

AUGHAVAS: Reader: Pat Kilkenny.
Eucharistic Ministers: Eilish Cooke & Anna McKiernan.
Counters: Kathleen Fitzpatrick & Geraldine Beirne.

Advent

Robert Louis Stevenson spent his childhood and youth in Edinburgh. The story is told of how one night his nurse found him with his nose pressed against the frosty pane of his bedroom window. She tried to get him away from the window, afraid he'd catch his death of cold, but young Robert wouldn't budge. He sat as he watched an old lamplighter slowly working his way through the black night, lighting each gas street lamp along his route. Robert said to his nurse "see, look there; there's a man poking holes in the darkness". This is an image we can claim and adapt for ourselves as we make our journey through Advent. We come to Advent in the darkest time of the year. Nature itself is at it's lowest ebb, resting and preparing itself for the promise of Spring. And of course this year, the year in which we have endured so much suffering as a result of Covid-19, we are perhaps dreading the darkness of winter even more than ever before. And yet, think back to that image of a man poking holes in the darkness. As Christians, this

Advent we get to face the darkness of winter assured of the promise of light. Advent is our enduring proclamation that, in Christ and through Christ, light overcomes the deepest darkness. As Christians, as followers of Christ, we are people who believe that Jesus is the Light of the World. And we are called again and again to welcome the Light of the World, Christ, into the centre of our being and to share His Light with a world yearning to receive it. Advent, as the start of a new Church year, can also be for us the start of a new relationship with Christ. Over the four Sundays of this season we edge closer and closer to the joy of Christmas and the Feast of the Nativity when we commemorate the birth of Christ, when God took flesh amongst us. But our Advent work is not just about getting ready to remember and commemorate. It is about preparing ourselves once more to welcome the person of Christ into the centre of our lives, with all the messiness that our lives may entail! And the Christ we welcome into our lives is Christ who was, who is, and who is to come.

But we would give a great Advent gift to ourselves if we also recognised that God is all the time coming to us, speaking to us, wanting to be in relationship with us — now. Advent is yet another moment in our lives when we get to do what Mary did, say yes to God's invitation to us. And in saying yes to God we are letting in the light of Christ, the light that endures for ever and that can reach every corner of our lives, no matter what is going on for us. One of the outstanding images of Advent is that of the Advent wreath. How eloquently this wreath 'pokes holes in the darkness' as its light builds over the course of the weeks while we make our Advent pilgrimage. As winter leans deeper into darkness, Christians lean deeper into the light.

Just think about that wreath. Its circular shape, with no beginning or end, symbolises the eternity of God. In the midst of winter's bleakness, its evergreen reminds us of the everlasting life we have in Christ while any pine cones or pods in the wreath represent new life and resurrection. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent while purple is traditionally a colour of penance and prayer as we turn back to God once more. The rose pink candle that is lit on the Third Sunday marks our joy as we move ever closer to Christmas.

Each week as we come to church we get to see the light of the wreath increase against the backdrop of a darkening winter. It brings us to a gradually dawning realisation that we finally get to proclaim at Christmas — Jesus is the Light of the World. Jesus is the one who pokes holes in the darkness, who is our Light if we only but let Him into our lives. This year, as we navigate a reality never experienced before in our lifetime, we are a people in deep need of this truth of our faith. In the light of the Advent wreath and in the scripture characters and stories that accompany us through the season, we begin to catch glimpses of what the Light, who is Christ, can bring to our lives. The Advent scriptures are full of stories of transformation, of overcoming adversity, of the seemingly impossible being possible — the barren give birth, dead stumps blossom, the lion lies down with the lamb.

Over these weeks, as we light another candle we proclaim in faith what God intends for our world, for our families, for ourselves: in Christ, hope overcomes despair, peace overcomes division, joy overcomes desolation, love overcomes hatred. A life and a world of hope, peace, joy, love — that is what God wants for us, that is what awaits us when we let Christ come into our lives.

If you don't already do it, perhaps this is the Advent more than any other to start a tradition of having an Advent wreath in your home. And as you light your wreath throughout the weeks of Advent may it remind you, this year especially, to not be afraid to face the darkness and to see, at the same time, how Christ is poking holes through it, letting in His light — a light that darkness will never overcome.

The Hook of Faith presents A Three session virtual Advent Retreat with Fr. Billy Swan from Tuesday 1st to Thursday 3rd December 2020 from 8—9 pm on Zoom. Email: thehookoffaith@gmail.com to receive the Zoom link. All are welcome.