

Parishes of Glendermott & Strathfoyle

Sunday 14th December 2025
Third Sunday of Advent

John the Baptist

Our gospel this weekend opens with John the Baptist in prison. John had denounced Herod for divorcing his wife and marrying his brother's wife. From prison he sends two of his disciples to find out about Jesus. He wanted to know if Jesus was the Messiah or have people to wait for someone else.

John the Baptist is confused. The question of John the Baptist is our question also. Is Jesus the one for us or are we waiting for someone else?

John's image of the messiah as portrayed in last weekend's gospel was one who would bring a fiery judgement, a dispenser of wrath. Now we read of John hearing that Jesus who he proclaimed the Messiah as one that heals the sick, he blesses people and he tells people that they must not judge one another but indeed love their enemies. Jesus' Messiahship, therefore, seems a totally different one to what John imagined.

When John's disciples come to Jesus, he does not claim to be the Messiah but rather he asks them to pay attention to what is happening: the afflicted are healed, the dead are raised to new life, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

To accept or reject Jesus is a decision of faith. Jesus did not do it for John the Baptist, and he does not do it for us.

Whether John was convinced of who Jesus is we are not told but we are told that Jesus held John in very high regard. He compliments John in a way that he does not compliment anyone else.

Baptisms - We welcome into the family of God – **Eddie Thomas Sharkey**, Duddy's Court; **Cathan Sean** Webb-Higgenbotham, Gelvin Grange.

Deaths – We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of **Brendan McLaughlin**, Top of the Hill; **Neil Doherty**, Deanfield; **Vincent Bradley**, Blackburn Crescent.

Anniversaries: We are asked to remember in our prayers *Kathleen Rawlings, Jackie Dalton, Billy Quigley, Hugh Quigley, Isaac Duddy, Monica & Robert McLaughlin, Monica Kelly, George Starrett, Noel Elliott, Bridie McConnell, James & Margaret Carey, Margaret & Dan Kelly, Helen McDermott, Fr O'Donnell, Joseph Vaughan, Pat Boyle, John Gillespie, The McMenamin and Orr families.*

Offertory Collection: Glendermott: £3952.00 Strathfoyle: £530.00
Thank you for your generosity to the parish collection.

Vocations – For our seminarians and all those who will be the future priests of our diocese, that they will be prophetic proclaimers of the Good News of God's liberating love revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026: Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July (4 nights) ex City of Derry Airport. Cost £895 inclusive of local taxes but exclusive of single supplements and insurance. The Pilgrimage office will open for bookings on Saturday 17 January 2026 at 11am. However, Gift Vouchers to any value are now available (Monday to Thursday) from the Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, Derry BT48 6UJ.

Children in Crossfire Appeal – The focus of this year's appeal is on children living in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, whose days are split between going to school and scavenging on a huge rubbish dump nearby, searching for items to sell for food. Children in Crossfire's goal, with your support, is to give those children the better future they deserve.

Pilgrimages 2026: Poland: 16 - 23rd June 2026 £1275 Flights and Half Board
Salt Mines: (Optional) £55 Spiritual Director: Fr. James Devine.

Fatima: 23rd - 30th July £879: Flights, Full Board, Coach to Dublin Airport
Spiritual Director: Fr. James Devine

Medjugorje: 4th -11th September from Belfast: £849: Flights and Half Board
Contact Maria at 028 81648357 or 07768395038 for special offer. Spiritual
Director: Fr Pat O'Hagan.

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Thought for the Day – Advent calls us to stop and think. But for nearly everyone the season of Advent is also the busiest time of the year. There is so much to be done to prepare for Christmas: cards, presents, the planning of meals, hospitality in general. Leaving aside whether we need to do all this and whether it could not all be simplified, the actuality of most lives during Advent is emphatically not one of contemplation. We can benefit from moments each day, that we set aside just to keep ourselves grounded in faith. It is Jesus and his birth that we celebrate, not just togetherness. Can we still enter the spirit of Advent, this holy season?

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve – Vigil Masses

- 6.00pm** Church of Immaculate Conception
- 6.00pm** St Oliver Plunkett's Church
- 8.00pm** St Columb's Church

Christmas morning

- 9.15am** St Mary's Oratory
- 10.00am** St Columb's Church
- 10.15am** Church of Immaculate Conception
- 11.15am** St Oliver Plunkett Church
- 12.15pm** Church of Immaculate Conception
- 12.30pm** St Columb's Church

No evening Mass on Christmas Day

Blessing of a Christmas Tree

Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree. May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our heart. May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Mass Schedule

Sunday

St Columb's Church	10.00am, 12.30pm & 6.00pm
Immaculate Conception	10.15am & 12.15pm
St Oliver Plunkett	11.15am
St Mary's Oratory	9.15am

Monday - Friday

St Columb's Church	10.00am & 7.30pm
Immaculate Conception	9.15 am
St Oliver Plunkett	11.00 am
(11.00am Mass in St Mary's Oratory every Wednesday)	

Saturday

St Columb's Church	10.00am, 7.00pm (Sunday Vigil)
Immaculate Conception	11.00am, 6.00pm (Sunday Vigil)
St Oliver Plunkett	6.00pm (Sunday)

Confessions

St Columb's — Saturday after 10.00am Mass

Monday-Friday at 7.00pm before evening Mass

Immaculate Conception — after 11.00am Mass every Saturday at 5.30pm before evening Mass on Saturday.

St Oliver Plunkett — Every Saturday at 5.30pm before the Vigil Mass.

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YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/WatersideParish

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Rev. Joshy Parokkaran CC 02871342303 secretary@watersideparish.net

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS — If you are concerned about the welfare and safety of children or a vulnerable adult contact:

Designated Diocesan person Ms Marie Gormley at +44 7596500793 or marie.gormley@derrydiocese.org or PSNI101.