

THOMASTOWN PARISH NEWSLETTER

1st January 2023

Parish Priest: Fr. Dan Bolland Mobile 087 6644858 Email: bollarddan@gmail.com Website www.thomastownparish.ie Radio: fm108 Diocese of Ossory Reg. Charity No. 20015831.	Parish Office: Tel No 056 7793191 Opening Tuesday Thursday, Friday 10 - 1pm Email: thomastown@ossory.ie Facebook: Thomastown Parish
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CHURCH SERVICES beginning Sunday 1st

Parish Church	Saturday 31 st Mass	18.00 hours
	Sunday 1 st January Mass	10.30 hours
	Monday 2 nd Mass	10.30 hours
	Wednesday 4 th Mass	10.30 hours
	Thursday 5 th Vigil Mass for Epiphany	19.00 hours
	Friday 6 th Epiphany Mass	10.30 hours
	Saturday 7 th Vigil Mass	18.00 hours

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available after Saturday evening Mass or any other time on request.

Masses celebrated at the Parish Church are available on webcam and 108fm.

Deaths and anniversaries: Pope Benedict XVI; Dolly O'Mahony, nee Langton, Birmingham and formerly Kilcullen; **Trevor & Gerry Minogue,** 15 Newtown Tce & **Bridie Minogue,** Cloghabrody & **Christine Bergin,** Waterford (6pm Mass Dec 31st); **Matthew & Michael Kearney,** Ballydonnell (6pm Mass Dec 31st); **John Butler,** Pleberstown; **Margaret Galway,** Knockard; **Thomas and Margaret Tyrrell,** Newtown; **Mgr. Paul Fitzgerald.** May they and all our dead rest in peace.

Anniversary Masses next weekend: Seamus Cullen, Dangan Terrace ((6pm Mass); **Breda Burke, nee Skehan,** Newtown (6pm Mass); **Michael Walsh,** Friarhill, and **May and Eddie Fenlon,** Bridge House (10am Mass).

The Parish Office will open once more, after the Christmas and New Year breaks, on Tuesday 3rd January.

The Ossory Times, Issue 31, sharing the life of our Diocese, is available this weekend. It contains articles on our new Bishop, Niall Coll, on the Sisters of Mercy 150 years of service in the Diocese, and a valuable article titled 'From 'Last Rites' to a Sacrament of Healing', among other valuable and thought provoking articles.

Bishop's Ordination: Our new Bishop will be ordained at St. Mary's Cathedral on Sunday 22nd January. Are you interested in attending the Ceremony? We have four tickets available to people of the Parish. If interested, give your names to Fr. Dan or into the Parish Office. We will draw the four names from those submitted by next Sunday, 8th January.

Happy New year!! I look back and wonder where 2022 went. Births, deaths, and marriages – they all seem to melt in together. How was/is Covid? And Ukraine looms large in my memory. I think of the dread filled pictures on television and newspapers, and the people fleeing from their homeland to Ireland and other countries in western Europe. Currently so many people are challenged financially with rising costs for essentials, so many people unable to get homes for themselves and their families. And of course, our hospitals are full, our health staffs under severe pressure. That's all very bleak.

And when our schools are open, I hear – over the wall – the exuberance of youth. Sport has lifted our hearts. International and Irish and Kilkenny sportspeople have brought us great joy. Work has started on the new St. Columba's. And what about the new houses built at Newtown, and the new Medical Centre. And we can gather in Church. We have many reasons to rejoice.

Personally, I look back to June and my 50 years as a priest. I thought I would simply mark it and grimaced a bit at a celebration. However, the memory of so many people with whom I have walked, for whatever length of time, over the fifty years changed my mind and I began to realise that there was something to celebrate. I am very grateful for your support and good wishes at the Jubilee and at all times. Thank you.

Pope Francis, as Popes do each year, has written a letter for World Peace Day on 1st January. His theme this year is 'dialogue between generations' - a wonderful call, to keep open communication between the generations, so that we talk, but with people who may seem at first sight very different to us. The Pope calls us to realise our human interdependence, that we need one another, that we make a better world together.

Thanks to everyone in the parish who makes that happen, in all the varied activities and organisations in the area. I think of the various Church groups, such as the Parish Council, with Chairperson Kevin Kelly, and of the Parish Finance Committee, with Chairperson Fionnula Taylor. I really appreciate their wisdom and energy. I think too of the Vincent de Paul Society. Thanks too to the staff and Board of Management of St. Mary's National School. Thanks to all who serve in our Churches – sacristans, choirs, musicians, servers, collectors, readers, Eucharistic ministers, children's liturgy leaders, 'do this in memory' leaders, co-ordinators of Adoration, cleaners, florists, and many more. Many people have said how glad they are to see our young people serving at Mass once more. Thanks to envelope distributors and money counters. Thanks to our Church stewards. Thanks to the Community Scheme workers at the Church grounds and Cemetery. Thanks to Sandra Cullen and Marian Fennelly at the Parish Office. You all make a difference. Thank you!!

Congratulations and best wishes to Marian who has become national president of the St. Joseph's Young Priests Society. The work of the Society is to promote vocations to priesthood and religious life. As we priests become older and scarcer this is a cause we all ought to support. We've been more successful ordaining Bishops than priests for Ossory. With our new Bishop, Niall Coll, we will have ordained three bishops in the last 15 years. In that time, we ordained only one priest. Pray and encourage our young people so that we will have priests to celebrate Eucharist and minister the Sacraments.

And I assure you of my support and a place in my prayers and am very happy each week to offer Mass for all the people of the Parish – one of the responsibilities of the Parish Priest. Fr. Dan Bolland.