

## THOMASTOWN PARISH NEWSLETTER

08<sup>th</sup> January 2023

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### CHURCH SERVICES beginning Sunday 08<sup>th</sup>

<b>Parish Church</b>	Sunday 08 <sup>th</sup> Baptism of the Lord: Mass	10.30 hours
	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> Funeral Mass	12.00 hours
	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> Eucharistic Service	09.20 hours
	Wednesday Apostolic Adoration	10.00-11.00 hours
	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> Mass	09.20 hours
	Saturday 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:** Kieran Wemyss, Noreview Crescent, recently deceased; **Seamus Cullen**, Dangan Tce (6pm Mass); **Breda Burke** (nee Skehan) (6pm Mass); **Kate Power**, Kilfane (6pm Mass); **Michael Fitzsimons**, Newtown Tce (6pm Mass); **Michael Walsh**, Friarshill (10.30am Mass); **May & Eddie Fenlon**, Bridge House; **Eileen O'Neill**, Dangan Tce; **Sandra Brett**, Cloughabrody: May they and all our dead rest in peace.

**Anniversary Masses next weekend:** **Kitty Begley**, Castle Ave (6pm Mass); **Noreen Walsh**, Dangan & **Deceased Members of the Walsh Family** (6pm Mass); **Frances & Patrick Lannon**, Station Road (6pm Mass); **Walter Walsh**, Grennan House (6pm Mass); **Billy Walsh**, Graiguenamanagh (10.30am Mass).

**Thomastown Parish Senior Citizens Association holiday** is to the Clonakilty Park Hotel, County Cork from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Cost €700 per person sharing, (single supplement €200 extra) to include 6 nights B & B with dinner and entertainment nightly, and day trip every day. Breakfast on day of departure and dinner on return journey. To book your place a non-refundable deposit of 50 euro is required. For further details and to book your place please call to Senior Citizens shop, Community Hall Thursday, or Friday 10 am to 2 pm.

**Anam Cara Southeast** is hosting a new monthly Parent Evening for bereaved parents on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January at 7:15pm in the Brandon House Hotel, New Ross. 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. Please contact us on [info@anamcara.ie](mailto:info@anamcara.ie) or 085 2888 888 for any queries.

Today is the feast of **the Baptism of the Lord**. Ordinary time begins on Monday. We will include in our Newsletter the names of those recently baptised. Good to have our Baptismal Team back in action post Covid. They provide a wonderful service.

### POPE BENEDICT 1927 – 2022

Reflecting on the life and ministry of Pope Benedict, John Allen – an American author and commentator on Church affairs for many years – commended that with the benefit of hindsight, Benedict XVI now seems a towering “Pope of Ironies,” with three standing out.

Firstly, for most of his career Benedict XVI had been seen as the great “Doctor No” of the Catholic Church. Yet once he became pope, Benedict emphasized the Catholic “yes,” rather than the church’s traditional catalogue of “no’s.” In other words, “Doctor No” as doctrinal Cardinal became “Father Yes” as Pope.

In a second grand irony, Pope Benedict, who had acknowledged “I don’t have the charism of governance”, launched historic management reforms on two key sources of scandal for Catholicism, child sexual abuse and the Vatican’s decidedly mixed record on money. He was the first pope to embrace a “zero tolerance” policy on abuse, and the first to open the Vatican to outside secular inspection of its accounts.

In perhaps the most notable irony of all, a pontiff sometimes seen as arrogant and aloof was a man of striking personal humility. One instance came immediately after he was elected, when Benedict insisted on returning to his Vatican apartment to gather his things and carry them back to the papal apartments. Before he left the building, he thanked the nuns who did the cooking and cleaning. When Francis did much the same thing, returning to a Rome hotel for clergy to pack his bag and pay his bill, it became a sensation. Benedict never drew the same applause, in part because the narrative of “God’s Rottweiler” surrounding him made it difficult.

Of course, Benedict’s voluntary abdication of power was arguably the single most humble act by a pope in centuries, if not of all time. Benedict was never one to cling to power for its own sake and announcing a surprise resignation on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013, he would end his papacy with a spectacular demonstration of the point

After having become pope himself, Benedict dropped hints at several points that he was open to the idea of voluntarily relinquishing the office. On a 2009 trip to Aquila, Benedict left the woollen pallium he wore during his 2005 inauguration Mass on Celestine’s tomb (Pope Celestine, a native of Aquila, had retired as pope in 1294 and is buried in the cathedral church of Aquila). Those bits of foreshadowing, however, did not make Feb. 11, 2013, any less stunning when Benedict used a meeting of cardinals for sainthood causes to deliver his surprise resignation announcement in typically elegant Latin prose.

American Cardinal James Francis Stafford, who was present on that day and witnessed the announcement live, would later say that he sat in the room for some time afterwards, unable to comprehend what he had just heard. “I couldn’t believe it,” Stafford said. “I kept playing the Latin over in my mind to be sure I had heard correctly.” Benedict said at the time that he was stepping aside because “my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry.

May his gentle soul rest in peace.