



## SAINT FRANCIS AND THE CHRISTMAS CRIB

**N**ativity scenes have been a popular Christmas decoration for centuries. Saint Francis of Assisi had a special devotion to the Child Jesus, and he is credited with creating the first Christmas Nativity scene on Christmas Eve of the year 1223, at Greccio, a town sixty miles northeast of Rome. It is believed that he was inspired to do this after visiting Bethlehem in the Holy Land. The following text was written by Saint Bonaventure (1221-1274), a contemporary of Saint Francis of Assisi about what happened that night:

Saint Francis' mind went back to Bethlehem and he remembered the night when he had knelt in the Cave of the Nativity. What could he do so that these good people of the Rieti valley should be able to understand fully the beauty and mystery of Christ's



birth? They were simple people, and to see with their own eyes the stable and the manger, and the gentle beasts, would help them to see the Christ-child.

He built a stable in the woods near his hermitage and he put a real manger in the stable and filled it with hay, and beside the manger he built a simple altar. He arranged that there should be a real ox and donkey there, and he asked the people to Mass at the hermitage on Christmas Eve. The people came, singing ancient carols. The youngest got there first, and the older people heard their excited cries of awe and joy: "Padre - there is a stable here. There is a manger for the bambino, and an ox and a donkey, a real ox and donkey! Come quickly!"

The wood became a Church and the stable the altar of the Church. They knelt with bowed heads on the carpet of moss and pine-needles. Those who had brought candles still held them between their hands and the flames showed the young faces, sunburnt and rosy, and the older ones lined and weather-beaten. Those who were nearest to the stable could see the manger and the gentle beasts, the priest vested, and Saint Francis as his deacon, but those who were too far away to see very much were not aware of any loss, for the great peace and joy of this holy night enclosed them all.

Saint Francis' recreation of that first Christmas night was so popular that soon every church in Italy had its own nativity scene. The devotion also spread to private homes, and in modern times even to secular institutions, so much so that it's now impossible to imagine Christmas without a nativity scene to behold.

Father McGachey

## A WORD FROM FATHER MCGACHEY...



It is almost three months since Bishop Toal appointed me as Parish Priest at Saint Bride's. I have been genuinely touched by the warmth of your welcome and words of encouragement: these have helped smoothe the transition from the small parish of Saint Patrick's in Strathaven, to the busy parish Saint Bride's, East Kilbride.

As I have unpacked my life and possessions, to settle into the Chapel House, it has been a busy few months: with almost thirty funerals, as well as visits to dozens of the sick and the bustling local primary schools, not to mention the everyday tasks of a priest in a busy parish - including the inevitable fabric headaches for which Saint Bride's is famed! Your kindness to me has been a constant source of support - I am very grateful! God reward you!

I have been edified as the numbers attending Mass have continued to grow; I have been impressed as the financial support you give your parish has risen too. This is very much to your credit, given the financial pressures we all find ourselves under this time. I thank you for your generosity, and humbly ask for your continued financial support for Saint Bride's.

My sincere thanks to those who are committed to the service of the Parish - the sacristans, servers, church cleaners, our musicians and choristers, our readers and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, those who look after the altar linens and sacred vestments, the pass keepers, the Children's Liturgy group for the great work they have done, the counters and those who bank the collection, those who assist me in putting together the weekly Bulletin, those who curate our parish website and media platforms, and those who stream our Sunday Mass. Moreover, I should like to thank the others who work in the background to ensure the smooth running of the parish, in particular those men and women who give of their time to work in the Hall; those who adiminster the 200 Club; my thanks too to the parish Legion of Mary and the parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society, the parish Third World Group, the parish Bereavment Group as well as those who have co-ordinated the Ukraine Appeal. May God reward you all!

On a personal note, I should like to say a special 'thank you' to all those who have sent me cards and gifts - I feel quite overwhelmed. I look forward to opening these on Christmas afternoon with my family. I wish all our parishioners a Holy and Happy Christmas, and some time to relax you're your family and friends. **Father McGachey, Parish Priest**

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## CALENDAR



The days of Christmas Week are known as *Octave of Christmas*. Like the greatest of all the Christian Feasts, Easter, Christmas is followed by eight days of solemn and joyous celebration which will end on January 1<sup>st</sup> with the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God. **Saint Stephen** is honoured on **Monday**. Known as the 'Proto-Martyr', he was the first disciple of Our Lord to be martyred. **Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist** is remembered on **Tuesday**. Described by himself in his Gospel as the "beloved disciple" who rested on Our Lord's side during the Last Supper. The **Holy Innocents** - the children of Judea who were slaughtered at Herod's order in his search for the Christ-child - whose feast falls on **Thursday**, are obviously connected in a special way to Our Lord's infancy. **Saturday** is the Feast of **Saint Thomas Beckett (pictured)**. He was the Archbishop of Canterbury who was killed in 1170 by the King Henry II's men after the king exclaimed "Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?"

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## CHILDRENS' LITURGY

The Childrens' Liturgy is stopping over the school break. It will recommence on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January with a special four week programme for those children preparing for their First Reconciliation, and our main Childrens' Liturgy for all other Primary School students.

If there are any children at Christmas Masses, there is a small chocolate gift from the Parish. Please collect it from the top door - where I usually stand after Mass.

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### A MESSAGE FROM SAINT BRIDE'S LADIES PHOENIX CLUB

As there is no-one to take over the running of the Club, the bank account has been closed and the balance of £100.19 has been given to Saint Bride's Parish. Father McGachey will say a Mass for the intentions of all past members of the Phoenix Club. Thank you for all the good years! (May I thank the members for this generous donation. Father McGachey)

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### CLUB 200

This week's winner is Catherine Doohan. Please collect your cheque from the sacristy.

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### SAINT MARGARET'S AODPTION AND CHILD CARE

Donations at the Crib will go to the Saint Margaret's Adoption and Child Care Society. Please be generous as you always are.

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### 'MY DAY BY DAY'

The January edition of "My day by day" is on sale at the Stall, priced £1.00. Please continue to use the wall-mounted box marked 'Papers' to place the money there. It is much safer!

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## THE CHRISTMAS SEASON AT SAINT BRIDE'S

### MONDAY DECEMBER 26<sup>th</sup> - FEAST OF SAINT STEPHEN

There will be no 10am Holy Mass or Eucharistic Service today at Saint Bride's

### TUESDAY DECEMBER 27<sup>th</sup> - SATURDAY 31<sup>st</sup>

Holy Rosary 9.40am (Each day, except Thursday). 10am Holy Mass each day

### SATURDAY 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER - NEW YEAR'S EVE

Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God - 4.30pm

A Service of Thanksgiving for the old year and to ask for God's blessing on the New Year, with Night Prayer (Compline) and Benediction - 11.30pm

### SUNDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY - NEW YEAR'S DAY

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God - World Day of Prayer for Peace

Festal Holy Masses at 9.30am and 11.30am

After Mass today bottles of Holy Water, blessed during Mass, for you to sprinkle your home, will be distributed to those present

## PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS

### SICK

Samantha Beach, Lorraine O'Donnell-Browen, Richard O'Donnell, Ray O'Donnell, Joanne Barrett (England), Brian McKenna, Eileen Biggins, Satya B Metha, Patricia McCormack, Helen Walton, Fiona Docherty, Margaret Deehan, Patricia Williamson, John Lang, Francis and John Reilly, Terry Cassidy, May McLaughlin, Theresa Fleetwood, Bailey Barnes, Liam Greig, Nicholas Oakes, Gillian Congdon, Liz Knight, Rita Baxter, Jean O'Neill, Ann Dillon (Dublin), John Thompson, Sarah Collins, Nora Houston, Catriona Slorach, Michael Tracy, Liz Nicol, Patrick Gahagan, Malcolm Buchanan (New Zealand), Maureen Macrae, Kate Milligan.

### RECENTLY DEAD

Maria Conway - Funeral Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> December 10am. John Kennedy, John Campbell.

### CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCES

Margaret Sinclair McCrear, John Connor, Cathie Hughes, Lynn Tonner, Frank Armstrong, Helen and Peter Orsie, John McAdams, Gerard Kennedy, Margaret-Anne Kennedy, Brian Curran, Margaret and Robert Purdie, Mary Agnes McCabe, Elizabeth McAnish, Peter McAnish, Philip McAnish, Margaret Hendry, James Hendry, Christina Farran, Robert Harrison, Maria Kochanska, Joseph McFadyen sen., Joseph McFadyen jnr., Tom Lochrin, Jim Graham, Mr and Mrs W. Graham and Son, Isabella and Robert Kinghorn, Cormack Cunningham, Barbara Hepburn, Jack and Chrissie McLaughlin, Mrs M. Smith, the Harvie Family and Friends, Robin Lyon, Isabel McCorry, Michael Burke, Frances Burke, Helen Dynan, Jack Dynan, Bridget Burke, Nicky Burke, Eileen Twigg, Harry Twigg, Pat Tennant, John Mullen, James and Annie Kennedy, Mary Baker, John Doyle, James Doyle, Theresa Doyle, Ken Baker, Blanche Baker, Frances 'Jo' Reilly, Peter Reilly, Francis Gabriel McNeill, Elizabeth Patricia McNeill, Aurelio Santonino, John McMillan, George MacLellan, Catherine Crews, John Crews, Catherine Slaven, Helen McCann, Elizabeth Patrick, O'Brien Family, McCole Family, Rose Margaret McKenna, John Muldoon, Priscilla and Edward O'Pray, Mark O'Pray, Michael Todd, Peter Garden, David Cook, Andrew, Annie and John McShane, Peter Connelly, The Harvie Family, John, Margaret and Gerald Ferrie, Alex and Jane Smillie, Nicola Harvie, Jane Underwood, Ryan Sneddon, Mark Divers, Liam Currie, Trevor Horton, Patrick Naughton, James Naughton Sen. and Jnr., Winifred Naughton, Alex Graham, John McKeown, Thomas McKeown, Anna Cullen, Bernie Cullen, Mary Aiton, Theresa McIntyre, Paul McAllister, Mary Fearon, Mary and William Doherty, Barrett Family, Doherty Family, Ian Forrest, John Reilly, Burns Family, McGowan Family, Savage Family, Patrick Heffernan, Angela Heffernan, Heffernan Family, Ellen Quinn, William Quinn, Quinn Family, McAlpine Family, Margaret Johnston (née Connelly), Peggy Campbell, Joseph Wilson, Catherine Denholm, Thomas Deholm, James Denholm, John Carson, Sheila Denholm, Christopher Walker, Brian Walker, John Devlin, Ian Davidson, Dennis O'Neill, Gerard O'Neill, Catherine Yardley and Mary O'Neill, William Magill, Pat McGinley, Bernie and Cecilia Kelly, Con, Mary and John Campbell, Maureen Donnelly, Charlie and Nellie Strain, Andrew Strain, James and Kathleen McGachey, Helen and John Stark, George and Rose O'Connor, John M. Muldoon, Margaret Muldoon, Rose McCabe, Elizabeth Richmond, Sister Sheila Clancy, Lorenzo and Antonio Di Vito, Don Smeaton, Patricia Burns, Alberto, Luisa and Elio Faccenda, John McEnaney, Margaret and Robert Purdie, Giuseppe Faccenda, Thomas and Elizabeth Ormsby, John Ormsby, Dan and Jancie McQuade, Katie Dzczbist, Tony Rooney, Jack Kelly, Barbara Kelly, Garry Family, Garrity Family, Traynor Family, Jim Lappin, Nora Lappin, Larry Butterworth, Rebecca Butterworth, Maisie Love, John Love, Tom Martin, Margaret Martin, Damian Martin, Bill Russell, Maureen Russell, Elizabeth Smith, Doreen Warren, Alexander Warren, Margaret Tollan, James Tollan, Josephine Maule, John Maule, Eileen McGuigan, James McGuigan, Willie McCann, Ray and Bill Crossan, Noah Repper, Ann Spicer, Michael Spicer, Barry Spicer, Mario Tamburrini, Catherine Tamburrini, Robert Tamburrini, John Mitchell, Robbie Robertson, Gail McFadyen, Dominic Saroli jnr., Sarah and James Mitchell and Family, The Williamson Family, Ann and Bernard McGovern and Family, Rev. Mons. Peter Smith, Dominic Saroli, sen., Cathy Saroli, Isabella Saroli, Roberta Saroli and Mr Saroli, Vittoria and Libbano Sinci, Bruno and Perla Mozzachioli, Lina, Rina and Norma Mozzachioli, Eldo and Serio Bergamini, John McAdams, Roddy MacSween, Bill and Maureen Russell, Susan and Tony Lynam, Mary and Bill Kane, Anne Usai, Anne Collins, Sharon Collins, Jan Kirkpatrick, John McKechnie, Jack Dynan, Helen Dynan, Nicky Burke, John Dynan, Michael Burke, Bridget Burke, Claire Burke, Michael Tennant, Patricia Tennant, John Tennant, Duncan McSporran, David Dynan, Bill McLaren, John Mullen, Mark O'Pray, David Murphy, Peter Murphy, Michael Todd, Margaret Murphy, John Murphy, Priscilla Garden, Daniel, Mona, Teresa and Hugh McGeoch, Ian and Malcolm McGeoch, Bill and George Miller, Docherty Family, O'Kane Family, Gemma Maxwell, Anne McShane, Mr M. Hannah, Liz Hannah, Alex and Gordon Cowley, Bobby Tate, Lynn Tonner, Jean McNair, Dan Smith.