

**Thought for the week
Fourth Sunday in Advent
20th December, 2020**

Lord Jesus Christ,
our Divine Physician,
we ask you to guard and protect us
and all people from the
coronavirus and all serious illness.
For all who have died from it ,
have mercy;
For all who are ill now,
bring healing;
For all searching for a remedy,
enlighten them;
For medical caregivers, helping the sick,
strengthen and shield them;
For all working to contain the spread,
grant them success;
For those afraid,
grant peace of mind.
By your grace,
may you turn the evil of disease
into moments of consolation and hope.
We abandon ourselves into your
infinite mercy.
Amen.

How shall we prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus as our King this Christmas?

One remembers past Christmases and in our case many of these were in Africa and Asia in large churches overflowing at Midnight Mass with as many people outside as there were squashed inside. What a contrast to this year when we are limited to only 40 in our Church and a need to pre-book even these places. Yet we can still celebrate Christmas and the coming of our Saviour.

Advent combined with current lockdowns is an opportunity to review our lives. Pope Francis in a new book suggests how we can emerge from the COVID crisis stronger and more united than ever. The book: "Let us Dream: The Path to a Better Future" is by Pope Francis written in collaboration with Austen Ivereigh:

"This is a moment to dream big, to rethink our priorities-what we value, what we want, what we seek – and commit to act in our daily life on what we have dreamed of."

Pitilessly the virus has demonstrated our mutual dependency and common vulnerability. The doorstep applause for the doctors and nurses risking their lives, and the key workers who kept essential services going was a collective lightbulb moment. The Pope writes:

"They are the saints next door, who have awoken something important in our hearts...the antibodies to the virus of indifference. They remind us that our lives are a gift and we grow by giving ourselves: not preserving ourselves, but losing ourselves in service. What a sign of contradiction to the individualism and self-obsession and lack of solidarity that so dominate our wealthier societies".

It is into this changed world we see Christ entering, not as a baby, but with power of the Spirit to change the unchangeable and set the prisoners free.

Stephen and Judy

"Let us Dream: The Path to a Better Future" is available through major booksellers



Prayers Please

For Margaret Allison (Mary Lewis' Mother) who died peacefully on Thursday. Mary would like to thank everyone who was praying for her,

Maddy Sharman has asked for our prayers.

Vera Bird has asked for our prayers for her Great, Great Grandson Harry

Please pray for Cecilia Fung, the mother of Fr Jojo. She has had a stroke.

Please pray for Timothy Kehoe, who is very ill.

Prayers please for Antonita's nephew Peppin who has been readmitted to hospital due to the coronavirus.

Please pray for Caroline Mikhail (daughter – in - law of Jane and Ramsay Mikhail) who suffered a stroke.

Please pray for Peter Halter's sister Jean who has macular degeneration and for Jean's great grandson Rogan who is 8 and has leukemia. Rogan continues to need our prayers. Please also pray for Peter's cousin Paul Wailen who is very ill.

Please pray for Ted Cotter (brother of Philomena) who has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy.

Please pray for children under stress.

Please pray for the residents and staff at the two nursing homes in our parish, Abbeycrest and St Luke's.

Please pray for all victims of the Coronavirus.



Please also remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time including;

George Raynard, Sheila Wright, Abigail Gonzalez, Paul Fay, Eamonn and Nancey Keogh, Gwen Payne, Bridget Mullaniff, Nan and Lawrence Maxwell, Tessie McNAmara, Ann Wevlin, Fr Robert O'Neill O.F.M, Fr. Xavier O.F.M.Q, Maud Cooper, Benjamin Roman Zambrano, Phyllis Baning-Gould, Robert Nicholson, Gino Dell'Aqua, Ivy Edna Roberts, Charles Harris, Kathleen Harris, Mickey Harris, Bridget O'Foughlin,