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We, the Priests of the Parish, would like to wish all the People of Bantry, both at home and abroad, especially those who are ill and those who are not able to travel home for the Christmas Season, a very holy, happy and peaceful Christmas with family and friends.

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 Fr. Sean Crowley
 Fr. James McSweeney

BANTRY PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND. 8TH – 16TH OCTOBER, 2018. EX CORK AIRPORT. COST: €1635.00. BROCHURES AVAILABLE AT THE PARISH OFFICE.

Lourdes Pilgrimage: The Bantry Parish and Friends Pilgrimage will take place from the 22nd to 27th September 2018 (Ex. Cork) with Full Board accommodation in the 'Agena Hotel'. Cost: €765. 2018 is the 160th anniversary of the Apparition. Spiritual Director: Canon Martin O'Driscoll Booking forms & Details will be available in Bantry Church in the new year.

Calendar: Mass Times and Intentions :-
Mon. 25th December: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

Hospital: 8.00am Bantry: 9am Coomhola: 10am
 Kealkil: 11am Bantry: 12 noon

Tues. 26th December: St. Stephen, First Martyr:
 Bantry: 10am: Mary & Jim O'Driscoll & deceased members of the O'Driscoll Family - Gearhies

Wed. 27th December: St. John, Apostle & Evangelist
 Bantry: 10am: Owen O'Sullivan - Glencreagh
 Hospital: 5.30pm: Denis Gilley - Caher

Thurs. 28th December: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
 Bantry: 10am: Gemma Barrett – Colomane East

Friday 29th December:
5th Day of the Octave of Christmas
 Bantry: 10am: Noel O'Sullivan (Slip Park) & his sister Sheila O'Sullivan (Clonakilty)
 Kealkil: 7.30pm: Maura O'Shea Kealkil

Sat. 30th December:
6th Day of the Octave of Christmas:
 Hospital: 10am: Myrna Cussen
 Bantry: 6.15pm: Tommy Murray – Ballylickey

Sun. 31st December:
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph:
 Bantry: 9am : Chrissie Collins - Durrus
 Coomhola: 10am:
 Molly O'Sullivan – Cappadyourdil, Coomhola
 Kealkil: 11am: People of the Parish
 Bantry: 12 noon: People of the Parish

Died Recently: We extend our prayers & sympathy to the families, relatives & friends of:

Patrick (Paddy) Creedon
 - Kielnagnapogue, Kealkil

Donal O'Connor
 - Glengarriff Road, Bantry

Sr. Catherine Spillane
 - Convent of Mercy Schull & Bantry
 - & Moulivard, Durrus
 May they Rest in Peace

Collection for Priests:

The collection at the Christmas Eve Vigil Masses and on Christmas Day is for the priests of the parish. Christmas and Easter are the only occasions when the collection goes to the priests' income. The Bishop only allows two days a year when the offertory collection is given to the Priests – Christmas and Easter. All other collections are for the running of the Parish. These are all accounted for by the Parish Finance Committee and in turn sent to the Diocesan Accountant in Cork. We thank you for your great support and generosity.

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The display of cribs in our churches is the result of the hard work and imagination of the students of our local schools. A special word of thanks to their teachers for their guidance and patience, especially when there is such a demand on their time at Christmas.

Hope & Peace

Father, at this special time, as blessings all increase, the Angels gather round about with Christmas hope & peace. Now help us Father, once again, to seek your star above, as reaching out across the world, we share your Christmas love.

Iris Hesselden

UCC Mature Student/QQ/FE (FETAC) CAO Information Evening

Wednesday 10 January, 6.00 p.m., Lecture Theatre Boole 1 (beside the Boole Library). Relevant for anyone making a CAO application or contemplating same. Personal Statement, budgeting, fees and finance, etc. All welcome

Offertory Collection: Weekend of 16th / 17th December: Bantry - € 1,380; Coomhola - €210; Kealkil - €285.

2018 Parish Calendars are available at the Church Porches. Please take one for your home and for your family & friends.

Recent Parish Baptisms:

Conor Joseph O'Neill

Balmain, Sydney, Australia

We welcome him into our Christian Community

Wedding Congratulations

Congratulations to Tracey Harrington of Pine Grove House Derrynakilla, Coomhola & Anthony Slattery (Tipperary), who were married on 8th December 2017 in the Honan Chancel UCC

2018 Rotas (Jan-June) for Ministers of the Word & the Eucharist are now available. Please call to the Sacristy or the Parish Office to collect your rota. Thank you. We ask that all Ministers arrange a sub if you cannot attend on your scheduled day

Christmas Anniversary List: We are now taking names of deceased loved ones to be prayed for at the Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We ask that you please specify the Mass at which you would like the person to be prayed for.

St. Stephen's Day Walk in aid of Bantry Hospice, Cancer Connect and Cork Arc Cancer Support.

Walk A: Boulteenagh to Fahan (approx.8km)

Walk B: Boulteenagh to ooska (approx 4km)

Walk C: Family friendly walk to Bantry House.

Buses leave Bantry Tourist office for A and B walks at noon. Walkers for Walk C leave at noon. Tea and Biscuits at the Bantry Bay after the walk!

THE DEEP END: Born on the Margins

The situation into which Jesus was born was one of huge stigma with dangerous consequences. God's physical birth into this world was condemned socially; Jesus was marginalised from the moment of his conception. Imagine God choosing to be involved so intimately in this world and in such a shocking way. Even the town of Galilee is problematic for this news, as Galileans were considered by the religious leaders of the time to be 'second-class Jews'. So the fact that God would send his messenger there is controversial in itself. Galilean Jews were considered to be less faithful than others, so it is ironic that in this particular situation Mary's response is the exact opposite. God surprises. God stands with the marginalised. God is present in the most hidden places at times. On the first Sunday of Advent we were invited to 'keep awake'. As we approach the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, what have you noticed this Advent? What has your waiting been like? How have you prepared? Where have you seen God present this Advent? Where have you seen God being born around you? In the most unexpected places? In the most marginalised? Is your heart more open to receive a new birth of God again?

'Quiet me within, clothe my body in peacefulness, that your Word once again may take flesh – this time, within me – as once it did in holy Mary; long Advent days ago.' Edward Hays

Jane Mellett (mellettj@gmail.com)