

St. Joseph's Church Wilton

Telephone: 021- 4341362

Website: www.smawilton.ie Email: stjosephschurchwilton@sma.ie



May you be blessed with the spirit of the Christmas season which is **PEACE**, the gladness of the season which is **HOPE**, and the heart of the season which is **LOVE**.

May you be filled with the **wonder** of Mary, the **obedience** of Joseph, the **joy** of the angels, the **eagerness** of the shepherds, the **determination** of the wise men, and the **peace** of the Christ child, this festive season and for the year ahead.

Christmas blessings to all our parishioners and all our Christmas visitors.

Fr. Michael, Fr. Thierry and all parish staff



Some Thoughts At Christmas

The Christmas crib can give us the courage that we need today to say a fond farewell to the grand model of the church that was the Gothic cathedral, with its magnificent stained-glass and stonework. This is happening anyway, with more than a few parish churches having to close down.

This is an opportunity to welcome the new grass-roots model of the church that is emerging. This is a simpler, more human and personal model.

The new model challenges us to take the risk of coming closer to each other - to support each other's faith, at a time when the secular culture is beginning to lose its humanity.

The Christmas story does not want us to think of the church as a religious ghetto! The crib is a world changing event, a liberating and saving event.

Our giving of gifts at Christmas is always selective. Most of us probably make a list of those we have to buy for. God's giving is not selective in that way. God gives the gift of his Son equally to us all. In the words of the Gospel reading, Jesus, the Word, is the light that enlightens all men and women. Even if we have hesitated to receive that gift in the past, God continues to hold out to us all the gifts of his Son. At this time of the year in particular, God is saying to each of us, **"Come and receive"**.

St Joseph's (SMA) Wilton Christmas Charity

For Christmas our parish is recognizing the plight of and supporting Christians who are being persecuted throughout the world through the work of Aid to the Church in Need. Here in Ireland we have the absolute freedom to celebrate Christmas if we wish. This is freedom denied to so many fellow Christians in so many countries throughout the world.

Any visitors attending our church this Christmas are most welcome. We invite you to join in supporting this worthy cause by placing a red ribbon on our Christmas tree and placing a donation in the box beside the tree. To date we have collected **€3,776**.



Picture of 130 Nigerian children who were held captive for a few weeks showing delight on their release. No doubt this will be a happy Christmas for them.

Mary's Christmas Dream

I had a dream Joseph. I don't understand it, not really, but I think it was about a birthday celebration for Our Son. I think that was what it was all about. The people had been preparing for it for about six weeks.

They had decorated the house and bought new clothes. They'd gone shopping many times and bought elaborate gifts. It was peculiar though, because the presents were not for Our Son.

They wrapped them in beautiful paper and tied them with lovely bows, and stacked them under a tree. Yes, a tree Joseph, right in their house. They decorated the tree also. The branches were full of glowing balls and sparkling ornaments. There was a figure on the top of the tree. It looked like an angel might look. Oh, it was so beautiful. Everyone was laughing and they were very happy. They were all excited about the gifts.

They gave the gifts to each other, Joseph, not to Our Son. I don't think they even knew Him. They never mentioned His name. Doesn't it seem odd for people to go to all that trouble to celebrate someone's birthday if they don't know Him? I had the strangest feeling that if Our Son had gone to this celebration, He would have been intruding. Everything was so beautiful Joseph, and everyone was so happy, but it made me want to cry. How sad for Jesus not to be wanted at His own birthday party. I'm glad it was only a dream. How terrible Joseph, if it had been real!

"Let's put Christ back into Christmas" for then there will be Peace on Earth for all men.

Christmas Gospel Reflections

The birth stories are found only in Matthew and Luke. Like all Gospel stories, they are written in the light of the resurrection. Again, like the Prologue of John, they serve to provide a Christological key to the identity of Jesus in the rest of the narrative. Again, like the Prologue, they establish a significant level of continuity with the revelation to God's first chosen people. Both Matthew and Luke write in dialogue with patterns and personalities from the Old Testament and, to a high degree, the writing is determined by those earlier models. While there is indeed a historical core (the Holy Family, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem), nevertheless these accounts are "parabolic" in nature rather than history as we would understand it today.

POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. Bring to mind a time when the birth of a child made a huge impact on you. Use the experience to meditate upon the incarnation.
2. There is great joy in the Gospel tonight. Have you ever felt such spontaneous, exultant happiness? A prayer of praise and thanksgiving.