

Christmas greetings and prayers

Dear Parishioners and Visitors

The theme of the Christmas Service organised by Portadown Inter-Church Forum was 'There is always enough'. Our prayer and hope for you this Christmas is that you have enough money to share in food, presents and charities; that there is enough room at your table for all who visit; that you have enough generosity and welcome and love and forgiveness for all you meet; that there is enough room in your home for the crib; that there is enough room in your timetable for God, for prayer, for Mass, for a visit to the crib in the Church; that you make enough time to spend with family and friends and neighbours.

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May God - who has enough love for all of us - bless you this Christmas and may our celebration of the Coming of Jesus help deepen our faith in God's presence in our lives and help us grow as a faith community caring for each other.

Â Â Â Â Very Reverend Michael Oâ€™DwyerÂ Â Reverend John Burns
Â The Proclamation of Christmas

After the passage of countless centuries from the creation of the world, when in the beginning God created heaven and earth and formed man in his own image; and very many centuries from the time when after the flood the Almighty had set his bow in the clouds, a sign of the covenant and of peace; in the 21st century from the migration of Abraham, our father in faith, from Ur of the Chaldees; in the 13th century from the departure of the people of Israel from Egypt under the leadership of Moses;Â in about the thousandth year from the anointing of David as king according to the prophecy of Daniel; in the 194th Olympiad; in the 752nd year from the foundation of the City of Rome; in the 42nd year of the rule of Caesar Octavian Augustus; while the whole world was at peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the Eternal Father, desiring to consecrate the world by his most gracious coming, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit, and when nine months had passed after his conception, is born as a man in Bethlehem of Judah from the Virgin Mary; the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

Prayer of Blessing at a Crib

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Saviour was great
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy and love.

Lord,
bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise up our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Saviour of all,
and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen

Grace at table during Christmastime

Glory to God in the highest
And peace to his people on earth.
Lord Jesus,
in the peace of this season our spirits rejoice:
With the beasts and angels, the shepherds and stars,
with Mary and Joseph we sing Godâ€™s praise.
By your coming may the hungry be filled with good things, and may our table and home be blessed.

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Blessed are you, Lord God.

Through the fruitful virginity of Mary
you fulfilled the long expectation of the poor and
oppressed.

Grant that with the same faith with which Mary awaited the birth of her Son, we may look for him in our
brothers and sisters in need.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen