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MASSES
 St. Paul's Oratory
 Tues.—Fri. 10am
 Sat. 6pm / Sun. 11am
 Available on Webcam
 & Radio 100.2fm
 No 10am Mass on Thursday & Friday

NEWSLETTER
 Articles for the Newsletter
 must be received by
 12 noon on Thursdays.
PARISH OFFICE OPENING HOURS
 Mon. Wed Fri. 9.30am—1.00pm
 Tues. & Thurs. 9.30am - 1.00pm
 & 1.30pm - 2.30pm

VISIT BALTINGLASS PARISH WEBSITE
 For Weekly Newsletter, Information,
 to make a donation etc.
www.baltinglassparish.ie

SUNDAY MASSES

	GRANGECON	STRATFORD
Dec:	24	17/31
Jan:	7/21	14/28

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS
 Christmas Eve (24th)
 6pm Baltinglass & 8pm Grangecon
 Christmas Day (25th)
 9.30am Stratford & 11am Baltinglass



WE REMEMBER

MONTHS MIND
 Kathleen Byrne, Raheen

ANNIVERSARIES
 Thomas (Sid) Byrne, Raheen
 Pat Rogers, Edward Street
 Margaret Nolan, Bawnogues
 Mary B. Byrne, Chapel Hill
 Michael Connors, 29 Parkmore
 Tom Coogan, Carrigeen
 Jack Doyle, Tinoran
 Jack & Ciss Kelly, the Dales, Carrigeen
 Bridget Dooley, Chapel Hill
 Lorcan Cogan, Kilmurry
 Ann Groves, Baltinglass
 James Nolan, Gilbertstown, Rathoe &
 deceased members of the Nolan Family

GRANGECON: 9.30AM
 John & Josephine Tierney, Rathbran
 Michael & Mary Wade, Rathbran

Rest in Peace

SVP CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2023
 Society of St. Vincent de Paul
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY.

BALTINGLASS - BIGSTONE - GRANGECON - STRATFORD
PARISH NEWSLETTER
 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10TH DECEMBER 2023

John the Baptist: A Central Figure of Advent

Over the weeks of Advent we encounter a number of key characters in the unfolding story of our salvation. In the Gospel this Sunday we are introduced to John the Baptist. An older cousin of Jesus, he was a prophet sent by God to prepare people for the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. His life was one of continually pointing to Jesus. When his mother, Elizabeth, was pregnant with John, she was visited by Mary, and John leapt in her womb. This revealed to Elizabeth that the child Mary carried was the Son of God.

John's desert ministry was all about calling people to be ready for Jesus and the change he would bring to their lives. John's call to repentance is not mere fire and brimstone, scare tactics, but is a call rooted in the belief that God is coming to His people and we need to be ready. John's message provokes us into action, calling us to turn back to God and to ready ourselves for Christ to come into our lives. Crucially, this personal readying involves looking beyond ourselves, to how we treat others and live with others. As followers of Jesus, it calls us to lives of justice and right relationship with one another; it calls us to acts of kindness and charity to neighbour and stranger.

*For the desert places in which we walk, the streets we roam,
 the paths we cross, guide our feet, take us to places where You would go.
 Give us words that You would use that in this Advent season of
 promise and preparation we might point the way with John the Baptist
 to the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*

Looking ahead to the Third Sunday of Advent—NEXT SUNDAY

 St John Paul II began a tradition in Rome that continues today. On this Sunday, children and their families from across Rome come to St Peter's Square, bringing with them the figure of the infant Jesus from their crib. After the Angelus, the children raise up the figures and the Pope blesses them. The day is now also known affectionally as Babinelli Sunday, the Italian for 'babies'. In many places the blessed figure is wrapped and placed under the family Christmas tree to be unwrapped and finally placed in the crib at Christmas – reminding us of the first and most important gift of Christmas.

Bring your infant figure to any Mass next weekend.

An Advent Tradition

 While the Christmas tree is very much part of the Christmas season, over the course of Advent the tree will begin to appear in more and more homes, signaling that we are getting closer to the feast of Christmas. In the midst of winter, the evergreen tree, dressed with lights, reminds us of the life and light that comes to us through Christ. The colourful decorations of the tree are a reminder of the paradise tree of the garden of Eden, hung with the bright colour of fruit. Families are invited to say the following prayer together when they put up the Christmas tree in their home.

*Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we gather around this tree.
 May its light and the cheer it gives us be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
 As we delight in this tree may we come to the knowledge and joy of the Christmas gift
 of salvation and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

ADVENT 2023

Come, Lord Jesus
Lord of Hope

Resources to help us through our journey towards Christmas are available on kandle.ie



SUGGESTION FOR THE HOME

Why not create a prayer space in your home for Advent? You might like to make your own Advent wreath or have a special Advent candle to use in the prayer space, including perhaps purple coloured cloth/ribbons and evergreens. You'll find a short video on creating an Advent prayer space on kandle.ie

AN ADVENT HOUSEHOLD PRAYER

Loving God, as your light grows in the dark of winter, bring its strength and its hope to the people of the Holy Land and to all people who suffer through war and conflict. Just as you sent the star of Bethlehem to lead the way to your Son, guide all people to follow your ways of peace and justice. As we remember the difficult journey of Mary and Joseph, may the Holy Family be a source of courage for each of us, helping us to reach out in friendship to the oppressed and displaced of this world. Help us to see in the Christ-child we welcome this Christmas, the one who came to bring an end to all divisions. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



FAMILY MASS

We invite families to join with the children preparing for Confirmation and First Holy Communion for the Mass on Sunday (17th)
9.30am Stratford 11am Baltinglass

STRATFORD/GRANGECON GAA LOTTO



Winning Numbers

13, 19, 22, 29



No Jackpot Winner

2 Match 3 Winners - €100 each

Kieran Hanbidge, Elaine

Sellers Prize: Glen Lounge

This week's Jackpot: €6,400

Additional Prizes - €50 each

Ann Marie Linnane, Mary Case, Tara Moore
Three extra prizes of €50 weekly up to Christmas.



BALINGLASS GAA LOTTO

Winning Numbers

01, 09, 27, 30



No Jackpot Winner

5 Match 3 Winners - €60 each

Declan & Bob Barrett, Anne Leigh,

Anne Marie Byrne, Maureen Plant,

Michael Kavanagh.

This week's Jackpot: €8,500.

6 VOUCHER WINNERS

Derek Patterson, Keith Pender,
Damian Patterson, John & Betty McMahan,
Brenda Murray, John McMahan



JACKPOT €1000

Mondays at 8pm in Fatima Hall

Thanks to everyone for their support.



LINK PEOPLE

Please call to the Parish Office from Wednesday onwards to collect the annual parish envelopes which are ready for distribution.

Prayer for Peace by Candlelight

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of the 'Prince of Peace' while we live in a world that is far from peaceful.

Join us this week on Wednesday (13th) at 7.30pm as we gather in Rathvilly Church to pray for peace especially in the Middle East and Ukraine.



SYNOD NEWS

A video of the recent talk given in the diocese by Bishop Brendan Leahy on his experience at the synod in Rome, and its findings, can be viewed on the synod page of the diocesan website, www.kandle.ie You can find other material on the synod & the synodal pathway for Ireland there, too.

BALINGLASS SINGS—OPEN REHEARSAL

The Baltinglass Sings group, which has been meeting every Wednesday evening in the Lalor Centre since the 13th Sept., is opening their last rehearsal in 2023 to the public. Over 50 participating singers, the conductor Paula Phelan & the accompanying musician Halyna Fler Obshta, extend a warm invitation to all music lovers in Baltinglass and its surroundings to join them on the 13th Dec. in Germaine's at 7pm for an evening of seasonal songs, mince pies, cuppa and chats. A free event; no registration required.



Friends of Calcutta

THANK YOU

For supporting last week's clothes collection.

DAY CARE BOUTIQUE

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances, the pop-up shop at Baltinglass Day Care Centre, due to open the 7th December, is now postponed. As soon as we have a new date we will let everyone know. Thanks to everyone for their continued support.

RAMPERE RECYCLING CENTRE

CLOSED: 24th to 28th Dec. inclusive

OPEN: Sat 23rd, Fri 29th & Sat 30th Dec
8.30am to 1pm.

Normal hours resume Tuesday 2nd January

BALINGLASS AND DISTRICT

ACTIVE RETIREMENT

Congratulations to our members in the Baltinglass Bowling Team. They were Plate Winners in last month's 3-day National Bowling Tournament in The Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney. We hope their inspiring success will encourage other members to join our Active Retired Bowling Team.

DANNY'S CORNER

Hello all. We would like to sincerely thank "4 mothers and others" for their very kind donation towards our Christmas party. A wonderful time was had by all on last Friday with plenty of music and dancing.



"Reusing something instead of immediately discarding it, when done for the right reasons, can be an act of love which expresses our own dignity" (#211)