

Christmas Message from Fr. Denis

Christmas Day 2014



Catholic Parish of The Sacred Heart *Our Mission*

Through the power of the Holy Spirit we will be a parish renewed in our knowledge and understanding of the love of Jesus Christ, to enable each of us to fulfil our Christian mission

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Dear Friends,

Twenty-five years ago, on 9 November, demolition began on the Berlin Wall. People used small tools, large hammers and other implements to break down the barrier. Built in 1961, it divided East and West Germany. Families were divided, communities destroyed, property seized and threats were made to anyone trying to cross over. Then on the evening of 9 November, twenty-five years ago, hope was born as the wall began to all.

History gives many examples of barriers that divided people. Some were religious, others social, class, illness and so on. We think of the Jews and the Gentiles, the sinner and those who judged. Here too, families were divided.

Into this divided world Jesus was born. He not only broke down barriers, He united people in a common bond – the love of God and His promise. Through His actions and words He broke down those invisible walls. This is part of the great message of Christmas.

There is no doubt as to the divisions which exist in our world. The war and suffering

which exists in so many places, and shown on our television screens, are a result of division. Palestine and Israel are an example.

Division can exist in families; a word spoken years back can cause hurt and division. Rows, misunderstandings, can fester for years. This time of year can focus on that. Hence it is a tie when we try, even for a day, to forgive and forget. The love seen in the crib urges our minds and hearts to change.

This year, as always, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year. During my recent illness I have received cards, visits and prayers from you. Thank you. Prayer is such a great comfort and strength. On 9 January I will be in the parish nine years, since 2006. It is a great privilege to be here, and I pray that the Lord will give me many more years here. I will keep my 40th anniversary of ordination on 15 June 2015. Please mark the date in your diary.

Special thanks to Deacon Philip, Fr. Dan and the Parish Management Team for your help over the last few months.

Fr. Denis

A Reflection by Fr. Denis

The shepherds were given the message by angels, which is fairly good authority, and yet they said, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see for ourselves this wonderful thing which the Lord has made known to us.'

The life of the Christian is a journey from revelation to faith. It involves coming to find out for myself the truth and the reality of what I had been told by my parents, teachers, or preachers in church. I have to cross that bridge. The gospel is in between two phrases. At the beginning, we are invited to 'come and see,' and, at the end, we are instructed to 'go and tell'.



The Jesus of Bethlehem is the same today as He was last year, as He was that first Christmas night. What can have greatly changed are the conditions within my heart. It could happen, for example, that today is the first day He has really felt at home in my heart, because it might be the first occasion in which He is genuinely welcomed, and made at home. If I can get this right, then, of course, this will certainly be the greatest Christmas in my life.

INFORMATION

CONFESSIONS

Confessions have been suspended for the present, please contact Deacon Philip for information on 07780 687 452.

PRAYER LINE

Please ring for intercessory prayer on 01525 634 186. We have some wonderful answers to prayers. Be assured of full confidentiality.

IN HOSPITAL, SICK OR HOUSE-BOUND?

Please let us know of anyone who needs a visit or requires Holy Communion at home.

THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL GROUP

meets every Monday at 7.45pm. If you would to join us or would like more details or if you know of anyone who needs a visit, help with transport or any other need, contact Pat Rees on 01525 713 547.

CARDS, GIFTS, etc.

Are available for sale in Sacred Heart church after 9.00 am and 11.00 am Masses. All are priced. Please put money in the repository box in the porch or see Clare Bevan – contact on 01525 403 589.

LITTLE 'UNS

Meet every Friday 10.15 am–11.45 am in term time, in the church hall. This is a group for babies and pre-schoolers. For further information please contact Catherine Bevan Dunn on 01525 862 253.

CHURCH NEWSLETTER ONLINE

<http://www.sacredheartflitwick.co.uk>

CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS

Your offering at Christmas is for your parish priest so please be generous.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Thank You

Fr. Denis would like to thank everyone for their weekly contribution to the parish; it has been wonderful to see the continued increase in giving. This will help in the running of the parish and in developing a contingency fund for the parish's future needs.