



Marino Parish Newsletter

Parish of St. Vincent de Paul Marino

No 6 Volume 19 Christmas Issue.



There is light!



Another year has passed, and we stand on the door of the Advent Season. Advent begins the Church's year and leads us in prayer towards the celebration of Christmas, the commemoration of the birth of Jesus. Advent has always been a time of expectancy, of hope and longing, when we focus on the core of our belief that the Redeemer would be born to us in a humble stable.

We build our faith lives around this simple and humble beginning and each year the Advent candle lights on our altar, bringing the birth of Christ nearer. In a blaze of light Christmas morning calls us to welcome Jesus, the light of the world, a light which takes away darkness and gives us hope.

Last year we were waiting in hope that the pandemic would end once we had a vaccine. That hope was realized but now at years end we have come to understand that the vaccine is body armour, not a complete shield. We are not out of the woods yet, so again, we must be mindful of all the precautions even though they seem to strike at the very heart of what Christmas is, the joy of the human family. That light of the Advent candle will shine again this Christmas and hopefully we will celebrate in safety as we greet each other and welcome those who have been away.

Pope Francis in his homily last year at the height of the pandemic in Italy reminded us that **"Being watchful in expectation of Christ's coming, not letting ourselves be overcome by discouragement. It is to live in hope"**

As people of faith, we see Advent as always, a sort of countdown to the outpouring of joy, in families, in the faith life. Children long for Santa, to meet their family, their grandparents, parents long for the wild geese to return home.

At this festive time, even if a little muted, we are called to remember that for many in our country and in so many parts of the world this season is more fraught, especially for those who have little, who may live in absolute poverty and want, where in many places the vaccine may not reach for another year or two and may not even then reach down to the margins.

During Advent, it is useful to reflect on the reality of Joseph and Mary on that journey to Jerusalem, a journey with all the risks which could befall a pregnant woman at that time. Today we feel sure that God held them in the palm of His hand, but did they feel that all the time. They were like us and those qualms and worries that affect us now were no different for them.

In times like these the words of the young Jewish girl, Anne Frank, still full of the bright hope of youth wrote as follows,

•I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that this cruelty too shall end, that peace and tranquility will return once more.'

Advent gives us that hope.

Our Christmas Crib



The image of the Christ Child in the manger and other pictures of the story of Bethlehem have been used in church services from the earliest days. One of the first images of the Nativity scene is said to be in one of the Roman catacombs in the burial place of a Christian family.

The crib as we know it originated with St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis felt that he could explain the story of the Nativity by creating a living tableau of people and animals at the Church to fully comprehend the circumstances of the humble birth of Jesus. On

Christmas Eve in the town of Greccio in Italy the first living crib came into being. Such was the manner in which this event captured peoples' imagination from that small town that the practice of having living cribs became part of the European Christian tradition. Because of the difficulty of always organising these living cribs particularly during times of war and pestilence that the practice of producing models became widespread. Italian cribs usually show a great variety of people in these static tableaux harking back to that first occasion with St. Francis. The innocence and simplicity of the Manger scene has inspired artist and writer since then and not only adults, but our children are still capable of wonder at the sight of the baby in the manger. Some purists would say that the crib does not reflect the chronological events of that time in the life of Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus, but we can overcome these querulous voices by immersing ourselves in the simplicity and humanity of the Birth of a Child.

Household cribs were always set up in the home using figurines gathered over the years and at one time every household would have a crib in the window or prominently inside the house. From the Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve when the image of the Infant was placed in the crib until the figures of the Magi arrived, the Church crib became a place to visit and to reflect on that miracle of Jesus present to us.

As Tom Kettle wrote on that fateful day in 1917, men carry the burden of the world not for fame or fortune,

**"Not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor, —
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,
And for the secret Scripture of the poor".**

Photo: Our parish crib last year

A very happy and Holy Christmas to all our loyal parish readers. We know that the web based newsletter cant get in every door but we hope you continue to find our current efforts worthwhile.

Also the Communications team would like to thank Fr. Tom, Fr. Christian, Parish Office personnel and the Sacristans for their continued support and also to recognise the great work done by our Pastoral Assistant, Mrs. Anne Dooley.

The late Kay Lyons R.I.P. – An Appreciation

On the 9th of November last the parish of Marino said goodbye to one of its oldest residents with the passing of Kay (Kathleen) Lyons. Kay over her long life was a true resident of Marino having been born and reared here and having lived all her life in the parish. Kay



was the last girl in her family of seven having three sisters and three brothers. At her passing she was just ninety years old. Kay was a woman of deep uncomplicated faith, with daily Mass until age and occasional illness upset her routine. She was always active helping out in various aspects of parish life. In fact, she was one of the early tea ladies. In her younger years she helped distribute the Marino parish newsletter.

Another aspect of Kay's life which she was immensely proud of, but which her innate modesty never drew attention to, was the fact that she was the holder of nine All-Ireland camogie medals having played in eleven All Irelands in total.

Kay was involved in training many young women in the Marino Camogie club, of which she was one of the founding members. Up to the outbreak of the pandemic she was still active in sport playing bowls in St. Anthony's club, Clontarf, and winning the league some years ago. She was also passionate about her beloved G.A.A., both football and hurling and she loved to go with her nephew Garrett, to Croke Park to watch her favourite Dub team playing.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Kay's family and friends on their sad loss.

Photo: Courtesy of Independent.ie. Kay Lyons is sixth from left back row on the Dublin All Ireland winning team of 1957.

The late Mrs. Desiree Prole. – An Appreciation

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of the late Mrs. Desiree Prole and to her fellow parishioners of Drumcondra, North Strand and St. Barnabas. Mrs Prole will be remembered as a great neighbour and friend to all and for her innate goodness and commitment to the highest ideals of Christian living. As a staunch member of her parish, she will be remembered for her work in music and at the Synod and for her time teaching in St. Columba's on North Strand.



In our parish community she will be remembered for her generous support and for her presence at so many shared Faith events especially at Harvest thanksgiving and at many Ecumenical ceremonies.



The closing date for material for next newsletter is 21st January 2022.

The Winter Garden

Gardening in winter is very often as much about contemplation and planning as it is about work. Unless you have a nice snug greenhouse or heated garden shed with a light then most of the work will be done outdoors if the weather is good, but of an evening the garden programmes may pass the time and fill you with enthusiasm for the great makeover.

The pandemic has made many of us look more closely at our garden. It is now a valuable space when one works from home. If we lift our heads from the screen to rest our eyes what pleasant prospect do we see. Does it enhance each of the seasons with colour or tracery, leafy and green in summer with warm colours or pristine whites for light. Sheltering shrubs in winter carrying the shining frost crystals or giving shelter in Spring to the emerging flowers and to the leafing fruit trees. It is also an arbour where children and the grand children can be safely under supervision.



The urban garden has actually come into its own in this difficult time. We hear people on gardening shows talking about a colour palette for the garden; flowers displaying their colour in a matching pattern. Now is the time perhaps to assess your garden. Does its planting and layout afford you and the family what the family needs. We are now living in the era of the all-year round garden. Garden centres and our own local suppliers ensure that we can have winter plants available to us either to plant out or to use in containers.

We can now buy in some winter flowering shrubs, which are to some extent frost resistant, and these can be planted in vacant spaces to take the bare look off the garden. Be advised by your local supplier or the garden centre, but also read the label on the plant or shrub. Some shrubs do not like to be exposed to strong sunlight. and even in winter, early morning sun can have a bad effect on them. If you have these shrubs in tubs or large pots make sure to keep them watered.

When placing some plants in a conservatory or porch ensure that they are frost hardy if this area gets very cold at night. With central heating on always keep a good eye on your indoor plants lest they dry out and you lose them.

Today many large potted plants very often come in colourful ceramic or pottery type pots.

If your intention is that they will be in the back or front garden, then check if the pots are frost hardy. Some type of clay pots will crack if the temperature drops very low.

In relation to pots and potted plants most garden sheds acquire a volume of plastic pots over time. Some people reuse them for potting out seeds, but it is worthwhile to disinfect them before reuse since you don't want to import pests into your garden soil or into your seedlings. If others go to recycling clean them out and check firstly that they can be recycled.

When we spoke about planning your garden one always assumes a garden space front or back. Modern house may not have as much ground as older houses so perhaps the idea of a vertical garden may appeal. It is something that you could plan for, read up and look at examples and if you have a nice wall even a shed wall you could have both a colourful and productive space. Old pallets if left over from some project can be painted up and used as shelves for plants placing small pots filled with flowers or herbs in the slotted space. Also of course apartment living brings opportunities for what people call micro gardens where one can grow herbs and various vegetables in pots and even using large coke bottles or water bottles cut lengthways and using potting compost.

Perhaps this has sparked your imagination a little and even it doesn't quite fit in with your plans to garden over time remember that any space can be what you can dream it to be.

In this time of pandemic perhaps your back wall might be the ideal place to project a tropical scene, not too brightly to annoy your neighbours but something for the dark evenings.

Even gardeners can dream.



Archbishops Homily for the first Sunday of Advent



In a beautiful homily at Mass in St. Andrews Church, Westland Row, Archbishop Farrell spoke about waiting in these challenging times. He spoke of how we have been waiting for the past two years, waiting for a vaccine to be developed, waiting to receive it, waiting for tests, waiting for much delayed hospital appointments. There are so many people waiting in their own way, those

terminally ill waiting to be called, farmers all over the world waiting for seed time or harvest. And also, families waiting for the birth of a baby. A woman waiting for her baby waits longing for the day and so full of hope. Was it any different for Mary at that first Christmas?

He reminded us that the world was waiting for God Who came to us in Jesus of Nazareth and continues to come in all phases of our lives. Remembering His presence, we are filled with hope. In God “our past and our future go hand in hand”

He reminded us that Advent is a time that alerts us to the reality that Christ has never left us. God is present in the common occurrences of everyday living where we can, as believers, bring the hope of Christ to those who find themselves lost and disappointed and without meaning.

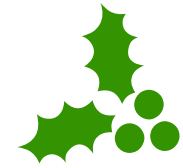
The Archbishop reminded us that the God who comes to us does not come just for us alone but to enable us to reach out to those afflicted or troubled or enmeshed in the epidemic of drugs or to those in poverty and want. He spoke of the need for a societal response to the scourge of drugs, and he expressed the view that only by working together as a society could we tackle the normalisation of drug use across society. In this response he reminded us that Pope Francis has urged us to have empathy and compassion for those so afflicted. We are all ‘fratelli tutti,’ brothers and sisters linked together inextricably. He reminded us that if we lose this sense of brotherliness we lose our sense of compassion and our empathy with those less fortunate.

He reminded us that the God who comes to us, comes to walk with us. To deal with the many problems of society we have to walk with the affected, to support, pray and encourage by our presence. Only through this understanding of being present for God can we create that society which will restore so many people to lives of hope and fulfilment.

Advent reminds us that the Christ who comes at Christmas is our role model as we support those communities and people and those who work in that vineyard.

Christ is not just present in Word and Sacrament, He is present in those people who help, who are present as His visible face to those afflicted. He reminded us that “To be a Christian is to relate in a particular way to people who are weak.” He said, that the presence of all who help in communities ravaged by social ills, testify to the presence of Christ among us and he prayed that, “In these days of Advent may we never cease to pray that his Kingdom may come, that justice and mercy be done. • Come, Lord Jesus! *Maranatha!* • Do not delay”

Pat on tap December 2021



Hi again



This time I’m sharing a painting that I have decided to call “Old Door” which is acrylic on board. It represents the year just finishing, 2021, which we are just about to step out of. The door has taken a lot of rough times and certainly the past year has been a rough time regarding the pandemic.

Personally I have lost my favourite cousin and two good friends and I’m sure many of you can top that. I don’t honestly know where the time went, with all we have been through with lockdowns and restrictions of one kind or another. You would think that the year would go very slow but instead it has gone in faster than ever. When we all got the jab earlier in the year, we thought that would

be the beginning of the end, but as things stand at the moment unless they come up with something better, we could be in a state of uncertainty for a long time to come.

Anyhow Christmas is nearly upon us once again and we will all please God have a lovely joyful and healthy festival. I wish all our readers a happy and prayerful Christmas and a great New Year when we enter through the new door of 2022. That’s an awful lot of 2s. We will all have to keep safe by wearing masks, keeping distance and avoiding big crowds. But get out there; do things; meet friends join clubs but do it all with and awareness of looking after yourself and all those that you meet up with. We can’t just isolate again; that’s not good for anyone, certainly not mentally. We just have to find safer ways of mixing.

Let’s hope and pray for an end to it all in the New Year. Please look after yourselves and your family and friends. We should really get together and pray the Holy Rosary one day of the week for an end to the pandemic. How about for a start all pray the Glorious mysteries on a Wednesday at a time convenient to you?

I will leave you with some words of Mother Teresa which would be an excellent guide to how we should travel through 2022 and would leave us with a door in much better condition to step through than the one we are just about to.

- “People are often unreasonable and self-centred. Forgive them anyway.
- If you are Kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.
- If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.
- If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.
- The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.
- Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God.
- It was never between you and them anyway.”

God bless
Pat



TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAKE RECIPE

Ingredients:

¾ lb. Butter (340 g)

¾ lb. Sugar (340 g) 6

Eggs

1 lb. Flour (452 g)

Pinch Salt

1 lb. Sultanas (452 g)

1 lb. Currants (452 g)

¼ lb. Raisins (113 g)

6 ozs Candied Peel (170 g)

2 ozs Cherries (57 g)

¼ lb Chopped Almonds (113 g)

½ tsp Mixed Spice

2 tbs Treacle

Glass Brandy (Whiskey)



Method:

Beat butter and sugar to a cream. Add each egg separately and beat until the mixture is stiff and uniform.

Stir in the flour, salt, fruit and chopped almonds, spice, treacle and Brandy (Whiskey), mix well and transfer to baking tin and bake for 6hrs 20 mins at Gas Reg. 2, Electric 150C (300F).

Preparation of Cake Tin:

9 " tin. Fully lined (sides and bottom) with double brown paper and then a layer of greaseproof paper well buttered.

Editors Note: The first Christmas that Simply Cooking with our late contributor and good friend, Mary O'Mahony, appeared was in two thousand and five and she used her favourite Christmas cake recipe in that issue. We have taken the liberty of using again in tribute to her.

Local Nature in Winter



Over the years our newsletter has regularly commented on the arrival of the Brent geese to a green patch or slob land near us. At the risk of continually repeating the news it is marvellous to see them once again out by Clontarf near the Causeway. More and more must we reflect on the recent COP26 conference at which so much was discussed about climate change and its effects. Our visiting bird life is also changing due to changes in the seasonal temperatures. It is possible that the Brent geese schedule may change if climate changes in Canada and in Greenland. The recent flooding around Vancouver is a reminder of how a major city could find itself

cut off by flooding. These events affect local wildlife destroying nesting colonies depending on time of year and by wiping out breeding potential among flocks of birdlife.

A recent newspaper article written by a journalist in west Cork talked about his delight at hearing the Curlew, with its familiar call. He evidenced the fact that there were very few breeding pairs now in Ireland, in his account only one hundred breeding pairs. That must give us cause for thought when we look for them along the foreshore out by Clontarf and the Bull Wall.

For many people during the past two years of lockdown garden birds, birds in passage and of course the birds encountered as we walk through our parks and along by the sea have become part of the background of life.

At a time when so many people either on bikes or walking are wedded to their earphones, the songs of nature find little space to be heard. It would be a shame if current and future generations will rely on archive footage either to see and hear our native and visiting birds.

History is littered with different species which have disappeared either through hunting, disasters, agriculture, loss of habitat due to flooding or ice melt, or in pursuit of minerals or oil or precious metals. We can use this time of slow down to listen to the sounds of nature and perhaps understand the cry to protect what we have.

Imagine the fields of the countryside without the murmur of starlings in flight as they wheel and turn in their thousands in an aerial ballet. As we walk along either side of Dublin Bay notice the small flocks of small sea birds performing so much like the starlings in the Autumn in busy flight to air and back again to rest on the water's edge.

These small birds are called Knots and sometimes a small flock can take to the air as you pass by as if startled by our intrusion.

Many years ago, Rachel Carson wrote a seminal book called 'The Silent Spring'. It saw nature and bird life vulnerable to advances in chemical use for agriculture and in some countries, using chemicals to combat the spread of malaria by killing off mosquito breeding grounds. War has also left its residue in so many countries where the chemical aftermath of bombing and so on has degraded natural habitats.

We may only have now to try to preserve and nurture as much wildlife as we can. Pope Francis prayed in a homily before the UN Summit on Climate Change is starting, **“so that the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor will be heard and that this meeting may give effective answers offering concrete hope to future**



Christmas Candles



Part of our Christmas preparation in older times was the purchase of the Christmas candle. Fairy lights and electronic displays have almost obliterated this practice from our memories. The Christmas candle and its lighting was part of how Christmas was celebrated. On Christmas Eve going through the countryside, each house would have at least one candle twinkling in the window, if

not one in every window.

Lighting the candle was also part ceremonial since the youngest child was always called upon to light it. This tradition probably came about in penal times when the lighted candle showed a safe house for a priest to stay or to say mass. For many people the candle was a welcoming symbol for the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph to show the world that there was a welcome at each house.

While many people still follow the traditional practice, with the risk of fire and accidental damage today more people now use an artificial electric candle.

From those memory banks of youth, one remembers that colour was important, with so many people seeking red candles and others blue. Of course, as well in those different days, people liked to have blessed candles in the house if a priest had to make a sick call. So many little touches were important to us then.

Today of course candles are an important part of house décor for many people, with scented ones and other varieties for aromatherapy and so on.

For many of us however the candle will symbolise the open door and the welcome for that little family at Christmas. In this time of pandemic may the light of the Christmas candle either from beeswax or electricity continue to fall on all who have a welcome for people at Christmas time?

Thank You

A sincere word of thanks to all parishioners for your support in 2021 and especially to all our volunteers who made it possible to function in the past year.

Wishing you a Very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and looking forward to a healthier and more normal 2022

Father Tom, Father Christian and the Parish team

This issue of the Newsletter is dedicated to our late friend and colleague, Raoul Essig whose skills in design were evident in every newsletter since 2009.

The Newsletter is published in good faith by the Communications Group of Marino Parish. The Parish cannot accept liability for any errors or omissions contained therein

The 'humble' cyclamen



Each year at this time we are bombarded with photos of poinsettias and their availability for Christmas. Full of dramatic colour they tend to take over the narrative. Last year our Christmas issue featured the lovely Mexican legend which refers to it as the Flower of the Holy night because of a miracle associated with it.

Over the last number of years another beautiful small colourful flower has also come to signify this time of year through Autumn and into our winter. The beautiful colours of the cyclamen are proudly displayed outside our local hardware shop and at various florists and garden centres all over the country. Their glorious reds and pinks and various shades in between with purple and the glorious white tinged with pink give such colour wherever we see them. Interestingly enough there does not seem to be a yellow cyclamen.

It is a gentle revolution that allows us to decorate our memorials in the cemeteries as we visit our loved ones. As the centre piece of beautiful containers and pots the cyclamen brings joy and colour not only to our outdoor spaces but to conservatories and indoor spaces.

Not alone that as long as they are kept moist and in shelter our little plant can survive and perpetuate itself for months and months.

The cyclamen is originally a flower from the Mediterranean basin and up into southern Europe. It is known since biblical times and in many cultures has a variety of uses. Its tubers have been used in the Middle east for cleansing and even for making fish bait.

However, in both the Christian tradition and in Muslim tradition where the Blessed Virgin is venerated the cyclamen is identified with Mary and is known as the Incense of the Virgin Mary.

Its white flower with its demure head has been associated with the acceptance by Mary of the Angels message and the reddish pink colour is associated with the suffering which she bore with the death of Jesus. The tuber has been used to produce the incense for purification ceremonies and was used by the Sultans in the grand mosque in Istanbul.

Since the cyclamen has been a plant of the Autumn it has been associated also with the feast of All souls and is used at funerals along with chrysanthemums, and as we said to bring to the grave of our loved ones.

As Christmas approaches bring colour and gentle beauty into your home or a colourful gift to those you love with a cyclamen.

Editor's Note

At this very unusual time we would like to thank all of our sponsors who helped us in the past eighteen years and to ask you to continue to support their businesses over Christmas and for the future. We have included a page in tribute to those who have helped the newsletter through sponsorship in the past years

Our local Supermarkets, Bakers, Butchers, Pharmacies, Hardware, and all our services such as our Hairdressers, Dry Cleaners, and local Gyms, our local coffee shops and Chippers have all played their part in helping us get through the various lockdowns. Nor can we forget our Doctors, Dentists, care Staff, and of course our Funeral Directors whose unfailing kindness and compassion has helped so many of our bereaved parishioners. We wish all of them a safe and successful Christmas.

KELLY BRADSHAW DALTON

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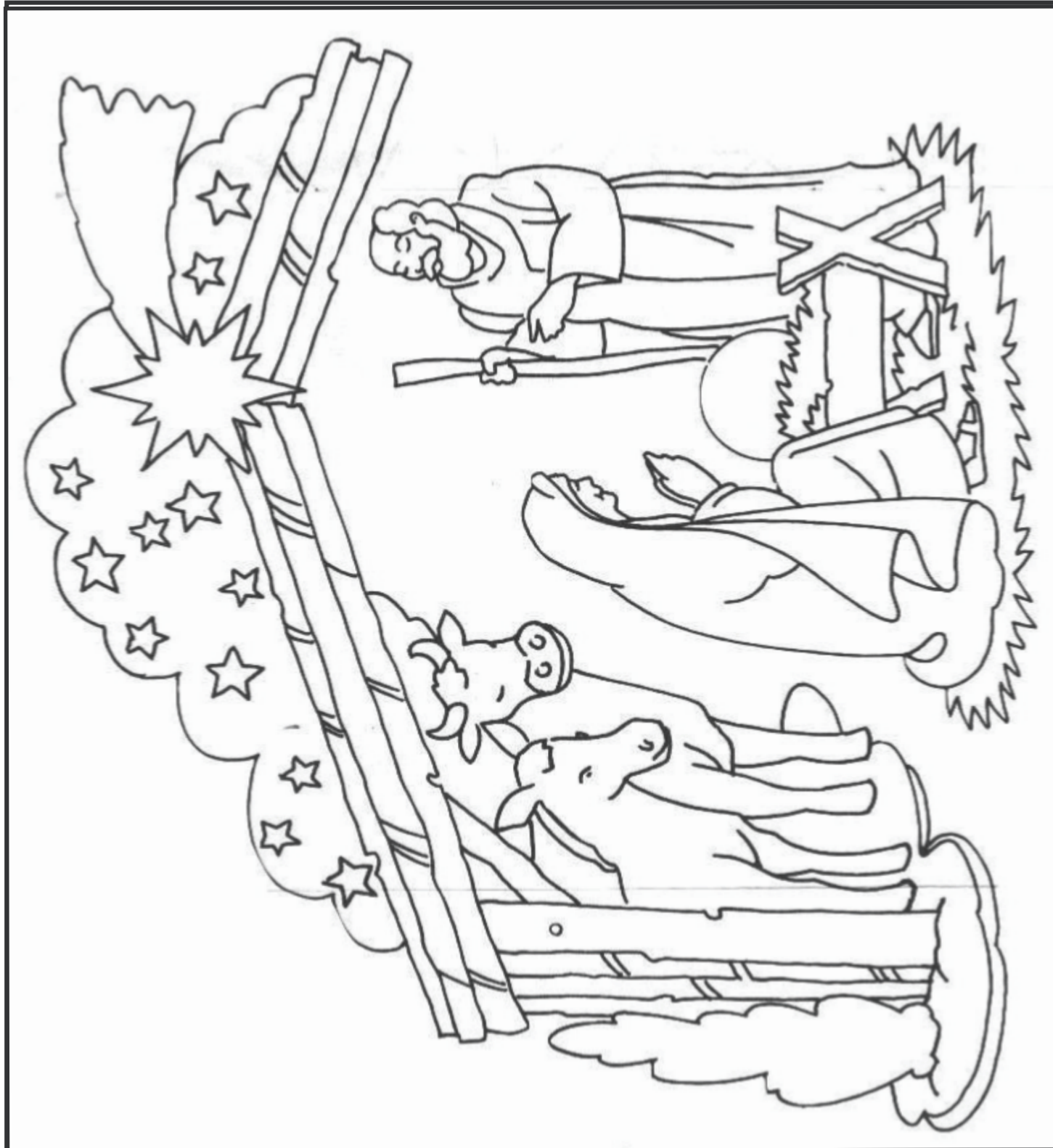
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Christmas Colouring Competition

Welcome to all our young readers who have loyally entered for the Art competition in our normal Newsletter.

Just colour in the drawing, write your name and address on the back of the page and drop your entries into the parish office at Marino Church, before the 14th. January 2022

Please do keep entering as it a great encouragement to our judges and our editorial team, when we see so much young talent and interest, especially as our newsletter is on the web for the time being.

Gift tokens for the winning entries. The upper age limit is 12 years. Results published in the next newsletter, and the judges' decision is final.

In line with Child Protection Policy please do not give children's mobile phone numbers.

We also leave out house numbers in the publication to maintain anonymity .

Halloween Colouring Competition Winners

1st prize : Isabella Wusu

Second prize: : Sadbh Breen

Joint Third Prize : Ava Grace Kelly, and Saoirse Breen

Closing date for the next Competition is 14th January 2022