



## *Christmas Message 2024*



The theme for this years Late Late Toy Show was based on the film Home Alone which came out for Christmas 1990. This is a comedy featuring a family in America going to Paris for Christmas and accidentally leaving their troublesome Son, Kevin behind at the airport.

He has to spend Christmas at home in his own house and what follows is a series of adventures and mischief as thieves try to break in. It is fun loving and heartwarming as well as a hilarious film that at the end of it all reminds us that home is a “home sweet home”.

Home and the family are at the heart of Christmas celebrations and festivities. “Home for Christmas” is one of the great joys of our yearly feast that is the wish of our exiles no matter wherever they are in the world.

“Home for Christmas” was a song sung by Bing Crosby and other singers down the years. “Driving home for Christmas” was sung by Chris Rea in 1986 and captures the mood of expectation and excitement. Some of the words go like this; “Driving home for Christmas with a thousand memories; I take a look at the driver next to me; he’s just the same; he’s driving home for Christmas.”



The airports will be extremely busy with arrivals from all parts of the world. There will be joyous family reunions. When we think of these homecomings, it highlights all the more the plight of the homeless. We have the continuous coverage of the volumes of people displaced by war, conflict and persecution especially in the Middle East, Ukraine. We think of those who have lost everything, not to mention those who have lost their lives. These are harrowing times for survivors trying to find crumbs of hope in the midst of desolation.

Reducing the numbers of homeless will continue to be one of the challenges for our new government along with the task of providing suitable accommodation for the growing number of immigrants arriving in our Country.

We might ask; what is the message of Christmas? The Christmas cards and the Christmas carols try to put the message of Christmas into words, images and pictures. What is this message? A class of school children was asked to sum up this message in one word. Peace, Love, Joy, Children, Brotherhood were mentioned. One person mentioned the word, Home. Christmas is the feast of the family when everyone tries to get home.

The English Poet, G K Chesterton said that Christmas is the feast when everyone is homeless trying to get home. He may have meant all those travelling at this time of year and he may have meant the way we feel in our hearts, that we come from God, that we are made by the very heart of love, and that Christmas most of all is a time when we feel cut off or isolated and lonely. When there is no one around to share that experience of love and togetherness.

Christmas speaks of peace, love, joy, hope and friendship. Christmas is surely all of these especially if our deeds are inspired by these qualities that come from God himself.

We might say that Christmas is only for children, but it is for all of us, and we share the wonder and excitement of children at this time of year.



Santa Claus is the centre of their world. The word Santa means Saint in Latin. All of us can be another Santa for all those around us, bringing much needed hope and cheer into the lives of those in family and community. There is always a brokenness in this valley of tears. We are not perfect, and our common humanity is made up of our faults, feelings, shocks and accidents, we are all there for one another.

## ***Children's Story***

A father, who had been working hard all day, came home wanting rest and quiet. But his young daughter kept pestering him. To keep her quiet, he cut out a map of the world from a newspaper and cut it up into pieces of different sizes. He then told her that he would give her a bar of chocolate when she had "put the world together". He hoped that this would give him an hour of peace. Five minutes later she came back telling him that the map was finished and was laid out on the floor. The father was surprised and asked, "how did you get it together so quickly?" 'That was easy,' she said, 'I just turned the pieces over, and on the other side, I saw the picture of a man. When the man was put together right, the world was right'.



## ***In Memoriam***

We think of those who have died since last Christmas. *May they rest in peace.*

### ***Croom***

Noreen Gardiner (nee Hayes), Croom  
Stiofán Moloney, Anhid  
Noreen Mullane (nee Leahy), Elm Park  
Johnny Sweeney, Caherass  
Frank Mullane, Elm Park  
Tom O'Rourke, Glen Má  
Gerard Moloney, Caemore Court  
Jerry English, Croom Cottage  
Willie Cregan, Skagh

Eileen Clifford (nee O'Brien), Donoman  
Mary-Ann O'Shea (nee McInerney) Kylefea  
Lena Fitzgerald, Main Street  
Christina (Crissie) Sheahan, Honeypond  
Nora-Mai Dunworth (nee Begley), Main Street  
Brendan McMahan, Croom  
Mary Whelan, Kylefea  
Sadie Mangan (nee O'Connor), Honeypond

We also remember Rev. Joseph Kennedy RIP and those who were laid to rest in Relig Mhuire and Church of Ireland Cemetery.

Betty Darcy (nee Sheahan), Granagh, Bernadette Fitzgerald, New Rd., Vincent O'Neill, Charleville, Fr. Willie Walsh, Croom, Kathleen Kennedy (nee Cashen), Adare, William Daly, Ballingarry and late of Croom, Frank Burke, Donoman, Michael O'Sullivan, Croom and Daniel O'Riordan, Patrickswell. May they all Rest in Peace.

### ***Banogue***

Michael Storan, Morenane

Moss Guiry, Banogue

## ***Grief***

When we lose someone who is important to us, we grieve. This is a natural process. Feelings and thoughts come in waves. Particularly at Christmastime bereavement is challenging. We remember and cherish our departed loved ones. Happy memories relived at Christmastime can be a source of healing. One lives on in one's children and relatives.

No person is ever truly alone. Those who live no more, whom we loved, echo still in our thoughts, our words and our hearts. And what they did, and who they were becomes a part of all that we are, forever.



## ***Christmas Joy***

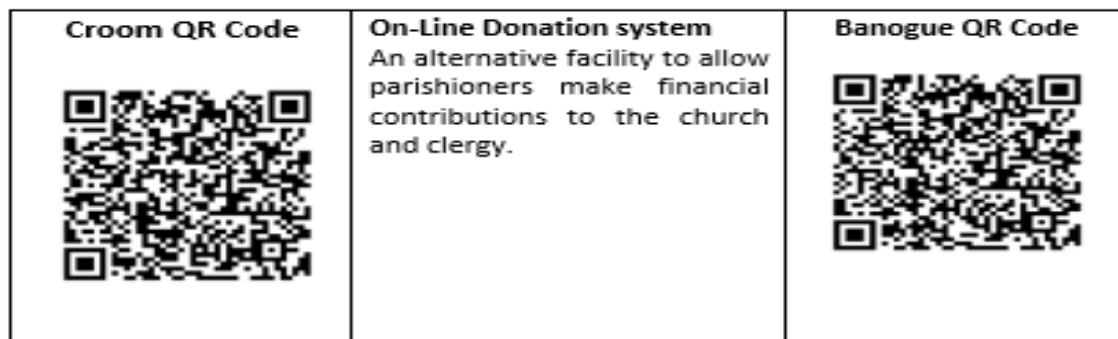
Joy is a blend of laughter and tears.

It is looking for the happiness that comes in small packages, knowing that big packages are few and far between.

It is making the most of the present, enjoying what is at hand right now.  
Joy is love bubbling over into life.  
Joy is the flag we fly when Christ, the Prince of Peace, resides in our hearts.

## ***Christmas Dues***

The Christmas Dues Collection will be taken up at all masses this Christmas. There are extra envelopes at the back of the Church. Alternatively, you can use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR Codes below to bring you directly to our payments site for Croom and Banogue or alternatively use the donate button on our parish website <https://www.croomparish.com/>



Again, the priests appreciate your generous support throughout the year.

We also thank all those who contribute to the Offertory collections for the upkeep and maintenance of both Banogue and Croom Churches.

We are also indebted to all personnel who are involved in the different groups and organisations in both Banogue and Croom Parishes who work for the welfare and betterment of the two parish communities.

## ***Prayer for Migrants and Refugees***

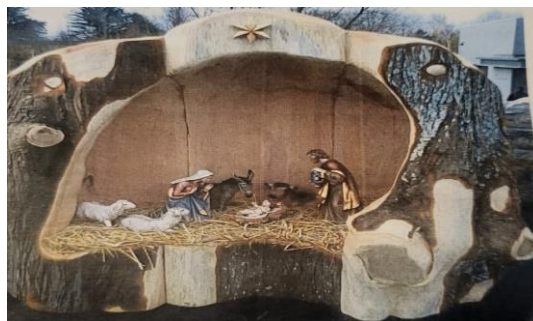
Merciful God, we pray to you for all the men, women and children who have left their homeland in search of a better life. May we never forget them but honour their sacrifice with deeds more than words. We entrust to you all those who have made this journey enduring fear, uncertainty and humiliation, in order to reach a place of safety and hope.

Just as you never abandoned your Son, as he was brought to a safe place by Mary and Joseph, so now be close to these, your sons and daughters, through our tenderness and protection. In caring for them may we seek a world where none are forced to leave their home and where all can live in peace, freedom and dignity.

Inspire us as nations, communities and individuals to see that those who come to our shores are our brothers and sisters. May we share with them the blessings we have received from your hand and recognise that together as one family, we are all migrants, journeying in hope to you, our true home where every tear will be wiped away, where we will be at peace and safe in your embrace. *Pope Francis.*

## ***The Crib on the Croom Church grounds***

During the big storm in February 2014 many big trees were knocked down. One of those huge trees fell on the land of Joan and Denis Brosnan. They arranged for a special carving of a crib to be made out of the tree trunk. They got the crib figures handmade, and hand painted in Italy. The finished product is a beautiful work of art and is now located at the side of the Church that faces the gateway onto the car park.



## ***Remembrance Tree***



We think of our exiles especially at Christmas. You are invited to write down the name of a Family member living abroad on one of the tags provided and place it on the Remembrance tree. Also, we can remember our departed loved ones who have died abroad. We will put these names on the parish website for Christmas.

### ***Christmas Arrangements***

Confessions: Christmas Eve Croom Church 11.30 am – 12.30 pm  
**Masses:**  
Christmas Eve: Banogue 5.45 pm Croom 4.30 pm (Childrens' Mass) & 7.00 pm  
Christmas Day: Banogue 10.00 am Croom 11.30 am

### ***Dates to Remember***

Confirmation: Banogue Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April at 10am  
Croom Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April at Noon  
First Holy Communion: Croom, Saturday May 10<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am  
Banogue, Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am

## ***Jubilee Year 2025***

The Holy Father has decided that 2025 will be a Jubilee year, something that happens every 25 years. The theme is “pilgrims of hope” and is a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, the ongoing effects of the Covid 19 pandemic and a climate crisis.

Jubilee is a name given to a particular year – a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another and with all of creation.

### ***Special Prayer for Jubilee***

Father in Heaven, may the faith you have given us in your Son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May the grace of the Jubilee, reawaken in us, pilgrims of hope and yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed be glory and praise forever. Amen

## ***We wish all the parishioners of Banogue and Croom at home and abroad a happy and peaceful Christmas***

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