

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS: welcoming the Birth of Christ.

THANK YOU to all who have shared in the collaboration of many different ways of giving service that makes the masses so fruitful and beautiful.

Fr Tony says a big Thank You to so many for so many personal gifts and greetings and the marvellous blessing of sharing in such a Christmas community.

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS: Realizing God's Gift

The Liturgy: The Christmas Octave days following Christmas day celebrate great Saints as children of God, encouraging us in our own following of Christ. Then:

- Feast of Mary, Mother of God on Sunday January 1st
- The Feast of the Epiphany on Sunday January 8th
- The Baptism of Christ on Monday 9th January
- Peace Sunday on Sunday 15th January with Visitation Joynt Mass #2
- Christian Unity Sunday on 22nd January.

Spirituality: GOD-IS-WITH-US: that the Word may become our flesh.

- **The Examen** is a good practice to look for the light of Christ day by day and ask for the Spirit's help in the dark experiences
- **the LIVING CHRIST RETREAT** is a wonderful, simple retreat day to grow in the blessings of Christmas. Led by Fr Chris from Irenaeus here in SJS on Friday-evening/Saturday-day 20th/21st Jan 2017: teaching about down to earth living in faith, with friendship and support for each other. Do sign up now for a New Year blessing. NB the GIFT prayer group meets at 8pm on Tuesday 3rd January for prayer, planning & invitation ministry.
- **The Ministry of Mercy** continues each first week, monthly with prayer for healing, Sacrament of the Sick and Confessions. Archbishop Malcolm has clearly forbidden general absolution in the diocese, so in future the sacrament of reconciliation can be received only by personal confession.
- **Contemplative Meditation:** each Wednesday and Friday at 6.30pm for ½ hour. We begin again on Wednesday 4th January. On Saturday 7th 11am til 5pm is the next First Saturday monthly Soulcare day at Sacred Heart: come for any or all of the sessions: 11-1; 1-2 lunch; 2-3.30; 3.30-5.00 mass & talk.

SHARED LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY:

The Church Teams joint meeting is on Tuesday 10th January, 7.30pm at SJS for one of the two times annually together: to start off the New Year implementing the Parish Vision. The agenda so far includes: -continuing the review of Christmas fairs – the Welcoming Priority and Visitation Joynt Masses – Ecumenical life in 2017 – your suggestions are welcome through the box in the porches or email.

The Parish Vision Team meets on Thursday 12th January 4pm: your parish representatives are Monica, Claire, Anne and Gina.

Southport Catholic co-ordinating Group(SCCG) are the parish reps with the priests serving Southport's Missionary Plan. The **Missionary Outreach** team from the SCCG are hosting an evening of **"Spreading the Light of Faith"** on Tuesday 24th January at 7.15pm in SJS: continuing the call to "Come and See",

learning from the Prophet Jonah to share with others, working to have Christ lit up in next year's Christmas. All welcome.

Catechists for Children and Parents passing on faith: on Thursday 12th January from 7.15 in Sacred Heart. Ann Welsh leads a marvellous session looking prayerfully at the liturgical year, planning blocks of Sundays and looking towards Lent. Sure to be fabulous: all catechists and interested parents welcome, open to all from the Southport Pastoral Area.

ROTAS 2017: thank you to our rota makers! Please ensure you have yours: apparitors/greeters, Readers, Eucharistic Mins, Counters.

GROWING COMM-UNITY: "Jesus Christ is uniting our community of HeartStone in its Vision and Mission...." but what that unity will look like is what we must discover together. It is not amalgamation!

The 2nd Visitation Joynt Mass is 15th January at 10.00am

when St John Stone will host the visit from Sacred Heart with the ONE Sunday mass: the 9am and 10.30am suspended on that day only.

The next Preparation meeting, open to all, is at SJS on Tuesday 3rd Jan, 7pm

SJS Photo's wanted by 8th Jan please! Photos wanted of St John Stone Church & Club for the joint Mass. Please put your name & address on the back and on an envelope, so we can return them afterwards.

Parish Chosen Charities: thank you to the parishioners who put on the great social events for the charities. We start 2017 on Friday 27th January at St John Stone with a Frankie Valli tribute and songs from the Jersey Boys show.

Future dates for your diary: Feb 25th Lionel Ritchie Tribute act -17th March Irish singer - 21st April Abba tribute act -13th May Rat Pack – June: Parish barbecue

Improve Woodvale: our next gathering is a **New Year Sociable Meet-up** on Wed 11th January in St John Stone parish centre's games room, from 7.30pm with plans for Homewatch, update from Sefton on Sandbrook Way.

JUST MEN: an invitation for men to gather on Friday 6th January for mass at 7.30pm in St John Stone followed by company, chat, a pie and a pint: first drink on Fr Tony in the bar at the Parish Centre. All ages of males welcome!

GRATITUDE AND CHARITY:

Bethlehem Children: crib donations will be passed on through our Archdiocese to the sisters in the Holy Land caring for orphaned and wounded children.

Thank You lunch for the House and Admin Team, on Tuesday 3rd January 1pm

Welcoming the Stranger: our friendships through Asylum Link Merseyside continue as they expand with new leases, and our parish volunteers are invited to get together on Friday 13th January at 7.30pm.

Dementia Information Sessions available for all who live in Ainsdale, an hour in Sacred Heart Hall during January: Friday 27th 10.00am & 2pm; Tuesday 31st 7pm.

Our SVP do great work in the parish, in Southport and with MRANG. Donations continue after each mass when no other collection. Bravo the appeal:see back page!