

REALIZING THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

This is the Catholic attitude to living a Happy New Year. This year it is after the **14th Night** that Christmas decorations come down – at least in our churches – but the Christmas spirituality continues in the liturgy and our evolution into living the Christmas faith. We are now led to appreciate afresh the Christ child's grown-up mission to the world. **“Realizing” is a word that helps:**

- **meaning #1** is realizing in awareness, to come to see and recognize, to appreciate the value of Christ's coming and discovering afresh the grace
- **meaning #2** is the sense of “making real”, enabling Christ's work to take flesh again, become actual, enabling it to happen and make new history

REALIZING #1: PERSONAL DISCOVERY of the CHRISTMAS GIFT

The LITURGY:

- The **Feast of the Epiphany** calls us to receive fresh showings of God's active love and glory among us, through our own faith and the “stars” we follow
- **Christ's Baptism** this Monday reminds us how he and we, his followers, are blessed with the Spirit for mission in the world
- **Peace Sunday** next week offers the world the hope we all seek to end war, Pope Francis is leading the way to a “Politics of Non-Violence”
- **Christian Unity Sunday** on 22nd January strengthens our working with all other Christians: leading up to this Sunday, evenings at 7pm in each other's churches build up this unity from Monday 16th to Friday 20th.

The LIVING CHRIST RETREAT:

Led by Fr Chris Thomas from Irenaeus, here in SJS on Friday-evening/Saturday-day 20th/21st Jan 2017 this is not a traditional, silent-only time, but helpful teaching about down to earth living in faith, with friendship and support for each other. Learn further ways of meeting God in our everyday living. **Do sign up now** for a New Year blessing not to be missed. Bring a friend for company and support.

LOOKING INTO the LITURGY of the WORD

This Thursday, 12th January, from 7.15 in Sacred Heart, Ann Welsh leads a marvellous session looking prayerfully at the liturgical year, reflecting on the Sundays of the Sermon on the Mount and looking towards Lent. Particularly vital for catechists in Children's Liturgy, others and parents will love Anne's way of opening up the beauty of our faith in the Sunday readings. Do come and try it: bring a friend. This is open to all in the Pastoral Area.

“COME AND SEE” is our Southport Catholic invitation to new people to follow up God's signs in their own lives to find out more about faith and our parish life. Do spread the invitation and help people contact us in the office or website. Groups meet in St Marie's and St John Stones to help each others' learning.

REALIZING #2: HELPING CHRIST'S GIFT TO HAPPEN AFRESH “SPREADING THE LIGHT”

on Tuesday 24th January at 7.15pm in SJS all are invited to learn new ways and encourage each other in **letting the light of Christ shine out** in Southport:

- extending the work of “Come and See” by inviting and celebrating in Lent
- learning confidence from the Prophet Jonah to share the faith with others
- making 2017 a year of passing on faith in Ecumenical ways
- working to have Christ lit up in next year's Christmas.

This evening is part of the Pastoral Area Missionary Outreach work.

BUILDING UP COMM-UNITY: SOCIAL LIFE Supporting the parish social opportunities is a great contribution to community life. See the details on the back page for the **socials for the Parish Chosen Charities**, the regular activities in **The Parish Centre at SJS** and the periodic **opportunities in Sacred Heart. BINGO** is still a great support to many: Fridays, Sacred Heart & Wednesdays, St John Stone

THE WELCOMING PRIORITY: See the INSERT today for appreciation of the spirituality and activities of the Visitation Masses that all can contribute to. **The Parish Vision Team** meets this Thursday at 4pm to review the mission, with Clare McConnell leading this first of the priorities of Mission.

SHARING IN LEADERSHIP: thank you to all who joined in before Christmas with the skills workshop for prayer and worship. Four of us on the Faith For Life course continue this month. Soon we train more Ministers for Communion Service.

CHARITY AND SERVICE IN SOCIETY

IMPROVE WOODVALE: the **New Year Sociable Meet-up** is this Wednesday in SJS Stone parish centre's games room, from 7.30pm with plans for Homewatch, update from Sefton on Sandbrook Way. All welcome.

WELCOMING THE STRANGER: our friendships through Asylum Link Merseyside continue as they expand with new leases; our parish volunteers are invited to get together on Friday 13th January at 7.30pm. On Saturday 14th there is a planning for Social Integration with Sefton Migrant Workers in the Baptist Church.

LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA: We continue stage one of this help, thanks to Declan Barry, who leads our next **Dementia Information Sessions** : an hour in Sacred Heart Hall on Friday January 27th at 10.00am or again at 2pm; or on Tuesday January 31st at 7pm.

OUR SVP: Donations welcome for the Mothers and Babies in MRANG. We continue after each mass when there is no other retiring collection. This Monday at 7.15pm is the next meeting: new members welcome to find out how to help others.

AINSDALE LUNCH and LEISURE(ALL) is the new name for the Methodist Centre, and they start **French With Friends** from Friday 13th January 1.30pm - 3.00pm and **Line Dancing** from Monday 16th January 10-10.45am. See the leaflets