



Parish of Saint Columbanus, Loughlinstown



2nd CANDLE – (purple) **THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF PREPARATION**
 God kept his promise of a Savior who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to “get ready”.
 Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! “As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:
‘A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God’s salvation.’ (Luke 3:4-6)

Pope Francis to COP28: ‘Choose life, choose the future’

In a hard-hitting *message*, the Pope told the COP assembly that “**the destruction of the environment is an offence against God**, a sin that is not only personal but also structural, one that greatly endangers all human beings, especially the most vulnerable in our midst and threatens to unleash a conflict between generations.” Climate change is “a global social issue and one intimately related to the dignity of human life”. It raises an urgent question; he said,

“Are we working for a culture of life or a culture of death?”

“To all of you I make this heartfelt appeal: Let us choose life! Let us choose the future! May we be attentive to the cry of the earth, may we hear the plea of the poor, may we be sensitive to the hopes of the young and the dreams of children! We have a grave responsibility: to ensure that they not be denied their future.” “The drive to produce and possess has become an obsession, resulting in an inordinate greed that has made the environment the object of unbridled exploitation. **The climate, run amok, is crying out to us to halt this illusion of omnipotence.**”

“The task to which we are called today is not about yesterday but about tomorrow: a tomorrow that, whether we like it or not, will belong to everyone or else to no one.” The Holy Father drew attention to the interconnected nature of environmental and peace issues, decrying the waste of humanity's energy and resources on wars.

“How many resources are being squandered on weaponry that destroys lives and devastates our common home!” he said, again presenting an already voiced proposal: “*With the money spent on arms and other military expenditures, let’s establish a global fund that can end hunger, carry out works for the sustainable development of the poorer countries and combat climate change*” “Please,” Pope Francis begged, “let us move forward and not turn back.”

He reminded policymakers that the purpose of power is to serve and warned against clinging to authority “that will one day be remembered for its inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so.” Pope Francis urged leaders “**to leave behind our divisions and unite our forces! And with God’s help, let us emerge from the dark night of wars and environmental devastation in order to turn our common future into the dawn of a new and radiant day.**”



Christmas Carols and Songs
Sing-a-long with
Sing for fun
Thursday 14th December At 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Children’s Christmas Play
Tuesday 19th December at 7pm

Admission Free To Both



Confessions after Mass

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th December

Penitential Service

Monday 18th December St. Anne’s Shankill at 7.30pm
Wednesday 20th Our Lady of Good Counsel Johnstown at 7pm



Crosscare Christmas Food Appeal



Crosscare, the Archdiocese’s social care agency, is seeking support for its Christmas Food Poverty Appeal at this challenging time for many families and individuals. **Anyone wishing to contribute can donate online at www.crosscare.ie, call 01 8360011, or send a cheque or postal order to Crosscare Christmas Appeal, 2 St Mary’s Place North, D07 Y768, Dublin.** *Thank you for your ongoing support for those most in need.*

Divine Word Christmas Cards and Mass Bouquets for sale in the parish office in the coming weeks

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