

V. Rev. Canon Fitzgerald P.P., V.F.
V. Rev. Canon O'Leary P.E., C.C.
Rev. Fr. Burke C.C.
Parish Office – Patricia Dwane:

CLERGY:
Phone: 025-84090.
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Phone: 025-84062. *Open 9am-12pm*

**Canon O'Leary is on Sick Call this week;
Phone Number: 087 – 2524979**

PARISH E-MAIL ADDRESS: mitchelstownparishofficechurch@gmail.com
DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER IS 10AM WEDNESDAY
Office Open: 9 am to 12 noon – Monday to Friday.
Parish Website: www.mitchelstownparish.ie

● **Advent Evening Prayer:** In preparation for Christmas, this Sunday Evening in the Parish Church at **5.00pm** with prayers of intercession and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. On the 3rd Sunday of Advent, (December 17th) at 5.00pm, the Parish Pastoral Council have organised a special Parish Carol Service in preparation for Christmas and you are all invited to attend.

● **ALTAR SOCIETY:** The Annual Collection for flowers to decorate the Altar throughout the year will be taken up at all Masses today after Holy Communion. Your support is a great help to the work of the Altar Society and gives special honour to the Lord. We thank all those in the Parish who do such wonderful work in decorating the Church Altars throughout the year, new members are needed.

Church of Our Lady Conceived Without Sin, Mitchelstown:

MASS TIMES: Saturday & Eve of Holy Day: 7.30pm
Sunday & Holy Day: 8.30am, 11.30am & 7.30pm.
Weekdays: 8.30am & 10.00am

FIRST FRIDAYS: 8.30am, 10.00am & 7.30pm.

Bank Holidays: 11am

MORNING PRAYER: Monday – Friday: 8.00am

ROSARY: Monday – Saturday: 9.45am

CONFESSIONS: Saturday: 12.00-1.00pm & 7.00-7.30pm

Eve of First Fridays & Eve of Holy Days: 12.00-1.00pm & 7.00-7.30pm

We encourage families to practice monthly Confession

EUCCHARISTIC HEALING PRAYERS: Thursday Evening 8.00-9.00pm
with Special reflections on the role of St. John the Baptist and Eucharistic Healing Blessing.

DIVINE MERCY PRAYERS: Friday at **3.00pm**. All welcome.

Church of the Holy Family, Ballygiblin

MASS TIMES: Sunday & Holy Day: 9.30am. First Friday: 7.30pm.

CONFESSIONS: First Friday: **7.00pm.**

St. Joseph's Church, Killacluig

MASS TIMES: Sunday & Holy Day: 10.30am. First Friday: 6.30pm.

CONFESSIONS: First Friday: **6.00pm.**

Home Deliveries: The boxes of Parish envelopes for the coming year, Parish Calendar and programme for Christmas will be delivered to your homes in the coming days. We would be most grateful for the help of the Autumn distributors. If distributors can collect the envelopes from the Parish Office, during Office hours – Monday to Friday, 9am to 12noon, it would greatly help.

Mitchelstown Parish & Community Newsletter

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THE STORY OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE: On December 9, 1531, in Mexico, Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego, a poor humble Aztec Indian who had recently converted to the Catholic faith. She asked him to go to the Bishop and tell him to build a church where she said "I will show and offer all of my love, my compassion, my help and my protection to my people." Juan Diego did as she asked, but the Bishop asked for a sign that this message was really from Our Lady. Mary granted his request. On December 12, she showed Juan where the most beautiful Castilian roses were and told him to gather them. It was a miracle that the roses were there and in bloom because there was frost on the ground, and the ground was an infertile place where only cactus and thistles grew. After he gathered them, she helped arrange them in his tilma, or poncho, and told him to show them to the Bishop. When he brought them to the Bishop, the Bishop was amazed at the roses, but was even more amazed at what began to happen to Juan Diego's tilma. Right before their very eyes, the image of Our Lady began to form on the cloth. The picture of Mary was beautiful and the Bishop fell to his knees. He had the church built at her request. The tilma is still intact after 470 years. The colours have not faded and the cloth has not deteriorated. It has been on display in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe for all this time. The manner in which Our Lady appeared on the tilma was very significant to the Aztec Indians. God had her dressed in a way that they would understand who she was. She was dressed in royal clothes that showed that she was very important, perhaps a queen. She also had the symbol of the cross at her neck which was the same symbol the Spaniards had on their ships and in the churches they built. She had a sash tied around her waist which meant that she was with child, for this was the way the Aztec women dressed when they were pregnant. And on her beautiful dress were all sorts of designs and flowers. But there was one flower on her dress that was very significant. It had only four petals. To the Aztecs, the four petal flower was the symbol for the true God, the God above all gods. This flower was located on her abdomen, right over the place where Jesus was growing inside of her. The Aztecs immediately understood that this was the mother of the true God! This appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe was very important to the history of our continent. You see, the Aztec Indians and the Spaniards were on the brink of war. The Aztec Indians' culture and religion were very different from the Spaniards. They worshipped gods, to whom they would offer human sacrifices, often killing 50,000 people a year. The Spaniards, who were Catholic, were naturally disgusted by this. But they were cruel to the Aztecs too, treating them like animals and sometimes killing them for no reason. If a war had occurred, it would have been very brutal and the Spaniards and Christianity would have been totally wiped out. Mary's appearance changed everything, however. It helped the Indians to embrace Christianity and it helped the Spaniards to treat the Indians with respect and as human beings. In the course of seven years, 6,000,000 Indians converted to the Catholic faith. This was the biggest conversion in the history of the Church! This is why Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness of the Americas. Juan Diego, the humble man to whom she appeared, was canonized in the summer of 2002.

