

A few words from Fr Joe

I lived in Portobello for a while, just a short stroll from Christchurch Cathedral. Some friends would come for food on New Year's Eve and a little after 11.00pm we would walk there together and merge into the huge crowd of people who gathered to share in "ringing" in the New Year. It was always a fun filled evening, saying farewell to one year and hello to another, hugging, toasting and singing in the company of those who are part of every year and surrounded by a joyous sea of faces from this city and all around the world.

Bells call people to come together and share in a moment of significance. Bells call us into the New Year, in for food, and bells call us to be fully attentive in church when the consecration is imminent. Bells are not designed to be silent, yet this New Year no bells rang out from Churches to herald a new beginning and at the altar steps the bells are unattended. We have to live through a period of silence, isolation and quiet contemplation as we welcome 2021.

We can't say farewell to 2020 without thinking of the tsunami of illness that swept across the world from Wuhan to Walkinstown infecting millions, effecting all and sadly taking a huge number of lives. We welcome in 2021 with great hope for vaccination programmes being successful and for our old ordinary lives to return. We want to be safe from Covid 19, we want our sick and elderly, the vulnerable and those who care for them to be less at risk and in time we might all have the needle jab in the arm and welcome that moment and begin to move on.

It's all a far cry from the throngs of people singing in the streets, but it will be a welcome first step. We will carry into 2021 our gratitude for kindness received, our admiration for heroic services provided, and our hope that this will be a good year for the whole world. We will promise to be a better people because we have lived through a tough time and learnt a lot about what really matters in life. We will ask for God's protection and presence, for that transforming love that comes from our Christmas celebration of the birth of the Saviour of the World. Happy New Year!

Notices



We welcome our new Archbishop elect, Mgr Dermot Farrell and look forward to getting to know him in the time ahead. We are thankful for the many ways that Archbishop Dermot Martin blessed our parish and wish him well in his well-earned retirement. Three things stood out in Archbishop Elect Farrell's words of welcome, his desire to see the church as a safe place for children, that he would listen to us and that

enhancing the contribution of women would be a priority. He acknowledged the parish as the basic building block of the church in the diocese and prayer as the source of everything that moves us to action. He has a tough job but his success will be our blessing and we can but promise to listen to his call to renewal and be active in rebuilding the church in Dublin.