A short reflection on today's Gospel Mark 13:33-37

As we begin the season of Advent, the Church invites us to pause, reflect and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus gives us a clear and simple message: "Stay awake!"

Advent is a time of waiting, but it is not about simply counting down the days to Christmas. It is an invitation to become more attentive to God's presence in our lives and to prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus with open hearts.

In the busyness of everyday life, it is easy to become distracted by shopping, preparations and the many demands placed upon us. Yet Jesus reminds us that we must not lose sight of what truly matters. To stay awake means to keep our faith alive, to notice those in need, to offer forgiveness, to show kindness and to recognise Christ in the people we meet each day.

As we light the first candle on our Advent wreath, let it be a reminder of the hope that Christ brings into our world. Let us use these coming weeks not only to prepare our homes for Christmas, but also to prepare our hearts.

May this Advent be a time of renewed faith, deeper prayer and generous love, so that when Christ comes, He will find us watchful and ready to welcome Him.

Prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood: During this season of Advent, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, we pray that the future priests of the diocese will welcome Him wholeheartedly into their lives so that they can bring His loving, healing, and life-giving presence to the individuals and communities they will be called to serve in His name.

Advent Programme

Make time to pause, pray and reflect this Advent. Amid the busyness and pressures of preparing for Christmas, we invite you to take some time out to deepen your faith, renew your relationship with God and reflect on the true meaning of Advent as we prepare to welcome Christ. There are a number of opportunities to join together in prayer and reflection throughout the season:

Morning Prayer of the Church: Join us in the Cathedral each weekday morning, Monday to Friday, at 7.45am, beginning Monday 30th November. A peaceful way to begin the day in prayer as we journey through Advent.

On the Way Home – Confession and Adoration: As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, there will be an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharistic Adoration each Monday during Advent: 30th November, 7th, 14th and 21st December, from 5.00pm to 7.00pm.

A chance to pause on the way home, spend time with the Lord and prepare spiritually for the celebration of His birth.

Medjugorje Advent Holy Hour – Candlelight and Music: Join us every Thursday evening, after the 7.30pm Mass, beginning on 3rd December, for a special Advent Holy Hour of prayer, reflection and Eucharistic Adoration. In the peaceful atmosphere of candlelight and music, we will come together to pray particularly for peace: in our hearts, in our families and throughout the world.

Eucharistic Adoration: Spend some quiet time in the presence of the Lord through Eucharistic Adoration:

- **Sundays:** 3.00pm – 6.00pm
- **Tuesdays:** 10.30am – 7.20pm

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

Gerard Murray
Patrick Orr

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Manus (Nassie) McCaul
Mary (Molly) Boyle
Patrick McGeehan
Patrick Columba Morrison
Charlie McIntyre
Alec (Lexie) Ross
Lorraine Moran
Mark McNulty

May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as members of God's family:

Brody Jon Parker Morrison
Cáelán Daniel Harkin
Conán Adam Millar
Liam Martin Laird

To book a Baptism contact the Parish Office 02871 262894

Collection

Weekly Collection: £5,006
Parish Development: £1,161

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

Smile Train: £100, £20, £50, £100
Cathedral Funds: £20
Mary's Meals: £40
Sight Savers: £20, £50
Homeless: £10
Hungry Children: £60 £5
Gaza Appeal: £100, £20, £100
Missions: £50
St Thérèse: £40

Readers for 5th / 6th December

6.15pm Claire O'Kane
7.30pm Stephen Orr/Karl Orr
9.30am Kate Doherty
11.00am McGinley Readers
12.30pm Eilish Friel
7.00pm Marian Boyle

SVdP (St Eugene's Conference) acknowledges with gratitude a donation of £50.

Time with our Beloved Dead: A Christmas Holy Hour – Tuesday 22nd December at 8.00pm, St Eugene's Cathedral. In the midst of the busyness of the Christmas season, you are warmly invited to spend some quiet time in prayer and reflection, remembering and giving thanks for our loved ones who have died. A gentle opportunity to bring them to the Lord in prayer, entrusting them to His loving care.

Celebrate Christmas Together - St Columb's Cathedral & St Eugene's Cathedral - This Christmas, our two Cathedrals come together in friendship, unity, and hope. You are warmly invited to join us in St Eugene's Cathedral on Wednesday 9th December at 8.15pm as we celebrate this holy Season with shared joy, prayer, music and community. There will be a retiring collection for SVdP. All are welcome.

If you have family away from home this Christmas and would like them to receive a Christmas card from the parish, please write their names and full postal address on a card available at the back of the Cathedral and return to the Parish Office before 4th December.

Saint Mary's College annual Mass of Remembrance for deceased pupils, staff and governors will take place on Monday 30th November 2026 at 7.00pm in the school multi-purpose hall. If you would like to add a name to the list of those to be remembered, you can do so on the night. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served after the Mass.

The Padre Pio Prayer Group at Holy Family Church, Ballymagroarty, will meet on Tuesday 1st December 2026. The evening will begin with the Rosary at 6.45pm, followed by Mass, and conclude with the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and a blessing with a first-class relic of St Pio. Everyone is welcome.

Job Opportunity with Derry Diocesan Trust - Head of Human Resources: Derry Diocesan Trust is seeking an experienced Head of Human Resources to lead its Human Resource function, providing strategic and operational Human Resource leadership to the diocese, its parishes and diocesan centres, reporting managers, employees and volunteers. This is a senior role for an experienced HR professional who can lead a small team, advise confidently at Board and Committee level, and proactively manage employee relations matters to resolution by fostering a supportive, fair and productive workplace culture. Contract: 25-37 hours per week (working hours to be agreed). Salary: £50,000 - £60,000 per annum (Commensurate with experience and pro rata for part-time hours). Location: Derry Diocesan Office, St Eugene's Cathedral, Francis Street, Derry BT48 9AP. For application packs please telephone 028 7126 2302 or email: recruitment@derrydiocese.org. Completed applications must be returned to Personnel, Bishop's House, St Eugene's Cathedral, Francis Street, Derry, BT48 9AP or via email to recruitment@derrydiocese.org no later than 5pm - Friday 11th December 2026. *Derry Diocesan Trust is an Equal Opportunities Employer. We welcome applications from all men and women and from members of all communities.*

Managing Grief at Christmas – Free Support Workshop, Wednesday 2nd December, 7.00pm, Shantallow Community Centre. Christmas can be especially difficult when grieving. Road Victim Support Northern Ireland–Donegal invites anyone experiencing bereavement to a free, supportive workshop with Counsellor Debbie Mullan, offering practical help with managing grief and remembering loved ones during the festive season. Donations welcome. To book or find out more, call 07748 570558.

St Eugene's Cathedral is monitored by CCTV cameras and by two live streaming cameras. Live streaming can be viewed online at www.churchservices.tv, www.watchmcnmedia or the parish website. The Diocese of Derry Privacy Notice is displayed on the parish website and Cathedral notice board, or you may obtain a copy from the Parish Office.

Safeguarding Notice: If you have any concerns with regard to the Safeguarding of children within the Church please contact Marie O'Kane, the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) on +447596500793 or email: dlp@derrydiocese.org
Northern Ireland emergency services: PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland): 101 Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust: 028 7131 4090 (and ask for the Duty Social Worker), Gateway Services, Northern HSC Trust: 028 9442 4459, Regional Emergency Social Work Services: 0800 1979 995. Republic of Ireland emergency services: Garda Síochána Buncrana: 00353 749 320 540 Letterkenny: 00353 749 167 100, TUSLA (ROI) Child and Family Agency: 00353 749 102 23

Vol 54 No 47
First Sunday
of Advent
29th November 2026

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty