



Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin

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Christmas Message 2025

There is a sameness and a beauty about every Christmas. We send the same people greeting cards, promising to meet in the New Year; we hear the same scripture readings at Christmas Masses, but they don't in any sense lose their freshness; we share in the same rituals, and if we are honest, we wouldn't want to change a thing. I love Christmas. I hope all of you do.

I am conscious there are people who will be on their own for Christmas. Christmas can be a day of contrasts. In one house, several family members will be crowded around the one table wearing their party hats and pulling Christmas crackers. Next door, a solitary figure might be sitting alone with a microwave meal. Let's look out for one another this Christmas. Some of you have suffered bereavements this past year, be gentle with yourself, Christmas mightn't be so easy.

Christmas this year comes as the Jubilee Year of Hope draws to a close. We will gather in the Cathedral on the Feast of the Holy Family to formally close it in the diocese. A year ago, at the launch of the Jubilee Year I made the front door of every home a place of pilgrimage to be reconciled with one another. Last weekend during the Jubilee for Prisoners I designated every cell door in itself a place of pilgrimage, a place where prisoners might pass through renewed, refreshed and reconciled with God, with themselves and with those on the outside. And of course the designation of the Relic of St. Brigid in the church in Kildare Town.

It may look like I didn't designate many Jubilee Places of Pilgrimage around the diocese, but truth be told I probably designated more than anywhere else and that is because of the particular Jubilee it was, the Jubilee of Hope. Hope is a faithful companion through all our ups and downs. Whenever you walk through a door, remind yourself of the hope we have in Christ our Lord.

We have been blessed in many ways this year throughout the diocese; the ceremony last month as I installed the relic of St. Columbanus in the Church in Myshall allowed us to complete the circle of a very memorable few days last July as we hosted the 26th International Columbanus Weekend; we have seen lay pastoral ministers commence formal training for ministry in our parishes; the establishment of Pastoral Areas where we can avail of greater opportunity of collaborating with neighbouring parishes has begun and we pray that this may deepen in the coming year.

As always, I warmly thank our priests, our deacons, our religious and lay women and men who are the backbone of every parish and our diocese.

May you all be blessed with the graces Christmas and a New Year bring.

✠ Denis Nulty
Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin