

THE STORY OF 'SILENT NIGHT'

So popular has 'Silent Night' become that several legends have grown up around it. Two basic facts are that we owe the words of the carol to a young priest called Joseph Mohr and the music to his friend, Franz Gruber, a schoolteacher and church organist.

Born in 1792, Joseph Mohr was the son of an unmarried mother. Thanks to relatives, he was able to get a good education and was ordained to the priesthood in 1815 at age of 23. Apparently, he wrote the words of 'Silent Night' during his first appointment to a parish. The following year he was transferred to a new parish of Oberndorf and brought the words of his poem with him.

On Christmas Eve 1818, Fr Mohr called on his friend and asked him to set his poem to music so that it could be used at the midnight Mass. There has been much speculation as to why he wanted it done so quickly. A possible reason is that the church organ was giving trouble and that another solution had to be found. By evening, Gruber had composed his setting to be sung by a single voice, accompanied by a guitar and a short chorus sung by the choir.

Fr Mohr's new carol proved to be very popular. It spread quickly through the surrounding villages. Surprisingly, in the days before recording or radio, it also began to travel abroad. The first English translation was made in 1859 and it is estimated it has been translated into 140 languages.

It has been said that a German soldier sang it from the trenches on Christmas night 1914. A British soldier replied with an English carol and then the men from both sides met in 'no man's land' and exchanged Christmas greetings.

THE MEANING OF THE CAROL

Fr Mohr's hymn had six verses and that is still how it is sung in German. Our English version has three verses. The quiet movement of the melody gives it the air of a lullaby for a small child:

"Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace!
Sleep in heavenly peace!"

There is a good deal of repetition that serves to emphasise the quietness of the scene as we contemplate the child sleeping in its mother's arms:

"Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!"

The opening words are repeated but we now find ourselves in the company of the shepherds as they hear the angels singing of the birth of the Saviour. Again the key message of the carol is repeated twice:

"Christ the saviour is born."

The third verse focuses its gaze on the holy child, repeating again the opening words:

"Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light,
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!"

It emphasises the mystical light of this child who will proclaim himself to be the light of the world. »



Today's readings

Ecc 24:1-2,8-12

Eph 1:3-6; 15-18

Jn 1:1-18

temporary dwelling place. It is fragile and vulnerable. In pitching his tent among us, Jesus takes on the same kind of fragile humanity as all of us, along with our weakness and limitations

GOD'S WORD TODAY

St John's Gospel does not contain a story of the birth of Jesus. Instead, it opens with a majestic flowing poem on how "the Word was made flesh" and dwelt among us. Its opening words look back to the very first book of the Bible, Genesis, that describes how, in the beginning, God created the universe by his word. That Word, the second person of the Trinity, has now come to live with us. The word John uses means something like 'he pitched his tent among us'. A tent is a

StouSpace

3 January 2021 – 2nd Sunday of Christmas Year B

Psalter Week 2

SERIES: SING ONCE: PRAY TWICE

Season colour: WHITE

Hymns are an important part of Catholic worship. We will look at some of our familiar hymns. Musical versions are available on YouTube.



'Silent Night' is probably the world's best-known Christmas carol. It began life in a small country church in Austria in 1808. In 2011, it was declared part of humanity's 'intangible cultural heritage' by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The recording made by Bing Crosby in 1935 is the fourth bestselling record of all time. It blares out in shopping centres as soon as Christmas shopping begins but in its homeland, it only begins to be sung on Christmas Eve!



Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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2nd Sunday of Christmas – 3rd January 2021

Masses this week

Mon 4th 9:00am Leitrim
7:30pm Dechomet

Feast of the Epiphany – there is no obligation attached to any Holy Day or Sunday at present

Tues 5th 7:30pm Dromara
Wed 6th 7:30pm Leitrim
Fri 8th 7:30am Dromara
Sat 9th 6:00pm Dechomet
7:30pm Leitrim
Sun 10th 9:00am Gargory
11:00am Dromara

Recently deceased

Patsy Bannon, Riverside, Leitrim
Christopher O'Hare, Carrigagh Road, Finnis

Anniversary Masses

Leitrim

Sat 2nd Eddie and Rosealeen Ward and
Eugene Ward; Thomas and Rose
Armstrong and Anne Murray
Fri 8th Rosie McAleenan (MM)
Sat 9th Bridie Madine; Frank McElroy

Gargory

Sun 3rd Peter and Una Gribben
Francis Cunningham

Dromara

Sun 3rd Dariush Mehrdash
Terry, Betty and Rita Lawlor
Tues 5th Eilish McMullan
Sun 10th Jimmy and Winnie McEvoy

Dechomet

Mon 4th Margaret Gilmore (MM)

Offerings

	Dromara	Drumgooland
Parish w/e 20 th Dec	£545	£1016
Christmas	£1031	£2880
Parish w/e 27 th Dec	£665	£2172

We welcome into Dromara Parish Brendan McNeill and into Drumgooland Parish Paudie McAlerney

Finance - the generosity of the parishioners has been amazing this year. Even when the churches were closed and we were all trying to keep our movement and contact to an absolute minimum, the contributions came in and were banked. It is not known what financial challenges you will face, hopefully it will not be too difficult for your families. There are a number of ways that people can contribute financially to the parish:

Parish envelopes - all envelopes received in the churches and in the parochial house are opened and banked. If anyone wishes to pay by cheque, please make it to either the Parish of Dromara or the Parish of Drumgooland. This applies to the priest's collection as well as the parish one. If making a contribution to cover a period of time, either by cash or cheque, please mark how much is to go to the parish and how much to the priest's collection.
Standing Order - you can set up a direct debit. Please email the parish and the appropriate forms will be sent to you.

Online - Diocesan website www.dromorediocese.org
There is a donate button for the parishes and you can donate to the parish and priest's collection.

One-off donation by bank transfer - please ring me and it can be discussed.

Thank you to all the people who have helped us stay safe and able to pray in our churches. The people who open and close the churches. The people who clean the churches on a regular basis. The people who take responsibility for cleaning their seats, etc. The people who help with sanitizing hands and finding seats for people. The people who decorate the churches, who create a place of beauty and calm during this challenging time. The people who created the cribs and will take them down. To those who do the unseen jobs but without you we would be poorer, thank you, may God bless you and keep you safe.

St Vincent de Paul Finnis, Dromara would like to thank everyone who kindly contributed to this year's Christmas Appeal and give donations. Your continued support and generosity is much appreciated and helped ensure no child went without a present this Christmas. If anyone urgently needs support please contact 07738838191.

SVP Our helpline number is **07586447427**. Please contact us, in strict confidence, if you would need help or support at any time, we are here to alleviate the struggle and worry of meeting household bills or worries.

NI Blood Transfusion Service Blood donation session in Baptist Church Hall, Ballynahinch, Thur 7th Jan, 1pm-4pm and 5pm-7:30pm. Sessions are by appointment only, to book, please phone 08085534653 between 10 & 4:30