

Dear Friends

Christmas is all about family, and whether we have many or few members of our own, it's a time of year for getting in touch, reminding people that we care for them, that they are special, by exchanging gifts and cards, and skyping those across the world.

So, Christmas when it eventually arrives, after all the frenetic preparations and stress, is the time to take stock, to recall the traditional story of the Holy family, the stable in Bethlehem, the gifts of the Magi, and the homage paid to a baby in a manger by the shepherds. And that's where the Church comes into its own, with the many and varied festive services on offer, all of which, depending on our personal preferences, help us to remember what Christmas really is all about. Keeping *Christ in Christmas*.

We have on offer :

Christingle Services with their unique message of 'light' - the light of Christ coming to darkened world, but with oranges, sweets and candles to do the explaining.

Crib services and Nativity plays much loved by the young, who get to dress up, and in their costumes re-tell the traditional story.

Carol services - in their many and varied formats, from the traditional 9 Lessons and Carols, to the less informal Carols by Candlelight, right through to the very informal carol singing around our villages, and even in our pubs.

Formal Holy Communion services, at various times from early afternoon to late on Christmas Eve, to 8am on Christmas Day for the early risers.

So there is something for every taste, and if you're one of the many who only goes to Church occasionally, or never, why not make this Christmas the one you walk up the path and through the 'open' door of your parish Church, or the one that is hosting your favourite type of service. Everyone is welcome everywhere in our 7 churches at any time, but especially at Christmas.

Wishing you all a happy, peaceful and blessed Christmas,

with love

Deirdre