

Reflections

Let our thoughts be positive

IN the past I have seen people starting Christmas preparations with enthusiasm and joy at the beginning of autumn. Our parish usually holds a number of events to engage with people of all faiths, and support those exuberant celebratory feelings.

The autumn fair, Catholic Women's League talks, Youth Mass and outing, the children's party, the Holy Hour with mulled wine and mince pies, and the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation

— all these usual activities reflect the hectic preparations to a much-awaited Christmas bonanza. Last year we had to add an extra service at Christmas since we didn't even have standing room for all those who wanted to attend our services. This year, due to Covid-19 restrictions, our Christmas preparations are very different. However, we are determined to look for every creative possibility to cheer our wearied spirits. For the last eight months, we have managed to have online Masses and meetings with sev-

eral backdrops creating a virtual around the world tour, including the Niagara Falls and the Taj Mahal. It is heart-warming to know that almost 80% of our parishioners have been able to join our Masses, either online or in the Churches when these have been open.

We know Covid-19 is an insidious and invisible enemy that can be deadly. Our energy has been drained by the prolonged lockdown, and we are therefore wary of taking chances by mixing with other people. At the same time, we

are trying to find safe ways to foster positive thoughts that can help us hold this precarious energy. We have already set up a virtual advent wreath with colourful candles for our Zoom Masses, and we plan to hold an interactive carol service and midnight Mass on Zoom, Skype and FaceTime. As places are still restricted in our churches, attendance in the church for Christmas Day Masses must be pre-booked, but these services will also be broadcast online. We will have a live-streaming display on a screen in our

parish hall, but attendance for this must also be pre-booked. If you feel weary and tired of Covid-19 and would like some positive feelings to keep up your spirits, please do consider joining our online Christmas services — more details on www.stbonifacechurch.co.uk

'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest'. Matthew 11:28-30.

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