**A Word from Fr Jim**

Fr Dermot joins with me in wishing you every blessing and joy for 2023.It was heartening to have so many attend our Christmas liturgies. It is my hope to see you more often in person with us in the coming year. Being together beats watching alone on computer any day.
I want to say a special word of thanks to all who worked to make our Advent and Christmas celebrations so rich and meaningful. Balally is truly a great parish. I’m also very grateful to those of you who made time to send cards or gifts to your priests. It really feels good to be appreciated.
The year ended with the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict. May the Lord rest his gentle soul.

We continue to pray for Pope Francis as he leads the church into the future, despite a lot of painful opposition. For me the year ended with that terrible flu and the prospect of my operation on 9th January beckons. It brings out to me, once again, how fragile our parish is and the urgent need to prepare the next generation for leadership. We had a wonderful meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council during the week which filled me with hope. Please put Tuesday 24th January at 7pm in your diary. That night we will be welcoming our Church of Ireland friends from Taney, the Methodists from Dundrum and Wesley and the Catholic parishes of Dundrum, Meadowbrook and Ballinteer to pray with us for Christian Unity. I had the pleasure of being invited to Taney

at Christmas to greet everyone and I was very warmly welcomed. Rev Nigel Pierpoint called in to greet us at our Contemplative Mass on Christmas Eve here. So new beginnings are being born.
**With my love & blessing**

**Fr Jim**