A Tsunami of Love for Isaac

In St. Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe on Sunday 20th December 2012

INSIDE
What Lent Means to Me P21
Inspiring Vision P19

Vision Mission & Ministry

Bishop Visiting Palestine P3
District Superintendent P12
St. Caimin's, Mountshannon P16
Abortion Views P5
Prayer Corner P15
Children's P34

including Methodist District News

ISSN. 0790-4517
Volume 70
WILSON’S HOSPITAL SCHOOL
CO-EDUCATIONAL BOARDING SECONDARY SCHOOL

Under the patronage of Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland

• Outstanding academic record and progression to Third Level
• Convenient yet rural location set on 200 acres, just off the M4/N4, less than 10 minutes west of Mullingar. One hour and 15 minutes from Dublin
• Wholesome and tranquil environment
• 450 pupils (300 Boarders; 150 Day pupils)
• Pastoral care, school nurses and doctor, 24 hour supervision including active night time care
• Bedrooms contain 3 or 4 beds
• School Chaplain, Sunday night Chapel service, Morning Assembly, Award Winning Choir

• Lifelong friendships established
• Five day teaching week – extensive weekend recreational programme
• Choice of 20 subjects to Leaving Certificate level
• Staff supervise all study. Emphasis on career guidance. Academic focus
• New classroom block under construction for 2013–14
• New sports pitches under construction
• Wide range of recreational activities, team and individual sports, indoor and outdoor
• Seven day boarding fee: €7,767 (level of maximum SEC grant)
• Extensive programme of grants, bursaries and scholarships

For further information and prospectus, contact

The Headmaster, Mr Adrian G. Oughton B.A., HDip. Ed., D.E.M.

www.whs.ie
MULTYFARNHAM, CO. WESTMEATH
Tel: 044 - 9371115 Fax: 044 - 9371563 Email: wilsonsh@whs.ie
The Bishop Writes

They’re not all terrorists, you know!

I am writing to you from Jerusalem during a visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. We are visiting Christian Aid partners working to eradicate poverty. Our group consisted of three Anglican Bishops, Peter Price Bishop of Bath and Wells, John Inge Bishop of Worcester and myself. We were accompanied by Rosamond Bennett, CEO of Christian Aid Ireland, and four other Christian Aid staff members. This is called the Holy Land, and so it is because Jesus walked these streets; he lived, died and rose again here. But this land is also a land of violent conflict, occupation, discrimination and injustice. It was so in Jesus’ time and sadly it continues to be so today. There is no space in this letter to attempt to describe the complexity of this society and its problems. All I can do is to share one or two stories of the people we have met and a glimpse of the lives they lead.

Our visit to Gaza was uncertain to the very last minute. As a humanitarian aid organisation (Christian Aid) we had asked the Anglican Church here to apply for our visas. To visit Gaza you also need a visa from Hamas. This was easier to obtain, and had been confirmed when we arrived in Israel at the beginning of our trip. The concern about the Israeli permit was a worry. We had decided not to arrange an alternative programme because we so much wanted Gaza to be part of our visit.

The journey to Gaza is, in itself an education. You arrive at the border from the Israeli side at what appears to be an Airport Terminal. Inside we were faced with 20 or more passport checking cubicles. But only one is staffed. Clearly the new terminal for Gaza was planned for a time when relations would be better between Gaza and Israel. At present Gaza is a no go zone. Very few visitors are given permits to enter Gaza, and fewer Gaza residents can visit Israel.

When eventually you get through the security checks, you arrive at a holding yard. No officials are present. No one to tell you what to do. We waited a long time. Then a metal door begins to groan and slides open. We go through and walk for 15 minutes through a caged walk way. This is no man’s land. In the open space to our left people have been shot and killed by soldiers in the watch towers. Since the hostilities in November, farmers have been allowed to graze their sheep and goats on this land. But even so, the shooting and killing goes on.

One Gaza resident we met had applied regularly for twelve whole years to visit Jerusalem. We met her a week after her visit. It was like a lifetime achievement for her. Assam was our guide in Gaza. He has travelled from his home in Gaza, through Egypt to London, Brussels and other places, but Assam has never been to Jerusalem. And in all probability he won’t be visiting Jerusalem anytime soon. His mother died from cancer. But there is no cancer treatment unit in Gaza, and he told us of the horrific suffering his mother endured because she couldn’t travel to receive the care she needed. It appears that Israel treats all Palestinians as terrorists.

Having travelled the length and breadth of Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, some of the most remarkable people I met have been in Gaza. I met a strawberry farmer whose livelihood had been seriously jeopardised, because exporting his crops to Israel and the rest of Europe had become so difficult his earnings were now a fraction of what they once had been. His business is crippled by rules and bureaucracy which apply only to Palestinians. Not far away I met a farmer whose chicken houses had been flattened by an F16 bomb during the war last November. He faces unemployment now with no dole available. I could go on and on about the sense of what it means to live in a country which is almost a prison, cut off from relatives, your people, your land.

But there is hope! I found hope in the commitment of the workers at the Culture and Free Thought Association which is supported by Christian Aid. It is an after school activity centre in Gaza. Drama, arts and crafts, IT communications, sports and a host of other activities are available for children after school. We looked in on a psychosocial therapy session with 10-12 year old girls. Before we had arrived they had been asked to draw an unhappy experience, then a happy experience, and a third drawing on what they hoped for their future. The girls, with great confidence talked about their pictures to us. One described the bombs falling on their house and her family running away from the devastation. I noticed another girl who didn’t speak. She didn’t draw but made a series of unrelated marks on the page. I was glad to hear there was a trained trauma therapist who worked one to one with those children who needed that care.

The happy pictures were fun, full of sunshine and laughter. Drawing their hopes for the future one girl wanted to be a doctor, another a lawyer, another a teacher. They all wanted to help their community. These children were being empowered to speak for themselves, deal with their demons and articulate their dreams. They had found a safe space which allowed them to hope in the midst of despair.

This centre had proved a safe place, not just for the children but
Dear Reader

We hope that you enjoy the new Newslink!

For some time we have felt that the magazine was looking a little tired and old fashioned, in need of refreshing. Olive, God bless her, had been planning changes before her health failed. And after a year as Editor I decided the time had come. You now hold the result in your hand, with the creative assistance of Paul from Davis Printers. The main changes are these:

- A redesigned front cover, with fresh, modern lettering, an index to feature articles on the left, and the diocesan crest replacing the seal.
- A new, modern, easy-to-read font – <italics>Rotis Sans Serif</italics> – which is also more compact.
- A new monthly column by the Methodist District Superintendent, to reflect the Methodist/Church of Ireland Covenant, now 10 years old, as well as the growing volume of Methodist news and subscribers. Note also the Methodists’ distinctive cross logo at the bottom left of the front cover.
- A new monthly Children’s Page.

No doubt some of you will like the new look and feel and others will not. But whatever your views please let me know them as Editor – we hope to be able to further reduce subscriptions next year and to reduce cost control has enabled us to reduce the subscription by €3 this year, as well as cutting advertising rates by 5%.

We hope to be able to further reduce subscriptions next year and provide a slightly larger magazine with more features and colour in 2013, but that will depend upon increasing the number of subscribers. So if you enjoy the magazine, please tell your friends who don’t take it and encourage them to do so. Tell them it has come down in price. Tell them it has been refreshed and modernised. Tell them that Newslink is an excellent way to keep in touch with what is happening in our parishes, circuits and the wider Church.

God bless, Joc Sanders

Yours in Christ
† Trevor
Rt Revd Trevor Williams
Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe
Rien Roe, Adare, Co Limerick
Tel: +353 (0)61 396244 • Mob: +353 (0)87 977 2125
Email: bishop@limerick.anglican.org

Editorial

What Is Newslink?

The Diocesan magazine

For the United Diocese of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfert, which also includes the historic dioceses of Aghadoe, Kilfenora, Kilmacduagh and Emly. For further information about the United Dioceses see the diocesan web site: www.limerick.anglican.org.

Newslink also covers Methodist Midlands and Southern District Circuits within the boundaries of the Church of Ireland Diocese.

Editor

In addition to parochial news, the Editor is delighted to receive articles and letters for publication, as well as suggestions as to how Newslink may be improved.

Please note: names and addresses of contributors must be given, and all letters printed will include name and address unless otherwise agreed with the Editor. All material dealing with parish/circuit matters must first be cleared with the Minister concerned.

Contact details:
Joc Sanders
Turravagaun, Drominneer, Nenagh, Co Tipperary
Tel: 067 24987 Mob: 087 699 6775
Email: newslink@limerick.anglican.org

Deadlines

The next issue will be published for Sunday 3rd March 2013. All material must reach the Editor by Friday 16th February 2013 before 6.00pm, by email only, unless otherwise agreed. Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

Diocesan Calendar

For updates see Diocesan web site - www.limerick.anglican.org

Wed 6th Feb, 8PM
Missions evening at Woodlands House Hotel, Adare

Sat 9th Feb, 8PM
Whist Drive at St. Michael’s, Limerick City

Tue 12th Feb, 8-10PM
Diocesan Council

Sat 16th Feb, 8.15PM
Whist Drive in Aghancon Hall

Sat 23rd Feb, 8PM
Whist Drive at Villiers Square, Limerick City

Tue 26th Feb, 8PM
Kilcolman Book Club, St Michael’s Hall, Killorglin

Sat 9th Mar, 8PM
Whist Drive with Raffle at St. Michael’s, Limerick City

Tue 26th Mar, 8PM
Kilcolman Book Club, St Michael’s Hall, Killorglin

Sun Apr 7th, 12 noon
Confirmations, Kenmare

Sun Apr 14th, 9.30am
Confirmations, Castleconnell

Newslink Annual Subscription Rates for 2013

(Reduced by €3 from 2012, for 10 issues)
Delivered to pew in bulk €34
Individual copy by post €40.50
Collected from printer in bulk €27

Newslink Advertising Rates for 2013

(Reduced by 5% from 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate per annum (Euro)</th>
<th>Rate per single issue (Euro)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 x Colour</td>
<td>1193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 x B&amp;W Colour</td>
<td>1069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 x Colour</td>
<td>596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 x B&amp;W Colour</td>
<td>534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Page</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Page</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Page</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Eighth Page</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For their mothers. Some mothers had confided in staff that they were victims of domestic violence and felt helpless to do anything about it. The centre worked in the community and enabled the women to speak out together about their plight. Domestic violence in their neighbourhood has been greatly reduced as a result of a programme the women initiated in the community. This centre is about helping people of all ages, young and not so young, to find their voice, articulate their dream and work together to change their neighbourhoods. Is it any wonder that Hamas, the ruling authority in Gaza, allowed the centre be destroyed a couple of years ago. Undeterred, the centre was established in a new building. It won’t be destroyed this time, because the local community value it so much, no matter how opposed Hamas is to ‘Free Thought’.

In the most depressing of contexts, the leaders of this community initiative are cultivating hope in the midst of despair. I was proud that Christian Aid was supporting this work which is preparing young people for the morning after the night before. I am preparing to return home tomorrow, with a renewed thankfulness for the freedom we often take for granted, and for the many blessings which enrich our lives.

Yours in Christ
† Trevor
Rt Revd Trevor Williams
Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe
Rien Roe, Adare, Co Limerick
Tel: +353 (0)61 396244 • Mob: +353 (0)87 977 2125
Email: bishop@limerick.anglican.org
Abortion - Methodist Church in Ireland Position Statement of December 2012

1. The Methodist position on abortion, reiterated at several Annual Conferences of our Church, can be summarised as follows:

A. We believe that abortion on demand is wrong. We believe that a foetus cannot be regarded as just an appendage of the mother's body, but that as it develops through the various stages of gestation, so it should progressively be accorded rights culminating with full respect as an individual on birth.

B. However, we also believe that abortion is a permissible choice in a small number of very specific cases, in particular:

C. - where the mother's life is at risk;
- where there is risk of grave injury to the physical or mental health of the mother;
- in cases of rape or incest;
- in cases of gross abnormality of the foetus (e.g. anencephaly) or otherwise where it is incapable of survival.

D. We maintain that Constitutional clauses are not the way to deal with the abortion question. The best solution is the introduction of carefully drafted, sensitive but relatively restrictive legislation. Complex social issues require the comprehensive detailed approach which is possible with legislation, but impossible through the blunt instrument of a few words in a Constitutional amendment.

Abortion - The Church of Ireland Position
Press Release from the Church of Ireland Press Office

The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin, and Mr Samuel Harper, Lay Honorary Secretary of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, made a submission to the Joint Committee on Health and Children this morning, Thursday 10 January 2013, as part of three days of public hearings on the implementation of the Government decision following the publication of the Expert Group Report into matters relating to A, B & C v. Ireland.

Following the hearing, Archbishop Jackson and Mr Harper said: 'We were grateful for the opportunity to participate in today's public hearings. The Church of Ireland opposes abortion but recognises that there are exceptional cases of strict and undeniable medical necessity. We believe the proposal to legislate and regulate in the area of abortion is overdue and welcome. Women and medical professionals need legal clarity to make informed decisions where the continuation of a pregnancy causes real and substantial risk to the life of the mother.' They continued: 'We expressed our appreciation of the open approach adopted by the Joint Committee in today's hearings and also, our commitment to the process of ongoing structured dialogue between the Churches and the State.'

The main points raised by Archbishop Jackson and Mr Harper are provided below in summary form. Both stated that this is an issue of exceptional human complexity and sensitivity and that the Church of Ireland is a synodical Church which develops policy guided by the prayerful consideration and discussion of bishops, clergy and laity. Because of the limited time-scale involved in providing a written response the document presented at the hearing can only be considered a preliminary response.

2. The Methodist Church favours a pluralist democratic society where all shades of opinion are treated with respect. The role of law should not attempt to legislate for a specific form of morality, but rather to set minimum standards for the social good. In keeping with the general nature of such a society, the approach should be to give maximum individual freedom, and should only restrict such freedom where there is a clear and unmistakable social necessity. There are many aspects of social behaviour of which we might disapprove, but that is not in itself a ground for considering legislation.

3. Given this consistent position, we argued as a minimum, the de facto legal situation following the X and C cases should be enshrined in legislation, in order to give clarity to everyone involved. We favoured, however, enacting legislation which went somewhat beyond the X case to include the range of circumstances outlined above – in particular to allow for abortion in controlled circumstances for:

- Risk to physical/mental health of the mother – with the caveat that we are talking about serious certified conditions
- Pregnancy as a result of rape or incest
- Congenital Malformations
- Economic or social reasons, nor
- On request

4. We believe this is the best approach towards the sort of open caring society that is most in keeping with our understanding of the implication of the Christian Gospel based on love and respect for the dignity and worth of each individual.

1. The Church of Ireland emphasises the right to life and this includes the equal right to life of the mother and of the unborn child. The Church of Ireland further honours the natural human desire to celebrate and to protect new life.

2. The Church of Ireland opposes abortion but acknowledges that there are exceptional cases of 'strict and undeniable medical necessity' where it is and should be an option. There is a variety of opinion within the Church of Ireland on what constitutes 'exceptional cases' but agreement that it includes circumstances where the continuation of the pregnancy poses a real and substantial risk to the life of the mother.

3. In the context of the Church of Ireland's previous comments on abortion about the need for legal clarity, it is agreed that the position in the State at present is very unclear and unsatisfactory, and unfair to pregnant women and medical professionals who deserve to be able to make critical, clinical decisions in a secure and well regulated medical framework. Accordingly, the decision by the Government to seek to provide clarity on the issue is welcome.

4. It is agreed that where there is a strict and undeniable medical necessity requiring the ending of a pregnancy at a later stage, where possible, this should be done in a manner that preserves the life of the unborn, without compromising the life of the woman. This diagnosis should be made expeditiously and should be formally notified to the woman. This will require legislation as medical council guidelines on their own will not necessarily have this effect.

5. Special provision should be made for emergency situations where the continuation of the pregnancy occasions a risk to the mother's life that it real, substantial and imminent.

6. The clauses of the 1861 Act require amendment or repeal in the light of the present situation.

7. The Church has previously urged the Government to adopt a legislative and regulatory approach which will allow for easier alteration in the light of changes in medical science. Accordingly, the Government decision to do so is welcome.

A transcript of the presentation is available online at: http://www.ireland.anglican.org/officialsubmissions
Church of Ireland
LIMERICK AND KILALOE
DIOCESAN BOARD OF MISSION

********

AN INVITATION TO A MISSION EVENING

WEDNESDAY 6TH. FEBRUARY, 2013

THE WOODLANDS HOUSE HOTEL, ADARE

AT: 8.00 P.M.

• SWAZILAND: A BRIEF PROGRESS REPORT.

• MAIN SPEAKER: ANDY MCCORMICK CMSIRELAND
  Modern Developments in Mission at home and abroad

• REPORTS BY PARISH MISSION REPRESENTATIVES.

• Everyone with an interest in mission both within their local community and overseas is very welcome to attend.

• Refreshments will be served both before and after the meeting

© 2013 Church of Ireland

Pact

FORMERLY THE PROTESTANT ADOPTION SOCIETY

DOMESTIC ADOPTION SERVICE

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION SERVICE

POST PLACEMENT REPORT SERVICE

PHONE: 01 2962200

FAX: 01 2964049

EMAIL: INFO@PACT.IE

WWW.PACT.IE

Girls Friendly Society

Happy New Year to everyone and wishing all the branches a year of fun and fellowship.

Birr Branch

Birr Branch members have been working on their cookery badge. In December demonstrated the skills they learned by preparing the food and setting the tables for their Christmas party.

Junior Candidates and Candidates made flower arrangements which were used to decorate the tables.

Roscrea Branch

The girls really enjoyed the Craft Day and were able to bring home lovely crafts. The younger girls appreciated Santa’s visit. The Branch went on a trip to Roll and Bowl in Portlaoise before Christmas. They began the visit with some tasty food. This was followed with a great evening bowling and they also enjoyed the play area. At present girls are busy working on the Bible Study and finishing the crafts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Birr Enrolment Service

UPCOMING EVENTS

Birr Enrolment Service
Sunday 27th January 2013
Central Council Meeting
Saturday, 23rd February Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin

Diocesan Council Meeting
18th April, St. Brendan’s Hall, Birr, 8pm

Competitions
Crafts and Bible Study Syllabus competition items are to be brought to Roscrea Hall on Saturday, 9th March for judging. All good wishes to girls and leaders as they prepare for these competitions and Diocesan Service.

Diocesan Service & Prize Giving Day
Saturday, 23rd March in Birr at 2.30pm

Diocesan Camp
Camp will take place in the new Faith Mission Centre in Durrow over the weekend of 21-23 June. More details as they become available.

Mothers’ Union

DIARY DATES
2nd March, 11 am: Diocesan Trustees meeting
3rd March: Mrs Phyllis Grothier will be commissioned as All Ireland President in Kilkenny Cathedral. All Ireland Trustees will be commissioned that day also.
15th April: Diocesan Council (venue to be announced)
19th – 21st April: Visit of Diocesan trustees to Derry and Raphoe
1st May: An afternoon of fun and fellowship in Aghancon. Details next issue. May will also see the elections for the 2014-2017 triennial.

GENERAL
Lynne Tembey came into office as Mothers’ Union Worldwide President on 1st January - as did Phyllis Grothier (of Cashel and Ossory) as All Ireland President - Please remember them in your prayers, which they will very much appreciate.

Margaret Schutz took over from Mary Caldwell as A&O Co-ordinator on the same date. Margaret will continue for the time being as Diocesan Co-ordinator also.

With Mothering Sunday on 10 March the “Make a Mother’s Day” Appeal is in full swing – there should be details on the website - www.themothersunion.org. Please look at the website and support this appeal.

The back of the new issue of Families Worldwide has nice pictures of Mothering Sunday and Easter cards. Please check with the Diocesan Marketing Representative to see if she has supplies of these.

BALLinasloe Branch
We’ve had a very varied and successful Autumn programme:
October – visit of Denis Poynton on behalf of Christian Aid.
November – An All age Beetle Drive, fun, laughter and concluding comment by one junior player “Can we have one of these every week?”
December – International Celebration of Christmas.

We continue our outboard-looking projects with another collection of used postage stamps ready for dispatch to the National Bible Society, who very much appreciate our support; two hand-knit blankets ready for the Women’s Refuge in Athlone, and our final contribution of washing powder, soap, toilet rolls, biscuits etc, for Ballinasloe Social Services.

LIMERick City Branch
On Sunday 11th November the Limerick City Branch held their Indoor Members Afternoon Tea Party. The venue was Richmond Terrace, a sheltered housing project where several of our indoor members live. The tables were laden with a huge variety of tray bakes, bracks, scones and sponges - I’m sure all baked from the Tea Time Treats Cook Book! This was also an opportunity to be in with a chance of winning the beautiful painting, donated very generously by Patsy Pomeroy. Patsy’s painting was raffled to raise funds for our Overseas Fund. Adare and Rathkeale branches also joined the party and the room was positively “buzzing” with laughter and chat. A very special mention should be given to Sheila Fogerty who celebrated her 93rd birthday in October and who has also been a member of Mothers’ Union for over 60 years. This was a wonderful opportunity for our Indoor Members to catch up with all the news of each other and how Mothers’ Union is progressing 125 years on!

On January 17th 32 ladies from Aghancon, Shinrone and Kinitty had a lovely meal out in the County Arms Hotel in Birr.

Mothers’ Union Worldwide has nice pictures of Mothering Sunday and Easter cards.

SECTIONAL DATES
[Details not provided]

1st Nenagh Company
We rounded the year off in December, first with a visit from Wyn the Guide dog with Nicky Croft her owner. This provided a great insight for the boys into their life and we appreciate their time and effort. Then it was the fun of the Christmas party which consisted of fun, games, pizza and an exclusive showing of "Rise of The Guardians" at Nenagh cinema. Thanks to them for accommodating us! Also that evening we awarded our first "service" badges and Canon Marie joined us to make the presentations.

January brought an action-packed start to the year! We always try to include new games that are educational in some way – some sport-specific and some more general development, e.g. hand/eye co-ordination. Cricket, blow-football, soccer skills and grab relay seemed to fit the bill (and those litter-pickers came in handy again!).

A chat based on Epiphany and a “decorate your own biscuit and then eat it” snack break calmed things down (a bit...for a while...). We have some big events to look forward to in January/February: 25th Jan is the Midlands Region Arts & Crafts evening in Tullamore and 17th Feb is St. Mary’s Nenagh Family Worship where Canon Marie has invited The Boys’ Brigade to perform their version of David & Goliath. She has granted us full artistic licence – “So long as David Wins”!!

Badge Presentation

THE BOYS' BRIGADE
>the adventure begins here

1st Nenagh Company
We rounded the year off in December, first with a visit from Wyn the Guide dog with Nicky Croft her owner. This provided a great insight for the boys into their life and we appreciate their time and effort. Then it was the fun of the Christmas party which consisted of fun, games, pizza and an exclusive showing of "Rise of The Guardians" at Nenagh cinema. Thanks to them for accommodating us! Also that evening we awarded our first "service" badges and Canon Marie joined us to make the presentations.

January brought an action-packed start to the year! We always try to include new games that are educational in some way – some sport-specific and some more general development, e.g. hand/eye co-ordination. Cricket, blow-football, soccer skills and grab relay seemed to fit the bill (and those litter-pickers came in handy again!).

A chat based on Epiphany and a “decorate your own biscuit and then eat it” snack break calmed things down (a bit...for a while...). We have some big events to look forward to in January/February: 25th Jan is the Midlands Region Arts & Crafts evening in Tullamore and 17th Feb is St. Mary’s Nenagh Family Worship where Canon Marie has invited The Boys’ Brigade to perform their version of David & Goliath. She has granted us full artistic licence – “So long as David Wins”!!

THE BOYS’ BRIGADE
>the adventure begins here

1st Nenagh Company
We rounded the year off in December, first with a visit from Wyn the Guide dog with Nicky Croft her owner. This provided a great insight for the boys into their life and we appreciate their time and effort. Then it was the fun of the Christmas party which consisted of fun, games, pizza and an exclusive showing of "Rise of The Guardians" at Nenagh cinema. Thanks to them for accommodating us! Also that evening we awarded our first "service" badges and Canon Marie joined us to make the presentations.

January brought an action-packed start to the year! We always try to include new games that are educational in some way – some sport-specific and some more general development, e.g. hand/eye co-ordination. Cricket, blow-football, soccer skills and grab relay seemed to fit the bill (and those litter-pickers came in handy again!).

A chat based on Epiphany and a “decorate your own biscuit and then eat it” snack break calmed things down (a bit...for a while...). We have some big events to look forward to in January/February: 25th Jan is the Midlands Region Arts & Crafts evening in Tullamore and 17th Feb is St. Mary’s Nenagh Family Worship where Canon Marie has invited The Boys’ Brigade to perform their version of David & Goliath. She has granted us full artistic licence – “So long as David Wins”!!

THE BOYS’ BRIGADE
>the adventure begins here

1st Nenagh Company
We rounded the year off in December, first with a visit from Wyn the Guide dog with Nicky Croft her owner. This provided a great insight for the boys into their life and we appreciate their time and effort. Then it was the fun of the Christmas party which consisted of fun, games, pizza and an exclusive showing of "Rise of The Guardians" at Nenagh cinema. Thanks to them for accommodating us! Also that evening we awarded our first "service" badges and Canon Marie joined us to make the presentations.

January brought an action-packed start to the year! We always try to include new games that are educational in some way – some sport-specific and some more general development, e.g. hand/eye co-ordination. Cricket, blow-football, soccer skills and grab relay seemed to fit the bill (and those litter-pickers came in handy again!).

A chat based on Epiphany and a “decorate your own biscuit and then eat it” snack break calmed things down (a bit...for a while...). We have some big events to look forward to in January/February: 25th Jan is the Midlands Region Arts & Crafts evening in Tullamore and 17th Feb is St. Mary’s Nenagh Family Worship where Canon Marie has invited The Boys’ Brigade to perform their version of David & Goliath. She has granted us full artistic licence – “So long as David Wins”!!

THE BOYS’ BRIGADE
>the adventure begins here

1st Nenagh Company
We rounded the year off in December, first with a visit from Wyn the Guide dog with Nicky Croft her owner. This provided a great insight for the boys into their life and we appreciate their time and effort. Then it was the fun of the Christmas party which consisted of fun, games, pizza and an exclusive showing of "Rise of The Guardians" at Nenagh cinema. Thanks to them for accommodating us! Also that evening we awarded our first "service" badges and Canon Marie joined us to make the presentations.

January brought an action-packed start to the year! We always try to include new games that are educational in some way – some sport-specific and some more general development, e.g. hand/eye co-ordination. Cricket, blow-football, soccer skills and grab relay seemed to fit the bill (and those litter-pickers came in handy again!).

A chat based on Epiphany and a “decorate your own biscuit and then eat it” snack break calmed things down (a bit...for a while...). We have some big events to look forward to in January/February: 25th Jan is the Midlands Region Arts & Crafts evening in Tullamore and 17th Feb is St. Mary’s Nenagh Family Worship where Canon Marie has invited The Boys’ Brigade to perform their version of David & Goliath. She has granted us full artistic licence – “So long as David Wins”!!

THE BOYS’ BRIGADE
>the adventure begins here

1st Nenagh Company
We rounded the year off in December, first with a visit from Wyn the Guide dog with Nicky Croft her owner. This provided a great insight for the boys into their life and we appreciate their time and effort. Then it was the fun of the Christmas party which consisted of fun, games, pizza and an exclusive showing of "Rise of The Guardians" at Nenagh cinema. Thanks to them for accommodating us! Also that evening we awarded our first "service" badges and Canon Marie joined us to make the presentations.

January brought an action-packed start to the year! We always try to include new games that are educational in some way – some sport-specific and some more general development, e.g. hand/eye co-ordination. Cricket, blow-football, soccer skills and grab relay seemed to fit the bill (and those litter-pickers came in handy again!).

A chat based on Epiphany and a “decorate your own biscuit and then eat it” snack break calmed things down (a bit...for a while...). We have some big events to look forward to in January/February: 25th Jan is the Midlands Region Arts & Crafts evening in Tullamore and 17th Feb is St. Mary’s Nenagh Family Worship where Canon Marie has invited The Boys’ Brigade to perform their version of David & Goliath. She has granted us full artistic licence – “So long as David Wins”!!
SCHOOL NEWS

St. Nicholas’ National School, Adare

December proved to be a very busy month in school. The pupils, staff and some parents took part in a WOW day (Walk on Wednesday) as part of our plans for our fourth green flag. We walked home from school, well part of the way! Pupils made very colourful posters encouraging everyone to walk or take the bus rather than the car and then we all walked to the Heritage Centre in the village where pupils were collected to continue their journey home. We hope to repeat the WOW day again this term. We certainly made a very colourful sight as we walked from the school, up through the village and into the car park at the rear of the Heritage Centre.

Congratulations to many of our pupils who participated in MS Readathon this year and raised €1200 for MS Ireland.

Mad Hair Day was a very mad affair indeed with some crazy and colourful hair styles from pupils and staff.

Our Parents’ Association committee members were very busy leading up to Christmas. They very kindly undertook to refurbish the stage area in the school hall with new curtains, backdrops and painting. It certainly added to our Christmas concert this year as the stage looked fabulous. Well done to all three classrooms who produced very entertaining and funny plays with some great singing and acting. Later in the afternoon we had a visit from Santa who brought some large sacks of gifts with him, much to the delight of all assembled in the hall.

This year, parents and pupils took part in some carol-singing in the Crescent Shopping Centre to raise funds to cover the cost of the stage refurbishment. We also sang at the Live Crib in Adare and at the annual carol service in St. Nicholas’ Church. We definitely know our Christmas carols by now! Many thanks to everyone who supported us at these events.

School re-opened on Monday 7th January and since then we have had a visit from Leah Fitzgerald of Dog’s Trust who talked about the importance of looking after our pets properly.

Chess club will begin soon and the after school Art club will resume at the end of the month.

Cloughjordan No.1 National School

In the absence of notes from our school for some time and with a humble apology for the “non contribution” from Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. it is appropriate to reflect on some events from earlier this school year.

Belatedly we send our congratulations to Amanda and George Hayes on the birth of their daughter Emma last November. We are delighted for Amanda and George as they welcome their new baby daughter. Congratulations, also, to Louise Cromer and to Marty Ryan on the birth of their son Elliot on 1st January. We are delighted for Louise and Marty, and for Alex, Evan and Callum as they welcome the latest member of their family.

We extend a very warm welcome to Miss Jennifer Foster, as Learning Support Teacher and to Miss Jean Ryan as Class Teacher while Mrs Hayes and Ms. Cromer are on maternity leave, and look forward to working with them both throughout the year. We look forward to working with Mrs. Teresa Kennedy as Acting Deputy Principal for the remainder of this school year.

Our school is much warmer this term, thanks to the installation of our new boiler and repair of a leak in our heating system last term. Thankfully the weather was mild and the days with little heat did not affect us. The school is very grateful to the Department of Education for Emergency Works Funding which enabled us to install a new boiler and carry out associated works.

Thank you very much to Carola Donaldson, who once again, guided Fifth and Sixth Class pupils to make beautiful Advent Wreaths for our parish churches and school. We really appreciate all the work that Carola puts into this each year and her willingness to share her skills and talents with us.

Thank you very much to the many parents who drove the older classes to Borrisokane Community College’s Christmas Concert and the younger classes to “A Hippo for Christmas” in Nenagh Arts Centre. The children really enjoyed both of these events.

Our Christmas Concert, on December 19th, was a wonderful occasion, enjoyed by all those who attended and filled the hall to capacity. There are too many people to thank individually, so to everybody who helped in so many different ways, thank you very much. Your help was greatly appreciated. Thank you to Sophie Bailey who worked with children and staff throughout last term, preparing for the concert, and most importantly to all the children. You really were the stars of the show. Well done to you all.

We are very grateful to Santa that he was able to fit in a visit to our school before Christmas. The children were thrilled with the gifts they received and were delighted that Santa was able to advise them on what food and drink to leave out for him, and the reindeer, on Christmas Eve.
Third to Sixth Classes joined with the pupils of St. Michael’s N.S. on the last day of term to sing carols in different parts of Cloughjordan. The event was a great success and helped to raise funds towards the Christmas Lights in Cloughjordan.

On behalf of the school’s Parent Teacher Association thank you very much to everybody who supported our Nursery Rhyme Quiz Sheet and Children’s Competition. Your support was greatly appreciated and helped to raise funds for our school. As I write these notes the draw has not yet taken place. Our PTA will soon bagpack in Dunnes Stores, Roscrea to raise further funds for our school. Again, the school is very grateful for all support.

All classes enjoyed participating in the StreetSmart programme. StreetSmart is an initiative set up by the Road Safety Authority which aims to bring the issues of road safety to life for young school children. The school is very grateful for the use of the GAA complex in Cloughjordan for this programme.

**St Cronan’s National School Roscrea**

Christmas started early in St. Cronan’s last year as pupils presented their wonderful nativity play “The Star Attraction” on December 7th. The following Monday saw a procession of carol singers from the school delivering Christmas cheer to Tesco, Supervalu, The Dean Maxwell and Villa Marie Nursing Home.

Ms. Veighley was foremost in our thoughts on the 13th when she and Andrew tied the knot and we have now welcomed back Mrs. Hogan after all the excitement.

O.M. Ministry presented a highly entertaining puppet show nativity entitled “The Donkey’s Back”. Very clever lyrics to popular music, colourful characters and even a snow machine ensured a lasting impression of staff and pupils alike.

On December 19th 1st to 6th class travelled to the Concert Hall in U.L. to see “Cinderella”. It was a fantastic performance and a great experience for all.

During Santa’s visit on the last day of term we were delighted when the Roscrea Fire Engine and crew turned up to add to the excitement.

Preparations for the Annual School Dance are well under way and we look forward to another successful fund-raising event and a very enjoyable social evening on February 16th in the Templemore.
Arms Hotel. Huge thanks to the Parents’ Association Committee for their hard work and commitment in organising the night.

The enrolment process has begun for September 2013. Please contact the school for an application form.

**Oxmantown NS Birr**

**Staff Changes** – On the final day before the Christmas holidays we said farewell to Mr Jack Ryan. Mr Ryan came to us from Dublin and fitted in very well at Oxmantown. Thank you to him for all of his extra work and activities with the children, table tennis and chess with the seniors and his assistance with the infants at lunch time. We warmly welcome Ms Barnwell who joined us as our Learning Support Teacher in January having completed her maternity leave – Violet needed no guided tour of our school as she is a former pupil!

**Carol Service** - Thanks to all of our pupils who worked hard in preparation for our Carol Service which took place on 19 December at St. Brendan’s. Our pupils’ attendance was reduced by about a third due to the flu that seemed to have hit Birr more severely than other places before Christmas. We are so proud of the courage of those pupils who volunteered to ring the hand bells and to read lessons with one practice ten minutes before the Service began. Thanks also to Mr Yau, our music teacher, for training the children in their choir groups and for organising his friends to accompany their singing on the violin and keyboard.

**Song for Offaly** - Mr Brendan Keeley, a Tullamore based singer/songwriter, visited our school recently. He taught all of the pupils a song that he has composed called ‘We will be Strong’. The idea behind this project is that this song will be uplifting and will unite and bring hope to the people of Offaly in these bleak times. All of the people of the county are invited to O’Connor Park in Tullamore to sing in unison on Sunday 27 January, this will give people a chance to meet, make a memory and be part of a community event, it is expected that two television stations will be there to record the historic occasion.

**Green School** - The Green Schools Committee have sent off all of the necessary documents to apply for our Green Flag, thanks to Mary O’Connor out-going chairperson and welcome to Breda Phealan O’Meara who has taken on this role and we welcome Angus Carter as the third class rep.

**Rathkeale No 2 National School**

**Swimming Lessons** - Swimming lessons for all classes have begun again. Lessons are taking place in Askeaton Swimming Pool. Our pupils join with the pupils from Coolcappa National School on Tuesday afternoons for the lessons.

Once again swimming is proving to be very popular amongst the children and we look forward to seeing their progress throughout the course of the swimming programme.

**Goodbye** – On Friday 18th January we said farewell to Mrs Mary Teskey who has been our substitute special needs assistant. Mary has been with us since October and we will all miss her greatly. We will of course be delighted to see Mrs Helen Dunne return to work on Monday 21st January.

**Postal Bible School** – Pupils are looking forward to welcoming Noel and Liza back to school on 12th March when they come to present prizes for the Postal Bible lessons.

**Mid-Term Break** – School will be closed on Thursday 14th and Friday 15th February for mid-term break.

**Villiers School**

**Transition Year** – Our TYs are preparing themselves for two weeks of work experience, commencing on Monday 28th January. We wish them the best of luck as they face a taste of the real world.

All TYs completed the second leg of the Lough Derg Way hike last Monday 14th January. We began in Ballina village and climbed to Tountina Mountain and decended to the ‘Look Out’ near Newtown village, catching the bus back to Villiers from Castlough Bay on the shores of Lough Derg. This proved to be a very enjoyable day as the students continue to prepare for their annual trip to Achill Island in April – where they will complete their Gaisce adventure module.

**Boys’ Soccer** – Congratulations to Yousef Mahdy in third form who has been recently selected to play for the Ireland under 15 team. What an achievement. Best of luck in the upcoming Internationals.

**Mock Exams** – The academic year if flying by and our 3rd and 6th form mock exams are just around the corner. We wish all our students the best of luck. Keep up the study over the coming weeks.

**Boys’ Rugby** – Villiers Seniors through to O’Gorman Cup Final – Report by Mike Storey

Villiers senior rugby team progressed to the final of the O’Gorman Cup with a hard fought 16-13 win over a very dynamic St Clements side.

At half time we were down by 8-10 with a try from Gavin Hayes and a penalty from the boot of Ben Coady.

In the second half we turned it around.

Looking back at Christmas is always a time to realise just how busy life was in Villiers School. The end of term exams took place and the hustle and bustle of Christmas was in evidence. Of course the main event was the Villiers Carol Service. I was exceptionally proud of all the readers and choirs as they produced an occasion that was both memorable and spiritual. Once again I heard that wonderful comment that Christmas only begins after the Villiers Carol service is over! One of the many things that had an impact for me was when I turned up to St Mary’s Cathedral an hour before the service was due to start only to discover that it was already well filled up by parents and relatives who were all eagerly anticipating this wonderful occasion. I always say that this event does not simply happen but there is so much work that takes place by a large number of people behind the scenes. From the readers and the Choirs giving up their lunchtimes to rehearsal to the gang who patiently fold and staple the booklets and of course to the patience, understanding and dedication of our music director, Sinead O’Sullivan, who I always feel gives so much of herself to this event and the singing is only as good as it is because of her selfless dedication.

I would also like to thank Dean Sandra Pragnell and all concerned with St Mary’s Cathedral and a special thanks to Rev Tom Kingston and Father Frank O Connor for agreeing to take part in our end of year festivities and worship.

At the beginning of this new term plans are currently taking place to organise our annual CU trip which also promises to be a terrific occasion and a chance to come together in friendship and fellowship and to meet and make new friends.

As ever the Christian Union meet every Thursday at lunchtime and all are welcome to join.

Hope to see you all there!!!

**News from the Villiers Sanctuary**

_by Chaplain Jackie McNair_

Looking back at Christmas is always a time to realise just how busy life was in Villiers School. The end of term exams took place and the hustle and bustle of Christmas was in evidence. Of course the main event was the Villiers Carol Service. I was exceptionally proud of all the readers and choirs as they produced an occasion that was both memorable and spiritual. Once again I heard that wonderful comment that Christmas only begins after the Villiers Carol service is over! One of the many things that had an impact for me was when I turned up to St Mary’s Cathedral an hour before the service was due to start only to discover that it was already well filled up by parents and relatives who were all eagerly anticipating this wonderful occasion. I always say that this event does not simply happen but there is so much work that takes place by a large number of people behind the scenes. From the readers and the Choirs giving up their lunchtimes to rehearsal to the gang who patiently fold and staple the booklets and of course to the patience, understanding and dedication of our music director, Sinead O’Sullivan, who I always feel gives so much of herself to this event and the singing is only as good as it is because of her selfless dedication.

I would also like to thank Dean Sandra Pragnell and all concerned with St Mary’s Cathedral and a special thanks to Rev Tom Kingston and Father Frank O Connor for agreeing to take part in our end of year festivities and worship.

At the beginning of this new term plans are currently taking place to organise our annual CU trip which also promises to be a terrific occasion and a chance to come together in friendship and fellowship and to meet and make new friends.

As ever the Christian Union meet every Thursday at lunchtime and all are welcome to join.

Hope to see you all there!!!
with a try from Tobi Ademakin and another penalty from Coady.

Centre Devon Staunton had a strong match with one particular run nearly leading to a try. Ian Gibson, Gavin Hayes, Toni Ademakin and Mark Armitage were especially prominent in the pack. In the backline Dewey Richter provided good service to Ben Coady, who managed the team well around the pitch. Niall Poff made several incisive runs and Nathan Ecrett was excellent at the back of the backline.

This team has shown a commitment second to none this year with their rugby trainings complemented by regular early morning gym training sessions. This extra commitment has led to a tighter group who played for each other in this match and in the previous matches.

We can’t put ourselves on the back yet, because there is still a final to play. Well done so far.

**Boys’ Hockey** - Congratulations to both the junior and senior boys who comprehensively beat Newtown School, Waterford in both their Munster Schools Cup semi-finals. David Cardy was the star with a hat-trick for the juniors.

Our minors play Midleton College next Wednesday 23rd Jan in their semi-final in Villiers and best of luck to them. Could we make it three finals in one year? Fingers crossed.

---

**St John’s Parochial School Tralee**

St. John’s School wishes Happy New Year to all!

We are already two weeks into the new term and our successful Christmas Play and wonderful Christmas party are consigned to memory at this stage. “Go Raigh Mile Maith Agaibh” to all in the Parents Association for arranging the party and for organising a visit from Santa Claus who had a present for each child. The whole event has been recorded photographically as a memory of a very special day.

We are looking ahead to our part in the Family Service in Tralee Church on 3rd February and we invite family and friends to come along to the service.

We send our congratulations to teachers Aoife on the safe arrival of baby Cathal and Moira on the safe arrival of baby Tomas who was born on Christmas Eve.

Welcome to Hannah and Samuel Aladesanusi who have joined us in Senior Infants and 3rd Class respectively. Welcome also to Janice O’Reilly who is our new School Caretaker.

The Christmas Cards and School Calendars were very successful – well done to the Parents Association and thank you to Morna for the wonderful photographs. Some calendars still available - contact the school office if you would like to buy one.

We are currently marketing our school in advance of the new school year and have produced a brochure. These are available in the school and we need the help of all to get the message out to the wider public please. We already held an Open Day on 14 January and have another planned for Saturday 9 February.

We have a new website. It is up and running at this stage and will be populated with up to date information over the next few weeks. The address is www.stjohnsschooltralee.ie

There is some exciting art work on display in the school right now. The senior classes have been very creative with colourful spiders and multi-storied round towers adorning their classroom. They are now working on an art project as part of the Texaco Schools Art Competition.

On 31st January students from our 5th and 6th classes will take part in a Primary School Debating League. Debating develops oral language skills and also critical thinking skills such as analysis, flexible thinking, curiosity and open mindedness. In addition it develops a child’s self-confidence and promotes active listening. The topic for their debate is “Ryanair is the best way to travel”. We wish them well in their efforts!
The Methodist District Superintendent writes

The focus of the Methodist Church in Ireland during the month of February is on the work of the Church beyond our shores. There are about 70 million Methodists in the world. John Wesley, founder of Methodism looked upon the world as his parish which sometimes upset some of his Anglican clergy colleagues who understandably felt their parish boundaries should be respected.

For 253 years Methodists have been engaged in world mission. It began when Nathanael Gilbert took two African slaves from his sugar plantation in the Caribbean to England. There they heard John Wesley preach in Wandsworth Main Street and they were converted. They returned to Antigua in 1760 and in 1786 the Rev Thomas Coke an Irishman, ‘mad about mission’ caught up on the congregation created by these converted slaves. He was on his way to Canada but was blown off course by a hurricane and landed in Antigua on Christmas Day.

Meanwhile in 1760, Barbara Heck and Philip Embury had grown up in the Palatine community in Co. Limerick. Faced with rising rents, they sailed from Limerick to New York and started the first Methodist Church in America. Today the Methodist Church in Ireland and Britain are in partnership with about 70 autonomous churches worldwide.

From Ireland, there are 8 mission partners serving overseas which includes Rev Andrew and Mrs Julie Cunningham, Elijah and Hannah who are serving with the Methodist Church in Belize, Central America. Andrew pastors several congregations, Julie is involved in women’s development. Andrew hails from Shannon, Co Clare.

In conjunction with USPG, the Methodist Church operates an Experience Exchange Programme (EEP), where volunteers can serve an Anglican or Methodist church overseas for a 6–12 month period. Nada Khaled-Abdo of Dublin Central Mission has just spent 6 months in the Gambia working in primary schools teaching arts and crafts. Playing drafts with Muslims, they became her friends. She was also involved in teaching families English.

The Methodist Missionary Society Ireland (MMSI) also operates a container ministry in response to requests from Partner Churches. Last year containers were sent with medical supplies to Nigeria; equipment for a children’s centre in Zimbabwe and a school for the deaf in Kenya; to support Leadership Training in Nigeria; Evangelism in the Caribbean; Training of Pastors in Uganda and the distribution of bibles in Ghana.

World Mission is emphasized through Global Vision Conferences at various Centres throughout Ireland. The Midland and Southern District will host two: a Conference in Carlow on Friday 22 February at 7.30 pm and in Cork on Saturday 23 February 10.30 am–4.00 pm. More information from Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu: 059 9132445

This year part of the Conference will focus on the future of the Methodist Church in Ireland how local congregations can be more involved in mission to the community in which they live.

In 1992, the Methodist Community on the Midlands and Southern District was 1,801, by 2007 it had grown by 30% to 2,617, fading back to 2,429 in 2011. This increase was largely due to the influx of Methodists from the Overseas Churches, especially from Africa creating multi-ethnic congregations in Limerick; Killarney; Galway and Waterford; and in Dublin Central Mission. In many cases they brought a breath of fresh new life into dying Churches. The Rev Tom Stuckey, former President of the Methodist Church in Britain has described the churches in Britain and Ireland as “the arthritic partner with creaking joints receiving vitality and youthfulness from partner churches growing worldwide.” Who would have imagined that revival could come in this way, from a seed as small as two slaves.

It is my prayer that our churches will thank God for those who have come to Ireland, who are the back-bone of our medical services, are enriching us by their cuisine and culture and bringing new energy to our Churches. They are missionaries in reverse so it is my hope that we do not miss this opportunity and simply go back to a slow death.

Yours in Christ,
Rev Brian Griffin
Superintendent of the Midlands and Southern District.

Methodist Notes

Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit
The Rev. Elizabeth Hewitt
Methodist Manse, Rathkeale Rd, Adare, Co. Limerick.
Tel: 061 39626
Email: liz.hewitt23@hotmail.co.uk

First of all, may I wish all Newslink readers a belated Happy and blessed New Year from the

Methodists in Adare and Ballingrane!
Bible Study Group will meet on Wednesdays at 8.00pm in the Manse on 30 January, 13 & 27 February.

MWI (Methodist Women in Ireland) will meet at 8.00pm on Tuesday 26th February in Adare Church. The speaker will be Rev Vicki Lynch from Christ Church, Limerick.

World Day of Prayer - Friday 1st March
We look forward each year to two services in our area.
Adare: 10.30am in Holy Trinity Abbey
Speaker: Rev Liz Hewitt
Ballingrane: 8.00pm in St James RC Church

ADVANCE NOTICE!
Flower Festival in Adare Methodist Church
Friday 10th – Sunday 12th May 2013
The theme will explore our Methodist and Community Heritage.
As we begin 2013 we continue with our Year of Celebrations, running from Harvest last year to Harvest this year. We have a date for our Genealogy Day - March 16th. We're hoping that people will take time out of their ‘Saint Patrick’s weekend festivities to come along and join in. As I said, people will have the opportunity to search their own family history in Limerick and beyond and to look through a variety of church and school documents connected with different Christian traditions in the City. I wonder if anything unknown and exciting will turn up!

This year we’re inviting back some previous ministers of Christ Church – Rev Peter McDowell will be with us on February 17th, Rev Des Bain on April 21st and Rev David and Eileen Kerr on the weekend of May 26th and 27th. David and Eileen will be exploring with us how reminiscing can ‘springboard us into the future.’

We’re working on a project for Central Buildings and hoping with patience, persistence and enough inspiration we'll get up and running in a small way this year. After the success of Open House Limerick’s stay in the ground floor unit, we helped the Simon Community with a pop-up coffee shop in December which raised some much needed funds for their appeal. We’re hoping that however we move forward, that street front space will remain flexible enough to be shared with the community in different ways.

Dr Rosemary Power’s Pioneer Ministry has come to an end in Shannon and Christ Church has joined the Limerick Circuit. There was an evening Holy Communion on January 20th, generously hosted by Jean Cunningham, to mark this ending of one stage of Christ Church, Shannon’s journey and the beginning of the next. It was a lovely community time of different music traditions, with lots of singing, sharing, reflecting and food. Rosemary’s ministry has been appreciated and valued not only by the people of Shannon but the wider community of County Clare. We wish her every blessing in her future journeys.

LIMERICK
Sunday Service 11.30am.
Holy Communion 1st Sunday
Family Service 3rd Sunday
Sunday School 1st, 2nd & 4th Sundays
Youth Group 2nd & 4th Sundays
Midweek Holy Communion Wednesday 10am

beginning February 13th

Lectio Divina Tuesday 11am in the meeting room (access from the lane)
Discovery Group (Adults)
Monday 7.30 – 8.30pm
(The Manse, 15 Aylesbury, Clonmacken)
Youth Alpha
Wednesday 7 – 8pm (The Manse, 15 Aylesbury, Clonmacken) beginning February 6th

SHANNON
Fellowship Group 2nd & 4th Tuesdays 7pm – contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details
Holy Communion as arranged – contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details

KILLARNEY & KENMAR
Methodist Churches

[part of the Cork South & Kerry Circuit]

Minister: Rev. Laurence Graham
10 Flesk Grove, Killarney, Co. Kerry.
Tel: 064 6631613
Email: laurence.graham@irishmethodist.org
Web site: www.irishmethodist.org/kenmarn
Kenmare Lay Pastoral Team: Ed & Jean Ritchie; Larry & Meriel O’Mahony
Tel: 064 6620580
KILLARNEY METHODIST CHURCH EAST AVENUE, KILLARNEY
Sunday Services:
9 and 11am (inc. Children’s programme at 11)
Prayer meetings:
Monday – Thursday 8am – 9am
Bible Study Meetings:
Wednesday 8pm, Friday 10am
Drop in for coffee each Friday:
11am., 12pm.
Parent and Toddler Group:
Tuesdays 10am – 12pm
Youth Club (11+) 2nd & 4th Fridays 8-10pm, preceded by Youth Bible Group at 7pm.
KENMAR “GATEWAY”
GORTAMULLIN, KILLARNEY ROAD, KENMAR.
Sunday Service: 11am (preceded by coffee, inc. Children’s programme)
Weekly Bible Study/Fellowship meetings:
Tuesdays at 8pm (Prayer time at 7pm), Wednesdays at 10am.
Drop in for coffee: each Wednesday 11am-12pm.
DAMES FOR YOUR DIARY
Gneeveguilla Home fellowship group is scheduled for Thursdays 7th and 21st February at 8pm. Contact Laurence for directions to the venue.
In Killarney the monthly men’s breakfast will meet on Saturday 9th February from 8.30 – 10am. The speaker will be Brian Callan from Cork.
South Kerry Parkinson’s Association meet in Killarney Methodist Church on the second Monday in February (11th) at 7.30pm.
Services in Millstreet continue every Sunday evening at 6.30 pm. We have changed venue and now meet at Drishane Castle. We expect this to be a temporary arrangement but that is where our meetings will be until further notice. Also in Millstreet a mid-week

North Tipperary Methodist Circuit
Minister: Rev Brian Griffin
The Manse, The Mall, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 0505 21670 Mobile: 087 987 0755
Email: beg08@eircom.net

Kate Cargin an Ecumenical Accompanier in Palestine (see Newslink Dec/Jan 12/13) led worship in the Shinnrone Methodist Church on Sunday 27th January.

MWI (Methodist Women in Ireland) plays a large part in bringing women together to look at topical subjects and simply, for fellowship. The speaker at the MWI Open Night on Tuesday 15th January was Gillian Kingston, who spoke about ‘Walking the Camino’. This walk in Northern Spain to the famous Pilgrimage Centre of Santiago de Compostela, was a fundraising exercise by students and staff of UCD for the work of Father Peter McVerry among homeless boys in the Dublin inner city.

Another Church of Ireland speaker, Rev Janet White Spooner will address the MWI on Tuesday 12 February at 8.00 pm in Roscrea Methodist Church Hall; entitled ‘Life begins at 70’. And Regina Brennan on Tuesday 19th February in Borrisokane, will speak about Alzheimers. There is an open invitation to the Mothers’ Union and to the ICA.

The weekly Bible studies have now resumed after the Christmas break. Monday evenings in Borrisokane at 8.00 pm and Thursday evenings in Roscrea at 8.00 pm. Subjects dealt with have included Abortion; Gay Marriage; Is war ever just?, Assisted Suicide; Paying Taxes; and understanding Islam.

A Lenten Series of 5 talks, during Lent, organised by the Irish School of Ecumenics on consecutive Tuesdays at 8.00 pm commencing Tuesday 19th February in the County Arms Hotel, Birs. Our Circuit will be encouraged to attend as this will be our main focus during Lent.

‘Deeper’ Youth Weekend for young people of Secondary school age, will take place from 8-10 February at the Faith Mission Centre, Bandon. Cost is 55 Euro. For more information, email: midlandsandsouthern@gmail.com for booking and search Facebook for Midlands and Southern Youth.

‘Spring Swell’ – is about bringing young people (13+) together in Lahinch, Co Clare, from Friday 22nd-24th March for a weekend of FUN, SURF and encountering GOD in a creative informal & culturally relevant way. It’s a place where faith can be caught as well as taught. Further information and booking, contact Jonathan Griffin on 086 128 2803
Archbishop Of Canterbury

Appreciate the ‘silent conspiracy of generous dedication’ from the Anglican Communion News Service

Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams has used his final New Year’s message to pay tribute to people whose unsung efforts and sacrificial generosity helps to transform lives and build communities.

In the BBC message, the eleventh he has done since taking office in 2002, he draws on the experience of the London Olympics to illustrate what it took to make the games so successful: “...everyone who visited the Olympic site or watched the broadcasts will have been made aware of the army of volunteers who cheerfully gave up their free time and worked away, without complaint, all hours of the day and night to make these great events happen. They were the key people who translated the Olympic vision into reality for the rest of us.”

Similar things are happening in many communities, he says, and points to the work of London churches in caring for the disadvantaged: “...over twenty local churches are combining to offer food and shelter to homeless people in London. Religion here isn’t a social problem or an old-fashioned embarrassment, it’s a wellspring of energy and a source of life-giving vision for how people should be regarded and treated.”

This kind of contribution, he says, explains why so many of the things which work well in communities come from the hard work and selfless generosity of ordinary people who want to make things happen:

“If you have the good fortune to live in a community where things seem to be working well the chances are that if you slip backstage you’ll find an army of cheerful people making the wheels go round - and don’t forget just what a huge percentage of them come from the churches and other faith groups”

“So let’s recognise this steady current of generosity that underlies so much of our life together in this country and indeed worldwide. It’s all based on one vision - to make our society, our whole world, work for everyone, not just the comfortable and well off.”

And he challenges people to ask what they can do:

“We should be prompted to ask the tougher question: what can I do to join this silent conspiracy of generous dedication? There’ll be those who have time and skill and strength to offer; there’ll be those who have less of these, but can support in prayer and goodwill.”

All of this, he says, gives us joyful glimpses of the quiet, unfailing generosity of God.

County Clare Protestant Orphan Society (Founded 1835)

Four Protestant Orphan Societies, Clare, Kerry, Limerick and Offaly, exist within the Dioceses of Limerick and Killaloe. Their roles and needs have changed considerably over the years as orphan numbers are fewer; but many children continue to need assistance. As a result these societies have had to widen their scope.

While priority is specifically assured to orphans in need, frequently it is now a case of assisting one parent families, or families with unemployed or incapacitated fathers or mothers, with necessary expenses such as school uniforms, books or extra-curricular fees, thus complimenting other sources of help.

Donations are always welcome particularly in the case of the Clare Society whose funds are limited, but who continue to receive appropriate requests for assistance. The Society is anxious to respond positively to these calls as they recognise the difficulties at present faced by so many. Parental or otherwise qualified requests for help made to the Society are confidential and may be made to The Secretary, Clare Protestant Orphan Society, c/o St. Columba’s Church, Bindon Street, Ennis, Co. Clare.

In County Clare we also ask each congregation (Church of Ireland, Methodist and others) to generously contribute the sum of fifty euro annually to boost necessary finances, and to thereby assist us not to diminish our limited reserve capital funds. Contributions will be gratefully acknowledged.

J J Ryan Funeral Directors

Nenagh, County Tipperary

Ryan’s provide a comfortable purpose built funeral home. Shipping of remains, embalming (female embalmer available) Cremation, nurse to perform last offices

Telephone: 076 31541
Mobile – Philip 087 6874775
 Philip@jjryanundertakers.com – www.jjryanundertakers.com

Grania R. Weir
At a recent Diocesan convention, one of the topics introduced was the promotion of intercommunity action and sharing. This is already happening in many places as witnessed in Inniscealtra parish. Chat to anybody in Mountshannon or Whitegate and they’ll, little doubt, express delight at what has been achieved mainly through an enlightened local FÁS campaign and workforce and their farsighted leader, Tomás Macnamara.

At the beginning of December, the Reverend Lucy Green, Churchwardens Gina Sparling and Vera Jamieson (who provided light refreshment) and a small gathering of parishioners shared with members of the local community employment scheme in the launch of a delightfully produced booklet, St. Caimin’s Church of Ireland, Mountshannon, 1789 – 2012. This colourful presentation which has magnificent photographs is the result of work undertaken by the group, supported by the Department of Social Protection.

At the east end of Mountshannon, overlooking Lough Derg and the Tipperary shore, St. Caimin’s is a simple four bay stone building with single lancet windows each side and a triple lancet lighting the incorporated sanctuary of equal size and style. Central to the west end is attached a pleasantly pinnacled bell-tower on the south side of which is the main entrance. A small vestry adjoins the north-east. Inside there is a balcony beneath which is a recently completed – credit mainly due to the late Ben Oakley – parish room. Thanks to the Atkinson family, the whole is beautifully carpeted in red which brightens the light grey pews and interior. Monuments line the internal walls of this well-kept edifice.

In the adjoining graveyard, the basis for the overall exercise, are some interesting vaults and tombstones, two of the former having had trees growing through them, now magnificently restored using traditional materials and local skills. These elucidate, through those buried in them, much of the history of this interesting parish. Its name, Inniscealtra, perpetuates its ecclesiastical history mainly due to the Holy Island which is in the parish, and whose onetime abbot was a brother of Brian Boru.

Once part of the Daly Estates of south-east Galway, the parish of Inniscealtra was ‘peppercorn’ - leased to Limerick linen merchant, Alexander Woods in 1738 on condition that he erect fifty houses, a school, market house and a slated church. The present parish edifice completed in 1790, had its tower added in 1831 by Alexander Woods’ original mason John Boyle’s son. In 1898, the parish was politically transferred to Co. Clare. Woods, however, had lost his property through a reputedly indulgent life-style to London bankers, Reade and Tandy. The Reade family (Woodparks) took on the west end and the Tandys, the east. Both continued the developments initially undertaken by Woods.

The Reades erected the old school, the Manor House at Woodparks, and helped with the construction of the Roman Catholic Church whereas the Tandys built other structures such as the early Mountshannon House and the Market House. Both bankers, the Reades (who intermarried with the Fetherstonehaughs, monuments to whom are in the Church) were basically from Co Westmeath and the Tandys an old Irish family from near Kels in County Meath. George Tandy was probably a younger brother of General (Irish Brigade, French service) James Napper Tandy who, having died at Bordeaux in 1803, had been a leading United Irishman, a friend of Emmet and a Republican. George died on active service in India leaving a widow, Mary who continued to run the estate until her death in 1878. She was aunt to Thomas and May (or Mary) George who were buried with him, and possibly her sister Catherine Barry (d. 1886), John Fox George having then inherited the property.

The Tandy family vault is a fairly simple heavy-slated-roofed stone creation with shallow false pillars. The Reade family vault has an unusually...
designed rectangular cut stone base capped with a balustraded banister over the centre of which is a miniature pinnacled rectangle of similar height with gabled sides.

These two interestingly designed monuments containing the bodily remains of early developers of Mountshannon village have been completely dismantled and rebuilt; other tombstones restored and re-settled. The graveyard has been thoroughly cleaned up, unwanted vegetation cleared and surrounding walls rebuilt; a really wonderful job and an inspiration.

Other records to past parishioners include those to Charles and Augustus Coghlan, the then rector’s sons who were drowned in 1870 and to Bridget Doyle whose husband had located their bodies and who had searched for that of George Fletcher who also died. Amongst present-day parishioners’ ‘kin’ buried are Major William Gibson who served in India, on the Somme, and who mapped jungle territory in Burma (Myanmar) whose family from Roscrea included Lord Ashbourne, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who introduced the absentee landlords act; the Howes, Sparlings, Grahams, Johnstons, Wisemans, Flynns of Mountshannon and the Hollands and Worrells from Whitegate.

Both the booklet and the physical work undertaken are a credit to Tom Mac’s team and to the community at large. This effort is part of an outstandingly well accomplished programme where so much of the village has also been restored. The team is to be thanked unreservedly for a job well done and which is appreciated by so many, particularly the small numbers of active Church of Ireland present day parishioners.
Twelve year old Isaac Leal, lives on the Isle of Wight with his twin
brother Reuben and his parents Rachel and Jonathan. About 4 months
ago Isaac felt unwell and collapsed suddenly. Tests revealed that he
had a tumour causing pressure on his brain. Surgery was performed
but unfortunately the surgeon was unable to remove all of the cancer.
Isaac found himself in intensive care in Southampton Hospital
unable to swallow, to speak, even to sit or to stand. His eyesight had
deteriorated and he required extensive physiotherapy to regain use of
his right side. Throughout all this he was so very brave.

Isaac’s Granny, Hazel Espey from Tuamgraney/Scarriff, raced to be
at his bedside and she wrote to her friend Barbara Hartigan, “This is
a nightmare, can you ask the children in All Saints Sunday School to
pray for Isaac?”

The next day Barbara told the children all about Isaac’s situation
and together with help from Rachel Martin and Jane Holmes, they
decided to make a giant card with each of the 17 children drawn by
Barbara and inside a little message from each child. The next Sunday
Barbara was able to report how thrilled Isaac was and what this had
meant to the whole family.

Several weeks followed where the children provided their own little
prayer for Isaac, to be included in the regular Sunday Service by Rev
Stan and Rev Lucy. By now everyone was asking “How is Isaac?”

The Castleconnell Carol Service was arranged for 3 o’clock
on Sunday 16th of December and it was decided to send another
message of love and positive vibes in the form of a photograph of
the congregation holding up cards with the names of Isaac, Reuben,
Parents Jonathan and Rachel, Grand parents, Len, Rose, Hazel and
John and also a Christmas Greeting. Everyone gave a little wave and
smiled as they were photographed in front of the Altar beside the
Christmas tree, by Stephen Holmes. The Greeting, downloaded, winged
its way through cyber space to Isaac’s iPod, and imagine our delight
and surprise when we received a photo back from Isaac showing him
waving to us from his hospital bed. “The Wave” was now gathering
momentum.

Christmas morning: “the better the day, the better the deed!”
Another photograph of the entire congregation was sent winging
its way to the family, all together, sharing Christmas Dinner back in
their home on the Isle of Wight where Isaac had been allowed home
for Christmas. Hazel texted “As we sit here sharing a really special
Christmas, wearing our party hats, how amazing to be touched by
so much love and good wishes from people, many of whom we have
never met.”

The “Tide” of good will, that started as a ripple has been rolling on,
gathering strength and on Sunday the 30th of December, at the
combined Service of Holy Communion in St Flannan’s Cathedral, Rev
Stan invited all to come together to send a veritable “Tsunami” of a
wave in the form of a final photograph from Mountshannon, Clonlara,
Tuamgraney, Castleconnell and Killaloe.

What started in the Sunday School room of all Saints Castleconnell
spread out, touched so many and joined families to share and to care
in a way we could never have imagined ! As Leslie Harigan prepared
to take the final photograph he was approached by an American
gentleman and his wife on holiday in Ireland, to know if they might be
included in the “wave”. The wave had gone Global !

Finally on New years Day we received a lovely photograph of Isaac,
Reuben, Rachel and Jonathan, bathed in sunshine, and smiling at their
new found friends. A new Year and a very special Greeting!

As Mother Teresa once said, “We can do no great things, only small
things with great love.”

A Tsunami of Love for Isaac
by Barbara Hartigan

The Wave becomes a Tsunami in St Flannan’s Cathedral, Killaloe
Inspiring Vision for our future

Bishop Trevor reports on the consultations in Tralee, Limerick, Cloughjordan

When I elaborated the significance of Confidence, Community, Caring and Celebration for our Diocese at the Synod meeting in Aghancon in June, I had no idea that the parishes of the diocese would be at the starting line of a shared journey just six months later. Yet that is what has happened. Energised by our time together as clergy in Dingle in early October, we agreed to divide the diocese into three – north, middle and south – in order to avoid excessive travel and to meet in manageable numbers for discussion not later than the beginning of Advent, and so it happened.

The southern end met first on Sunday 18th November in Tralee. Second was the middle region on Sunday 26th November in Limerick followed by the northern region on Sunday 2nd December. On each occasion, the clergy of each parish attended, accompanied by three or four non-clerical parishioners, most of whom played some leadership role in their local church. Over the three meetings, some eighty persons were present. In each place both genders were well represented and it was a great joy to see young people in conversation with the middle aged and elderly. Out of the whole diocese, only one parish was totally unrepresented and only one other had no lay representation. It is therefore not too fanciful to claim that together, the three meetings were significantly representative of the people of God called Anglicans in the Church of Ireland united Dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe and Ardfert. That such should be the case lends great authority to the conclusions of these meetings which neither I as Bishop nor my colleague clergy, nor yet again our select vestries and our diocesan committee organization can ignore.

What is of fundamental significance for all of us is the common shared understanding of where we want to be as the Body of Christ by 2025. That was the first question we asked ourselves and the answer which was forthcoming from the discussion groups was so strikingly similar that the similarity is itself a manifestation of the Holy Spirit at work amongst us.

Without hesitation we can affirm that we want our Church and our churches, by 2025, to be inclusive, welcoming, open, friendly, without walls, caring, outgoing, Christ-, cross-, bible- and sacrament-centred, united and community minded. Even after a period of sustained reflection, it is exceedingly difficult to come up with other words and phrases of description which would give further enhancement to that vision. It is a vision of confidence about the nature of community, about the centrality of caring which, because it flows from the heart of God in Christ, gives us everything we need to celebrate. In a very real sense, we could finish this report at this point with the challenge – what do we need to be doing in each parish to realize and actualize this vision. However, to do that would be to seriously devalue the other work which our meetings did, so I share that with you under four headings.

1. What are our strengths in moving to become this church of 2025?

Here again there was very great similarity of response within and between the groups.

- The core of our parishes comprises people of very great loyalty
- Many of our parishes have young people of great ability and enterprise
- Clearly we can articulate a shared common vision
- We have a history to give meaning to the present for the sake of the future
- We have a strong sense of the importance of worship and liturgy in various forms
- We are committed to and engaged in ecumenical relationships and activities
- In some areas we have an enriching mix of cultures and nationalities
- We are in town and country
- We have buildings and these can be used more
- We are trying to be a people open to others and to the future

2. What are our weaknesses which might prevent us from becoming the church of 2025 which we want to be?

Again, great similarity between meetings at which it was clearly recognized and understood that strengths could have companion weakness which can be clearly seen in comparing 1 and 2:

- There was a sense that apathy could well prevail among the less committed in our parishes
- There was a sense that exclusivity arising from the need for identity could torpedo inclusivity
- Limited resources caught up in maintaining buildings
- Smallness which is so small that it ceases to be beautiful
- In some places a sense of irrelevance
- A strongly reported resistance to change, particularly to meet the needs of young people and the wider community
- Parochialism, heads down and negativity
- In some ways the burden of history, including the times and days of worship
- The neglect of pastoral care.
3. What are the opportunities to assist us in moving towards the vision of church 2025?
- Our young people and our schools
- Ecumenical opportunities
- Much greater role for vestries
- Much greater awareness and use of gifts and talents
- Interest in spirituality
- Greater role for lay people
- New forms of communication
- Love of and ability to offer hospitality
- Visitors and fluid population
- Variety in forms of worship

4. What are the threats which may prevent us from becoming the church of 2025 as we have envisioned it?
Under this heading, a number of matters were mentioned, very similar to those itemized under weaknesses in 2 above:
- Sending children to boarding school
- Ignorance of the substance of our faith
- Modern living – demands, pace, counter attractions, popular culture, materialism, self-centredness
- Incoherent worship – especially lessons that are not given context and unknown hymns.
- Internal divisions and feuds
- Dilution of spirituality
- The general economy and lack of institutional resource
- Alternative churches.

It had been intended to conclude each meeting with two further items for discussion – what have we learnt? And what have we left unsaid? Only the Tralee meeting completed the agenda in the time available.

It is worthwhile recording what that meeting thought we have learnt.
- We have a lot in common
- We have differences due to geography
- We have to adapt to survive and grow
- Not everything can be measured by numbers
- It is good to share our stories and events
- We need more times together.

On that final item I can report that already a diocesan get together is being planned for Sunday 29th September with Leslie Robinson presiding over the planning. So please everyone get that date in your diary and await further information about the stages of our common journey between now and then, and by the way, if you noticed, confidence, community, caring and celebration coming through in the sermons and prayers of Advent, we need all to thank Stephen Neill for his elegant commentary on these themes relating them to the Sunday readings on our approach to Christmas.

My sincere thanks to Rev Michael Cavanagh (Kenmare) and Salters Sterling (Birr) for their collaboration in planning the meetings and compiling this report

† Trevor
What Lent Means to Me
by Canon Susan Watterson, Priest-in-charge Killarney & Aghadoe Union

Richard Parker was terribly sea-sick, and not the most ideal travelling companion – but then I don’t suppose Bengal tigers are used to travelling by boat. I first read the story of Richard Parker and Piscine Patel (The Life of Pi) about ten years ago, but seeing the film recently was amazing, not simply because of the incredible photography but because somehow the film seemed to simplify the complex theological questions and themes raised in the book.

Each year my personal Lenten journey takes new routes and pathways toward Easter that I may not have explored before. Whilst there is usually a focus on how prayer and fasting may inform my giving, discovering a different vehicle for this annual expedition has become in itself, a part of the discipline. I believe that God reveals himself to us in many different ways. His word is not limited to sacred scripture as He continues to speak to us through art, music, literature, the beauty of creation and the kindness of people. The most important aspect of my personal devotions during this season, will involve a conscious decision to slow down – to listen for God ‘out there’. Although I am somewhat contemplative by nature, I find that Lent has become a time to focus my listening to God, to hear him out and stop finishing his sentences for him. Lent gives me the time and space to do that. It gives me permission to use my time differently.

Re-visiting The Life of Pi has raised issues of faith and truth that I need time to consider. Pi Patel was born into a Hindu family in Pondicherry. At age fourteen he decided that he would like to be baptised by the local priest, but Pi’s Hindu and Muslim teachers were also influential. Eventually Pi was asked to choose just one of the three faiths, but he couldn’t. He practised all three avidly – but only Christianity revealed to him the love of God, in a very real and profound way.

Ten years ago, my response to Pi’s pragmatism was very different than today. Maybe then I responded to Pi’s understanding of truth in the way I felt I ‘should’, the way that my tradition dictated. Now I need the permission that Lent offers to examine different concepts of truth: Jesus spoke the truth - and it wasn’t received well at all; he used parables to explain difficult and complicated matters - people still scratch their heads and ask what he meant. People also scratch their heads at the possibility that a greater truth may be revealed through the narrative. Personally I welcome that possibility – what I need to explore however is the extent to which that philosophy can be taken.

Lent this year, will mean an opportunity to consider and reflect on whether every jot and tittle must be measurably accurate, or whether facts can be ‘fudged’ in order to reveal a more important truth, especially when suffering and pain are involved.

The book I have chosen to inform my prayer and reflection is Lucy Winkett’s Our Sound is Our Wound It is a book to help me focus on ‘Jesus’ words and his silence – his wordless cries and his transforming parables’, as I journey through Lent toward the truth and joy of resurrection.

Churches Plan New Peace Initiative with EU Help

A new peace project supported by the largest Christian denominations in Ireland is currently recruiting senior staff with the aim of publicly launching the new initiative in the springtime of 2013.

Entitled the “Irish Churches Peace Project” the programme is a partnership involving the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, the Church of Ireland and the Irish Council of Churches. It will be funded through the EU’s PEACE III Programme which is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. Additional funding is being provided by the Northern Ireland Executive through the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLD) of the Irish Government.

Aimed at promoting good relations, reconciliation and peace work at both strategic and grassroots levels across Northern Ireland and in the border counties, the £1.3m project has placed ads seeking to appoint a director and two support staff for a temporary period up to June 2015. It is also expected that six field staff will be recruited early in 2013. Since 2008 discussions have been taking place between the various denominations as to what the peace process in Ireland requires to ensure its continued success and what unique contribution the churches could make to that. What emerged was an inter-church project with three main aims:

The first of these aims is to promote sustained and well facilitated cross-community dialogue particularly focusing on the contentious issues that need to be addressed in order to develop good relations and promote reconciliation.

Secondly, to support local inter-church/cross-community groups in their development of new grassroots initiatives that will contribute to the lasting peace.

The final aim of the programme is to facilitate a process by which the main denominations speak more frequently in the public sphere with a united voice on social and political issues, and through that to model positive cross-community cooperation and undermine the vestiges of sectarian politics.

With its programme of work agreed and funding in place the “Irish Churches Peace Project” has now moved to recruit senior staff with a view to making appointments in January 2013.

More information can be found at www.presbyterianireland.org/opportunity/employment.
United Diocesan Youth Council of Limerick and Killaloe

UDYC Annual Christmas Dinner Dance 2012
The United Diocesan Youth Council of Limerick and Killaloe once again held its Annual Christmas Dinner Dance in the Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick. This social event is one of the highlights of the UDYC programme for both leaders and young people. This year, thanks to superb volunteers who promoted and sold tickets to the event, numbers attending were higher than previous years. It is always encouraging to see the large numbers of young people who return year after year, not only to this social event but to the Youth Council’s weekend and summer events.

For many the dinner dance is a great opportunity to meet up with old friends, given the size of our United Dioceses and the fact that many leaders are studying or working around the country which can make coming together a challenge. This year we were also blessed to have with us many friends from outside our Dioceses including a group from Meath and Kildare Diocesan Youth Council, with their Diocesan Youth Officer Alison Jones and a visit all the way from Belfast by Barbara Swann (Church of Ireland Youth Department) and her husband John. Thus showing how strong relationships in Christ can be built up across this island through the ministry of our Church. The night was a great success with great food, music and as with all UDYC events, marked by fun, faith, and fellowship!

Senior & Junior Christmas Day Trips (28th & 30th December)
Once again, we held our annual and much-loved Christmas day trips over the Christmas holidays. As usual, an action packed day was had by all with both the junior and senior groups joined by groups from Meath and Kildare Diocesan Youth Council. Both the juniors and the seniors had a great time swimming at the National Aquatic Centre, ice skating at Dundrum on Ice, as well as the ever-popular karting at Kylemore Karting. The juniors also went bowling, while the seniors paid a visit to Funderland.

Senior Spring Weekend
UDYC in the next couple of days hope to release booking forms for our Senior Spring Weekend scheduled to take place over St. Patrick’s Weekend from Friday 15th to Monday 18th March 2013. This event will be for 13 plus year olds. Please watch out for those booking forms dropping through your letterboxes shortly!!

Junior Multi Activity Sleepover Event
In March we intend to hold a Junior Multi Activity Sleepover event from a Friday evening to Saturday evening for all persons attending National School from 3rd class upwards. It is also hoped that a group from Tuam Diocese will join us too with their Diocesan Youth Officer Stevie Brickenden. It is hoped to hold this event in the north of our United Dioceses with the programme proposed to include numerous games, worship, sleepover, swimming, good food, activities at Birr Outdoor Education Centre to include Zipwire, Climbing Tower and Archery and much more fun faith and fellowship that one could imagine in a 24 hour period. Please watch out for those booking forms dropping through your letterboxes!

As always, further information about any UDYC events and activities can be got from Edward on (087) 2907553. Also, information and programme of events for the year can be found on our new UDYC website: udyc.ie as well as the Diocesan Website at limerick.anglican.org, and our regularly updated UDYC group page on Facebook.

Until next month, Damian
Email: 05shortend@gmail.com
Diocesan Board of Mission

Thanks from Saldanha Bay

Fr Dirk Magerman writes from Bontekoe, in our Companion Diocese of Saldanha Bay, South Africa:

"Herewith and more to come some photographs of what we did for the families of the Mine Disaster at Komaggas (see diocesan website www.limerick.anglican.org).

"We hope that the project will continue, as in the New Year we hope to start a community garden, to which end letters were written to government institutions for land and help with water etc...etc.

"On behalf of Bishop Raphael, and the Saldanha Bay Diocese we would like to thank you most sincerely for the wonderful way in which you have blessed those less fortunate than ourselves.

"Bishop Raphael, his wife Myfanny and the entire Saldanha Bay Diocese, as well as myself and Ellen, wish you all a God-Filled Festive Season, and may The Christ Child be born again in our hearts this Christmas 2012."

Swaziland

National Director Linda Chambers writes on behalf of Us (formerly USPG) and the Diocese of Swaziland:

"I would like to say a big "Thank You" to all who have supported the fantastic fundraising campaign for the Luyengo Farm Project. It has been amazing to see the diocese working together in this common cause, and we are particularly grateful to the Diocesan Mission Committee for their vision and enthusiasm, and to Bishop Trevor for making the journey to Swaziland.

"You will already have heard about the visit of Bishop Trevor, Michael Hanna and Salters Sterling to the farm in October 2012. I hope you have seen Bishop Trevor's marvellous videos of the farm, and other aspects of life in Swaziland (see diocesan website www.limerick.anglican.org). Bishop Ellinah (who was not yet consecrated at that time) was greatly appreciative of the visit, and of the knowledge of the prayers of the folk of Limerick and Killaloe Diocese. We hope to bring her to visit you too.

"In November we became, on behalf of the Diocese of Swaziland, an equal partner in Luyengo Fresh Produce Ltd. Jan de Brujin and Revd Arthur Barrett represent our interests on the board. The other directors are Tiekie de Beer - also farm manager – and Robert Atwell, company secretary. Robert is Anglican and comes originally from Glasnevin in Dublin – a coincidence?

"We walked the land at Luyengo when it was scrub. Now it is producing mealies (maize) and baby corn, potatoes and carrots, tomatoes and cabbages. People are employed, both on the land and in the packing sheds. We expect that from 2014 the farm will make a profit, 50% of which will go to the diocese specifically for its HIV/AIDS programmes. The whole Anglican community is encouraged and revitalised by the activity on the farm.

"This is a unique project, delivering real long-term benefits. Your support is making a vital difference to the people of Swaziland. Please continue to pray for Bishop Ellinah and her people, and for the Luyengo Farm and all involved there."

Safeguarding Trust

Church of Ireland child protection policy statement:

"It is the policy of the Church of Ireland to set standards for the welfare of all children sharing in its ministry with a view to protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm."

On Saturday, 19th January 2013, Renée English joined us at the Woodlands Hotel, Adare, to provide training for the Diocesan Support Team so that members can in turn offer training to Parish Panel Members and also to those within our parishes working with children. Training will be offered to those parishes where it is needed so that parishioners throughout our Dioceses can be assured that, as far as it is humanly possible, best practice is in place in their parish in its ministry to children and vulnerable adults and for those working with them.

We are extremely grateful to Renée for the amount of time and encouragement she has given.

Saint Basil the Great wrote:

"The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry; the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of him who is naked; the shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot; the money that you keep locked away is the money of the poor; the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices that you commit."
Clergy of Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert and Kilmacduagh.

A number of copies of this book, containing the biographical succession lists for the diocese of Killaloe, are available at the bargain price of 40 Euros (reduced from the original price of €50). Enquiries can be made through Rev Canon Bob Hanna (Email: bobhanna@eircom.net, Tel: 065 682 0109, Mobile: 086 216 7040).

Canon D.W.T. Crooks has revised and updated the lists first compiled by renowned historian-compiler Canon J.B. Leslie. Included are photographs and background to all the churches in the combined dioceses. Launching the book in 2010 Bishop Trevor hoped Leslie-Crooks would help readers to gain a fuller sense of their identity in the Christian family. Published by the Ulster Historical Foundation, it is the eleventh in a series of revisions of Succession Lists. Canon Crooks is currently working on Limerick, Emily and Ardfern.

A Prayer for February

The Collect for Ash Wednesday

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:

Create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the ancient custom of marking the forehead with ashes as a sign of repentance. The pre-Reformation collect for this day referred to that custom and so, as the practice had (for the time being) been discontinued at the compiling of the Book of Common Prayer, a new collect was composed for that day by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer. It did, however, use phrases based on the medieval English prayers for the blessing of the ashes.

The oldest source for the composition of this collect is the Book of Wisdom, part of the Apocrypha: “But you are merciful to all...and you overlook people’s sins, so that they may repent. For you love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that you have made.”

Wisdom 11: 23-24 (NRSV). The source for the petition “create and make in us new and contrite hearts” is Psalm 51: 10.

We are reminded in this prayer that God is not indifferent to the world he has made. God still loves us despite the fact we have misused our gift of freewill and turned against him. He loves the sinner and is always ready to forgive those who are sorry – and we pray for “new and contrite hearts” at the beginning of the Lenten season. God is like a potter who must break up and refashion a vessel that is imperfect; he must shatter our hard, rebellious hearts and recreate them – but only with our full consent. And that means being truly (“worthily”) sorry for our sins and aware of the unhappiness (“wretchedness”) they bring us. Only in so doing can we be assured of God’s forgiveness and the putting away of that which has offended God’s goodness.

Michael Johnston

Partners in Prayer – February 2013

Each Sunday

The Diocese of Clogher and Bishop John McDowell

Our Companion Dioceses: The Diocese of Saldahna Bay (South Africa) and the five Dioceses of the Protestant Church of Anhalt, Germany.

3rd February, 2nd Sunday before Lent, Green

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Lui (Sudan) and Rt Revd Stephen Dokolo Ismail.

Our Diocese: The Electoral College meeting in Armagh tomorrow to elect a new Bishop of Kilmore.

10th February, Sunday before Lent, Green

Our Diocese: The Mission evening in Adare on Wednesday.

17th February, Lent 1, Purple/Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Malakal (Sudan) and Rt Revd Hilary Garang Deng.

Our Diocese: The various Lenten projects and studies being undertaken throughout our Diocese.

24th February, Lent 2, Purple/Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Maryland (USA), Bishop of Maryland Rt Revd Eugene Sutton, and Assistant Bishop of Maryland Rt Revd Dr Joe Burnett.

Congratulations to Vikki Cullen and John Deegan who announced their engagement on Christmas morning – every happiness for your future life together. We await news of the big day!!

SINCERE SYMPATHIES
Sincere sympathies to Mrs Alma Kelly of Whitegate, Mountshannon whose son Raymond was killed in a work accident in the States. Our thoughts and prayers are with Alma and her other sons as they prepare to make the sad journey to New York.

STOP PRESS
On Saturday 23rd March at 6.30pm, Blessington Millennium Choir in Concert present ‘Darkness and Light’ in St Flannan’s Cathedral, Killaloe:
Part One - The Crucifixion by John Stainer
Part Two - Medley of Carolan, O’Riordain music played by the Aer Lingus Ensemble. Accompanied by Mr Trevor Selby, G.G.S.M., F.R.C.O.

More details to follow but please make a diary note for this excellent evening. The Choir will also enhance our worship in St Flannan’s on Palm Sunday.

The Birr Group of Parishes
Birr, Lorrha, Lockeen, and Dorrha

Rector: Venerable R. Wayne Carney
Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert
The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly
Tel: 057-912-0021 Mob: 087-786-5234
Email: mapleire@eircom.net

Assistant Priest: The Rev. Ruth Gill
Kilgolan House, Kilcormac, Co. Offaly
Tel: 057-913-5341 Mob: 087-948-4402
Email: ruth_gill40@hotmail.com

MIDLANDS SIMON
Many thanks to all who contributed so generously to the Christmas Appeal. The gifts were handed over to Midlands Simon in time for distribution for Christmas.

PASTORAL
It has been a difficult winter for some of our parishioners who have lost loved ones. Mrs Sadie Hayes, Killenaule, died on St Stephen’s Day. She hadn’t been in good health for some time but her death came quite quickly and caught many of us unawares. Her funeral service was in Birr on the 28th December, with burial in Clonoghill. Sincere sympathy is extended to her family, Elizabeth, Phyllis, Richard, Eric, Neville, and Victor and their families. Sympathies are also offered to her extended family, friends and neighbours.

Mrs Pat Harding passed away on New Year’s Day 2013. Pat had been ill for a couple of years but remained strong emotionally. Her family all rallied round to support her and she in turn was an inspiration. Pat will be fondly remembered for her involvement in so many ways in the parish life of St Brendan’s as well as a friendly face behind the counter in the old Harding’s Shop on Main Street. Her funeral service was held on Thursday, 3rd January in St Brendan’s, Birr. Members of the Mothers’ Union formed a guard of honour as her remains left for burial in Aghlish, Borrisokane, alongside her late husband, George. Sincere condolences to all her family: Carol and Bob, Leslie, Rose and George, and Joseph, Noileen, Mark and Alison.

Condolences are also offered to Mrs Rhoda Gill on the death of her sister in England, and to Mrs Denise Bailey, whose father, Evan Williams died recently. His funeral service was held in Eyrecourt.

ECUMENICAL CAROL SERVICE
The service was hosted by the Church of Ireland in Birr on 23rd December. There was a great turnout! The singing was led by Birr Choral Society with Enda O’Connor at the organ. Special music items were done by the Ecumenics, Jonathan Carter, the Boys’ Choir from Birr Community School, Virtuoso and a piece by BCS Quartet and Harp. The whole evening set a good tone for Christmas! The collection went to Bishops’ Appeal and St Vincent de Paul.

FAMILY SERVICES
Our Family Services are held on the second Sunday of each month. Many thanks to Silvia Vaughan for organising the tea and coffee after the service.

ASH WEDNESDAY
Our Ash Wednesday service will be held in Birr Church on the 13th of February at 8.00 pm.

ECUMENICAL LENTEN PROGRAMME
As a follow-up to our successful series of discussions in co-operation with the Irish School of Ecumenics last autumn, we will have a series of Lenten discussions on Tuesday nights from 19th February. Details will be announced.
DECEMBER IN REVIEW

December is always a hectic month with lots of activity and this time was no exception. The month started with Roscrea GFS hosting the Diocesan Craft Day in the Methodist Hall—a great success even if the pace was a bit frantic! The next day Jason Patterson, David Lewis and June Wallace accompanied Rev. Lesley to a Diocesan Ministry Meeting in Cloughjordan Hall convened by the Bishop to explore the future of ministry in the Diocese. On the evening of 6th December St. Cronan’s NS held its excellent nativity play, 'The Star Attraction', in St. Cronan’s Church, having performed a matinee for the pre-schools that morning. St. Cronan’s Youth Club held its Christmas party on 8th December, starting off with a feast in Supermacs, and ending with some fun in the club room in the Temperance Hall.

On 10th December St. Cronan’s NS were singing again, this time around Roscrea, carolling in Tesco, Supervalu, and the Dean Maxwell and Villa Maria nursing homes. On 12th December Rev. Lesley and Amanda Pearson presented a cheque for €750 to the Laurels Hospice Unit of the Dean Maxwell, from the proceeds of the Flower Festival. On 14th December Team OM visited the school with a fabulous nativity puppet show. A truly memorable evening for all the right reasons! On 16th December, Kyle Church hosted the first of our carol services, while on 19th December, the rectory hosted a parish party and the middle and senior rooms of the national school attended the pantomime 'Cinderella' in the University of Limerick.

On Thursday 20th Rev. Lesley, Adrian Hewson and a good number of parishioners attended the ecumenical carol service in the Methodist Church, Roscrea. Santa visited the school on the 21st and got a spin on a fire engine in the process! Corbally, Roscrea and Bourney all had good congregations at their carol services on the 23rd and at their Christmas services on Christmas eve/morning. On 28th, seven of our young people headed off with the United Diocesan Youth Council for an action packed day of activity in Dublin, subsidised by St. Cronan’s youth club.

NEW ARRIVALS

Congratulations to Colin and Aoife Young on the safe arrival of baby Leah on 28th December; a little sister for Josh and Abbie; to Sarah Clare and Brian Pearson on the safe though early arrival of baby Ben on 13th January; and to Thomas and Lorraine Hodgins on the safe arrival of baby Rachel on 19th January.

Holy Baptism

Jack Stephen Lewis, first child of Mervyn and Michelle Lewis, was baptised in Bourney Church on 20th January. We wish him every blessing.

ROSCREA PEOPLE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The Church of Ireland community in Roscrea was honoured to receive a Roscrea People of the Year award on the occasion of the bicentenary of St. Cronan’s Church in 2012. The presentation took place at a ceremony in the Damer Court Hotel on Thursday, 17th January, when the award was presented to Rev. Lesley and a representative delegation of the parishioners.

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Ash Wednesday, 13th February: Holy Communion, Roscrea 8pm
Wednesday 20th February: Holy Communion, Corbally 8pm
Wednesday 27th February: Holy Communion, Roscrea 8pm
Wednesday 6th March: Holy Communion, Corbally 8pm
Wednesday 13th March: Holy Communion, Roscrea 8pm
Wednesday 20th March: Holy Communion, Bourney 8pm

Nenagh Union of Parishes

Nenagh, Templederry, Ballymackey and Killodiernan.

Rector: Revd. Canon Marie Rowley-Brooke
St. Mary's Rectory, Church Road, Nenagh. Co. Tipperary.
Tel: 067-32598  Mob: 085-1474792
Email: revdmarie@eircom.net

SUNDAY SERVICES

9.30 am Templederry, 1st 2nd and 4th Sundays.
11.00 am St Mary's Nenagh
12.15 pm, 2nd and 4th Sundays Killodiernan.

Advent and Christmas

Both our Choirs had been working very hard over some weeks
before the Advent season, and began with a service entitled 'The Advent Sequence: Veni Emmanuel.' With hymns, readings, prayers and Advent banners the service firmly focussed our minds on the meaning of Advent, a season often crowded out by the commercial demands surrounding Christmas.

Christmas oranges were made the focus of the month’s Family Worship, processed through the church by the children.

Advent and Christmas then came together halfway through in 'The Prophecies and the Birth' a candlelight service of readings and carols in Killodiernan Church. A School Carol Service was also held, and the Junior Choir had a party to thank them for their excellent work during the course of the year.

Then to bring in Christmas finally there was an uplifting Carol Service at St Mary’s on the 23rd. The collection here was shared between St Vincent de Paul, and the Nenagh Day Care Centre.

During the weeks of Advent there was also an opportunity for quiet prayer and reflection led by Canon Marie, with Compline by Candlelight, a time to draw breath, to be still and to remind ourselves of the ‘wondrous story’ that gave rise to our faith.

The Sunday after Christmas being so close to the New Year, it was a good idea to join together in the Covenant Renewal Ceremony. As we pledge ourselves to working for the Kingdom of God in 2013, it is also appropriate to say a special word of thanks to the many, many people in our Nenagh Union who give so generously of their time and talents to enable our Christian family to flourish.

The Epiphany season began with a Crown-making workshop for the children and then the Epiphany service where the children processed wearing their crowns, and then cast them down before the Epiphany season of course embraces the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and this year our two choirs hosted an evening of hymn singing entitled “United in Song”. In this the Nenagh Folk Choir, and the Cloughjordan Community Choir joined them. Each choir sang two pieces, and we also joined together in singing some great hymns and enjoying refreshments afterwards. There was a great atmosphere, and many positive comments about how enjoyable and meaningful it all was. Thanks are due to Sylvia Crawford, our organist, and Patrick Rowley-Brooke on the cornet, for providing the accompaniments.

We hope during Lent to pick up on Bishop Trevor’s four themes (the 4C’s!) in considering the future vision of the Diocese: Confidence, Celebration, Communication and Caring, and the group which attended the first gathering of the proposed informal Limerick grouping will be meeting again to reflect further.

Congratulations to…Jane Coman, who has a new grand-daughter, Sophie Caroline, born on 18 December to Andrew and Faye Coman, and to Ruth and Danny Fitzpatrick on the birth of Holly on 11 December, a sister for Olivia.

Condolences to…Jean Borland and the Shorten family following the death of Jack Shorten, and to Charles Fitzgerald and his family following the death of Des.

**Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group**

Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.

The Rev. Canon Stephen Neill

Modreeny Rectory, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary.

Tel/Fax: 0505 – 42183 Mob: 087 – 2328172

Email: stephen.neill@gmail.com

Parish website: www.modreeny.com

Stephen’s blog: www.paddyanglican.com

Borrisokane 200

Thanks to all who helped to make the bicentenary celebrations such a great success. It was a very pleasant surprise that our Bishop was able to be present after all and we equally welcomed our ecumenical guests who shared so graciously and generously in the celebrations. It was very encouraging to see both FR Tom O’Halloran and Fr JJ Rodgers along with Rev’d Tom Kingston to represent the other Christian Churches. The sermon delivered by Mrs Gillian Kingston was by all accounts inspirational and the music led by Ivor Hayes and his choir was superb. The Rector was assisted by Ms. Valerie Stephens, Parish Reader in leading the worship. We also appreciated the support of our public representatives with many local councillors in attendance and especially Borrisokane’s Lord Mayor Darragh McKenna who did us the honour of planting a tree to commemorate the occasion. Thanks to the Austin family who donated the tree for the event. The meal after the service was a great success and all were fed and fed very well indeed. Thanks to all who assisted in the preparation and serving of the lunch.

The Austin family who donated the tree for the event. The meal after the service was a great success and all were fed and fed very well indeed. Thanks to all who assisted in the preparation and serving of the lunch.

At that lunch Norman Harding’s history of the church was launched by Canon Marie with Compline by Candlelight, a time to draw breath, to be still and to remind ourselves of the ‘wondrous story’ that gave rise to our faith.

The Sunday after Christmas being so close to the New Year, it was a good idea to join together in the Covenant Renewal Ceremony. As we pledge ourselves to working for the Kingdom of God in 2013, it is also appropriate to say a special word of thanks to the many, many people in our Nenagh Union who give so generously of their time and talents to enable our Christian family to flourish.

The Epiphany season began with a Crown-making workshop for the children and then the Epiphany service where the children processed wearing their crowns, and then cast them down before the Epiphany service. We now have a wonderful new Nativity set, knitted for us by Rae Croft; it’s very touchy-feely so the children can really get up close and personal with it!

The Epiphany season of course embraces the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and this year our two choirs hosted an evening of hymn singing entitled “United in Song”. In this the Nenagh Folk Choir, and the Cloughjordan Community Choir joined them. Each choir sang two pieces, and we also joined together in singing some great hymns and enjoying refreshments afterwards. There was a great atmosphere, and many positive comments about how enjoyable and meaningful it all was. Thanks are due to Sylvia Crawford, our organist, and Patrick Rowley-Brooke on the cornet, for providing the accompaniments.

We hope during Lent to pick up on Bishop Trevor’s four themes (the 4C’s!) in considering the future vision of the Diocese: Confidence, Celebration, Communication and Caring, and the group which attended the first gathering of the proposed informal Limerick grouping will be meeting again to reflect further.

Congratulations to…Jane Coman, who has a new grand-daughter, Sophie Caroline, born on 18 December to Andrew and Faye Coman, and to Ruth and Danny Fitzpatrick on the birth of Holly on 11 December, a sister for Olivia.

Condolences to…Jean Borland and the Shorten family following the death of Jack Shorten, and to Charles Fitzgerald and his family following the death of Des.
those of you who come less often to come whenever you can. You are missed when you are not there and our worship and fellowship is all the better when you are there. I do appreciate that for some people there are lots of competing activities on a Sunday morning, in terms of Sport especially, but if and when you are free you are always welcome. Together we are stronger and can be a more effective community of faith.

**BAPTISM**

Aoibheann Sarah Gaffney, daughter of Declan and Tara of Cloughjordan was baptised in St. Kieran’s Church on Advent Sunday. We wish Aoibheann Sarah every blessing in her life.

**BEREAVEMENT**

It was with considerable sadness that we said farewell to Hilda Williams (Nee Switzer) of Stoneyacre, Cloughjordan. Hilda was a wonderfully warm and positive person who saw the best in life and brought out the best in others. In latter years she had lived in Rivervale Nursing Home in Nenagh but always had a great love for her home and her family as they did for her. Our condolences and prayers go to her sons Gordon, Freddy, & David & daughters Daphne & Kay as well as her brother Alan and sister Marian and the extended family.

**THANKS FROM BOB & HERMOINE KELLY**

Bob & Hermoine have asked that their appreciation for the presentation made on the occasion of Bob’s retirement as Parish Reader be recorded. They were delighted with the event which came as both a shock and a surprise.

**Shinrone Group of Parishes**

*Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinnitty and Dunkerrin*

Rector: The Rev. Michael Johnston  
Tel: 0505-47164 Mob: 086-6088567  
Email: shinrone@killaloe.anglican.org

**CHRISTMAS**

Advent and Christmas seemed to fly by this year with the usual round of traditional services. In preparation for Christmas all parishes hosted Carol Services, the children enjoyed a film screening in Aghancon Hall and the Christmas Eve Christingle service in Shinrone, and the Mothers’ Union entertained the residents of Clover Lodge Nursing Home in Shinrone with a morning of carol singing. The churches were wonderfully decorated for the season but, as usual, it seemed no time until the decorations were being boxed up again! But we pray that Christ may have been born anew in hearts and lives again as we face a new year.

**YOUNG PERSONS’ DISCO**

Following a very successful pottery evening in November a Christmas disco was held for young people in the parish on the 21 December in Aghancon Community Hall. A great evening of fun was had and many thanks to Sandra Reid for organising it and to all who helped on the night.

**VARIETY CONCERT**

The evening of Thursday 3 January saw a wonderful night’s entertainment as a Variety Concert was held in Aghancon Community Hall in aid of Aghancon church and the Children’s University Hospital, Temple St and Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin. A large range of performers from within and outside the parish gave of their time and talents to provide a great night of music, comedy, storytelling and refreshments. Many thanks to all who contributed on the night, and who supported the event. A particular thanks to Leslie and Ina Blackwell for their work of organising and compering. Around €2,000 was raised which is very much appreciated!

**MOTHERS’ UNION DINNER**

Despite a last minute change of venue to the County Arms Hotel in Birr the annual Mothers’ Union Dinner was again an evening of good food and fellowship. A great number of members and friends attended and many thanks to those who organised a very enjoyable evening.

**GUEST PREACHER ON SWAZILAND**

On Sunday 20 January the guest preacher at the 10.25am service in Shinrone was Linda Chambers, National Director of ‘Us’ (formerly USPG) in Ireland. She gave us a very vivid account of life in Swaziland and the wonderful work Us are doing in collaboration with the Diocese of Swaziland. She was able to update us on how the farm project sponsored by our Diocese was progressing and it was great to hear how our prayers and financial contributions are making a real difference to people’s lives. Many thanks to Linda for taking the time to come and be with us.

**ECUMENICAL TRIP TO OUR GERMAN LINK PARISH**

A group of parishioners will be visiting our link parish of Harzgerode in Germany during the week after Easter. We’re looking forward to meeting and worshipping with our German friends again and exploring the area, as well as doing some sightseeing in Berlin and Leipzig. It’s hoped to have a couple of fundraising events in February and March to defray a little of the cost and all support would be much appreciated as we continue to build links and friendship with another part of God’s Church.
Drumcliffe Union with Kilnasoolagh

Ennis, Kilfenora, Kilkee, Spanish Point, Kilnasoolagh and Shannon

Rector: Rev. Chancellor Robert Charles Hanna
The Rectory, Bindon Street, Ennis, Co. Clare.
Tel: 065 – 6820109 Mob: 086 2167040
Email: bobhanna@eircom.net
Parish website: www.churchofirelandclare.com

Bishop Trevor, hot from his Christian Aid visit to Palestine and Israel, negotiating snow-bound Airport challenges, found enough energy to preach at the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service at St. Peter-Paul Roman Catholic Cathedral. Having made his own journey out of Jerusalem into the West Bank a short time before, Bishop Trevor was not short of imagery to go with the gospel story of the journey to Emmaus. The overall theme of this year’s service was built on the words of Micah, “What does the Lord require of you?”

Bishop of Killaloe, Rt Rev Kieran O’Reilly hosted the service, assisted by Bishop Williams and the Rev Vicki Lynch, representing Shannon Methodist community. Also present was Canon Bob Hanna.

Cathedral Administrator Fr Tom Hogan and Fr Ger Fitzgerald were responsible for the service of Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer. Mr Nigel Bridge represented the Drumcliffe Group as a scripture reader and organist.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation classes will commence in February in preparation for a ceremony in early summer. So far only three candidates are listed. Watch this space.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Rev Patricia McKee Hanna has had her PhD historical thesis accepted by Trinity College Dublin and looks to Conferment soon. It took the form of a historical biography of a “subversive” antiquarian and eccentric clergyman and scholar-tutor at Trinity College Dublin, James Henthorn Todd (1805-1868). A biblical scholar, educator, and Irish historian Todd was made Regius Professor of Hebrew at Trinity in 1849. Among his notable writings was “St Patrick, Apostle to Ireland” and “War of the Danes with the Gaels”. He was also co-founder of St Columba’s College, Dublin. The Rev Patricia is currently Anglican chaplain at the University of Limerick.

SEASON PAST

Advent and Christmas meant much activity, especially around St Columba’s Church pre-Christmas, with lots of beautiful music in the several concerts. Thanks to all who decorated the churches, led worship and provided hospitality. A post-Christmas service took place in St Columba’s, when the combined Lions and Rotary Clubs concluded their Christmas Tree Remembrance observance with an act of worship. The grand sum of €4,000 was raised during the “Tie a yellow ribbon” campaign for Cahercalla Hospice.

ILLNESS

Our prayers, on going to press, are being offered for husband and dad Kerry Blake from Newmarket-on-Fergus who was in Cork University Hospital after taking ill. His wife Ursula and children Johnny, Cathy and Alex are also in our thoughts.

Clonfert Diocese

Aughrim & Ballinasloe
Unions of Parishes

Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Ardrahan, Clontuskert and Woodlawn

Rector: Rev. George Flynn
The Rectory, Aughrim, Co. Galway
Tel: 090 9673735 Mob: 087 20 74739
Email: georgeandgwyn@eircom.net
Parish website: www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org

Greetings from the ‘North’ - I hope that everyone enjoyed the New Year and Christmas Festivities and that the year ahead will bring you all happiness, peace, great joy, and prosperity.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

All our services were well attended with a total congregation gathering at our six services of just under 200. The collections supported the work of Christian Aid in grateful thanks for all God’s blessing to us this past year.

GLEBE SCHOOL AUGHRIM

In September our Glebe School new pupils brought our numbers to fifteen and great credit must be paid to Ms. Lisa McKeigue Principal and supporting staff for directing an excellent Christmas pageant before an enthusiastic gathering of some fifty parents, relatives and friends. The performance was followed by refreshments and goodies and a raffle that was a great success raising much needed funds by the Parents’ Association for extra school activities during the coming year.

HIGH MILEAGE CLUB

The gathering of our Senior Citizens was held in the Rectory on Saturday 15th with twenty two assembling for their Christmas Dinner. All enjoyed their meal that concluded with the celebration of Holy Communion.

CHRISTMAS SEASONAL EVENTS

St. Catherine’s Ahascragh held their annual Christmas Musical evening on Friday 7th December with a very large gathering enjoying a wonderful evening of music, readings and song followed by the traditional serving of festive refreshments. The Annual Fundraising Dinner organised by parishioners and assisted by friends in the community was held in De Courcey’s on Sunday 16th another successful afternoon well supported and enjoyed by all.

CAROL SERVICES

Were held on Sunday the 16th December with Ballinasloe Ardrahan holding their own and Aughrim Clontuskert and Woodlawn coming together in Woodlawn for their combined service. All were well attended.

CAROL SINGING

This year parishioners joined me with the singers from St Catherine’s Aughrim in attending Hillside NH in Aughrim Thursday
CHRISTMAS JOY
Jersey USA.

from the Registers
Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

50 Ballinvoher, Fr. Russell Road,
Castletroy, Limerick

Email: sandrapragnell@eircom.net

The Very Rev. Sandra Pragnell
St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's and
Limerick City Parish

Limerick Diocese

St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's and
Abington

The Very Rev. Sandra Pragnell
The Deanery, 7 Kilbane,
Castletroy, Limerick

Tel: 061-338697 Mob: 087-2658592
Email: sandrapragnell@eircom.net

The Rev. Jane Galbraith
50 Ballinvoher, Fr. Russell Road,
Dooraadyle, Limerick

Tel: 061-302038 Mobile: 085-1450804
Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

FROM THE REGISTERS
Holy Baptism: 23 Dec 2012, St Mary's
Cathedral: James William John van HORCK
son of Mark and Kate (née Hassett) of New
Jersey USA.

The Clonfert Group
of Parishes
Clonfert, Banagher, Eyrecourt, and Portumna

The Rev. Alan Nevin
Priest in Charge; Very Rev. Patrick L. Towers
Tel: (090) 9684547. Mob: (086) 8140649
Email: towers@iol.ie

GOOD NEWS
Banagher parishioners were delighted
to be back in St Paul’s Church the Sunday
before Christmas Day after repairs had been
completed to our damaged Church, and
how lovely it all looks now. We would like
to thank the contractors and the many people
in our congregation who contributed to the
completion of this work which on occasions
took more time than could easily be spared.
The Church really looks delightful with new
paint and cleaned brass work.

OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES
...were all joyful affairs with good
attendances Thanks are due to the many
people who did such a great job in decorating
and getting ready our churches. A candle lit
service of carols and lessons was again held
in Clonfert Cathedral. With the light fading
as we arrived, and a well filled church, all
added to a lovely atmosphere. We held a
Christmas Holy Communion service at Eliza
Lodge Nursing Home just before Christmas
and livened the service up by singing a few
carols.

BEREAVEMENTS
Evan Williams of Meelick died on 1st
January 2013 and we sympathise with
Margaret, Tommy, Denise, and Michelle, all his
grandchildren and great grandchildren, and
all his many friends. His funeral took place in
St John the Baptise Church Eyrecourt on the
4th January. It was nice to meet once again
the Rev Robert Kingston who was once rector
of our Parish and who assisted at the funeral.
Nell Jamieson died on 6th January 2013.
Our sympathies and prayers go to Olive, her
sister in law and all the other member of
her family and friends. Nell has long been a
full supporter of St Paul’s Church Banagher
and has over a long period of time done
much good work in and around the town of
Banagher.

David Witcher also died over Christmas.
Dave came over from England many years
ago and has lived in Banagher for many years
and will be missed by many of his friends in
the town. His funeral at St Paul’s Church
Banagher was attended by his daughter
Carolyn, grandson Alex, and a church full of
his friends from far and wide.

We thank God for the lives of Evan, Nell
and Dave and pray they will be received to
his heavenly home and give them everlasting
peace and happiness.

CONGRATULATIONS
To Sam and Jackie on the birth of their
third son, a grandson for Noel and Isobel
Finney. We thank God for this new life and
wish him health and happiness for the future.

WELL DONE
To Elain Williams who graduated from
Galway University recently with her master’s
degree.

MANY THANKS
To everyone who helped and supported
the coffee evening and cake sale for the
Galway Hospice at Eyrecourt before
Christmas. €1,100 euro was raised to date, a
great achievement in these difficult times.

Limerick City Parish
St. Mary’s Cathedral, St. Michael’s and
Abington

The Very Rev. Sandra Pragnell
The Deanery, 7 Kilbane,
Castletroy, Limerick

Tel: 061-338697 Mob: 087-2658592
Email: sandrapragnell@eircom.net

The Rev. Jane Galbraith
50 Ballinvoher, Fr. Russell Road,
Dooraadyle, Limerick

Tel: 061-302038 Mobile: 085-1450804
Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

FROM THE REGISTERS
Holy Matrimony

12th Dec 2012, St Michael’s Church:
Michelle Walshe and Jim McMahon; and 28th
December 2012 at Abington Church: Diane
Gow and Shane O’Brien, who were married by
the Rev’d Tom Kingston and Fr Michael Kelly.

SINCERE SYMPATHY
Sympathy to Moira Gray on the sudden
death of her husband, our former Organist
and Master of the Choristers, Stuart Gray
on 5th December; to Mary Howes
and family on the death of his father John (Jack)
in Askeaton on 8th December; to Mary Howes
and family on the death of her mother, Mary
Hickey on 11 December; to Frank Sheahan,
and family on the death of his cousin, Marie
Fitzgerald who died on 13th December; to
Patricia O’Brien and family on the death of
her husband Donal (Donie) on 26th December;
and to Hilda Fairbrother and her sons, Georgy,
Simon, Robert, John, Stephen and Frankie on
the death of her husband George on 16th
January 2013.

THE LATE STUART GRAY
As a tribute to Stuart, St Mary’s Cathedral
Organist and Master of the Choristers for 25
years, a Memorial Service has been arranged
for Sunday 24th February 2013 at 3pm in St
Mary’s Cathedral.

CONGRATULATIONS
Congratulations to Daniel & AmyBattle
on the birth of a baby girl, Caitlin Margaret
Aoilbe born on 18 November, a new sister
for William and Aoife; and congratulations to
Mohsen (Sam) Farahmand on being granted
Citizenship in December.

13th Ballinderry NH and Millrace Saturday
16th All were well received with the residents
joining in the singing and festive fun.

FAMILY SERVICE
On the first Sunday after Christmas a
united Family Service was held in Aughrim at
2.30 p.m. A time to reflect and see out 2012
and welcome in a positive way the coming
2013. A very good congregation attended and
most came back to the Rectory for a festive
cuppa and chat.

CHRISTMAS JOY
Most households experience much joy
at Christmas with family members gathering
from different places. For some it is a time
of sadness when some family members are
unable to come home at this time. This year
the arrival of a new family member brought
much cheer and happiness to the Newton
Families of Persse a baby son to George
and Beatrice Newton. We extend our best
wishes to the extended family. I was so much
families of Persse a baby son to George
and Beatrice Newton. We extend our best
wishes to the extended family. I was so much
delighted to see the new arrival at church of
Christmas day at the age of four days. IS THIS
A RECORD????

PASTORAL CARE
We continue to remember all known to
us who are ill at this time or recovering from
surgery and pray that all will experience the
healing spirit of Christ and restoration too
fullness of health before too long.

NEW CHILDREN’S CLINIC SATURDAY ONLY
Is now opened at Ballinasloe Enterprise
Centre (off the Roscommon Road). All
children up to the age of 14 will be accepted.
Dr Susan (Orwa) Gravenir is the Paediatrician.
No referral is necessary and the opening
hours are from 10.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m.
Professional fee €60.00

SERVICES JANUARY 2013 as per website.

29
CATHEDRAL CHOIR NEWS

Farewell to Daniel Battle, our Associate Organist for the past year, who has taken up a new post in Cork overseeing an organ building project. We appreciate Daniel’s contribution to the life of St Mary’s Cathedral in addition to his musical talents, and wish him well in his new role. Welcome back to Peter barley, our Organist and Choir Director, and his wife Catherine who have spent the past year in Canada.

NEW ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF LIMERICK

We rejoice with our Roman Catholic neighbours as they welcome their new Bishop Brendan Leahy and a new chapter in their faith journey, and we look forward to continued good inter-church relations with all our Christian neighbours.

MOTHERS’ UNION

Mothers’ Union would like to say a huge “Thank You” to everyone who donated to our Christmas hampers for Thomond House Women’s Hostel and Clare Street Men’s Hostel. Your donations have made up two big hampers and enough toiletries to make up Christmas gifts for the ladies in Thomond House who really appreciate them.

CONCERT IN ST MICHAEL’S CHURCH

The Light of Christmas’ concert on 11 December was a great success, raising over €1,100 and we owe Irina Dernova (organist) sincere thanks for organising it. Helen Houlihan (soprano), Owen Gilhooly (baritone) and Sheila Allen (clarinet) were all superb, and thanks also to St. Michael’s Church Choir joined by some members of St. Mary’s Cathedral Choir, and all who helped in a variety of ways.

ST.MICHAEL’S CHRISTMAS WHIST DRIVE

St. Michael’s Christmas Whist Drive took place on 8th December. Raffle Prize winners were 1st Kayt Shier (Hamper kindly sponsored by Niall Johnston) and other winners were Rosemary Shier, Niall Johnston and Darren Cheatley. Thanks to Val Beck for the lovely mince pies, Gillian Cheatley, Margaret Schutz, Susi Eckhardt, Noreen Johnson and Tracey Lyttle for the tray bakes, to Niall Johnston for once again sponsoring the lovely hamper and special thanks to those who donated prizes.

THE LEPROSY MISSION

€1,695 was collected for Leprosy Mission Ireland, - thanks to all who contributed in our churches, or who bought Christmas cards, and the collection from St Michael’s NS.

LIMERICK CITY PARISH WHIST DRIVES

Sat 9th February – St. Michael’s Church
Sat 23rd February – Villiers Square
Sat 9th March (RAFFLE) – St. Michael’s Church
All Whist drives start at 8pm sharp. Admission including supper €5. We welcome your support.

HEALING SERVICE

Sunday 10th February at 7pm St Mary’s Cathedral. All welcome.

ASH WEDNESDAY (13th February)
HC at 7.30am (followed by breakfast), HC at 10.30am, and Evening Service 7pm, all at St Mary’s Cathedral.

Saint John Chrysostom in Antioch...

In the late 4th century closed his 2nd sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man by imploring his congregation to keep one main thing in mind:

“I beg you, remember this without fail, that not to share our own wealth with the poor is theft from the poor and deprivation of their means of life. We do not possess our own wealth but theirs.”

Adare & Kilmallock
Group of Parishes
Adare, Croom, Kilmallock, Kilpeacon

The Rev. Gary Paulsen
The Rectory, Adare, Co Limerick
Tel: 061 396227 Mob: 085 764 0533
Email: adarerector@gmail.com

So much happened over December with a busy calendar in the group of parishes and the celebration of Christmas. A fundraiser Christmas lunch was held on 9th December at Bruff RFC club, organised by Jessie Griffen and her very capable team of helpers. The team managed to feed everyone. Prizes were given out in lucky draws and everyone took to the floor and were dancing away. What a wonderful day it turned out to be, with a great sense of community and lots of laughter. Thanks again to everyone and to Bruff RFC for allowing us to use their facilities.

St. Nicholas’ Church hosted a “Nollaig Cois an Maigue” Christmas Concert. The concert consisted of local people performing in spoken word, choral and solo musical traditional pieces. Following the concert, seasonal fare of mulled wine and mince pies was served. Again a full house and thanks to Kieron and his team for a great evening.

Kilmallock and Kilpeacon Sunday Schools put on their Nativity plays during the Sunday morning worship slots and the children and teachers worked so hard to put it all together and the modern slant put on by the Kilpeacon group was very innovative and creative. Thanks goes to teachers and children for the hard work put in and the wonderful participation by all. It was surprising that some of the little ones at Kilmallock could pronounce some of those ‘big’ words. Well done.

The Lessons and Carol Service on 23rd December saw a packed church at Adare with everyone singing those wonderful Christmas tunes. St Nicholas’ School did a lively Ding Dong which really set the mood. Chloe Kelly sang ‘O Holy Night’ and David Griffen ‘Nella Fantasia’. Two amazing talented young people. It is such a privilege to have them do this in our parish. Liam Kelly led us with the final Auld Lang Syne with everybody singing at full voice, which just finished the night on such a high note with everyone feeling that the wonderful season of Christ’s birth was truly upon us.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day saw the churches full with family and friends visiting and taking the time to give thanks that Christ came to share in our humanity and calls us to share in his divinity. The season of Christmas is truly a wonderful season for family and friends to celebrate the gift of life.

The 22 nd December saw the relaunch of the Adare Youth Group.
An evening of fun, prayer and pizza. It warmed my heart to know that we had thirty people attend and that young people want to be involved. Another fun night at the Ice Rink was also arranged. Kenneth Baker is dedicated and enthusiastic and with his other helpers and parents involvement it will grow from strength to strength. Look out for information on Adare Youth Club Facebook page.

We now look forward to Shrove Tuesday. 12th February will see our pancake and fun night before we launch into lent on Ash Wednesday the 13th. This year we will have a series of talks on spirituality. Watch this space.

WELL DESERVED AWARDS

Well it has been an active Advent and Christmas for our group of parishes. One of the good things which happened is that we won an award, several in fact, for the maintenance of our graveyards at Askeaton and Nantenan. Our Askeaton graveyard won two awards: first prize in the local electoral ward and first prize in the Limerick County as best conserved ancient graveyard. Congratulations to Ann Drew and the graveyard committee and many thanks to our local Fás team for all the hard work that has gone into this. Nantenan won third prize for conservation in the electoral area. This is a fantastic achievement, and all down to hard work from a team of men and women around Nantenan and Cappagh. It is work in which Rathkeale parishioner Arthur Gilliard has been deeply involved and a great deal of cooperation and support has been given by Simon White, who owns the surrounding land. There is much yet to do, and we know that Arthur and the team have plans for next spring and summer but Nantenan has been given a whole new lease of life by the work carried out so far. Many congratulations and thanks to everyone involved.

UP AND COMING

Easter is early this year and Lent is coming up this month. There will be an Ash Wednesday Eucharist in St. Mary’s Askeaton on Wednesday 13th at 8:00 p.m. Hopefully there will be a Lenten study programme: “Making Sense of the Scriptures” which will meet in Rathkeale National School No. 2 starting Thursday 14th February.

FROM THE REGISTERS

We were saddened by the death of two of our older parishioners over the Christmas period. John (Jack) Shorten died a few weeks before Christmas. He had been a member of Rathkeale for many years, and most of his family still live and contribute to the life of the parish. Jack was well known throughout the country as a keen breeder and judge of horses. We extend our prayerful sympathy to his widow, Ruby and all his family. And Colonel Philip O’Grady died shortly after Christmas. Always known as “The Colonel” he was 96, and had been a key figure in the life of Askeaton parish until he retired when he reached 80. We extend our deepest and prayerful sympathy to all his family.

A more joyful note was struck in January with the baptism of Adam Drew. We rejoice to welcome our newest member to Askeaton parish.
CHRISTMAS SERVICES

All of our special Christmas Services were well received by our various congregations. Traditional Carol Services were held in Dingle and Kilgobbin Churches, both ecumenical and both well attended, and also in Ballyseedy Church, the traditional venue of the united Carol Service for the Tralee and Ballymacelligott Union since the Union was formed.

In recent years the Christmas Service in St. John’s, Tralee, although still comprising mainly Christmas Carols and Readings, has sought to take a different format. This year it was a Service of Greening the Church, during which, as the title implies, the church was prepared and decorated for the Christmas season, enrolling the help of the Sunday Club, Youth Club, Boys’ Brigade and other parish organisations.

This year the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass in Ballymacelligott Church was moved from its former time of midnight to the now more usually accepted time of 10pm. This proved to be a success as could be judged by the increase in the numbers attending.

SEEKING AN INCUMBENT

The search for a new Rector of our group of parishes took on a more immediate air with a visit from the Diocesan Ministry and Resources Team in late January, when members of our congregations were invited to address the Team. It is only right and proper that great care should be taken over such an important appointment, which may last for many years and profoundly affect the nature of our parishes and the contentment of our congregations, but there are times when I wish that the mills of God wouldn’t grind quite so slowly. We ask you to pray for a successful, and reasonably speedy, conclusion.

Killarney & Aghadoe
Union of Parishes

Killarney, Aghadoe and Muckross
Tel: 064 66 31832 Mob: 087 689 2025
Email: smwatt1@gmail.com

SERVICES

Sunday 3rd Holy Communion at 11am
Sunday 10th A Service of the Word at 11am
Ash Wednesday 13th Holy Communion at 10.30am
Sunday 17th Holy Communion at 11am
Sunday 24th A Service of the Word at 11am

There is a service of Holy Communion each Wednesday at 10.30am.

Thank you to everyone who played a part in our Christmas Services and Concerts, it seems a long time ago now – but thank you to those who decorated and cleaned as well as to those who were involved in the music and children’s activities. Through our annual concert, Carol Service and Toy Service Appeals we have raised almost €3,000 shared between The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the local Chernobyl Children’s Group and KASI – the local asylum seekers support network. Many thanks!

The Book Club is ready now for a change in direction, after reading Shantaram which many enjoyed but found to be something of a marathon. Any suggested titles for the Club to read and discuss between now and the summer would be appreciated. We meet in the Malton Hotel at 8pm on Thursday 7th.

This year the Ash Wednesday Communion Service will be held in the morning (13th) at 10.30am, followed by coffee.

There have been a number of enquiries regarding the date of the Memorial Service and Interment of Ashes of the late Billy Vincent of Monaco, and formerly of Muckross House Killarney. After much discussion the date has been finalised as Friday 28th June. The service will begin at 4pm in St. Mary’s Church Killarney, followed by the burial of ashes in Killeaghy Graveyard, Muckross. At 6.30pm there will be a reception in Muckross House. Billy was well known as a great philanthropist and patron of many Irish charities. He leaves Elizabeth his wife and her children. It was the Vincent family Graveyard, Muckross. At 6.30pm there will be a reception in Muckross House. Billy was well known as a great philanthropist and patron of many Irish charities. He leaves Elizabeth his wife and her children. It was the Vincent family who left Muckross House to the State in 1932. May Billy rest in peace and rise in Glory.

Our concert season begins early this year: February 13th 8pm.
Oxford Chorale from Detroit
March 9th 8pm.
The Saints Chorale New Jersey
March 26th 8pm. University of N. Alabama.

Killcolman Union of Parishes

Killcolman, Kiltallagh and Glenbeigh
Priest-in-Charge: The Rev. Máirt Hanley
20 Knocklynne, Sunhill, Killorglin, Co. Kerry.
Mob: 087-619 4733
Email: rev.hanley@gmail.com

Greetings all and Happy New Year - I hope you are all doing well and getting settled into the New Year. Some great things happened last year especially with the link to Güntesberge, and I hope and pray that we can build on all the good things that have gone on over the last year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that contributes to the life of the parish and especially those who helped over the Christmas period, everything went so well, thanks.

GÜNTESBERGE

As you will see if you go into the church in Killorglin, we have put up a small exhibition of our trip to our link parish. I say we, but I should say Pauline. She has done a great job - it really gives a sense of what the trip was like. The return leg of this should be on in September with I think a slightly bigger group coming over to us, so we can say that we are doing our bit for the gathering.

CONFESSIONS

We have our date for Confirmation in the parish this year, it will be on the 26th of May. So far I have 5 names for confirmation, if you or someone you know might be interested, please let me know as soon as possible as classes will start on Tuesday January 29 just after evening prayer.

LADIES DINNER

The annual Ladies Dinner on the Monday before Lent, is on again this year on the 11th of February - more details in our next newsletter.

BOOK CLUB

We are currently looking at extracts from ‘Everything I Really Needed To Know I Learned In Kindergarten’ well worth a look, short humorous reflection that I think most will enjoy.

GERMAN CLASSES

Pauline has offered to help us get some basic German so that when our friends come over from Güntesberge we can give them the same welcome that they gave us, and to help us communicate better. My hope is that we will be able to get these up and running in the not too distant future.

CRICKET CLUB

The parish cricket club A.G.M has been proposed for February the 18th - new members welcome, no experience needed.

MUSIC CLASSES

These are back on this Thursday the 17th at 8pm in the hall, and if new people are interested, do pop along and take a look. Thanks to Áine for organizing these.

CHRISTIAN UNITY WEEK SERVICES

Our monthly mid week service on January 24th fell in the week of prayer for Christian Unity, so our parish and school got together with those from Ballyfinnan as we did last year. Since last year the service was in our church, this year it was the turn of the Catholic Kiltallagh church.
On the evening of Sunday 20th of January, we hosted the main service for Christian unity week in mid-Kerry. It was a lovely service and a great pleasure to be joined by Fr. Micheal from St. Joseph’s Catholic Church and Pastor Seagun From the Redeemed Christian Church, as well as some of the other pastors and people from Free Churches in south Kerry. Thanks to Lettie, Christine and Carmel for doing the teas and showing our brothers and sisters in Christ that we may all be equal in God’s eyes, but nobody beats our baking!

News sheets 2013
Pauline Dobbins has volunteered to be our parish publisher and be the ‘go to’ person for our newsletters. So if anyone has anything for newsletters from now on, please forward to Pauline at paulinedobbins@gmail.com.

Kenmare & Dromod Union of Parishes
Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville and Valentia
Priest-in-Charge: The Rev. Michael Cavanagh
St Patrick’s Rectory, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.
Tel: 064 664 8566 Mob: 087 1606312
Email: michael.cavanagh@eircom.net

CHRISTMAS SERVICES
We enjoyed a wonderful set of services over the Christmas period, starting with our Christingle, followed by moving carol services in Valentia, Sneem and Kenmare (in conjunction with the congregations of Holy Cross and Kenmare Methodists) and joyful Eucharists on Christmas Day itself. Everything went smoothly, apart from dog Murphy stealing 24 mince pies. And then looking for more.

PLOUGH WEEKEND
The weekend of 13/14 January was celebrated as our Annual Plough Celebration. Plough Sunday is a traditional celebration of the beginning of the agricultural year that has seen some revival over recent years. Plough Sunday celebrations usually involve bringing a ploughshare into a church with prayers for the blessing of the land. It is traditionally held on the Sunday after Epiphany. Accordingly, work in the fields did not begin until the day after Plough Sunday: Plough Monday. Also traditionally, a Plough Supper is held on the preceding Saturday evening – the last chance for the ploughmen (and ploughwomen) to let their hair down before the work begins again in the fields. Entertainment was provided by a mixture of local musicians and poetry readers, plus one or two special guests, including a church dignitary who travelled from his palace in Adare just to be with us and sing a couple of dubious songs. Undoubted stars of the show, though, were the Bergin sisters, Caoimhe and Aislinn (pictured). The weekend was extremely successful, and we raised over €830 to be split between the Luwengo farm project in Swaziland and the Kenmare Men’s Shed.

PRAISE AND PLAY
Our Praise and Play group for Under-5s continues to grow – to the extent we’re looking at the possibility of building an extension to St Patrick’s – but in the face of complaints from some ex-members who are now over-5s, we’ve had to start up a new group to cater for slightly older children (up to 8 yrs. old). It’s called the Kid’s Shed, and until it grows too big, we meet on the first Saturday in the month in the Rectory resource room from 2-4 p.m.
Promises, promises!

Barney says

Hello friends,

As we look through the Bible we can see that time after time, God has looked after His people, providing for them at just the right time.

King David, who wrote this Psalm, knew that God keeps his promises - not just in his life, but in those he read about in Scripture.

David knew that God’s promises are important and that’s why he didn’t forget what God had told him.

When I was a young we sang this song: The best book to read is the Bible. If you read it every day, it will help you on your way. Yes, the best book to read is the Bible.

Reading our Bibles is a great way to get to know God’s promises for ourselves - and to remember them!

Love Barney

Barney’s jokes

What’s brown and sticky?
A stick!

What is a pirate’s favourite letter?
P

Let’s talk to God!

Dear God, thank you that the Bible is full of your promises. Thank you that you keep them! Amen.

God’s word

Your promise has been tested through and through, and I, your servant, love it dearly. I’m too young to be important, but I don’t forget what you tell me.

Psalm 119:140-41 (The Message)

God is love

Here are four words - if you fit them correctly into the grid above, you’ll make LOVE, another promise about who God is!

Promise
Tested
Servant
Told

ASH WEDNESDAY
13th February

The date of Ash Wednesday changes each year according to the date of Easter. The earliest possible date for Ash Wednesday is 4 February and the latest possible date is 10 March. So this year it is quite early.

It is called Ash Wednesday because of the church service where palm crosses kept from last year are burnt and their ashes mixed with water to make a paste. This paste is used to make the sign of the cross on peoples’ foreheads.

For Christians these ashes are a symbol of being sorry for things that they have done which make God sad. It is also a reminder that we are all mortal.

The mark of the ashes on the forehead shows as a sign of our commitment to Jesus Christ and God. And it reminds us that we are saved through Christ’s death and resurrection.

FIRE & ASHES

All of these Bible questions have answers to do with fire or ashes... answers at the bottom of the page

1. Who saw a burning bush in the desert? (Exodus, chapter 3)
2. According to Isaiah chapter 58, what should you wear with ashes when you fast?
3. In the second letter of Peter, what cities does he say were turned to ashes?
4. How did an angel cook a cake for Elijah? (1 Kings, chapter 19)
5. In what year did the seraph touch Isaiah on the mouth with a live coal? (Isaiah, chapter 6)
6. Where was Peter when he heard the cock crow? (Luke, chapter 22)

Which English King invented the fireplace?
Alfred the Great.

1. Moses 2. sackcloth 3. Sodom and Gomorrah 4. he baked it on hot stones 5. in the year that King Uzziah died 6. While sitting by a fire in the courtyard of the house of the High Priest.
About Bluebird Care

With 16 offices nationwide, Bluebird Care provide a wide range of professional care and support services to people of all ages in their homes and in the community. Our Care Teams and Personal Assistants are dedicated to offering the highest standards of quality and professionalism in the services they provide.

Care Givers & Personal Assistants

All our staff are Garda vetted, have a suitable 3rd level healthcare qualification, are professionally trained and most importantly are passionate about the services we provide.

Call us 0818 227052

Our Services

- Care of Older Persons
- Care of Adults and Children with Physical Disabilities
- Care of Adults and Children with Intellectual Disabilities
- Care of Adults and Children with Sensory Impairments
- Children’s Services, including nanny services
- Palliative Care
- Dementia Care
- Pre and Post Operative Care
- Supporting People with a Mental Health Illness
- Respite Services
- Live-In Services
- Personal Assistants

Tax Relief

Income tax relief is available to our customers or their relatives at the top rate of tax subject to conditions.
VILLIERS SCHOOL

• Caring “family” environment with dedicated staff.
• Consistently excellent academic achievement.
• Promotes the holistic development of your child.
• Broad range of sports available: Rugby, Hockey, Basketball and Athletics.
• Modern facilities.
• Comprehensive Transition Year Programme with wide ranging opportunities.
• Varied and multi-cultural society.
• Protestant ethos.
• Reasonable fees.
• Grant assistance, bursaries & scholarships available.

Bursaries & Discounts
In addition to the SEC and other grants available Villiers School offer the following assistance with fees:

Scholarships
Four Academic Scholarships, currently €1,000 per year, are awarded based on the results of the scholarships exams set each May for students entering Form I. These are awarded to the best Day Girl, Day Boy, Boarding Girl and Boarding Boy.

Prompt Payment Draw
All families who pay before a specified date each semester are entered into a draw for a refund of their net fees for that semester.


North Circular Road, Limerick
Telephone: (061) 451447 / 451400 Fax: (061) 455333
E-mail: secretary@villiers-school.com Web Site: www.villiers-school.com