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The Headmaster,
Mr Adrian G. Oughton

www.whs.ie
The Bishop Writes

Dear Friends,

Thank you to all who represented their parishes at the Lenten Conversations and the contribution you made to our Diocesan Vision.

Why is a Vision important? Well simply if we look at where we will be in ten or fifteen years, we will wither and fade away. All we have to do is to bring an end to Church of Ireland witness in our Diocese - nothing! To carry on as we are is all that is necessary to ensure the decline and eventual demise of our Diocese.

Many of you may ask ‘Is change absolutely necessary?’ Change is difficult. Change can be painful. It requires a certain amount of letting go. It demands stepping out in faith. It demands a willingness to make mistakes, learn from them, and perhaps even start all over again.

Let me share with you what I hear from parishes. There are less people than there used to be. We are facing large financial challenges. Repairing buildings, our Churches, Rectories and Parochial Halls, is getting more and more expensive. Oil and electricity prices have gone through the roof. Now our Parish will have to pay Property Tax on our Church buildings. In every respect we are being asked for more, and we have less and less to give. In the past we have been able to ward off the evil day, but we don’t know how much longer we can keep that up. This is extreme gloom!

But the message is clear. The future is gloomy only if we carry on as normal. But there is hope. And this is how to live in hope.

We need to:
• Face the reality of the present situation
• Pray for wisdom in planning for the future
• Work together at describing the future we believe God is calling us towards
• Act in faith by taking the first step in that new direction.

“Challenging and Interesting.” That was the general reaction to the Lenten Conversations. We need now to move from ‘interesting’ to ‘commitment and change’. That commitment must express itself at parish level. Some have already got that message and have invited me to come to carry on the conversation with their parish. I’m looking forward to that. And looking forward to having further invitations.

I believe our Diocese has an exciting future. Look at how much is working really well in our parishes. Think of how those strengths could be developed and made even more effective. As we think of change, let’s carry what is best about our past into the future.

The first part of this letter was dark and gloomy. Rather like Good Friday. But I believe in the resurrection. God is a God of new life beyond our human imagining. So let’s reach out and explore how God may be inviting us to be agents of His Good News in our local communities. When we align ourselves with God’s will, there is no obstacle that can stop us.

Let us pray, ‘your will be done, your Kingdom come, among us, now.’

Yours in Christ

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

PS If you would like a copy of the Presentation at the Bishop’s Lenten Conversations, just send me an email or drop me a line.

Statement by the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland on election of Pope Francis

“In company with millions of men and women throughout the world of different Christian traditions to his own, I assure the new Pope of our prayers as he begins his new ministry. An Argentinian of European parentage, he brings together in his own person the cultures, hopes and spiritual needs of the first world and of the developing world, so much to be valued amidst the complexities and apprehensions of our globalised earth. He has been a champion of the needs of the poor and dispossessed, and, in the simplicity of his own lifestyle, he has sought to reflect the life of the much-loved saint whose name he now carries in the future, Saint Francis.

As the Church of Ireland’s Archbishop of Armagh I extend also to Cardinal Seán Brady, to Jesuit friends throughout the island and to all the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, our best wishes, with the hopes and prayers of many fellow-Christians, as Pope Francis now embarks on the ministry to which he has been called.”
Editorial - We are stronger together!

As a diocese we all share in the wonderful success of meeting the challenging target set for us by the Diocesan Board of Mission to raise €40,000 for the Luyengo Farm project in Swaziland. I have no doubt that the Holy Spirit has been at work. But I think this demonstrates that the Holy Spirit works more effectively when we join together to follow where it leads. There is, I think, a lesson we should learn from this as a diocese.

In fact I feel sure that the power of the Holy Spirit would be multiplied many fold if Christians of all traditions were to join together more often in Christ's work of bringing in God's Kingdom. And I feel more hopeful today than I have for a long time that this can happen, despite the present challenges we face.

In a remarkable homily at his inaugural Mass in St Peter's, Pope Francis called for Christians and all men and women of good will to embrace the vocation of being "protectors". That means, he said, 'protecting all creation, the beauty of the created world... It means respecting each of God's creatures and respecting the environment in which we live. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need... It means caring for one another in our families... It means building sincere friendships in which we protect one another in trust, respect, and goodness. In the end, everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it.'

In another remarkable address at his own inauguration two days later, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said, 'The present challenges of environment and economy, of human development and global poverty, can only be faced with extraordinary courage. Courage is released in a society that is under the authority of God, so that we may become the fully human community of which we all dream. Let us hear Christ who calls to us and says "Take heart, it is I, do not be afraid."'

Are these words signs that the Holy Spirit is at work, calling us together to strengthen the work of the kingdom? I pray that they are. God Bless, Joc Sanders

Diocesan Calendar

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun Apr 7th</td>
<td>12 noon Confirmations, Kenmare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Apr 14th</td>
<td>9.30am Confirmations, Castleconnell</td>
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<td>Sat Apr 20th</td>
<td>8.15pm Whist Drive in Aghancon Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Apr 21st</td>
<td>11.15am Confirmations, St Mary's Cathedral</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu Apr 25th</td>
<td>8pm Diocesan Council, Woodlands Hotel, Adare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat Apr 27th</td>
<td>8.15pm Table Quiz, Aghancon Hall (table of 4 £20)</td>
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Newslink

Newslink is the diocesan magazine for the United Diocese of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfern, which also includes the historic dioceses of Aghadoe, Kilfenora, Clonfert, 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.

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.

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A Vision of being Church
by Rev. Gary Paulsen, Adare & Kilmallock Group of Parishes

Since my arrival in Ireland I have needed to adapt to a new way of church and also adjust to a new constitution and canons. However this also means that I come in with a different perspective of what it means to be church, and hopefully I can enrich the church where I am. I have always found that one of the strengths of the Anglican Church has been its collaboration between clergy and laity. The ACSA (The Anglican Church of Southern Africa) Constitution in part says this in Canon 28 about the parish Council (broadly equivalent to our Select Vestry):

"The function of the Council shall be: (a) to consider matters affecting worship, stewardship, evangelism, education, social responsibility and pastoral care, to examine the needs of the community, and to initiate such actions and shall be determined in any of these concerns. (b) To consider the general welfare and accommodation of all licensed clergy and where applicable their family and dependants and take such action as they deem necessary. (c) to seek at all levels such contact with other Christians as shall strengthen Christian witness an promote Christian unity..."

LIVING STONES

So with this background I find that in my current context Select Vestry meetings are not much concerned with many of these points, since it sees its role ‘as per the guidelines’ being to see to fabric and finances. So as I have been journeying with the congregation, I have been emphasising that we need also to be concerned with the living stones, our people and communities.

The idea that the parish priest is to be all things and all present and all doing is not possible. The traditional priest with one congregation is a thing of the past. Corinthians guides us in saying we as Church are the body of Christ, each having a function and a role to play as we all have been gifted differently. Therefore we should ‘tap’ into each other’s giftedness.

We should try and develop a holistic approach considering all aspects of our common life together as church. The following list covers most aspects of our life together:
- Finance
- Administration
- Worship and prayer (Liturgy)
- Education
- Youth
- Mission and evangelism (local context)
- Buildings and maintenance
- Pastoral care and social responsibility

LAY LEADERSHIP

In each of these aspects there needs to be leadership and this is not from the parish priest. The parish priest should have an overall ‘handle’ and role and input into each, but it would be impossible to develop and nurture all of these aspects of our common life on his/her own. Therefore lay leadership is key - alongside the parish priest.

The parish priest’s main role should be liturgical and in spiritual direction, teaching, training and overall management.

The Select Vestry or other lay leadership should be taking on all the other aspects alongside the parish priest.

Therefore lay leaders should be identified and trained and nurtured in this role, with each of them developing a team of people around them. They then report to the parish priest and together share the responsibility of this ministry. We just need to find the people and stop saying we don’t have them (though I know, but let’s at least try and be creative!).

This then ensures that effective ministry happens in all the aspects of our life together. We need to develop budgets for these ministries and for training in the parish. Far too much money is spent on buildings and not enough on ministry. There should be budgets for clergy retreats (I believe clergy should spend a week at least each year on a silent and guided retreat and parishes should invest in their clergy’s development and spirituality), budget for parish quiet days, liturgy, pastoral care, perhaps for employing a full/part time youth worker/children’s ministry person in the parish group.

We should develop lay ministers who can visit each home and say a prayer with families, and develop short liturgies for families to help them in praying together. We should get families that live close to each other and praying and sharing their faith stories with each other, and generally being there for one another as part of each other in the body of Christ. The development of small groups creates community that will begin to trust each other and be willing to be vulnerable with each other.

DIVERSITY

Diversity in worship, in music, in age groups needs to considered. Just like in our homes we have to ‘tolerate’ the teenager’s music and pop culture, so we should also be able to do so in the parish family at our worship sessions together. Make space for all as the parish family. So too teenagers should ‘tolerate’ grannies’ music and stories, because this is important as well.

People need to begin to look beyond our own parish in the groupings that we have. It seems the only reason parishes are joined is to share the parish priest and split the costs. The parish priest should not be the only resource that is shared.

Therefore we need to look at development of spirituality that will nurture people to a point where the living stones of the church, its people, become the focal point. So many ‘concerns’ then become secondary and the people become the main concern.

We have a large missionary field locally and we should be ploughing money into developing this role in our local communities.

At my institution Trevor used these words amongst others which echo in my memory: ‘who are we...what are we about...who is my neighbour’. We could ask: ‘what is our core business as church? Do our life, our budgets, and our meetings together reflect the true meaning of being church? The living body of Christ.

VISION

As we develop a vision for the Diocese and indeed for each of our Parish groupings, it should be done over time to encompass a holistic approach in how we are church. There should be a direction in which we are heading. A vision statement will go a long way to bring us into focus and give us direction. Each time we are called to make a decision, we should be asking, ‘How does this relate to our vision as we have discerned it to be?’ Once you have prayerfully discerned a ‘Vision’, the practicality of a Mission Statement then needs to be developed. This becomes a working document.

These are some of my thoughts. We are just beginning to implement visioning and I trust it will help all of us consider and look at how we are church and how we can become church.
10 Years of Covenant Relationship - Where Next?

by the Very Revd. Nigel Dunne

Following the withdrawal of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland from the World Council of Churches in 1988 the tripartite talks between Methodists, Presbyterians and the Church of Ireland which had been ongoing since 1963 came to an end. The Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland decided to continue the talks under the auspices of a new Joint Theological Working Party (JTWP) which continued until 2002. The JTWP presented a draft Covenant between the two churches to the General Synod and Conference in 2000 and the final version was signed on Thursday 26th September 2002.

THE COVENANT COUNCIL

The Covenant Council was founded in 2003 to carry forward the commitments made in the Covenant, especially the desire to move towards full organic unity. The Council worked along two main strands in the first few years:

1. The publication of Guidelines for Local Covenant Partnerships in an attempt to support local co-operation, especially in the areas of Shared Churches and Chaplaincies.

2. Theological Reflection, especially drawing from other bilateral and multilateral ecumenical agreements including other Anglican-Methodist talks such as South Africa and the U.K. and the ongoing talks at international level under the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity and Mission, which is about to publish its final report next year.

INTERCHANGEABILITY OF MINISTRY

This reflection led to the Interchangeability of Ministry becoming the focus of the next major step towards full organic unity. A two year Special Bill is being brought before the General Synod next May, which, it is hoped will pave the way for this to come into full effect.

In 2005 the Council’s report to General Synod and Conference presented ‘ten points’ indicating the direction in which its discussions on interchangeability were heading. The report noted, ‘We have reached substantial agreement on the points outlined below and we present these as the starting point for a major discussion on the issues ...’ Both Synod and Conference encouraged the discussion to move forward and in 2007 the Council tabled its first major interim statement entitled, ‘Interchangeability of Ministry and Episcopate: Key Issues for the Churches’ in which it was suggested that it might be possible to recognise episcopi (oversight) as existing within the existing structures of ministry in the Methodist Church in Ireland, such as District Superintendents or the Conference, or the President.

Following a strong endorsement from both Synod and Conference a joint Interchangeability of Ministry Working Group made up of members of relevant committees of the General Synod and Conference was established which presented an interim report in 2009 and a full report and Agreed Principles in 2010. One of its key findings was to say, ‘We have discerned consonance between the office and function of Presidents and Past Presidents of the Methodist Church in Ireland and in the office and function of Bishops in the Church of Ireland based on the current doctrinal understanding and ecclesiology of both Churches.’ The warm reception of the Agreed Principles motivated the Council to move forward on the understanding that the interchangeability of ministry would be a very positive move towards full organic unity (rather than the achieving of full unity in itself).

In 2011 the Covenant Council presented a ‘Second Statement on the Interchangeability of Ministry and Episcopate’ which set out the way forward. Two key areas, agreed by both Synod and Conference that year, were the recognition that the Methodist President is where the historic episcopate had been, and continued to be, embodied and that as such the title ‘Episcopal Minister’ be used to describe him/her.

• ‘... the Church of Ireland accept that the Methodist President and his/her predecessors and successors give personal expression to the historic episcopate as embodied in the Methodist Conference.’

• ‘... the Methodist Church in Ireland embrace the title ‘Episcopal Minister’ as descriptive of the role and function of the Methodist President and his/her predecessors and successors and Church of Ireland bishops and Archbishops.

The report also noted that this would not mean full organic unity, but that it will be a step on the way – ‘It is proposed that both churches continue to cooperate in their own ecclesiastical polities post-interchangeability for the time being. However, should a presbyter/priest from either polity take up a post in the other church, he/she will be deemed to be under the authority and regulations of that church.’

THE BALL IS WITH THE CHURCH OF IRELAND

The Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland have already written in the term ‘episcopal minister’ to the consecration service for the President and made other small legislative changes to allow interchangeability to come about. The proverbial ‘ball’ now lies in the Church of Ireland’s court, with a significant raft of legislation needed, especially in the construction of a new Canon, to be presented at General Synod in May. This will allow Church of Ireland clergy and Methodist Church in Ireland ministers to take up posts in each other’s churches. As such, this is one of the most significant ecumenical steps to be taken in recent years, and, no doubt, can only further strengthen the mission of the church in Ireland, which, after all, has to be the key motivator for further co-operation between our churches.

“The Very Rev Nigel Dunne is Dean of Cork and has served on the Covenant Council since 2004

Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, was burnt at the stake in 1555 as one of the Oxford Martyrs. He wrote:

"Why should we Christians fear death? Can death deprive us of Christ, which is all our comfort, our joy, and our life? Nay, forsooth. But contrary, death shall deliver us from this mortal body, which loadeth and beareth down the spirit, that it cannot so well receive heavenly things, in the which so long as we dwell, we are absent from God ... Let us not then fear death, which can do us no harm, otherwise than for a moment to make the flesh to smart; for that our faith, which is surely fastened and fixed unto the Word of God, telleth us that we shall be anon after death in peace, in the hands of God, in joy, in solace, and that from death we shall go straight unto life ... let us comfort our hearts in all troubles, and in death, with the Word of God: for heaven and earth shall perish, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever."
1ST NENAGH COMPANY

HAPPY 1st BIRTHDAY TO US!! Time has flown by and here we are, our first year gone already. Of course we weren’t going to miss the opportunity for a party, so games and cake it was! We’ve grown considerably from our original 7 to 18 boys and to make sure we keep them all safe as well as orderly we have recruited a rota of 6 more volunteers – whom we are very grateful to!

The Line-up - 15 of the 18 at our birthday party

There was a lovely St. Patrick’s Day Family Worship this month at St. Mary’s and two of our boys led the thanksgiving litany. Denis (our most experienced reader) and Brehon (just 6 years old and a first-timer) read brilliantly and did a great job.

Earlier this month we took the boys to the Nenagh Heritage Centre Gaol for a tour. Ger, the captain was able to give the boys loads of gruesome and slightly scary details! We all enjoyed it – it is well worth a visit for anyone and it’s great to get the boys out for a change of scenery in the darker months when we can’t plan outside activities.

We got a bit serious at the last meeting! The Junior boys created a new set of company rules, the theory is they will "own" them completely rather than just "obey" them. Also we ran an anti-bullying workshop to provide some discussion, coaching and key messages including the fact that Boys’ Brigade has no place for bullying – and also very importantly that if anyone is experiencing or witnessing bullying there is always something that can be done about it. Ger’s "pencil" themed (you’d have to ask him!) spiritual chat with the Anchors went down a storm and we were all really pleased with the amount of enthusiasm and energy (and knowledge and understanding) that the boys contributed.

Coming up in April there is a big Boys’ Brigade Activity Day planned in Tullamore so we hope all Anchors and Juniors will want to be part of that.

We’re lucky to have such a great bunch of boys – spanning 3 different schools, 4 different churches and 5 nationalities we certainly have diversity! When we started up a year ago we were enthusiastic and with lots of ideas but entered into the venture with a degree of trepidation! We continue to grow (and hopefully improve) as we go along, through observing, discussing and also being open to accepting tips from wise and generous people outside of our immediate team – and hopefully it’s working! The boys have made it a very rewarding, enjoyable and worthwhile first year and we are looking forward to many more!

MOTHERS’ UNION

MAY DAY MOMENTS

...in Aghancon Community Hall, Wednesday 1st May from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. approx. We’re delighted that John Armitage is coming to play some music and help to develop our X Factor singing skills with some well-known songs. We are also greatly looking forward to welcoming Mrs. Margaret Crawford, who is travelling from Northern Ireland to meet us. Do please keep the date free. Aghancon Branch will kindly supply sandwiches and members from other Branches are asked to bring a cake per car please. Do please come and make it a special afternoon.

REMINDER: To all branches

The Diocesan Council meeting will be held on April 15th in Borrisokane Hall at 7.30pm. All branches please try to be represented.

Area Service will be held on May 19th in Holy Trinity Church, Aughrim at 3pm.

COMMISSIONING

See page 16 for a report with photos of the Service of Commissioning on Sunday 3rd March in St Canice’s Cathedral Kilkenny of Phyllis Grothier as All-Ireland President and of the Board of Trustees.
KILLALOE & CLONFERT
ANNUAL DIOCESAN SERVICE & PRIZE GIVING DAY
...was held on Saturday, 23rd March in St. Brendan’s Church, Birr.
Our special guests were Bishop Trevor, Mrs Joyce Williams and Mrs Sylvia Quinn (All Ireland President) who was on her first visit to the Diocese since becoming President last year. We were also delighted to be joined by Mr Edward Hardy and members of the UDYC group along with Rev. Lesley Robinson, Roscrea, Rev. Jane Galbraith, Limerick and Audrey Clarke-Gordon, Parish Reader.

The theme was ‘A Heart for God’ taken from this year’s Bible Study Syllabus. The Service was lead by GFS Diocesan Chaplin Canon Marie Rowley Brooke, and Archdeacon Wayne Carney. The Service began with the lighting of the GFS Candle by a member of Birr Branch. Gathering prayers were led by Cloughjordan Branch. The Story of David was presented by Nenagh girls and Audrey Clarke-Gordon. The Gospel Enactment of ‘the washing of feet’ was enabled by Birr Branch which proved to be a wonderful part of the Service. Final Prayers were led by Roscrea Branch.

The singing, prayers and participation in foot washing brought the gospel reading to life in a meaningful and thoughtful way. It was a lively and uplifting Service and one we will remember for a long time to come. Special thanks to our Chaplin and Archdeacon for making this Service possible.

The Prize-giving followed immediately after the service in the church and was conducted by Rose Langley, Diocesan President and Florence Reid, Diocesan Secretary. Mrs Sylvia Quinn presented medals to the Bible Study prize-winners, many of whom received 100% in the examinations – an achievement of which Mrs Quinn was very impressed.

Craft prizes of pottery were presented by Mrs Joyce Williams. The talented girls and leaders have produced wonderful work which was on display in the School hall. Congratulations to all the girls for work successfully completed.

In the hall we enjoyed refreshments and shopping at the stalls – Cloughjordan ‘Corner Shop’; Birr ‘Pot Luck’; Roscrea ‘Raffle’; Nenagh ‘Bits & Pieces’. All funds raised from these stalls go towards the running of GFS in the Diocese with the exception of the Cake stall which goes towards the Diocesan Camp in June.

GFS is very grateful to Birr Branch for hosting this year’s Service & Prize Giving. The leaders and girls worked very hard in preparing for this day which is the highlight of the year. The day was a very joyful celebration and congratulations to everyone who took part.

CLoughjORDAN BRANCH
Girls made cards for Mother’s Day. They are now working on Easter cookery and posies of flowers.

NENAGH BRANCH
Girls took part in the St. Patrick’s Day Service in St. Mary’s Church. They made their own St. Patrick’s Day badges the day before in GFS class. Afterwards many of the girls attended the parade in Nenagh.

PRAYER CIRCLE
GFS Central Office is looking for a representative from each Diocese to become part of a GFS Prayer Circle. If you feel this is something you like to be part of please contact Rose Langley, tel. 087-6758896.

UPCOMING EVENTS
• Diocesan Council Meeting – Thursday, 18th April, in St. Brendan’s Hall, Birr at 8pm
• Central Finance Committee Meeting – 20th April, Dublin.
• Central Council Meeting – Saturday, 11th May in Armagh. Winners of All Ireland competitions will be announced at this meeting.
• Diocesan Camp will take place in the new Faith Mission Centre in Durrow over the weekend of 21-23 June. More details will be available after Diocesan Council.
• World Council 2014. We are already making plans to visit World Council in Swansea, Wales (25 July – 4 August 2014). Please let your Branch Leader or Diocesan Secretary (Florence Reid) know if you are thinking of attending as the organising committee need to have an idea of numbers as soon as possible. This is a wonderful opportunity to join with our GFS colleagues from around the world, just a short trip across the English Channel.

LOOKING FOR ACCOMMODATION IN DUBLIN?
Try Oak House, 36 Upper Leeson St., Dublin 4, owned and managed by GFS. See advertisement on page 21
MULTI ACTIVITY OVERNIGHT SLEEPOVER 2013

As I write these notes we are all recovering from what was an excellent event on Saturday to Sunday 23-24 March! It was really good once again to have a nice size group. The event started at Birr Outdoor Education Centre with a wide range of outdoor activities including climbing tower, team games and orienteering; afterwards lunch at Tony’s Café was welcomed by everyone. It was a privilege for our group to join GFS service in Birr Church and following the service the group enjoyed a swim at Birr Leisure Centre.

In the evening the group led by Rev. Jane Galbraith prepared for participation at Sunday morning service in Aghancon Church. The young people and leaders with Rev Jane Galbraith led Palm Sunday worship which included a dramatic presentation of “The Passion”. Our thanks to Rev. Michael Johnston and parishioners for their welcome and facilitating this opportunity.

TAKING A LEADING ROLE PART – 2

The second weekend for our youth leadership weekend will take place from Friday 5th – Sunday 7th April 2013 at Catherine Mc Cauley House, Spanish Point, Co. Clare. This weekend is specifically for all those that participated at our first weekend in October last year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting for Diocesan Youth Council will take place on Saturday 13th April 2013 at St. Nicholas National School Hall, Adare, Co. Limerick at 3.00 pm. We do hope that as many people as possible will be able to attend this important event.

DIOCESAN CONFIRMATION WEEKEND

Please note that the Diocesan Confirmation Weekend this year will take place at Muckross Youth Centre, Killarney, Co. Kerry, from Friday 31st May – Monday 3rd June 2013 (June Bank Holiday Weekend). We do hope that as many as possible of 2012 & 2013 Confirmation candidates will be able to attend this important event. Please note that information will be sent shortly to all clergy throughout United Diocese directly from Edward Hardy.

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

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

Many charities are our legacy from generous benefactions from the past. The gifts arise out of generous spirits who saw a need and responded to it. It wouldn’t hurt us in this generation to respond to need in a similar way!

Havergal and Roxboro Schools Charity came to birth in the late summer of 1988. It has been awarding grants towards education costs to families from that time. The cost of educating our young people is a major expense for families and often requires sacrifice to achieve it. Therefore any source that would lessen these outgoings is welcome news indeed.

Havergal and Roxboro Schools Charity offers financial assistance to families as they seek to meet education costs, mainly for second level but also grants towards third level. The Charity is specifically for Church of Ireland families in the United Dioceses of Limerick and Killaloe. Those who apply are required to complete an application form that can be obtained from the Secretary (until May 7) or from their Rector. Applications to be returned to the Secretary in late July/early August.

This year the closing date for applications is August 19.

The Secretary (pro tem) is the Rev Maurice Sirr, 17a Knockhill, Ennis Road, Limerick.

A scholarship worth €500 is awarded annually to a student at the Villiers entrance examination who meets the criteria and becomes tenable in Villiers school. It is worth €3000 over the six year period.

A meeting of the Mission Board is scheduled for Wed 15th May at 8 pm in the Woodlands Hotel, Adare, when we hope to review our activities and performance to date and plan for 2013/14.

We also hope to have another Mission Evening in May, when the Bishop has promised to give a presentation on his travels in Palestine. For the exact date, watch this space.

David Frizelle, Secretary/Treasurer

THANKS FOR AN AMAZING ACHIEVEMENT

Linda Chambers of Us (formerly USPG) writes:

Dear Friends,

This week I had an email from David Frizelle. “I have posted a cheque.” He wrote, “We have reached our €40,000 target.” What an amazing achievement. It seemed such a huge figure at the beginning; almost impossible - but you have done it. Congratulations! Well done. I hope you all feel very proud of this.

Thanks in large part to you, your ingenuity and skill, your care and generosity, Luyengo Farm is up and running. There are still things to be done - a dam, a piggery, a nursery - but 6.5 ha are now being cultivated. Three thousand 5kg cabbages are harvested every week, along with tomatoes, maize, beans, carrots and now potatoes.

Mrs Heloise de Beer, wife of the Farm Manager, has started to write a weekly report on developments at the farm, and Revd Keith Scott makes sure that they are also on your diocesan website.

On behalf of Us (the new name for USPG) and the Diocese of Swaziland I want to say a big thank you to everyone who has helped to make this possible. It has been a wonderful experience for me to meet so many of you who are now interested in the farm, and in Swaziland. I so much enjoyed the trip to Swaziland with Bishop Trevor, that I invite you all to consider travelling there in July 2014 to visit Luyengo Farm.

And while you’re thinking about that, Bishop Ellinah is coming to visit the Dioceses of Limerick & Killaloe. She hopes to be with you on 2nd & 3rd June - see next month’s magazine for details.

With joy and prayers and huge gratitude,

Linda

Have you considered advertising in Newslink?

See page 4 for rates and details.
St. Nicholas’ National School, Adare

We were delighted to welcome Bishop Trevor to school for our annual prize giving. Following this the senior pupils organised a coffee afternoon in aid of the Simon Community and the Leprosy Mission. Thank you to all who baked goodies served the tea and coffee and donated very generously to these worthwhile charities. The pupils raised €280 and I think everyone had a lovely afternoon.

The pupils are busy collecting filled pencil-cases for primary schools in Swaziland at present. We hope to have our large box filled with pencil-cases by the end of April.

Pupils from 3rd to 6th classes took part in a recent 5-a-side soccer tournament in Limerick with one of the boys’ teams reaching the finals. Well done to all involved.

Made it! Cycle day in St Nicholas’

We have now submitted our application for our fourth Green Flag and await the outcome. This time our focus has been on transport and how we can help to reduce our carbon footprint by taking the bus to school, walking, cycling or carpooling. We had another WOW day recently when the whole school walked part of the way home; we walked up to the Heritage Centre in the village where the school buses and parents collected the pupils. Once again this was a lively and colourful gathering and it didn’t rain!

Chasing the clues in the treasure hunt in St. Nicholas’ Lá Gaeilge

Seachtain na Gaeilge was celebrated in school just before St. Patrick’s Day with lots of activities through Irish with the emphasis on speaking Irish in and around the school. We held a Là Gaeilge on March 13th when we all dressed up in green, white or gold and spent the day taking part in fun activities. We had a treasure hunt as Gaeilge, a Tráth na gCeist (quiz) and a céilí to finish off the day. There’s nothing like a couple of hours Irish dancing to keep one fit!

Pupils in 1st to 6th classes spent a day learning to improve their cycling skills. They learned how to cycle safely on the road, the importance of wearing a helmet along with many more skills. We were lucky with the weather and everyone thoroughly enjoyed their day on the bikes.

As we come to the end of our second term we wish everyone a very Happy Easter.

St Mary’s No.2 National School Nenagh

The past few weeks have seen a number of enriching and enjoyable activities in St. Mary’s.

At the beginning of Lent we chose a very worthy project to support. Our Diocese supports Us (formerly USPG Ireland), an Anglican mission agency working in partnership with the Diocese of Swaziland. The staff and pupils of St. Mary’s are supporting the work of Us by collecting filled pencil cases to send to children in Swaziland as part of the ‘Colour us Happy’ campaign.

In addition, our annual School Sale took place on Thursday 21st March in the Croft Hall. Pupils donated their unwanted books and toys and purchased ‘new’ ones. Homemade buns and cakes formed part of the sale and all proceeds generated by the children will be donated to our Lenten project ‘Colour us Happy’.

Ghlacamar páirt i Seachtain na Gaeilge freisin idir an 4ú agus an 15ú Márta. Rinne gach duine iarracht speisialta an Gaeilge a úsáid i rith an lae ar scoil. Claire Neelin kindly returned to teach traditional Irish dances. On Thursday 14th March, the pupils demonstrated their talents beautifully with a demonstration of Irish dance, poetry and songs, including the Siege of Ennis and Cúigear Fear ag Tógáil Tí. A rendition of Mamma Mia as Gaeilge was given by the senior classes to great applause. A harp recital by Denis Sheehy and a reel by Chelsea Rohan, Crian O’Donnell and Heather Hayes were much appreciated by all.

We bid a fond ‘adieu’ to Mrs Quin who commenced her maternity leave at the end of term. After Easter, we will be welcoming Ms. Joanne Holmes to St. Mary’s. Ms Holmes will be teaching Ranganna 1, 2 agus 3.

A school Palm Service took place on Friday, 22nd March at 1pm in St. Mary’s Church.

St Michael’s National School Limerick

Another school term swiftly comes to an end as we prepare for Easter. We have had a myriad of interesting activities going on in the school this term. Following on from the naming of the Molly Bloom tulip by one of our school parents, St. Michael’s pupils were invited to plant bulbs in The People’s Park to further celebrate the naming of this new and special Irish tulip. We look forward to watching all these tulip bulbs burst into bloom hopefully next month. We also hope to visit the Botanical Gardens in Dublin to see the giant Molly Bloom tulip bed depicting a portrait of James Joyce, which was planted last October.

This year St. Michael’s N.S. will be taking part in a new DES initiative to promote P.E. in Primary and Post Primary schools nationwide. An Active School Flag (AFS) will be awarded to schools that "strive to
achieve a physically educated and active school community’. We look forward to working with both pupils and parents to achieve this award for our school.

This term we were delighted to welcome 4 final year physiotherapy students to our classrooms. They came over a five week period to visit us each Monday and spent time in each of our four classrooms. The students were training our pupils in exercises for posture, stretching, breathing, relaxing and aerobics.

5th and 6th classes enjoyed participating in a Lego Mind Storm (Robotics) activity. This is like Applied Mathematics in Primary School!! It was a continuation on from the Scratch Computer Programme that took place last term in the school.

Our Lenten project has been to raise funds to buy stationary needed to fill more than a hundred pencil cases which we are sending out to schools in Swaziland. Ms Stevenson’s classroom held a most successful in-school cake sale that raised over €200. Pupils very kindly brought in an empty pencil case which they will now fill with much needed pencils, rubbers, rulers and other items.

| Molly Bloom tulips ready to plant |

**St. Cronan’s National School Roscrea**

Pupils have enjoyed another busy term – successfully representing our school in the INTO Handwriting Competition, Tipperary Libraries Art Competition, Roscrea Schools Credit Union Table Quiz and Eason’s Spelling Bee.

Congratulations to Isobel and Jessica Wallace, Stephanie Draper and Adam Wallace who were presented with 1st and 2nd place trophies at an awards ceremony in Roscrea Library for their entries in the Tidy Towns Art Competition entitled “Wildlife in Roscrea.”

The Annual Supper Dance in The Templemore Arms Hotel, raised much needed funds for the running of our school, so well done to the Parents’ Association for their hard work and commitment in organising the event and to all those who contributed to its success.

Funds were also raised through bag-packing in Tesco Roscrea, where pupils entertained shoppers with a lively sing-along. Many thanks to all those who gave of their time to help out.

We are very grateful to Wesley Carter for providing four weeks of rugby coaching for 4th, 5th & 6th class pupils. Mr Hogan has also been coaching soccer for 3rd to 6th class and hopes to include all pupils in the middle room next term. Tennis and swimming lessons are also planned for the term ahead.

We finish this term with a sing song in the Dean Maxwell Nursing Home.

**Cloughjordan No1 National School**

Congratulations to our U13 team of Ian Armitage, Robert Guest, Ruán Ó hAnluain and Lucy Warmington who, following their success in the Credit Union Schools Quiz in Borrisokane, went through to the next round in Nenagh and came joint 3rd in their section. The team and school are very grateful to the Credit Union for the very generous prizes received on the night.

Congratulations to three budding authors who won prizes for the books which they wrote and illustrated, and entered in the “Scríobh Leabhar” competition organised by Laois Education Centre. We look forward to future publications by Sophia Whelan, Lucy Fitzgerald and Megan Kennedy. Well done to all the children who entered this competition, and to their teacher, Mrs. Kennedy, for her inspiration to the children.

It was a pleasure to welcome past pupils, Emilee Austin and Melissa Mooney on work experience last month. Both girls were a tremendous help throughout the school and we are very grateful to them for all that they did during their time with us.

We celebrated World Book Day in March by visiting “Sheelagh na Gig” bookshop in Cloughjordan with our World Book Day tokens. Children enjoyed the storytelling, kindly organized by Elizabeth, and all children enjoyed browsing through the books on display. Many children exchanged their tokens for the free books especially produced for the day while others dug deep into their pockets to purchase books of their own choice.

Junior and Senior Infants were delighted to welcome some of their parents to their classroom to celebrate World Book Day. Parents brought along their favourite children’s story and read their story to an enthralled audience. We are very grateful to these parents, and also to Mrs. Anne Heffernan, retired principal of Birr Mercy Primary School, for giving up their time and sharing stories with us.

Mr. Clifford Guest was a very welcome visitor to our school last month. Clifford shared his knowledge of renewable energy with the children in a very hands-on, meaningful way. We are very grateful to him for sharing his expertise with us and for all that we learned from him.

Ms Linda O’Hehir, from Tipperary Friends of Animals S.P.C.A. was another welcome visitor to our school last month. Linda spoke to us all about the wonderful work that she and other volunteers do to care for vulnerable animals, and patiently answered the many, many questions the children asked her. We were delighted that she was

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**C of I Primary Schools Management Association Annual Conference**

The Church of Ireland Primary Schools Management Association will be holding its Annual Conference in Kings’ Hospital on Saturday 27th April next. The theme of this year’s Conference is ‘Practical Governance of Primary Schools in Contemporary Society’. Speakers include Ms Breda Corr, General Secretary National Association of Boards of Management in Special Needs Education, Mr Paul Collins, Risk Assessment Manager, Ecclesiastical Insurance, Brian Matthews, solicitor with expertise in education matters, Kyle Petrie, Expert on cyber-bullying and Ms Jacqui Wilkinson, Editor ‘Follow Me’. There will also be a session devoted to the problems facing many of our small schools.

Notification will be sent to all our primary schools, but individuals with a concern for the future of Primary Education are welcome to attend provided they contact the Hon. Secretary of CIPSMA, Rev Dr Norman Gamble (01-8454770) or Dr Ken Fennelly by 5pm on Monday 20th April.

The Conference begins at 10.30am and concludes at about 3pm. Lunch will be provided and is included in the Conference fee.
able to return a second time and accept a cheque for €785.35, the proceeds from an Easter Egg Raffle and Bring and Buy Sale held in school and organised mainly by the children. Thank you very much to everybody who helped us to raise this money for Tipperary Friends of Animals.

Presentation to Tipperary Friends of Animals

The school is very grateful to George and Pearl Whiteford, and to their helpers, who very generously organised a social dance in St. Kieran’s Hall last month on behalf of the school’s PTA. This was a tremendous support to the PTA’s fundraising efforts, for which we are most grateful. The PTA is organising a “Cloughjordan 8km” on Sunday 19th May, to which everybody is very welcome. This will be a fundraising, competitive race for interested adults, and a more leisurely stroll for others, while children are welcome and encouraged to walk the route. Refreshments will be served in St. Kieran’s Hall afterwards. More details next month.

Welcome back to Ms Fanny Healy who is teaching French to pupils in our middle and senior classes and to Mr. Patsy Farrell who is coaching basketball to these classes.

Thank you very much to Mr. Tom Tracey who donated and planted some welcome fruit bushes in our school grounds last month. We look forward to these bushes bearing fruit and to sampling the produce later in the year.

We were delighted that the Easter Bunny had time to visit our school again this year and are very grateful to him for the tasty treats he left for the children. They went down well!

Kiltallagh National School

This week in Kiltallagh was a very busy one with a Book Fair to celebrate World Book Day. We had a “Show and Tell” activity, where each child brought in their favourite book to show their class mates and explained why it was their favourite one. Children also got lots of opportunities to browse through the vast array of books available. We are presently putting the final touches to our very own book “We are Writers” which will be published by Scholastic prior to the end of the school year. We also succeeded in raising €300 in book vouchers to further enhance our school libraries through our “Book Fair”.

We also had our annual Table Quiz in The Fishery, Killorglin on Thursday March 14th 2013. It was a tremendous success. Considering the recessionary climate that we are experiencing, we raised a fantastic amount of money which is testament to the hard working and supportive Parent’s Association and community which we are privileged to be associated with. The money raised will ensure that our children can continue to enjoy all the extracurricular activities in the coming year, along with additional resources which can be purchased with this money.

On Thursday March 21st we had our monthly service in Kiltallagh led by Rev. Máirt Hanley. The children read prayers for all the less fortunate in our world including, the persecuted and the homeless. Our closing song, sang beautifully by the children, was entitled “Thank You God”. Through our singing we thanked God for our homes, our schools, our friends, our lives and for all his love.

We also had our fund raising Easter raffle for Lilian Leask - a former pupil who is heading out to Malawi for 6 months on her placement from UCC to do some charity work. Along with our No Uniform Day we raised an amazing €350. Lilian was presented with her money by the pupils and she has promised to keep us informed through email and Skype on her progress out there. There was a prize for each child in the school and some even got a second one so everybody went home happy!

Presentation to past pupil Lilian Leask

Oxmantown National School Birr

LENTEN PROJECT

The children in the senior classes continue with their efforts throughout lent to raise funds for Barnardos, the other pupils are generously supporting them and all of the pupils are doing a sponsored spell this week. We plan to hold a raffle and an Easter sale before the end of term.

NEW CLASSROOM

The planning permission has come through for the building of a replacement of our portacabin, so hopefully it will not be long before we can start and the infants will get a lovely new classroom.
NEW PUPILS

We look forward to welcoming Olivia and William to Oxmantown after Easter.

RUGBY BLITZ

The pupils from fourth, fifth and sixth classes took part in an inter-schools Tag Rugby Blitz at Birr Rugby Club recently. In all we played five matches - we won two and enjoyed ourselves despite the cold weather. We are very grateful to Mr David Farrelly our trainer for our training and for organising this event.

GYMNASTICS

Mrs Feehan has completed our gymnastics classes before the Easter holidays; thanks to the Parents' Association for helping to fund the cost of these specialist lessons over the past number of weeks.

FUND RAISING

The Parents' Association are organising bag packing at Supervalu in Birr on Friday 12th April to raise funds for the School, all help would be greatly appreciated.

Rathkeale No. 2 National School.

With the lengthening of the days the pupils of Rathkeale No.2 have been keeping an eye out for signs of spring. We are once again taking part in the Greenwave Project where we, along with schools around the country, are recording observations of the signs of spring. There are six species which we keep a lookout for, frogspawn, primrose, hawthorn, horse chestnut, swallow and ash. To date we have recorded observations of frogspawn and the primrose. We are also recording the weekly rainfall. It’s amazing that even with the recent spell of cold weather there are signs of spring out there.

The pupils took part in a Water Action Day on 20th February. Everybody designed Water Warrior T-shirts in art to wear on the day. We had a visitor from An Taisce who demonstrated some interesting water experiments for us. Congratulations to Lizzie and Peter on winning our motto competition for this year’s Green Flag application. We have submitted our application for our third Green Flag and are eagerly waiting to hear news about it.

Liadh from Dogs Trust visited the school to talk to us all about caring for our dogs and also how to read dogs. She spoke to us about Dogs Trust office dog WALT. WALT reminds us how to approach dogs we do not know. W – Walk up slowly, A – Ask the owner’s permission before touching the dog, L – Let the dog smell you hand and T – Touch, only then should you touch the dog.

Throughout Lent Dr Scott introduced us to South Sudan and CMS Ireland’s Lenten Project, “All Things New”, during his weekly assemblies. We learned about education in South Sudan and the challenges it faces. The pupils took up a weekly collection of their own pocket money and together they raised €60 for CMS Ireland.

Our swimming lessons have now come to an end for this school year and the pupils all took part in a short assessment during their final lesson. They are all eagerly awaiting their swimming certificates which we hope will arrive before too long.

We were delighted to welcome Noel, Liza, Gwen and Anne from the Postal Bible School recently. They presented prizes to the children for their Bible Time Worksheets.

On the 14th March we held our second Open Hour and we were delighted to welcome a few new parents and pupils to the school. Parents got a chance to meet with the teachers and see over the school. The closing date for receipt of applications for September is 30th April. If anyone wishes to enrol their child they should contact the principal for an application form.

We wish everyone a very Happy Easter.
Flower Festival to celebrate more than 250 years of Methodism in Adare
Event expected to attract more than 1,000 people from across Ireland

Preparations are now underway for what promises to be the largest ever event held at Adare Methodist Church. More than 250 years of Methodism in Adare will be celebrated on the 10th-12th May next when members of the village's Methodist Church hold a flower festival expected to attract more than 1,000 visitors from across Ireland.

Assisted by award-winning local florist Tony Mackessy and a team of volunteer arrangers, the festival will tell the story of Methodism which has had a presence in Adare since the mid-1700s and a close association with the local Palatine Community. Among the 21 floral exhibits will be a display of shoes to mark the thousands of people who have entered the doors of the Church since it opened in 1873 having relocated from a site beside the old road to Limerick which is now part of the Adare Manor golf course. And, many generations later, descendants of the founding families are still playing an active part in the life of the church.

“The flower festival is an opportunity not just to mark Methodism locally, but also to pay tribute to the role local Methodists have played in the development of the Church and the promotion of social justice nationally and internationally,” said Superintendent Minister of the Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit Rev. Liz Hewitt.

“We are looking forward to welcoming friends and other visitors from our local community and beyond. We hope that they will find our story inspiring and enjoy the beauty and creativity of each floral display.”

Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit is one of the most historic Circuits in Ireland and is the place from which the Methodist Church in the United States of America was born. In 1760, Philip Embury and his cousin Barbara Heck were among a group of Palatines who emigrated from the Rathkeale area and settled in New York. With Barbara Heck’s encouragement, Philip Embury became the first Methodist Pastor in North America. Today, some 253 years later, there are an estimated 14 million Methodists in America who include former senators Hillary Clinton and John Edwards, film producer George Lucas, author Stephen King and Dallas star Howard Keel.

The Adare Methodist Church Flower Festival will be open on Friday 10th May between 7.30pm – 9.30pm, Saturday 11th May between 10.00am – 6.00pm and Sunday 12th May between 12-noon – 7.00pm. Admission is €8 per adult which includes tea/coffee and cake.
On Sunday 3rd March 2013 in St Canice’s Cathedral, Kilkenny former Mothers’ Union Diocesan President of Cashel & Ossory Phyllis Grothier was commissioned as All Ireland President. She was supported by her husband George and her family Albert, Noelle, Elaine, Graham and Louise who was in Australia.

Phyllis Grothier was born in Clonegal Co. Wexford and now lives in Fenagh Co. Carlow with her husband George and family. Mothers’ Union membership started in Tullow Branch in 1984 when she was enrolled but attended her first meetings at the age of 7 when she went with her mother and grandmother to the local Branch meetings in Clonegal. Since then she has been Branch Leader, Branch Secretary, Young Members representative, Diocesan Vice President and Diocesan President in Cashel and Ossory for the past 6 years.

The service was led by the Bishop of Cashel & Ossory the Rt Revd Michael Burrows and the commissioning of Phyllis and the Board of Trustees was undertaken by the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland the Most Revd Richard Clarke. Also in attendance were the Rt Revd Trevor Williams (Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe), the Very Revd Raymond Ferguson (Chaplain to the MU), the Very Revd Katharine Poulton (Dean of Ossory), the Revd Canon Ian Poulton (Diocesan Chaplain MU) and members of the Cathedral Chapter. Many clergy and diocesan readers were present to support Phyllis as she had herself recently become a diocesan reader. The Worldwide Mothers’ Union was represented by its President Lynn Tembey. Also present were Lady Eames (former Worldwide President), Ruth Mercer (out-going All Ireland Mothers’ Union President), Anne Barrett, Paddy Wallace and Margaret Crawford (all former All Ireland Presidents) and Mothers’ Union members were present from every diocese including representatives from the Link Diocese of Sodor and Man.

In his address Bishop Burrows took his text from Jacob’s Dream and elaborated on the theme of when taking office not to be afraid of engaging the debate in the ‘public square’ with those who seek law reform. The Mothers’ Union has never been afraid to speak out on behalf of the family in relation to marriage, equal pay for women, the right to work in the public service after marriage, serving on juries and the debate on divorce. All the ‘Jacob’s ladders’ and bridges are needed for coping. When great social change is on the horizon, it is vital to have experienced and compassionate women. There is nobody better qualified to this task of leadership than Phyllis Grothier. In her diocesan leadership of the MU she has brought honesty, intelligence, compassion, generous judgment and practical wisdom all of which will be relevant to her new task ahead.

The Commissioning then took place. In a very simple moment the former All Ireland President Ruth Mercer presented Phyllis to the Archbishop asking him to commission the new President. He in turn asked Phyllis was she willing to commit to the office and work. She answered affirmatively. The Archbishop then admitted her to the office and the congregation welcomed Phyllis with applause.

Similarly the Archbishop commissioned the Board of Trustees presenting them to the congregation: Hazel Sherlock, Margaret Schutz, Jean Fox, Norma Bell, Mildred Gilmore, Pat Gray, Moira Thom, Kathy Trimby, Joy Gordon, Joy Silcock, Marion Cole, Ina Blackwell, Joy Little, Valerie Ash, Iris Suitor, Patsy Devoy, Maureen Lanigan and Alison Rooke. (Susan Cathcart, Kay Clarke and Margaret Knox were unable to be present).

A reception was held in Kilkenny College where presentations were made by Maureen Lanigan the newly elected Cashel and Ossory Diocesan President and others. Lynne Tembey also spoke and Phyllis replied bringing the proceedings to a climax by cutting the cake made especially in her honour.
Máirt’s Musings
- The Spirituality of a Creme Egg

by Rev. Máirt Hanley

There are a number of things that mark the change of the seasons and progress of the year. If you asked around, I’m sure everyone has their key indicators, depending on what is important to them. For some the first daffodils, for some the start of the Six Nations, or the National Leagues. There are also the almost universal signs that begin with a murmur and raise to a multitude of clamouring voices, first its just one optimistic soul claiming to have noticed a bit of a stretch in the evenings and then it becomes the common response of all, ‘Isn’t it awful, wet/cold/wind/whatever for the time of year?’ ‘Yes but sure there’s a grand stretch in the evenings’. There is something nice in having these familiar markers coming around again in our lives and I have also noted that for many people the markers they choose are badges of identity, be it an annual horse meet for those of an equestrian nature, or the start of this or that season. For me I think it is the arrival in the shops of - Cadbury’s creme eggs.

I know, it’s not necessarily the most spiritual thing in the world, it’s chocolate in Lent, it’s commercial hype, it’s very sugary and will rot my teeth if I’m not careful. All these I have been told at one time or another, and truth be known, it’s years since I have actually eaten one. That doesn’t change the fact that when I see them come in stock my heart leaps and I am filled with a remembrance of all the joy of taste and methodology (how do you eat yours?) that I had when I was 9 years old. They are so indicative of this time of year and seem to bring to mind every memory of every spring of my life. Why is this? Well perhaps it’s because you can’t get them at other times of the year! In a world where you can get anything you want at any time. When I was young I remember there being a season for every thing, strawberries, melon, asparagus – there were lots of things that you just couldn’t get outside the season. There were also lots of things that you couldn’t get outside of particular places. My family were in England when I was small and you could not get Kimberly Biscuits over there. This meant that when we were home for the summer holidays, my sister would buy a few big boxes of them to take back as a special treat. Then when we moved home to Wexford, trips to ‘Blighty’ to see the family still over there, started to revolve around pork pies and trips to Marks and Spencer’s. The thrill of someone returning from a trip to a particular country with a particular thing that you can’t get here seems to me to be gone. We have lost it amid the profusion of everything you could possibly want anywhere you could possibly want it. If it is there all the time it stops being special – and then, I think, we can forget to, or maybe even just give up, valuing it.

One of the few things that you can only buy at one time of the year is a Cadbury’s creme egg. It makes it special even if you don’t eat them any more - an annual reminder of the joy of life and the variety of ways of attacking it. Maybe it’s just the same chocolate and the same goo that we can get with different colourings in different bars all the time, but that special shape and colour makes me look at the confectionery stand through the eyes of a child. Likewise having a particular religious feast, at a particular time, will hopefully, communicate those constant and universal truths that I hold dear to me in a special way. So whilst in my head I will have all my grown up theology, philosophy and reasoning, somewhere in my heart I will see my faith through the eyes of a child.

Rev. Máirt has, one wife, two Sundays till Easter, three kids and four siblings.
We took part in the Family Service in St. John’s Church on Mothering Sunday and were joined by family, friends and neighbours. The wonderful singing at the beginning was a great start to the service. Well done also to the children who read so well at the service. As part of our promotion of the use of the Irish language, the school took part in the recent Seachtain na Gaeilge activities. Jasmin and Kaplan sang “as Gaeilge” and Caroline, Dakotah and Sam took part in Tra na gCeist.

On 12th March, the children received their awards in the Bible School Prize giving Ceremony in Tralee and on 22 March the school will receive a presentation from Lee Strand as a result of their collection of milk carton tokens over the year.

Pencil Case Project – As a project for Lent, the pupils volunteered to make up pencil cases for St Stephen’s Primary School in the parish of Mankayane in the south west of Swaziland. This school is located in a very poor area of the country and children have to walk long distances as the homesteads are so scattered. Of the 430 pupils 200 are classified as orphans and vulnerable children. A full pencil case will be a wonderful gift for the young person who receives it. Pencil cases are now ready to be sent to Swaziland after Easter.

Other school news! Well, now that Spring has arrived, work has started on the school garden – we look forward to wonderful blooms and a blaze of colour later on this Spring and Summer. Strawberries and a variety of culinary herbs will definitely feature in addition to the flowers!

Rugby classes have commenced with Mr Eddie Barnes – Eddie’s son Danny is a Munster player! We invite all family, friends and neighbours to come and hear us sing.

Finally it is Enrolment time for the school when we look ahead to our intake of new students in September 2013. All enquiries to the school office at 066-7128142 between 9.00am and 11.00am.
Deep Concentration at St. John’s Parochial School - Tra na gCeist!

Villiers School
MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2013
by Juliana Gleeson & Andrea Brislane

This February, twenty four students from Villiers Secondary School, Limerick attended a BIGMUN conference in Denmark. BIGMUN was held by the MUN Group of Birkerød Gymnasium, a Danish international secondary school, situated in beautiful surroundings, just 25 minutes from the centre of Copenhagen. Participating in MUN provides a cultural experience for all delegates and MUN directors.

For those who are not familiar with MUN, it consists of five days of riveting debates conducted solely through English and building lasting friendships with teenagers from all over Europe. At this particular conference there were delegates from the Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Denmark and of course Ireland, all representing various countries.

There is an opening ceremony welcoming all the delegates and to officially inaugurate the conference. All delegates then split into their respective committees and councils, of which there were nine. Each committee/council had three of four fascinating current affairs topics such as human rights, weapons disarmament and global economics. The delegates worked on resolutions concerning the aforementioned topics with allied member states. A resolution is made up of operative clauses, which are points of information explaining the topic and perambulatory clauses, which set out a plan to tackle the issues raised. Each delegate represented a country foreign to them and fought for the views of said country during the debates held over the duration of the conference. Some delegates found themselves fighting with opinions they personally didn’t agree with. For example, the delegates of Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Syria, all females, published a resolution in which they were opposed to allocating any form of rights to female citizens!

Formal language and dress is expected of all participating delegates during the conference. Formal language includes referring to oneself in the third person and no direct dialogue between delegates is allowed once debating has commenced.

Each council/committee had a Chair/President to oversee the smooth running of debates and to ensure all delegates complied with dress and language rules at all times.

Participating in a conference such as BIGMUN broadens the horizons of all involved. It raises awareness and interest in current affairs in young people and builds speech writing and public speaking skills. At the closing ceremony, awards are handed out for each council/committee. The awards include Best Delegate and Best Newcomer. Among the winners were several familiar names to the Villiers family including Lauren Hannon, Simon Benson and Morgan Clarke. Other fun awards included Best Dressed, Funniest Accent and Most Likely to Succeed in Politics.

Whilst the conference was stimulating and engaging during the day the social events surrounding the conference heightened the enjoyment experienced by all. On the first day, a canal boat trip was organised for all students and teachers as an icebreaker and to kick off the MUN experience. Typical Irish, the delegates of Villiers school stood waiting at the wrong dock for 20 minutes wondering where the boat was. The sprint to the boat before it left was sure to wake us up that morning!

On the second last night, a formal dinner was hosted by the school. One unsuspecting Irish delegate with an unfortunate nut allergy experienced a minor shock. Never a dull moment in Denmark!

The formal dinner was followed by a night of dancing and further interaction before the final day of General Assembly kicked off.

Leaving was a saddening occasion for all. Saying goodbye to newly made friends from such diverse places was surely disheartening but Facebook names were flying all around!

In conclusion, it is a rare experience that is not found in many other schools. The delegates from Villiers were honored to receive the opportunity to represent not only their school and country but themselves in their personal achievements. It is a highly recommended excursion. The talk on the plane journey home was in a highly formal forum as delegates found it hard to break the habit, surrounding the topic of “next year”. This will be in order.

VILLIERS TRIUMPH IN O’GORMAN CUP FINAL

On a crisp Tuesday afternoon on the 26th Feb in Clonmel Rugby Club, the Villiers senior boys produced a dominant all round display by overcoming Colaiste Muire of Crosshaven 27-12 in the Cup Final.

The team arrived at Clonmel having beaten Rice College, Clements and CBS Tarbert. The boys dug deep and produced a spirited performance. Captain Jack Kearney lifted the cup securing Villiers...
first rugby triumph in many years. Special thanks must go to their coaching staff of Mike Storey and Tim Fennell for their dedication and hard work. Players of note throughout the season and in the final included – Tobi Ademakin, Nathan Eacrett, Gavin Hayes, Mark Armitage and Ian Gibson.

BOYS & GIRLS HOCKEY FINALS

As the hockey season comes to a close, we have had an extremely busy week with Villiers being represented in the Senior A, Senior B and Junior A Munster finals and the the 1st Yr girls cup final.

Our senior A boys traveled to Ashton in what was always going to be a difficult tie. They fought hard and it looked like an upset could be on the cards when we drew level at 1-1 just after half time. Ashton's quality shone through in the end with a 5-1 win, a result that was certainly flattering.

Our senior B's played Midleton in their final at Villiers on Thursday. Villiers had the upper hand and looked more threatening from the off. The final result brought the cup back to Villiers with a 2-0 deserved victory.

Friday morning saw the junior A boys travel to Ashton for their final. Unfortunately we got off to the worst possible start, finding ourselves 1-0 down after two minutes. Nevertheless the boys rolled up their sleeves and threatened to equalise before Ashton increased their advantage and the match ended with a 3-0 loss.

While we took one cup from three, it is many years since we reached three boys finals. Great credit must go to George Blackwell for his effort and determination with coaching.

We will be sorry to loose such talented players as Nathan Eacrett and Ian Gibson – who have given so much to boys' hockey over the years. We wish them and their fellow sixth year's well in their future hockey careers.

The death took place of Margaret Williams peacefully in St John's Hospital, Limerick on 8th March. Born in Huddersfield, Margaret had been resident in Killaloe for some 25 years following a long life serving in many parts of the world with the British Geological Survey. Her funeral took place on 11th March in St Flannan's Cathedral, followed by cremation at The Island Crematorium in Cork.

1600 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN CASTLECONNELL

An Ecumenical Service of Thanksgiving will be held on Sunday May 5th at 3.00pm to celebrate 1600 years of Christian worship on the site of All Saints in Castleconnell. Bishop Trevor will be joined (yet to be confirmed) by Bishop Kieron and already there is great excitement as the ‘young church’ is preparing their special mural for the occasion. All are welcome.
THE CRUCIFIXION BY SIR JOHN STAINER

As we go to press final preparations are being made for the visit of the Blessington Millennium Choir and the Aer Lingus Traditional Ensemble for their concert in St Flannan’s on Saturday 23rd March. The choir will stay overnight in Castleconnell and then enhance our worship on Palm Sunday in St Flannan’s where Bishop Trevor will be the Celebrant.

LIFT HIGH THE CROSS

Thursday 21st March saw the traffic halted in Killaloe as pupils from St Anne’s Community College carried a ten foot Cross to St Flannan’s. They were greeted by Revd Stan, and Revd Lucy performed the act of Dedication. St Anne’s choir sang beautifully throughout this short service. The cross was made by the Transition year pupils and will the centerpiece for a prayer space. Visitors will be able to write their prayer requests which will be left at the foot of the cross and the clergy will include these prayers in the daily services. The cross will also strengthen the link that the Cathedral has with St Anne’s and its students.

Sincere thanks go to all the pupils and staff involved in this project but special thanks go also to Veronica Sheahan, the chaplain to St Annes.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The Convent in Killaloe was the venue for an intimate prayer service to celebrate World Day of Prayer on 1st March. Sincere thanks must go to Sister Noreen for bringing us all together, to Veronica Sheahan and St Anne’s choir, and to Avril Cullen for leading the service. Revd Stan led special prayers in memory of Judy Denison-Edson, and a minute of silence was respected in her memory as Judy had been a committed advocate of WDP.

HOLY BAPTISM

We welcomed Abigale Garnsworthy into the Church of God as she was baptized in St Caiman’s, Mountshannon on Sunday 10th March. Many congratulations and sincere thanks to her parents – Samuel and Kerri-Anne for bringing her to baptism.

A HAPPY AND HOLY EASTER

A happy and holy Easter to you all from Revd Lucy and Revd Stan as we all greet the Risen Christ. Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!!

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

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

Our Ecumenical Lenten programme at the County Arms Hotel finished with a group session led by two of our speakers, Dr Andrew Pierce and Dr Katherine Meyer. Many thanks to them, and to our other leaders from the Irish School of Ecumenics, Dean Tom Gordon and Dr Tom Scally, who took us through the topic of Temptation with care, insight, and fresh ideas.

PASTORAL

We continue to keep in prayer those who are ill. We also remember those in nursing homes or who have difficulty getting out and about. George Watkins, Charlie Ardill, Millie Bruce, Charlie Hodgins, Alfie Dyer and Pauline Hickie, who has gone to live in care in Newmarket-on-Fergus. May they know God’s love, which binds us all together.

NEW HYMNS

And some not so new! Our hymn-book, which is now thirteen years old, contains a fine selection of hymns and some of them are gems still waiting to be discovered. We’ve started to try and

Looking for Accommodation in Dublin?

Oak House, 36 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4

Owned and managed by the Girls Friendly Society, Oak House is a mid-terrace Georgian residence, with resident supervisor, designed to accommodate female students. Accommodation is on a self catering basis. Oak House is convenient to the city centre and on a main bus route. Bookings are now being taken for Summer 2013 (June/July & August) and the 2013-14 academic year (Sept ’13 to June ’14)

For further information contact the Administrator at:
Telephone/Fax: 003531 6603754 (Tue-Thur 10–4)
Email: office@girlsfriendlysociety.ie or log onto www.girsfriendlysociety.ie to download an application form
George Gill. We wish God’s richest blessing on Maeve and her family.

John Gill and Ciara Lanigan. Unfortunately, Ciara couldn’t be there almost any eventuality!

On 24th February, Malcolm Mossop, Cappalahan, passed away in Portlaoise Hospital following a short illness. Well known far and wide, his funeral service took place in Corbally Church prior to his burial in the adjoining Graveyard. Condolences to his sisters Violet and Iris, brother Donald, and his relatives, many of whom live in the parish.

Our condolences go to George Hodgins and Georgina Whitford on the death of their brother, Fred Hodgins; to Adrian Hewson on the death of his aunt, Breda Hewson; and to Lynn Wallace on the death of her grandmother, Aileen Stacey. We also sympathise with the family of the late William Young, who passed away in Villa Maria Nursing Home on 18th February aged 92, especially his niece, Evie Lupton; and with Doreen Roe on the recent death of her aunt, Joan Meredith.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

This year’s World Day of Prayer Service was held in St. Cronan’s Church, Abbey St. on Friday 1st March. In keeping with the efforts to broaden the service beyond the original clientele of women, this year’s speaker was none other than our own Adrian Hewson. Readers from each church within our Group took part: Doreen Roe, Corbally, Barbara Duke, Roscrea, Joy Dudley, Bourney, and Mai Clare, Kyle; along with Rev. Lesley who also read.

EASTER VESTRIES

Tuesday 9th April: Corbally, 8pm
Wednesday 10th April: Roscrea & Kyle, 8pm
Thursday 11th April: Bourney, 8.30pm.

ST. CRONAN’S CHURCH WINDOW APPEAL

Renovation work has commenced on the windows at the back of St. Cronan’s Church. The timber in these windows is badly in need of repair, and phase one of this project will cost in the region of €10,000. A small amount of grant assistance and some donations have been gratefully received, but contributions to the appeal are still being sought. Any help in this regard would be much appreciated.

COME DINE WITH ME

April is ‘Come Dine with Me’ month in aid of St. Cronan’s Church, Roscrea. Anyone willing to host a dinner party (preferably for 10 people or more) should contact Rev. Lesley as soon as possible. Four course dinner €20 per person.

AROUND THE PARISHES

We look forward to celebrating with Luke Hoffler, Roscrea, who will be confirmed in St. Mary’s Cathedral, Limerick on 21st April; with Nikola Evans and Philip McKelvey who will be married in St. Cronan’s Church, Roscrea, on 27th April; and with Robert Roe Jnr., Corbally, who will be receiving First Holy Communion in St. Cronan’s Church, Abbey St., Roscrea, on 28th April. We ask God’s richest blessings on them and their families on these joyful occasions.

Nenagh Union of Parishes

Nenagh, Templederry, Ballymackey and Killodiernan.

Rector: 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.

ST PATRICK’S DAY

Our United Family Service was held on the 17th and a large congregation celebrated St Patrick’s Day together. Both GFS and BB were well represented and took important parts in the service. The Junior choir sang, and the congregation joined in many of the traditional hymns, (including an enthusiastic rendition of all nine verses of St Patrick’s Breastplate) as well as reciting the Lord’s Prayer in Irish.

SPRING CLEANING!

Following the painting of the railings, plans are afoot to give the rest of St Mary’s a tidy up and face-lift. The effect of hard winters and wet summers have left all the surrounds of the church in a very soggy and unattractive state, as well as raising concerns about slips and falls. We were also conscious that we should have some space within

Roscrea Group of Parishes

Roscrea, Bourney, Corbally and Kyle
Priest in Charge: Rev. Lesley Robinson
St. Cronan’s Rectory, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.
Tel: 0505 – 21725 Mob: 087 – 9091561
Email: kandfrobinson@eircom.net

ARRIVALS

Congratulations to David and Ann Marie Dann, Corbally, on the recent birth of their first child, Stephen.

DEPARTURES

On 18th February, Robbie Connor, Spruce Hill, passed away peacefully in the care of Patterson’s Nursing Home. A true gentleman all his life, he was laid to rest in Dungar Graveyard following a well attended service in Roscrea Church. Our condolences to Ken, Margaret, and their family; and to Robbie’s other children Pam and Stuart, and their families.

On 24th February, Malcolm Mossop, Cappalahan, passed away in Portlaoise Hospital following a short illness. Well known far and wide, his funeral service took place in Corbally Church prior to his burial in the adjoining Graveyard. Condolences to his sisters Violet and Iris, brother Donald, and his relatives, many of whom live in the parish.

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HEALTH & SAFETY

Many thanks to Mr Tony Colville, who prepared the Health and Safety Statement for Birr Church and St Brendan’s Hall, and also came to explain the document to the Select Vestry. Once we have completed the implementation of the plan, we should be ready for almost any eventuality!

BAPTISM

Baby Maeve Hannah Lanigan was welcomed into the Christian family at her baptism in Birr on the 3rd March. Her godparents are John Gill and Ciara Lanigan. Unfortunately, Ciara couldn’t be there as she’s travelling abroad at present so Maeve’s other Granny, Ann Lanigan, stood in for her. She is a granddaughter of Rev Ruth and George Gill. We wish God’s richest blessing on Maeve and her family.

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the fence for disabled parking, so immediately after Easter (weather permitting!) work is going to begin, and the area gravelled all round, and generally improved.

BAPTISM
On 10th March we welcomed Benjamin Gerard Colm Mulligan son of Hilary and Ger Mulligan into the family of the church. He was well supported by family and friends, who joined the usual congregation for refreshments afterwards.

LENT GROUPS
A group met for four sessions during Lent to discuss Bishop Trevor’s 4Cs - Community, Caring, Confidence and Celebration. In addition, nine parishioners with the Rector attended the second of the Central Diocese parish groups meeting in St Michael’s, Limerick. Reports of the four sessions (and very lively some of them were!) were issued to the whole Union, and these have been brought together in one booklet. We have lots of ideas, some large, some small, and hope to bring these to fruition over the coming months. One of these has been acted on immediately - Patrick Rowley-Brooke has been serving regular tea and coffee at the end of every service in St Mary’s on Sundays. This has been much appreciated, and the congregation have taken advantage of a warmer chat indoors, and a welcome drink as well. We hope to make this a regular part of our get-togethers and will get a rota set up.

CONFIRMATIONS
We look forward to our United Confirmation Service at the end of April, at which Zoe Hayes, Ian Knight, Grace Langley, Luke Mooney and Devin Rusk will take on for themselves the promises made at their baptisms by their parents and god-parents. Please pray for them.

COMMUNITY
A number of parishioners have been quite poorly recently, though thankfully most are well on the way to recovery. Please remember Violet Moorhead, Stuart Whitton, Ruby and Willie Wallace, Olive Powell, Mildred Clarke, Sandra Manthe, and Anna-Mae Powell in your prayers.

Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group of Parishes
Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.
Rector: 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

SERVICES
Sunday 7th April – Easter 2/Low Sunday
10.15, Borrisokane, HC
11.30, Cloughjordan, MP

Sunday 14th April – Easter 3
9am, Ballingarry, HC
10.15, Borrisnafarney, HC
10.15, Borrisokane, MP
11.30, Cloughjordan, HC

Sunday 21st April – Easter 4
9am, Ballingarry, MP
10.15, Borrisnafarney, MP
10.15, Borrisokane, HC
11.30, Cloughjordan, MP (Sunday School Coffee after Church)

Sunday 28th April – Easter 5
10am, Ballingarry, MP
10.15, Borrisnafarney, MP
10.15, Borrisokane, MP
11.30, Cloughjordan, HC

AN EASTER REFLECTION
During my recent visit to New York I came upon this unusual sign mounted on the wall of a Church. It read as you will see in the photo ‘Fallout Shelter’ and was a legacy of the Cold war days when certain buildings were identified throughout the United States as appropriate places to seek safety in case of nuclear war. On one level it was quite consistent with the role of church buildings through the ages where they have been used as sanctuaries for those fleeing persecution and danger of various kinds. However it did strike me that even in times of no overt persecution or danger we Christians are far too comfortable sheltering inside our church buildings. What was once meant to be a base from which to go out into the world has become a very comfortable home in which we all have our favourite seats.

After Easter we find the disciples also sheltering in their ‘fallout shelter’ as they come to terms with the traumatic events of Holy Week and Easter. However it is only a temporary shelter as when Pentecost comes they go out into the world, filled with the Spirit, and respond
March visit ministry. The role of the Select Vestry is one place we might start. and identify one way which in the year ahead we might develop our talks the Bishop has suggested that we look at ourselves as parishes people in the organizational life of our parish. During his Lenten is not unique and perhaps we need to find new ways of involving Speaking to colleagues throughout the diocese I know this experience there is great spirit and enthusiasm in all our congregations. Easter Sunday. While there is not a huge turnover in vestry membership during the past year and welcome to those who take up office on place – Many thanks to those who have served in various capacities Harding as they prepare for Confirmation on 12th

Are we stuck in our fallout shelters?

BAPTISM
Welcome baby Harry John Cavanagh, son of Willie & Carmel Cavanagh of Modreeny who was baptized on 3rd March in St. Kieran's Church, Cloughjordan. We wish Harry every blessing in his life.

CONFIRMATION 2013
Classes have now commenced, meeting weekly in the Rectory. Your prayers are asked for Eoin England, Joel Young and Stephen Harding as they prepare for Confirmation on 12th May at 11am. We will be joined at that service by the candidates from Birr.

EASTER VESTRIES
As I write these notes all three of our Easter Vestries have taken place – Many thanks to those who have served in various capacities during the past year and welcome to those who take up office on Easter Sunday. While there is not a huge turnover in vestry membership there is great spirit and enthusiasm in all our congregations. However vestry meetings do not seem to attract great interest or attendance. Speaking to colleagues throughout the diocese I know this experience is not unique and perhaps we need to find new ways of involving people in the organizational life of our parish. During his Lenten talks the Bishop has suggested that we look at ourselves as parishes and identify one way which in the year ahead we might develop our ministry. The role of the Select Vestry is one place we might start.

Shinrone Group of Parishes
Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinnitty and Dunkerrin
Rector: Rev. Michael Johnston
St. Mary’s Rectory, Church Road, Shinrone, Birr, Co. Offaly
Tel: 0505-47164 Mob: 086-6086567
Email: shinrone@killaloe.anglican.org

CHRIST IS RISEN!
A very happy Easter to all

GERMAN LINK VISIT
As you read this a group from the parishes are just finishing a visit to our link church in Harzgerode, Germany. Visits were planned to Berlin, Leipzig, and Halle, as well as the local area. A full report will appear in next month’s Newslink.

MOTHERS’ UNION
The Mothers’ Union Overseas Meeting took place on Thursday 7 March in Aghancon Community Hall. The guest speaker was Canon Ian Poulton who gave a very interesting talk on mission. The MU closing service for the year took place on 25 March in Aghancon church and was followed by refreshments and a sale of work in the Community Hall.

PRESENTATION EVENING
A presentation evening was held on Thursday 14 March in Aghancon Community Hall at which part of the proceeds raised at the Variety Concert in January (€1000) was presented to representatives from the Crumlin and Temple Street Children’s Hospitals.

DAFFODIL DAY
This year’s Daffodil Day Coffee Morning in aid of the Irish Cancer Society took place on Thursday 21 March in Cloughmoyle Schoolhouse, Shinrone. Collectors also manned a stall in the local Centra and together €800 was raised. Well done to all.

UDYC SERVICE
On Palm Sunday weekend Aghancon parish were delighted to host a UDYC camp in the Community Hall. The young people then led the service on Palm Sunday and are to be congratulated for providing a very meaningful liturgy for the day. Many thanks to Jane, Ed and all the campers for their hard work.

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

CHURCH HISTORY
Easter Week (Thursday) was the scheduled date of a book launch in St Columba’s Church, Ennis by the Clare Roots Society. We should be grateful to the local society and particularly Mr Eric Shaw for the splendid “Memorials of Past Lives” which looks into the stories behind the war memorials of the Victorian building (1871), the first in the Irish church since Disestablishment in 1869. Containing beautiful colour photos the booklet should prove an invaluable guide to the popular and attractive neo-gothic church build by top Irish Paladian architect Frances Bindon.

The Rector wishes to acknowledge receipt of a history by Ms Lorraine McCarthy of the old Glebe House of Glenard, linked to the once active St Mary’s Parish Church, Clarecastle on the Newmarket side of Ennis. Lorraine’s family occupy the former Rectory and her history gives some very interesting insights to parish clergy and people in Clarecastle. Any parishioners interested in seeing this should contact the Rector.

FAMINE EVENT
Bishop Trevor Williams will attend the 2013 National Famine Commemoration in Kilrush on Sunday 12th May at 2.30pm. President Michael D. Higgins has kindly accepted an invitation to lead the official representation at the commemoration ceremony. The commemoration programme will open with a ceremony in which the local community will be greatly involved and it will culminate in the formal State ceremonial event, which will include the National Flag and military honours, and wreath laying ceremonies.

The community element of the ceremony will include music, readings, poetry and prayers and a theatrical piece in remembrance of those who suffered and perished during the Famine; and a minute of silent reflection.

PHOENIX VISIT
St Patrick’s Day, of course fell on a Sunday and with depleted numbers (as it happens, sickness for one thing) we did not, for the first time, sing the Breast Plate, which was a pity since it would have been nice for former temporary parishioner Gwen Schaecher to have
They were here to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Twinning with Phoenix, linked with the installation of the emergency medical facilities at the busy Cliffs of Moher.

**STAGE STAR**

Drumcliff parishioner Alan Maguire is getting used to hitting the bright lights these days as a leading member of the Corofin Drama Society, who for the second year running have reached the RTE All-Ireland Drama Finals to be held in Athlone in May with the production “By the Bog of Cats”, directed by Marie Carr resident playwright at the Abbey Theatre. The journey to Athlone and the ultimate prize comes via eight Festival successes. Last year they won the Corofin Drama Society’s “Best Young Actor” award for company, Alan, originally from Sligo, has lived in Clare for 12 years. A systems development manager with an engineering education, his way to the Finals with the play “The Subject was Roses.”

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

This took place in St Columba’s in candlelight, with a liturgy set by the Women of France. The Rector is grateful to the small fellowship of adults and students who made the service come alive, not least accompanist Nigel Bridge.

**PRAYERS**

Kerry Blake makes excellent progress in Ennis Hospital following his brain operation and awaits eagerly a call to the National Rehabilitation Unit in Dun Laoghaire; Rachel Brew recovers at home following serious damage to her back and legs from a balcony fall. Mark Munday recovers well from an operation in Galway and Jackie Reid is home after operative work in St John’s, Limerick. Pray also for Mervyn and Marguerite Groves as they settle into Carrigorran Nursing Home and for Mrs Anna McCrum, at 98, suffering in Cahercalla from a lung infection.

**Mental Health Association presentation to Cecil Cooke**

Supporting various organisations within our community. The late Nancy Cooke was very much involved with the above Association throughout her life, giving dedicated service for the well-being of so many. Nancy held several offices during her time of service from committee member to Chairperson.

This service was recognized posthumously at a presentation on 4th March in their Ballinasloe Centre in Ard Mhuire, when her husband Cecil received a framed painting created by Jackie Eastwood from Valerie Swanwick Chairperson.
PASTORAL CARE

Please remember our parishioners who are unable to be regular worshippers. Some of these are confined to their homes while others are residents in nursing homes within the confines of our parishes. There are in total fifteen such parishioners please remember them in your prayers at this time.

SERVICES

As advertised on web site.

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

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Was a very joyful occasion at St Paul’s Banagher this year, the most notable fact was that nearly 50% of the congregation were young people under the age of 18. The Rev Patrick led a meaningful service around the theme of motherhood. After the service we enjoyed Fay’s Simnel cake and a cup of tea and a great deal of fellowship, hopefully we will repeat this service in the years to come. We thank everybody who put so much effort into making this a successful occasion.

ST PATRICK’S DAY

Saw a well attended combined service of Holy Communion held at St Paul’s Banagher when much of the service was spoken in Irish (translation supplied). We all enjoyed this unusual worship in celebration and thanks to God for the life of St Patrick.

Although a bitterly cold day many boats turned out for a fancy dress run down the river Shannon to celebrate St Patrick, producing a vital spark to the town of Banagher after the long winter, and again we thank the many people that were involved to make the day such fun.

THE MOTHERS’ UNION

The Mothers’ Union recently gathered in our Parish Hall to hear from Roy Stodart on his recent experience with the Niall Mellon trust house building projects in South Africa. Roy told us that it was very enjoyable and rewarding. An experience that he said he would not like to have missed. Whilst building basic houses to replace shacks the people live in now, he had many amusing and distressing stories of the way local people lead their lives. We thank Roy very much for taking the trouble of coming and talking to us.

ALL OUR BEST WISHES

Go to Francis Delahunt at this time of her 90th birthday. She has been such an inspiration to us for so many years, and has given us such joy with her lovely playing of the organ and choice of hymns at St Paul’s for more years than we care to remember.

PLEASE SUPPORT

Maureen Moss on her forthcoming trip to Swaziland. We are holding a fundraising coffee evening and raffle at the Day Care Centre, Eyrecourt on 12th April at 8pm. Maureen is staying in Swaziland for three months on a teaching project. Anyone who would like to support Maureen and cannot come to Eyrecourt please contact Les, 0872922543.

Limerick Diocese

Limerick City Parish

St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's Pery Sq. and Abington
Very Rev. Sandra Pragnell
The Deanery, 7 Kilbane,
Castletroy, Limerick
Tel: 061–338697 Mob: 087–2658592
Email: sandrapragnell@eircom.net
Rev. Jane Galbraith
50 Ballinvoher, Fr. Russell Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick
Tel: 061–302038 Mobile: 085–1450804
Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

THE DEAN WRITES

“I was honoured in March to meet the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, during his pilgrimage of prayer (in various cathedrals in England) leading up to his enthronement at Canterbury. I met him at Southwark Cathedral, an inspiring day in itself, and had the privilege of receiving from Archbishop Justin a personal blessing for my ministry, as well as for your and my shared ministry here in the Limerick City Parish, as well as in the wider deanery of Limerick and Ardfert. And how lovely to be able (metaphorically) to fly the flag for Limerick on St Patrick’s Weekend.”

HOLY BAPTISM

On 16th February at St Flannan’s Cathedral, Killaloe: Caitlin Margaret Aobh Battle, daughter of Daniel and Amy: at the family’s request, the Rev’d Stan Evans baptised Caitlin using the traditional rite. On 14th March at St Mary’s Cathedral, Sinqobile Phillie Precious Makhanya, of Meelick, Co Clare was baptised as an adult.

BURIAL OF ASHES

On 2nd March at Kilmurry Church: Rosemary Elizabeth NASH (55), late of Dundrum, Dublin. The funeral took place at Taney Church; Rosemary’s ashes were interred in her parents’ grave. On 14th March at St Mary’s Cathedral: Ellen Nora DEVLIN (nee Howes, 96) late of Braintree, Essex. Ellen’s ashes were interred in the family grave. Our sympathies with both families

CATHEDRAL CHOIR NEWS

On Sunday 3rd March, the Dean formally admitted a new chorister, Córaigh Daly-Walsh into full membership of the cathedral choir. We hope she will continue to enjoy her time in the choir.
WHIST DRIVES
St. Michael's held the last one of the season on 9th March. Raffle winners were: Tracey Lyttle, Noreen Johnson, Gillian Cheatsby & Lindsey Boyle. Many thanks to Avril Condell, Margaret Brickenden, Barbara Clayton and John & Kayt Shier for donating prizes. We will be back in October.

LENT HUNGER LUNCHES at St Mary's Cathedral
The Saturday lunch of soup and bread during Lent has so far raised €300 for the Simon Community. Many thanks to all the chefs for the lovely homemade soups, and those who provided the bread, to Andrew Ellerker for setting it up each week, and to all who have supported this venture on Saturday mornings.

BON VOYAGE AND GOOD LUCK
...to Jenni Lyttle who has gone to Alaska to embark on a six month work placement working with people with disabilities at Hope Community Resources.

LIMERICK CITY PARISH TRAVELLING SUPPER
...takes place on Saturday 27th of April. If you would like to attend, please contact Tracey Lyttle (061- 455679/086-6486197) - St. Michael’s or Elizabeth Stanley (061-351634/086-2687123) - Abington or Frank Sheehan (086-8214223) - St. Mary’s.

LCP EASTER GENERAL VESTRY
Thursday 11th April 2013 at 8 pm in St. Michael’s Church Hall. Everyone is warmly invited to attend this annual General Meeting of the parish.

OUR PRAYERS AND GOOD WISHES
...to Evelyn Robinson, a regular churchgoer and supporter of Limerick City Parish and Mothers’ Union over very many years, as she prepares to convalesce near her daughter Shirley in Castlepollard. We wish her God’s richest blessing and all good wishes from Limerick City Parish.

CONFIRMATION
Please pray for Gift Amaeze, Jessica Egbulam, Henry Egbulam, Eli Hannon, Sam Kingston Ryan, Singobile Makhanya, Sophie MacMahon, Hazel MacMahon, Ingrid Meelvin, Ben Quilligan, and Stephanie Saidha. Bishop Trevor has arranged the Confirmation service for Sunday 21st April at 11.15 a.m. in St. Mary’s Cathedral.

Our parishes have had a busy Holy Week and Easter and now we are preparing for our Easter General Vestries which take place as follows:
• Rathkeale 8.00 p.m. on Tuesday 16th April at the Rectory
• Kilmallock 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 17th April at St. Brendan’s Church
• Askeaton & Castletown 8.00 p.m. on Thursday April 18th at the Rectory.

We hope everyone will make an effort to take part in these important meetings which shape the life of the community for the coming year.

Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes
Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kilcornan & Kilnaughtin
Rector: Rev. Keith Scott
The Rectory, Askeaton, Co. Limerick
Tel: 061 – 398647 Mob: 087 2885169
E-mail: rathkeale@limerick.anglican.org

Happy Easter to everyone - we hope that your Easter Day celebrations have been filled with joy and hope.

The congregation at St. Mary’s Askeaton were happily surprised to welcome the former Priest in Charge, the Rev’d Bill Romer, on St. Patrick’s Day. Bill and Molly were on a flying visit as part of a trip to visit friends and family in Europe. We wish them safe travels on their return to America.

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Ardfert Diocese

Tralee & Dingle Unions of Parishes

Trapee, Ballymacelligott, Ballyseedy, Dingle, Kilgibbon and Killiney (Vacant)
Parish Office: Teach an tSolas, St. John's Church,
Ashe St., Tralee, Co. Kerry
Tel: 066 712 2245 Email: tralee@ardfert.anglican.org
Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Jim Stephens
Kilderry, Milltown, Co. Kerry,
Tel: 066-976 7735 Mobile: 087-052 9107
Email: stiofain.s@gmail.com

SUNDAY SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Ballyseedy: 9.45 a.m. 1st, 2nd & 3rd Sundays
Kilgibbon: 10 a.m. every Sunday
Tralee: 10.45 a.m. every Sunday
Ballymacelligott: 12 Noon every Sunday
Dingle: 12 Noon every Sunday

ABOUT PEOPLE

Our congratulations to

. . . Nelius Groves, who is back home and recovering from the effects of his recent surgery.
. . . Bride Gleisure, Rector's Warden of St. John's, on taking ownership of Tralee Pet Corner located in Courthouse Lane, Tralee.
. . . Ed Kellner who has recently acquired the 'horse' business, Bridle & Bits, formerly of Pembroke St., Tralee, and relocated it to Clash Industrial Estate.

MOTHERING SUNDAY

The Mothering Sunday Service in St. John's, Tralee, in which many of the young people of the Union took part, was most enjoyable and only mildly chaotic. It was a delight to be joined by the young members of the Ballymacelligott Sunday Club and we want, particularly, to thank their leaders who sourced, and prepared, the daffodils which were distributed on the day. At the same Service, and at the suggestion of our Boys' Brigade Company, we also distributed a copy of 'Family Time' to each family in all of our Parishes. This is a slim volume of simple prayers, life lessons and devotions, produced with the cooperation of many main Church of Ireland organisations - we have no hesitation in recommending it to all Groups, Unions and Parishes.

EASTER VESTRIES

The Easter Vestry meeting for the Dingle Union will be held in Benner's Hotel, Dingle, at 7.30pm on Wednesday 10th April. The Easter Vestry for the Tralee and Ballymacelligott Union will be held in Teach an tSolas, Ashe St., Tralee, at 8pm on Thursday 11 April 2013. There will be a meeting of the 'outgoing' Vestry at 7.30pm on the same day.

GETTING ORGANISED

The rebuilding of the organ in St. John's has finally begun and, of course, any rebuilding must begin with demolition. I was briefly present for some of the demolition and I can only say that seeing the pipes being packed into wooden crates for transport to the workshops where the work will be carried out created a strangely funereal atmosphere. It was previously thought that much of the work would be carried out on site but this has proved not to be the case. Fortunately this means that the Side Chapel will be available to us for most of the time during the rebuilding. The only pipes now remaining in place are the huge, square, wooden ones which I imagine produce the very deepest notes; the ones which tend to vibrate your backbone! The race is now on to see which we will get first; an organ or a Rector.

PENINSULAR PARISHES

The Rev. Máirtín Hanley, who had oversight of Kilgibbon and Dingle Parishes before he moved on to be Priest in Charge of the Kilcolman Union, returned to the Peninsula to lead another of his popular ecumenical Retreat Walks, this time from Annascaul to Inch Strand, on Palm Sunday. Anyone who undertook the three-hour walk through that magnificent countryside could not fail to be spiritually uplifted.

Killarney & Aghadoe Union of Parishes

Kilarney, Aghadoe and Muckross

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Canon Susan Wattersen.
The Rectory, Rookery Rd. Ballycasheen, Killarney, Co. Kerry
Tel: 064 66 31832 Mob: 087 689 2025
Email: smwatt1@gmail.com

Editor: Canon Susan Wattersen has been appointed Dean's Vicar of St Finbar’s Cathedral, Cork, taking up the position on June 2nd. We give thanks for her ministry among us, and hold her in our prayers as she prepares to take up her new appointment.

During April there will be a service of Holy Communion each Sunday at 11am, the mid week service is on Wednesday at 10.30am followed by coffee in Mac's Restaurant.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sean and Vanessa who brought baby Annabelle for baptism in Killcummin on Saturday 16th March. Annabelle follows in big brother Jonah's footsteps, Jonah was baptised there three years ago. We wish them both every blessing.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the spring clean of the church, washed linen, hosed pathways, baked, served coffee, read lessons, played the organ brought flowers and contributed in any way to our Holy Week and Easter Services. It is greatly appreciated.

The Book Club will meet in the Malton Hotel on Thursday April 4th to discuss the March book. Members who are interested in the possible trip to Chartres this summer, may be interested in reading The Cleaner of Chartres by Sally Vickers. As with other Vickers' novels the story has amazing detail of the architecture, artwork and daily life of the Cathedral and town community.

The Annual General (Easter) Vestry will take place on Thursday 11th April at 8pm in Muckross Venture Centre. There will be a celebration of Holy Communion beforehand at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

It is with sympathy and regret that we remember the family of Andy Davies who died tragically in Rathmore on March 13th. Andy’s funeral was on 16th, and we hold in prayer Anne, the children and parents Ann and Mervyn. May Andy rest in peace and rise in glory.

Canon Sue’s last Sunday will be May 21st, before taking up the post of Dean’s Vicar at St. Fin Barr’s Cathedral on 1st June. Thank you all for your friendship and support over the past six years. As the family will continue their Killarney connections, hopefully we may meet from time to time.

St Mark’s Day is 24th April

Tradition says Mark is the author of the second gospel, and identifies him with the young man in Mark 14:51, who followed Christ after his arrest and escaped by leaving his clothes behind. He was a companion to Paul on his journeys. Papias, in 130, said that he later became Peter’s interpreter, explaining how he gathered so much information about Jesus’ life. Mark’s Gospel is the earliest account we have of the life of Jesus. He died about 74 AD.

Early in the 9th century Mark’s body was brought to Venice, whose patron he became, and there it remains. His symbol as an evangelist, the lion, is much in evidence at Venice.
**Kilcolman Union of Parishes**

*Kilcolman, Kiltallagh and Glenbeigh*

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Máirtín Hanley  
20 Knocklyne, Sunhill, Killorglin, Co. Kerry.  
Mob: 087–619 4733  
Email: rev.hanley@gmail.com  
Parish Website: www.kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org

Happy Easter to all! My thanks to all who have been helping out in the run up to Easter. We have had some great Tuesday discussions and confirmation classes. There have been two very enriching mid week services with the school in Kiltallagh and it is really nice to now be able to have tea and coffee afterwards.

As I write I am recovering from our Holy Week Walk. On Palm Sunday some of our confirmation candidates and twenty or so others from Kilcolman and Dingie Unions walked from Annascaul to Inch with reflections themed on the landscape and Luke Chapter 20. We had a great walk and were refreshed by the wind-swept hike. Next walk will be on May 5th in Ballyferriter in West Kerry.

For April we have some baptisms in both churches, we have our Easter General Vestry on the feast day of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, April 9th, after evening prayer at 8pm in St. Michael’s. We have a mid week service on the 25th at noon in St Cartach’s for St. Mark’s Day as well as all our regular activities.

My thanks to Pauline Dobbins for taking over the parish newsletters, which can be read on the parish web site. Also on the site you can read the full text of a summary of a discussion we had when the Book Club discussed the Bishop’s article about his Lenten Talks.

**VISION MISSION AND MINISTRY – THE BISHOP’S ARTICLE**

(Post a summary of what was shared at a meeting of the Book Club in Killorglin with a small but varied group, under the heading of ‘Community’)

- The first thing mentioned at the meeting was how much someone had enjoyed the trip to Kenmare to the Mothers Union there and that they wanted more of that.
- Someone else mentioned and lamented the passing of the Inter-Parish Fellowship that did at one stage exist in the Ardfert area. It was pointed out that some of the walks which are being planned might serve to bring people from different parishes together. These and the trip to Güntersberge were highlighted as valuable group experiences. This was felt to be key.
- The other aspect of group experience was felt to be in our ecumenical links, of which people wanted to see more. It was felt that group experiences help to build up relationships and broaden all of us.
- There was a brief discussion about being ourselves with our ecumenical partners, standing our ground on our differences, whilst not letting that stop us from sharing all that we have in common. It is the interplay between what we have together and what is different that is seen as making such contact so enriching. This goes equally for our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Germany. The experience and enriching of those who visited Güntersberge was brought up as something that those who had experienced it were very eager to share and make part of the general parish experience.
- It was noted that both corporate experience and a general sense of togetherness have been eroded in recent times and there is some sense of social disconnection, but there was also a feeling that we have new technology, the inclination and the victory in Christ Jesus to overcome this.

### What is a charitable heart?

It is a heart burning with charity for the whole of creation, for humans, for the birds, for the beasts, for the demons – for all creatures. He who has such a heart cannot see or call to mind a creature without his eyes becoming filled with tears by reason of the immense compassion that seizes his heart, a heart that is softened and can no longer bear to see or learn from others of any suffering, even the smallest pain, being inflicted upon a creature.

That is why such a person never ceases to pray for the animals, for the enemies of Truth, and for those who do him evil, that they may be preserved and purified. He will pray even for the reptiles, moved by the infinite compassion that swells his heart.

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St Isaac the Syrian, C7th Bishop of Nineveh

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**Kenmare & Dromod Union of Parishes**

*Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville and Valentia*

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Michael Cavanagh  
St Patrick’s Rectory, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.  
Tel: 064 664 8566  
Email: michael.cavanagh@eircom.net

**PRAISE AND PLAY & KIDS’ SHED**

You’ll have heard about Praise and Play, for under-5s. You’ll also know about the Men’s Shed, for grown-ups. Well now we have a Kids’ Shed as well, for the Praise and Play graduates up to 8 years old. First Saturday in the month, 2–4pm in the Rectory Resource Room. Bible stories, crafts, singing and prayer bubbles. Please spread the word to anyone you know who might like to join us.

**MOTHERS’ UNION**

Last month we welcomed Ann Hickey who talked to us about the situation around the time of the potato famine and its impact upon the population in Kenmare – a particularly moving true story about families being separated as they entered the workhouse from which most of them would never return. Ann provided a very clear picture of these desperate years. Harrowing as it must have been we must never forget; there but for the Grace of God go we.

Please pray for two of our members who are currently unwell and in hospital. Our love and best wishes to Cara Frost-Jones and to Janet Hawker. We pray too for those who are looking after them and for their families.

Our next meeting will be held in The Church of the Transfiguration Sneem on Tuesday 9th April from 2:30 pm – all welcome. We will be thinking about childhood. Please dig out a photograph taken during your own childhood (birth to 16 maybe). Don’t show anyone; we will have fun trying to work out who is who. Also please think of a childhood memory that you are willing to share – maybe a story that will bring a smile or even a tear. This is a ‘blank canvas’ and something we’ve not tried before. Tea and a treat will follow – maybe we could talk about a favourite childhood treat…mmm….toasted cheese in an enamel dish with a little milk added was one of mine (don’t forget to dip the bread into cheese/milk). Michael used to enjoy this on a Sunday afternoon – but he had an egg in his (posh)!

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

WDP is an international, interdenominational and global movement of informed prayer and prayerful action: www.wdopi.org

A service for World Day of Prayer (formerly Women’s World Day of Prayer) took place on Friday 1st March in St Patrick’s Church Kenmare. The theme was inclusion and friendship – “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” – prepared by the Christian women of France. Our reading was from St Matthew’s Gospel chapter 25 which ends with these words: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me”.

Our service was shared by members of Holy Cross RC Church, The Gateway Methodist Church and members of our own churches in Kenmare and Sneem. Thanks to everyone for making this a great time of fellowship and for imparting a strong message. Our gifts totalled €155 which will be distributed by WDP to a number of worthy charities – please see website for further information. We hope and pray that this will be the first of many such services. Next year’s has been prepared by Christian women in Egypt and the theme will be ‘Streams in the Desert’.
The Methodist District Superintendent writes

The famous handshake between the Queen and Martin McGuinness took place last year. From the 5th Century BC there are depictions of soldiers shaking hands at the end of war. The right hand traditionally carried a weapon, therefore the empty hand was a way of demonstrating that the conflict was over, no longer there any evil intention towards the other person.

Throughout all cultures people greet one another as a sign of recognition, affection, friendship and reverence. In West Africa when one enters a room full of people, time is taken to shake each person’s hand. In India, the greeting involves hands taking the prayer position raised to the face, then a slight bow and the word ‘namaste’ is exchanged.

Noel Dixon in his book ‘Wonder, Love and Praise’, the companion to the Methodist Worship Book, writes: ‘the peace is usually associated with the Lord’s Supper, with its earliest known liturgical appearance is linked, but it is thought that it may also have been included in other Christian gatherings.

St Paul instructs his readers to ‘Greet one another with a holy kiss’, 1 Cor. 16. 20. St Peter said ‘Greet one another with a kiss of love and peace to all of you who are in Christ’; 1 Peter 5. 14. When the prodigal son returned home, we are told by Luke that his father ran to him, threw his arms around him and kissed him. Prof. James Dunn speaks about the loss of the horizontal dimension in Holy Communion, that is, our relationship with one another. All the emphasis is on the vertical relationship between the worshippers and God. Originally Holy Communion was part of a meal shared in a house fellowship of Christians.

The naturally introverted feel uncomfortable greeting one another in this way and with visitors, the exercise is quite daunting. There are those who argue that it is not a sincere gesture since some people may not really be ‘at peace’ with others in the congregation.

Most people enjoy sharing the peace and feel they are missing something when it is left out. Some congregations take a good five minutes over the peace as everyone moves around the church to share the love of Christ with each other.

The sharing of The Peace in the service of Holy Communion, is not about the quality of a relationship of one with another. Rather it is a rare opportunity in worship to wish another the peace that only God can provide and which is needed in many relationships between church members today. It is the Peace of the Risen Christ, it is not of ourselves. Luke tells us that Jesus, after His resurrection, greets His startled and frightened disciples with the words ‘Peace be with you’; Luke 24. 36-37. That peace still has to be fully realised in the world. It is not an expression of perfect unity, of Christians with one another.

The greeting of Jesus to his disciples is the same as the universal Islamic words of greeting: Assallam-o-Allaikum (Peace be unto you).

Recognising similarities between Islam and Christianity is important. We are descendents from the shared Abrahamic tradition. We both accept God as Creator, Jesus is deeply respected in Islam as a Prophet and we share the same concerns for those in need. It is also important for us to discuss our differences. According to Islam, Jesus is not the Son of God. As well as rejecting the Trinity the Koran is unclear about the crucifixion and subsequently the resurrection, but does accept the ascension of Jesus.

Christians and Muslims make up over half of the world’s population. Until we can all learn to live in peace with one another, there can be no peace in the world.

The Holy Communion Service for Lent and Passiontide in the Methodist Worship Book, retain the words of The Peace but the actual greeting one with another is omitted. However, in the Easter Service, the sharing of The Peace is re-introduced, giving it greater meaning as a celebration of Christ’s Peace. This peace is to be shared beyond the Christian community. Jesus words are: “If you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others. Do not even the gentiles do the same?” Matthew 5. 47.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

Yours in Christ

Rev Brian Griffin
Superintendent of the Midlands and Southern District.

Methodist Midlands and Southern District Synod Report

Report by Rev. Laurence Graham, Cork South & Kerry Circuit

The Midlands and Southern District Synod met in Adare, Co. Limerick on the 9th March 2013. We enjoyed a bright sunny day while it poured rain in Kerry to the West and during the rugby match in Dublin far to the East!

The ministerial session met in the morning and we rejoiced to unanimously recommend Victoria Lynch for permanent recognition, as an ordained minister in the Methodist Church in Ireland. Vicky continues to have a very effective ministry in Christ Church, Limerick. It was also announced that Rev. Wesley Campbell is applying to be without pastoral charge from this summer and early in 2014 he plans to go to work with the Methodist Church in Uganda in lay training. We will remember to pray for him as he works in partnership with our sisters and brothers in Uganda.

After a wonderful lunch the representative session began with a service of Holy Communion led by our District Superintendent Rev. Brian Griffin, at which Rev. Wesley Campbell preached. Citing Peter’s rebuke to Jesus at Caesarea Philippi, after Jesus had prophesised that he would go to Jerusalem where he would suffer and die at the hands of “the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law….”, Wesley said that this raised the question of a choice between Jesus and the institution. In the Church today we must always choose Jesus and let him adjust our institution accordingly. Jesus and his kingdom must always be our first priority.

Rev. Brian Griffin was re-appointed as District Superintendent and Rev. Daphne Twinem was elected as the District Stationer. We then processed a long list of appointments and reports as is usual at the Spring Synod. In particular we spent quite some time on the business of the Home Mission Committee. Firstly it was reported that discussions are ongoing between several Circuits in the Midlands area regarding re-arrangements from 2014 when at least one of those Circuits will be unable to support a full time minister. We pray that God would guide ongoing discussions on the Portlaoise, Birr, Athlone, Tullamore and North Tipperary Circuits and perhaps even wider. At the other end of the District an application was received from the
Cork South and Kerry Circuit Executive asking that the congregation which has gathered at Millstreet be recognized as a Society of the Methodist Church in Ireland and be granted Church Development Board status. The Synod was greatly encouraged by the report of developments in Millstreet and warmly agreed to both of these applications. The Synod then spent some time discussing a letter which had been prepared with regard to grave concerns about the Connexional budget and the increasing strain on Circuits of paying the Assessment. It was decided to send this letter to various relevant bodies and also to the Methodist Newsletter.

Toward the end of the Synod we agreed on the wording of our report on the Work of God which will be sent to Conference. This report contained lots of exciting news from around the Connexion. One of the many highlights was a development in Cork where the manager of one of the shopping centres approached the Churches in the area offering a shop unit in which they could conduct informal worship services on Sunday afternoons. Also two Societies have been on RTE television recently – Clonakilty regarding its renewed “eco-congregation” award and Roscrea with regard to introducing local Scouts to mission in Cote d’Ivoire through the CAHP charity.

Before we finished we conducted two further important items of business. Firstly we agreed on two resolutions with regard to Palestine. These resolutions are as follows:

1. Synod calls on the Irish Government to press for the introduction of an EU ban on importing products from illegal Israeli settlements in Israeli occupied Palestinian territory.

2. Synod urges visitors to the Holy Land to use Palestinian tour guides when visiting Bethlehem or other areas of the West Bank. Consideration should be given to the Code of Conduct for Tourism in the Holy Land from the Palestinian Initiative for Responsible Tourism issued by the Alternative Tourism Group based in the West Bank. (http://www.patg.org) or (http://www.olivecoop.com).

Secondly we agreed on a memorial to be sent to Conference which reads as follows:

“The Synod of the Midlands and Southern District of the Methodist Church in Ireland notes with concern the inordinate amount of time spent each year on the stationing process (11 days, or 2.2 working weeks, plus travel time, in 2012/2013). It notes, in particular, the complications occasioned by extensions to terms of ministry. It urges Conference to examine the process and to emphasise the need for discipline in this matter for both ministers and circuits.”

At the end of all this business the sun was still shining and we left the Synod both challenged and encouraged although the journey home was rather depressing as we listened to the commentary of the Ireland vs France rugby match on the radio as we travelled!

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**Methodist News**

**Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit**

Minister: Rev. Elizabeth Hewitt  
Methodist Manse, Rathkeale Rd, Adare, Co. Limerick.  
Tel: 061 396236  
Email: liz.hewitt23@hotmail.co.uk

**IN MARCH**

... we were involved in two services for the World Day of Prayer, one in Holy Trinity Abbey Church in Adare on the Friday morning and the second in St Joseph’s RC Church at Cappagh in the evening. Several women from our two congregations took part in the services and Rev Liz Hewitt gave the address at the service in Adare. The service, prepared by women in France was significant for us in Ireland as the theme was about ‘Welcoming the Stranger’ into our communities.

**HOLY WEEK**

- Wednesday 27 March - Reflection at 8.00pm in Adare Church  
- Good Friday 29 March - Readings and prayers for Good Friday at 8.00pm in Ballingrane Church

**EASTER DAY**

11.00am United Easter Celebration and Holy Communion in Ballingrane Church

**LOCAL PREACHERS’ SUNDAY**

Sunday 7 April. There has been a long tradition in the Methodist Church in Ireland for the Sunday after Easter to be a time for ministers to take a break and an opportunity for local preachers to conduct worship in all our churches. Local preachers are women and men who have trained and been accredited to lead worship. They provide valued and faithful service to the Church.

Our services will be conducted that Sunday at 10.15am in Adare by Josephine Masawi from Shannon congregation and at 11.45am in Ballingrane by Kathleen Connelly, a member and regular organist of that congregation.

**UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP IN CHARLEVILLE**

In April we continue to extend our fellowship with other churches as we prepare for a special service in Charleville. There is a monthly fellowship group which brings together approximately 18-20 people from Catholic and Church of Ireland parishes in the area and our Methodist Circuit. On Sunday 21 April at 3.00pm, the United Fellowship will be hosting a special ecumenical service which will be held in the Roman Catholic Church. We are looking forward to welcoming the well-known and talented Kilkenny Gospel Choir who will take part in the service.

**MWI**

Methodist Women in Ireland will meet at 8.00pm on Wednesday 17 April in Adare Church. The speaker will be Tony McAssey who will be encouraging the members to get involved in flower arranging in anticipation of our forthcoming Flower Festival.

**ADVANCE NOTICE!**

**FLOWER FESTIVAL** in Adare Methodist Church, Friday 10 - Sunday 12 May 2013

The theme will explore our Methodist and Community Heritage in Adare.

We are looking forward very much to the Flower Festival. We are inviting flower arrangers from the community as well as our congregations to contribute their talents. The group arranging the event are working hard to make it a really notable event and have also been busy fund-raising to sponsor the event. Three energetic members of the Circuit raised €800 by participating in the Adare 10K Run/Walk on 24 February in aid of the Festival Fund.

We wish all Newslink readers a very Happy and Blessed Easter!

---

**John Wesley once said,**

‘Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt we may.’
Christ Church Limerick, United Presbyterian & Methodist and Christ Church Shannon, joint Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland

Minister: Rev. Vicki Lynch
The Manse, 15 Aylesbury, Clonmacken, Limerick.
Tel: 061 325325  Mobile: 086 8292073  Email: vickilynch@eircom.net

Accredited Local Preacher Josephine Masawi, with husband Cedric and granddaughter Samantha

Christ Church Limerick and Christ Church Shannon were delighted to celebrate with Josephine Masawi and her family as Josephine was awarded her certificate as a fully accredited Local Preacher. In the Sunday morning service Josephine shared with us the story of her ministry journey so far, from first tentative steps to the joy of successfully completing the course. She spoke of how her faith developed and grew during her three year course and of her hopes to be of service to the Methodist Church in Ireland. We are all looking forward to hearing Josephine preach and lead on a regular basis. We be of service to the Methodist Church in Ireland. We are all looking forward to hearing his very varied ministry and his recollections of Christ Church Limerick.

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)

SHANNON
Fellowship group 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7pm – contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details
Holy Communion every 2nd Sunday 6pm – contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details

Killarney & Kenmare 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/kerry

Kenmare Lay Pastoral Team:
Ed & Jean Ritchie
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.

KENMARE “Gateway” Gortamullin, Killarney Road, Kenmare.
Sunday Service: 11am (preceded by coffee, inc. Children’s programme)
Weekly Bible Study/Fellowship meetings: Tuesdays at 8pm, Wednesdays at 10am.
Drop in for coffee: each Wednesday 11am – 12pm.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
Gneeveguilla Home Fellowship Group is scheduled for Thursdays 4th and 18th April at 8pm. Contact Laurence for directions to the venue.

In Killarney the monthly men’s breakfast will meet on Saturday 13th April from 8.30 – 10am. The speaker will be Elsie McDonnell.
South Kerry Parkinson’s Association meet in Killarney Methodist Church on the second Monday in at 7.30pm.
Services in Millstreet continue every Sunday evening at 6.30 pm but 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 prayer and Bible study fellowship is meeting each Tuesday night at 8.00 pm. Contact Laurence for details of venue.

As we continue our Year of Celebrations we’re looking forward to the visit of Rev Des Bain who was a former minister of Christ Church Limerick. For many years now he has been the General Secretary of the Methodist Home Missions Department and amongst many other things has been very involved in the development of Pioneer Ministry. We’re looking forward to hearing about his very varied ministry and his recollections of Christ Church Limerick.
Meeting for Prayer, Praise and Bible Study in Lispole near Dingle continues on the last Thursday of each month. Next meeting 25th April.

A Women’s Fellowship group is now established in Killarney meeting on the first Monday of each month at 10.00 am. During the month of April a group of pastors from various Churches around Killarney will be visiting fifth and sixth classes for a four week period in two of the large national schools in Killarney. Please pray for us that we will be able to effectively share the Good News of Christ in a meaningful way.

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

WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2013
... the Annual Circuit Meeting will be held in Cloughjordan Methodist Church when circuit officials will be elected. The meeting is an opportunity to build up fellowship and mutual support as the stories of the Work of God, reports from the Circuit Executive, District Synod and the wider Methodist Connexion in Ireland, are shared. The financial accounts of income and expenditure for 2012 will be available. Discussion will focus on the possible reduction of Ministers to the District in the future. Members will be asked to reflect on how they can best help to ensure the on-going work of the church in the region if they are not supplied with a Minister.

LOCAL PREACHERS
... are an integral part of the Methodist system. The Sunday after Easter is traditionally Local Preachers’ Sunday when all services are led by men and women from around the District.

SUNDAY 28TH APRIL
... is St Cronan’s Day in Roscrea. A tradition has built up over the past few years when all three Churches, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist meet to walk together visiting sites associated with St Cronan.

MARY TUOHY
... a Physical Therapist from Roscrea, will speak to the Methodist Women on Acupuncture in Cloughjordan on Tuesday 16 April at 8.00 pm.

PRAYER CORNER

Collect Reflection
– 2nd Sunday of Easter (Low Sunday)

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
Grant us so to put away the leaven
of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son
Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is a modern language version of one of Thomas Cranmer’s Collects in the Book of Common Prayer of 1549. It is an excellent example of how to express reverence, doctrine and petition in a concise way.

The address to “Almighty Father” is most apt in Eastertide since it is by the almighty power of God, the Father, that Jesus was raised from the dead. It is by his resurrection that we disciples are given the privilege of calling God, “Father”, since we are adopted as his children, to be the brethren of Jesus Christ, the true Son.

The recital of what the Son of God has done for us is based upon Romans 4:24-25, “We believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification”.

The petition (“Grant us so to put away...”) is based upon what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7: “Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth”. It is a firm prayer that we shall put away all forms of spiritual and moral evil and serve God. The image of ‘the leaven of malice and wickedness’, bubbling away in a foul broth, is very striking, isn’t it! (The reference to leaven makes sense when we remember that for seven days after the Feast of the Passover the Jews sought to keep themselves clear from every kind of leaven.)

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Partners in Prayer – April 2013

Each Sunday
The Diocese of Down & Dromore and Bishop Harold Miller
Our Companion Dioceses: The Diocese of Saldahna Bay (South Africa) and the five Dioceses of the Protestant Church of Anhalt, Germany.

7th April, Easter 2, White
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Mumias (Kenya) and Rt Revd Beneah Salalah
Our Diocese: Pray for the Clergy and Diocesan Readers Spring Retreat Day at Glenstall Abbey

14th April, Easter 3, White
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Nambale (Kenya) and Rt Revd Josiah Were
CofI/Diocese: Pray for Diocesan representatives on Central Church committees meeting in Dublin this week

21st April, Easter 4, White
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: National Indigenous Bishop (Ontario, Canada) and Rt Revd Mark Lawrence MacDonald
Our Diocese: Pray for Diocesan Council meeting this week

28th April, Easter 5, White
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of New Busa (Kwara, Nigeria) and Rt Revd Israel Amoo
CofI/Diocese: We pray for all facing challenges in their employment at this time, those who have lost their jobs and those who face crisis in the current economic climate

Adapted from a commentary by Rev Dr Peter Toon at the Prayer Book Society website
1. Starting point: share everything
Most couples' wedding vows include the promise to share everything you own with each other. The fact that you share everything is the starting point to discuss how you manage your money.

2. Seek to understand each other and communicate
Opening a joint account reflects the fact that everything you have is shared. Agreeing a limit on the amount you spend from this account without consulting your partner will help you avoid disagreements. Many couples also have individual accounts which they use, for example, at Christmas or birthdays, or for expenditure that they consider their responsibility. Some couples transfer an agreed sum of money into their individual accounts at the beginning of the month - it doesn't have to be very much.

3. Work out a budget
The process of working out a budget together has a number of benefits. It will give you a clear picture of your financial position and can be a catalyst for frank discussion. Calculate your monthly income and expenditure, and discuss any planned giving. If your expenditure exceeds your income, check that you are claiming all benefits to which you are entitled. Then cut down on expenditure until the figures balance. Agree to review your financial situation regularly.

If you are finding managing money difficult …
- Buy a notebook and write down everything you buy.
- Cut up your credit card.
- Go back to using cash.

These simple principles will help any couple get their finances straight, and hopefully avoid arguments about money. With increasing pressure on family finances, it's important for couples, who are worried about money, to start addressing it now. Hiding the bills and pretending there isn't a problem will only cause more difficulties later on.

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**Barney's Page**

**Grace is all you need!**

**Barney says**

Hello friends,
Do you say a thank you prayer to God before a meal? It's usually called grace. Have you ever thought why?
Grace is one of the most important gifts that God has given us. It's something very special.
Our thank you prayers for food are a way for us to say that we know God is providing for us.
And God provides for us in so many ways. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, we are reminded that God's grace means that we are protected by Him. God gives us strength even when we feel weak.
So when you have a bad day at school, remember that God loves us. We can turn to Him and be thankful that His grace is all we need.

Love Barney

**Barney's jokes**

What do dogs eat when they go to the cinema?
Popcorn!

**God's word**

"My grace is enough; it's all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9 (The Message)

**Graces**

Here are some graces sometimes said before meals.

- What's your favourite?
- For well-filled plate and brimming cup, and freedom from the washing up. We thank you, Lord.
- The Lord of joy, be our guest at our table today. Make our meal a celebration according to Thy will.
- Give us a heart as big as our belly and a keen eye to see the smaller plate of those in need.
- This happy meal will happen if we O Lord remember Thee.

Let's talk to God!

Dear Jesus, thank you for your gift of grace. Please help me always to be thankful for everything you provide for me. Amen.

**SIGN OF THE FISH**

In the early days of Christianity it could be very dangerous to admit that you were one of Jesus' followers. You could be arrested, imprisoned and killed, simply for your beliefs. Christians had to meet in secret - but how could you tell if a stranger was a Christian or not? Who could you trust? Christians used secret signs to recognise one another. And one of these was the sign of the fish which could easily be scratched on a wall or drawn in the dust of the road. If the other person wasn't a Christian they'd just think you were doodling.

The fish was used as a sign because, in Greek, the first letters of the words 'Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour' spell 'ichthus', the Greek word for fish.

How can you show other people today that you are a Christian? If you have the joy of knowing Jesus in your heart then it should show on your face!

**SECRET WRITING**

The fish was a secret sign. If you would like to send someone a secret message, you can do it with 'invisible ink'.

You need a lemon or an onion. Squeeze the juice of either into a small bowl. Using the juice as ink, with a clean nib in a proper pen, write your message on a piece of paper. Leave it to dry and as it dries the message will disappear.

To make it reappear, hold the paper over a lamp or radiator. This is a very easy way of sending secret messages ... but you have to be sure that the person you are writing to knows the secret of how to make the message reappear!

Where does seaweed look for a job?
In the 'Kelp-wanted' ads!

What game do fish like playing the most?
Name that tuna.
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.

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Headmistress - Jill A Storey M.A. H.DIP. Ed (Hons) DIP. in REM. Ed. (Hons)

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