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The Bishop Writes

I will remember Thursday 19th September 2013 as one of the highlights of my ministry as a Bishop. After two unsuccessful Electoral Colleges it fell to the House of Bishops to appoint a Bishop for the Dioceses of Meath and Kildare. We chose Rev Pat Storey, Rector of St Augustine’s Parish, Londonderry.

The election of the first Anglican woman Bishop in these islands is an historic event. I am overjoyed that the hugely valuable ministry of women has been affirmed in this way. Society generally may award the Church of Ireland some credit for finally following an Equality Agenda, and be less inclined to accuse the Church of being anti-women. While this is good, popularity is not the main reason for my joy. I am grateful that in future when the College of Bishops meet together to give leadership to our Church, it will no longer be a male only gathering. In my experience meetings are different and a lot better, when both men and women are well represented. I really do believe that the House of Bishops will be enhanced and its work will be more effective because of Pat Storey’s presence.

It is worth remembering that in 1990 the Church of Ireland General Synod voted for the ordination of women as priests and Bishops. Twenty years later the first woman has been appointed. The Church of Ireland is the first among the Anglican Churches in these islands to take this step. Though others will follow. I was at the Church of England’s General Synod in July and they were making preparations to prepare the legislation to ordain women Bishops. What was delaying the Church of England was the inability to agree on what provision should be made for those who are unable to accept the ministry of a woman Bishop. The C of E will sort this sooner rather than later. In the last few weeks, the Church in Wales has also agreed to ordain women as Bishops. The Scottish Episcopal Church has also agreed, but so far hasn’t done anything about it. So words of congratulations have been flowing towards the Church of Ireland from all over these islands and from further afield.

However the appointment has not found favour with everyone, and while I and others have been joyful at the decision, others have greeted it with profound sadness.

One of the distinctive things about our Anglican way of being Church is that it is a ‘Messy Church’. We embrace people with different views, diverse traditions and a wide variety way of doing things. So what is it that holds us all together? Our glue is summed up in the quote from Augustine of Hippo “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.” Scripture is the source of all we believe, it is God’s Word. But all communication is a two step process. First there is what the author is attempting to communicate. Secondly there is the message that was received by the reader. Interpretation is inevitable. But the communication process is even more complicated. If this is what the author tried to communicate to the people in their culture, at their time and their context, what is the essence of that message for our culture, our time and context? The Church of Ireland takes the Anglican view that scripture, tradition and reason must work together in discerning God’s will.

Clearly the social context of women in Biblical times was very different from today. So we must take on board what we have learned from tradition and reason. For me the clincher is that we have experienced the blessing of women’s ministry in our Church and other Churches. That God given diversity is to be welcomed. That in Christ, there is no male or female (Gal 3.28). So I am clear that the right decision has been taken.

For those who disagree, I respect your right to do so and will seek ways of working together with you. What must be avoided at all costs is disunity. Difficult as it may be, learning to live with difference is one of the most important lessons God can teach us.

Yours in Christ
+Trevor

The Rt. Revd. Trevor Williams
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Church-wide ‘Census’ of the Church of Ireland Population
A Press Release issued by the Church of Ireland Press Office on 12 September 2013

In November 2013, the Church of Ireland will be undertaking a ‘census’ of the worshiping Church of Ireland population for the first time in many years.

On three Sundays in November (3 November, 17 November and 24 November) clergy and parish officials will be attempting to ascertain the age profile and gender profile of those attending services in Church of Ireland Churches throughout Ireland. Worshippers on those Sundays will receive a card on which they will be asked to indicate their gender and age. The card will be completely anonymous.

The objective of the census is to provide information on the worshiping Church of Ireland population and to enable parishes, dioceses and the Church at an island-wide level to make decisions for the future based on an up-to-date analysis of the Church of Ireland’s population.

It is anticipated that the 2013 census will be repeated every three years in order to enable the Church to examine trends in worship attendance and ministry throughout Ireland.

The census allows for parishes and dioceses to collect their own more detailed figures if they wish.

It is anticipated that a summary of the figures will be printed in the Book of Reports for the General Synod in 2014.

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My wife Marty and I have just returned from a short touring holiday in England. We had a lovely time exploring, and catching up with family and friends – and we also saw some of the amazing diversity to be found in the Church of England.

We took in some traditional Cathedral services, congregations for which are growing in England. In Ely Cathedral it was Sunday Sung Eucharist, sitting with friends underneath the magnificent lantern roof. The music was sublime – Neil Cox’s Missa Brevis and a Henry Vaughan motet sung by the Cathedral Girl’s Choir, but there was also plenty of congregational singing and involvement. In Canterbury Cathedral the weekday Evensong was beautifully sung, but one where congregants are asked to observe and listen, stand up and sit down, rather than participate, except in a final hymn. I prefer the more active role.

In Norfolk we encountered the Catholic tradition. In Thorpe St Andrew near Norwich I joined the Rector and Curate for a prayerful morning office, said using the Franciscan Office Book rather than Common Worship – a lovely way to begin the day. Psalms and canticles were said by alternate verses, but with a pronounced gap between half-verses, which I found odd, but learned was a monkish custom. We also visited the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, with its ‘Holy House’ built inside a 1930s basilica. The place was calm and serene, with fine modern pilgrim accommodation, but the air of self-conscious medievalism made me uneasy.

continued on P28...

Editorial - Anglican Diversity

Newslink

Newslink is the diocesan magazine for the United Diocese of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfer, 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. Newslink received a “Highly Commended” award in the Church of Ireland Communications Competition for diocesan magazines at General Synod 2013.

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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DEADLINES

The next issue will be for November, published for Sunday 3rd November 2013. All material must reach the Editor by Friday 18th October 2013 before 6.00pm, by email only, unless otherwise agreed. Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

Diocesan Calendar
(for updates see Diocesan web site – www.limerick.anglican.org)

Thu 17th October, 8.15pm
Whist Drive in Aghancon Hall
Kilcolman Book Club, St Michael’s Hall, Killorglin

Tue 22nd October, 8pm
Mothers’ Union Trustees & Diocesan Council, Richmond Terrace, Limerick

Sat 2nd November, 10am
Mothers’ Union Trustees & Diocesan Council, Richmond Terrace, Limerick

Tue 26th November, 8pm
Kilcolman Book Club, St Michael’s Hall, Killorglin

Sat 30th November
GFS Christmas Craft Day, Nenagh

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NEWSLINK ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2013
(Reduced by €3 from 2012, for 10 issues)
Delivered to pew in bulk €34
Individual copy by post €40.50
Collected from printer in bulk €27

NEWSLINK ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2013
(Reduced by 5% from 2012)

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Rediscovering the Joy of Sabbath
by Canon Stephen Neill

Unless you are an Orthodox Jew, the idea of Sabbath means increasingly little to people today in Ireland. Growing up we all remember how Sunday was a day that was completely focused on Church. Many people went twice a day and to Sunday school as well. No non-essential work was even contemplated. It was a family time and a day to take a step back from the busyness of the week. It was often enforced quite strictly and no doubt some people resented that and felt trapped by it but for others it was a blessed relief. This strict Sabbath observance was especially prevalent in the protestant churches but also not unknown in the Roman Catholic tradition. In a recent discussion I had with an elderly Roman Catholic man he recalled with some amusement how in his youth he was forbidden from doing work outside the house for fear of giving scandal to his protestant neighbours.

Today things are very different in our 24/7 world where shops are open every day and of course with the internet and mobile communications work is never further away than the next call, text or email. When anybody in a position of leadership in any of our churches or faith communities says anything about this non-stop activity of modern life they are usually mocked or ridiculed and told to mind their own business. Perhaps they are perceived to be trying to control people, a people who have broken away from the chains of the old institutional Church and found a new freedom which by definition must be the opposite of that which they have left behind.

But, and I hesitate to use this cliché, have we thrown out the baby with the bathwater? In dumping the Sabbath have we lost something fundamental and valuable, not only to people of faith but to all humanity? Is all this constant and at times frenetic activity good for us? It is certainly good news for gastric surgeons who deal with a greater number of stress related ulcers than ever before. It is good news for relationship counsellors and solicitors who deal with the increasing numbers of relationship breakdowns due to exhaustion and working schedules that mean couples and their children become strangers to each other. It is good news too to some in the self-help industry that seek to help us squeeze every last bit of productivity out of our lives regardless of the consequences so that we can become rich! The fact that we have no time to enjoy that wealth is a minor detail!

The current financial crisis while traumatic to many of us is also a time of opportunity. The speed of working life has slowed down just a little to one whereby we might be able to jump off without getting too badly hurt. And when we do we rediscover time, which had become something to be overcome rather than celebrated. The rediscovery of time is a revelation to many people because when you are living your whole life in a hurry there is no time but when the rush is over you can actually begin to enjoy life and not just be carried along by it. The resurgence of community life and activity, which is visible in all our parishes and communities, is a consequence of this new orientation in our lives. It is also rich and fertile ground for a rediscovery of Sabbath.

The great Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote a lovely little book simply called THE SABBATH and in it he said the following:

“What we plead against is man’s unconditional surrender to space, his enslavement to things. We must not forget that it is not a thing that lends significance to a moment; it is the moment that lends significance to things.”

This call to reverse our priorities and our whole approach to life is the underlying and often repeated theme of this beautiful book. Elsewhere Heschel describes it in these terms:

“The Sabbath as a day of rest, as a day of abstaining from toil, is not for the purpose of recovering one’s lost strength and becoming fit for the forthcoming labour. The Sabbath is a day for the sake of life....The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude but the climax of living.”

Think what a difference it would make if we lived the Sabbath – it would as Heschel so succinctly puts it give us “an opportunity to mend our tattered lives; to collect rather than to dissipate time”

Perhaps it is time to rediscover the Seventh day and allow it to transform all our days!

The Fourth Commandment
Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Exodus 20:8-11

Church? Love to come, but Sunday is such a good shopping day...
The Eucharist: Part IV - the Response

The fourth of a series of articles on the Eucharist by Archdeacon Wayne Carney

CREED

Our response to what we have heard in the Liturgy of the Word – the readings from Scripture – begins with the Creed. At the Eucharist, the Nicene Creed (based on articles agreed at the Council of Nicaea in 325 and subsequently) is the one most often used. We respond to the word of God by saying, ‘We believe’. The Apostles’ Creed, usually used at Morning Prayer, is a Baptismal Creed; it is personal, which is why it begins, ‘I believe’. The word ‘creed’, of course comes from the Latin ‘Credo’, which means ‘I believe’. We are not saying that we believe that God exists; we are saying we believe and trust in his love, shown through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and his gift of the Holy Spirit.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our second response to Scripture is ‘The Prayers of the People’; we hear the word and it prompts us to pray for others. This ideally is read by a lay person, though for some, prayers can be more challenging than Scripture readings. The difficulty with the Prayers is that they should be inclusive of the concerns of the congregation at the international, national, local, and personal level, but shouldn’t be too lengthy. There can be other opportunities in prayer groups or other small gatherings to have more comprehensive prayers. The usual pattern in the Eucharist is to pray for the church, the World, the sick and those in any difficulty, and to remember those who have died. There are usually responses by the congregation – this makes everyone a part of the prayers, not just the ‘pray-er’.

Máirt’s Musings – When is your New Year?

by Rev Máirt Hanley, Kilcolman Union

The first Thursday in September was Rosh Hashanah which is the Jewish New Year – so a belated “Shanah Tovah” to you all! Some of you may know that that means that Yom Kippur happened about half way through the month. In case you’ve never heard of it, Yom Kippur is the Jewish Day of Atonement – a day for quiet prayer, private confession and forgiveness, rounding off the ‘high holy days’ of the Jewish year. I like to think of it as our Hebrew brothers and sisters getting going off the ‘high holy days’ of the Jewish year. I like to think of it as our Hebrew brothers and sisters getting going and Godded up ready for the year to come. There are elements of admitting what the last year was really like, and then clearing the decks for the year to come. This, however, is not the only new year that starts at this time. As mentioned in the last edition, there is the new school year and maybe some of those heading into it would like the opportunity to confess and start afresh, without the tags of the previous year metaphorically floating above their heads. In terms of the Church of Ireland it may not liturgically, astronomically or organisationally be a new year but mentally it is. Cricket and the GAA county championships come to an end and the Rugby – that awful foreign sport that we seem to be no good at but want to talk endlessly – take over.

More importantly than this though, for a denomination built around niceness and cake, is Harvest Festival. It is a big deal for us and really kicks off the clergy person’s year. Once harvest and the associated bun fight and/or BBQ are done you are really into the guts of the year, on your trajectory through Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and onto General synod in May and out the other side to Summer and hopefully a few quiet Sundays.

There are various other new years: the Zoroastrian (that’s Freddy Mercury’s crowd) is in August; the official church year starts in Advent; the new year for the tourist industry is St. Paddy’s Day; and then there is the Chinese New Year. We also have an Irish tradition of the new year starting on St. Brigid’s Day; there was a time in Britain and Ireland when the new year started in March, which was changed to fit in with the rest of the western world some time in the 1700’s and of course there is our now traditional New Year in January. It is important to have a new year, to help you organise yourself and sort out where you are. But I suppose it doesn’t matter when your new year is, so long as it makes sense to you and is consistent.

I suppose for me it’s a matter of triangulation. If you want to know where you are you need to have two known fixed points to be able to make a triangle with your unknown point. If you remember back to all those lovely theorems from the inter cert, you can figure out the 3rd point of the triangle if you have the other two. However be careful. If you really want to know where you are, make sure that one of those points is a fixed constant out side of your power to choose – a north star to all the other points, otherwise you might find yourself drifting.

For me that is what God is.
YOUTH LEADERS’ RETREAT WEEKEND

A small group of our leaders and leaders-in-training gathered for a retreat in Clairvaux House, Roscrea. A retreat weekend which the Committee felt would be important and beneficial for the leaders of the Youth Council, on account of the it’s faith-based mission and ministry. The theme was ‘essential values for the Christian leader’, and we were led in our formal sessions of prayer, worship and learning by the Rev. Gary Paulsen and the Venerable Wayne Carney, on topics such as methods of prayer and meditation, the importance of Scripture, reflection on key aspects and values of Christian life and discipleship. The weekend also facilitated the growth and deepening of the fellowship among our leaders as people with the responsibility for Christian youth ministry. While the small numbers were disappointing, those present found it to be most beneficial and engaged well with the sessions and input, as well as with the whole ethos of the weekend as a ‘retreat’, as opposed to just a social weekend. Thanks to all those who were a part of the weekend (some from as far as Kerry!), our two retreat leaders, Gary and Wayne, and of course, Edward, who organised and planned the weekend.

DIOCESAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP GROUP

By the time you are reading this issue of Newslink, we will have had our first session of the new Diocesan Youth Fellowship Group, which we hope will have much to offer our older participants and leaders in their growth in discipleship. The text of the poster for the group follows:

“Want to grow in your relationship with Christ?
Do you desire to go deeper in your life of discipleship?
Preparing for to participate in Christian leadership and ministry?
Then the new Diocesan Youth Fellowship group is for you!

A fellowship group is not just another ‘youth club’. It is primarily a spiritual group, which means that the focus is not going to be on games, activities, and trips, but on coming together as a fellowship of similarly aged Christians, who want to grow and support each other in their faith, with worship sessions and times for prayer, learning, and discussion (in small groups) about different topics relating to our lives as Christians. Spiritual growth and living a life as a disciple of Jesus Christ is what is at the heart and core of such a group, and commitment to engagement with these goals is a key part of participation in it.

All teenagers and young adults in 5th year in secondary school and upwards are welcome and encouraged to become a part of this fellowship group. Meetings will be held once a month in the old Kilmurry Church, Castletroy, Limerick with our next meeting taking place on the 19th October 2013 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. (approx). Join our Facebook page, just search ‘Diocesan Youth Fellowship Group’ and click Join!

Directions to the Old Kilmurry Church: At Castletroy Roundabout take exit for Kilmurry Lodge Hotel. Then take the next left exit and the Old Church is on the right.

‘TAKING A LEADING ROLE’ YOUTH LEADERSHIP COURSE

The third and final weekend of the current ‘Taking a Leading Role’ Youth Leadership Course will take place from Friday 11th to Sunday 13th October at Clairvaux House, Roscrea. The current group have been great, and engaged well as they prepare for Christian leadership, and we look forward to them sharing their great commitment and potential in the service of the Youth Council and the wider diocese. We offer our prayers and support to them as they continue on their journeys of faith.

ANOIS 2013– “CELEBRATION”

Kilkenny College – Saturday 26th October – Monday 28th October 2013, 13 – 19 Year Olds
Cost – €80 (+€20 for return transport from all locations if required including Limerick, Nenagh, Moneygall & Roscrea).
ANOIS 2013 will be the 10th anniversary for this ever popular event and because of this the theme chosen for this year’s event will be “CELEBRATION”. If you’re up for the challenge and adventure ANOIS provides, come along this year – you’ll not regret it!

OUR MORNINGS AND EVENINGS will commence with creative and exciting worship ending with small group times for fun, exploration, discussion and prayer.

The ever popular MARK FERGUSON BAND will return to lead worship. The Band has been in existence since 2007, being first formed to lead worship at a variety of local events. Since then God has continued to unite, nurture and use the band to his glory, giving the band grace and gifts to answer his call. The band has been both humbled and blessed to have travelled all over Ireland to events of all shapes, sizes and styles! The core band members are: Mark Ferguson, Jimbo Donaldson, Timothy Duke & Matt Duke. (www.markfergusonband.com.)

Jasper Rutherford will be main stage speaker. Many will be very familiar with Jasper on main stage at Summer Madness. Jasper currently works for Summer Madness and Church Army as Outreach and Development Officer among young people and young adults in Ireland. Prior to training with Church Army as a Pioneer Evangelist, he was a Youth Worker in inner East Belfast for seven years where he pioneered a variety of youth initiatives that saw real fruit grow in many young peoples’ lives who would previously never have set foot in a church. He is often described as a wildly popular and upbeat character that eats constantly whilst putting on no weight. He lives in Belfast with his wife Lynn and their three children.

On SUNDAY MORNING there will be dynamic lively workshops facilitated by a team from “Love for Life”. SUNDAY AFTERNOON will see the return of some off-site activities – including KARTING at Kiltorcan Raceway at Ballyhale, SUPERSHOT PAINTBALL in Stradbally, Co. Laois or BOWLING & ACTIVITIES at K-Bowl Entertainment Centre Kilkenny followed by shopping and coffee.

For the LATE EVENINGS AND FREE TIME SESSIONS many of the old favourite activities will return: Inflatable Bungey Run, Rodeo Bull and Gladiator on Saturday evening, Chill zone with more games than ever before, Girls Zone; Cafe with the ever famous Table Quiz and acoustic sessions, Giant Games including Jenga, Dominos &
JUNIOR WEEKEND 2013
Friday 8th – Sunday 10th November 2013
Durrow Centre, Knockagranny, Durrow, Co. Laois
Age 10 – 13 year olds.
Cost - €100 per person and this will include all transport, food, activities and accommodation. Return Transport from Limerick, Nenagh, Moneygall & Roscrea
The splendid newly-built facilities just outside Durrow, await our Junior Weekend and our action packed programme will include the following:
Zany Icebreaker Games - Awesome and Creative Worship & Workshops
Fun filled time at Castlecomer Discovery & Adventure Park to include splendid Tree Top Adventure High Ropes Walk, Climbing Wall & Leap Of Faith,
Bowling and Laser Quest at Roll’n Bowl, Portlaoise
Fast Food at Supermac’s
Swimming with Inflatables at Portlaoise Leisure Centre
Disco - Good Food - A bit of sleep
And much more FUN, FAITH and FELLOWSHIP than one could ever imagine........
Final Date for receipt of bookings is Friday 1st November 2013.
As always further information about any UDYC events and activities can be got from Edward on (087) 2907553. Also, information and programme of events for the year can be found on the UDYC website: http://udyce.ie/ as well as the Diocesan Website at http://limerick.anglican.org/udyce_news.php and http://limerick.anglican.org/udyce_prog.php and our regularly updated UDYC group page on Facebook.
Until next month,
Damian
Email: 05shortend@gmail.com

Girls’ Friendly Society

On Saturday the 7th Sept GFS leaders from all over Ireland met in Abbeyfeale for a training day. After prayers from our President Sylvia Quinn we listened intently to Tania and Paul Baker’s fascinating accounts of life in the CMS Kiwoko Hospital. Their enthusiasm was infectious and the great work that they do is commendable. We are delighted that the GFS donate to this worthy project.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Family Fun Evening - Cloughjordan September 20th
GFS will be taking part in the Gathering to Go event in Villiers School on the 29th Sept.
Cloughjordan Branch will have their Enrolment Service on 13th October.

CLOUGHJORDAN BRANCH
Welcome back to G.F.S.
On 19th August some members went to visit Séan O’Farrell’s Organic Farm at Cloncannon, Moneygall. We saw a thriving vegetable plot and sampled some spinach.
Next we learned about natural manure which is used on the farm and saw very healthy looking chickens. Séan collected water samples from a stream and we examined the little creatures living in it. We saw the Fairy Fort and enjoyed blackberries in the fields.
We learned lots and had some treats before we left.
For our first G.F.S. Meeting we held a Milkshake Party where we learned how to make milkshakes and sampled them afterwards.
We’re looking forward to the Family Fun Night in Cloughjordan on 20th September: More on this next month.

Mothers’ Union

After our summer break Mothers’ Union Branches are all beginning to meet again for their winter programmes. Coming to the end of our 2013 Theme “The seeds we sow” we will now be working on the Theme for 2014 which will be “Sowing the future together”, so we sow we hope to reap.
Our Diocesan Trustee and Council meetings will be held in Richmond Tce. Limerick on Saturday 3rd November from 10 am and hopefully ALL Branch leaders, Secretaries and Treasures will be able to attend——if unable please send a rep from your branch.
On Thursday 14th November at 8pm in Dooley’s Hotel, Birr we are pleased to have Ms Caroline Ryan, Image Consultant, from Nenagh do a Presentation on General Style, Good Wardrobe Maintenance, and Shopping Skills, How to dress to suit our body shape and age. This evening is for all ages and everyone is welcome to come, more details next month. Admission is FREE and light refreshments will be served.
On a forward note: The General Meeting will be held in the Waterfront in Belfast on 21st June 2014, keeping that in mind perhaps people might like to go and further details will be available before Christmas.
Adare Branch members were the hosts at the opening service of the season in St. Nicholas Church which was also attended by members from Askeaton and Limerick City. Rev. Gary Paulsen who, reminding us of the theme for 2014 “Sowing the Future Together”, challenged us all in his sermon to look at new ways to be Mothers’ Union in the coming year. Albert Einstein said ‘To do the same thing repeatedly and expect a different result is insanity’. Rev. Gary urged us to think about what future we want for Mothers’ Union. We need to change – to do things differently – to meet the challenges of the future. The church used to be central to the community. That is no longer the case – there are so many other things to do. MU should be an active ministry within the church. We need to move on from the tea parties and be the face of Christ in our
Dear all,

Here is some news from the Chaplain at UL

WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY AT UL

This is written as we have just welcomed over 180 new groups of students to our Teach Fáilte Chaplaincy Drop In Centre and Contemplative Centre in the Student Courtyard or Square at UL. The weather was glorious, the student orientation guides calm, generous, professional and competent as they steered so many students around our large campus, so all in all, a very good experience, even if we as chaplains had to speak for five hours without a break and forgo a lunch break, for two days.

I also addressed around 300 International students in one of the lecture theatres and spoke of seeing beyond the stereotype of the young Irish drinking student, to identify with the many students doing all sorts of creative things: volunteering and winning the President’s Gold Medal Award, joining clubs and societies which have a great standard of achievement, and being spiritual seekers, exploring the great tradition creating sacred spaces that we have here in Ireland. The Contemplative Centre in UL, I reminded them, is not a pub, or a classroom or a lecture theatre, it is a space for thinking, dreaming, praying, worshiping and finding your own spiritual heartbeat in the midst of daily life.

Reminder once again – If you as a RECTOR have any third level parishioners at UL, young or old, do let me know. Of course, this gentle reminder here to incumbents and workers in parishes is most ineffective. They usually do not bother, unless it coincides with a parish or diocesan event! Which reminds me:

Taking part all day in the Diocesan Day on the 29th September in Villiers School. We hope to take part in the procession with a flag, posters and wearing UL T-shirts on the 29th September in Villiers. Do join us, past and present students, by coming along on the day.

My Chaplaincy Days in UL this year: THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

As a part-time chaplain my days this year in the Teach Fáilte are Thursday from 9am until 7pm and Friday 9am until 5pm.

You can contact me on Facebook by going to the UL homepage, typing in chaplain and going to the dropdown menu on the left hand side. We are also on the web at www.ul.ie/chaplain.

FINALLY

I am very grateful to all who have in any way supported the Chaplaincy ministry here in UL over the years. It is thriving and busy and what more could we want!

Rev. Patricia Mckee Hanna
Mobile: 087 6606003
Email: patricia.hanna@ul.ie
Teach Fáilte Chaplaincy Drop In Centre
Student Square
University of Limerick
Phone: 061233635

Following the service there was the ever welcome cup of tea with delicious eats and an opportunity to chat and catch up on people’s news. We wish Jessie Griffin well as she has knee surgery. Jessie is the Branch Leader in Adare.
Craggaunowen in Co. Clare on a History Field trip to learn more about how the Celts lived. They explored a crannóg, a ring fort and also managed to see some wild boar. It was a very enjoyable and informative tour.

A short service was held in the church on September 19th to mark the beginning of the school year. Thank you to Rev. Gary Paulsen who took the service.

We look forward to participating in the Harvest Thanksgiving service in St. Nicholas’ Church on October 11th.

Making butter the old fashioned way

**St Mary’s No. 2, National School, Nenagh**

Céad Mile Fáilte romhaimh go léir to our students back after a well deserved summer break.

We would like to welcome seven new Junior Infants to our school community. They are; Adam, Alice, Angus, Maxim, Nataniel, Tajus and William.

Our coaching programme kicked off in week one of term. Anne Fitzpatrick will be coaching the tennis programme for September. From mid-October, Sylvia Gee will coach soccer skills.

September brings the Harvest Festival. The students and teachers enjoy taking part in this annual event. The students will decorate windows in the St. Mary’s Church, Nenagh during the week of September the twenty fourth in preparation for the Harvest Service.

This year, St. Mary’s will begin working towards our Green Flag award in the area of Biodiversity. Green Schools is an international environmental education programme, environmental management system and award scheme that promotes and acknowledges long-term, whole school action for the environment.

We have planned a field trip for senior students to the County Council Offices for this term. This is a fantastic opportunity for understanding how local government works in our community.

**St Michael’s National School, Limerick**

With sadness that we said goodbye to Sinéad Franklin for a wonderful year’s work with 4th and 5th Classes and we wish her well in her search for a new post.

COMING AND GOING!

It was a great pleasure to welcome Max, Rylan, James, Noah, Artsiom, Robert, Dualta, Evan, Max, Lauren, Abigail, Olive, Emily and Alina into Junior Infants last month. We hope that their time in Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. will be a very happy and fruitful one. We also welcomed Mrs. Mary Doughan as our new part-time school secretary, Miss Whiteford back from career break, Mrs Grace and Ms Cromer back from maternity leave and Anne Fitzpatrick to teach tennis to all pupils.

We said farewell to Miss Linda White, our former school secretary, to Mrs Teresa Kennedy who taught Fifth and Sixth Class and to Miss Jean Ryan who taught Third and Fourth Class. We are very grateful to Linda, Teresa and Jean for the huge contribution they made to our school while staff members. They each left with our gratitude for a job very well done and with our best wishes for their future careers.

Parents of our infant children enjoyed an informal opportunity to get to know each other over a cup of coffee in school, school photographs were taken by County Photos and we enjoyed a visit to the Enterprise Centre in the Eco Village to “A Story of a Golden Egg”, a story telling and art installation which opened for Culture Night, but which was very kindly extended to facilitate a school visit. The school is very grateful to artists Tatiana Manley, Gráinne Watts and Antonia O’Keeffe for providing this opportunity to the school.

The school was delighted to support the Bags of Fun Appeal in aid of the National Council for the Blind Charity Shops. Many bags of unwanted clothing were donated by parents and very gratefully received by the charity.

We are busy practising the hymns in preparation for The Gathering in Villiers on Sunday 29th September.

During the summer, our wonderful caretaker, Jimmy Lynch, was kept busy making a new Spring flowerbed. The Infants and 1st Classes have been busy planting an assortment of bulbs which hopefully will produce a colourful uplifting splash of colour next year.

A mobile farm came to the school recently and the Junior classes enjoyed seeing at close hand many of the much-loved farm animals. The ducklings, rabbits and baby chicks were petted and rubbed with delight!
Kiltallagh National School, Castlemaine

We are all settling back here in Kiltallagh and looking forward to a busy and happy new school year.

Our first event of the school term was our Harvest Service - The school children participated in the annual Harvest Service in St. Michael's Church, Killorglin, on Sunday September 15th which was led by Rev. Máirtín Hanly who was assisted by Dean Sandra Pragnol, Eric Champ and Barbara Irngang Buckley - our new parish reader. All children sang and read beautifully.

A charity BBQ took place following the service where the families in the community joined together and served some delicious burgers and hot dogs which were accompanied with a wide variety of salads, finished off with some mouth-watering desserts and cakes. All donations went to Christian Aid.

CÓMHBHRÓN

We were all deeply saddened to hear of the untimely death during the summer holidays of our former music teacher Aíne Ní Ghabhann. Áine's exuberant and affable personality endeared her to pupils and staff alike and her wonderful gift of music and voice enhanced all of our school services and concerts down through the years.

We are quite sure that Áine is conducting all the choirs of angels in heaven while keeping a watchful eye on us all down here! We extend our deepest sympathy to all her family and friends.

PEACE PROMS

The Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland was established as a peace initiative in 1995, and is the most highly acclaimed and celebrated youth orchestra that Ireland has ever produced.

"Peace Proms" is a musical and cultural celebration on a spectacular scale with the central message of universal peace powerfully conveyed through the richness and majesty of music and song, enhancing young people's lives, helping them to develop qualities of self-reliance, personal integrity, responsibility, and confidence.

We are delighted that the senior room pupils in Kiltallagh will this year be participating in ‘Peace Proms' and are eagerly looking forward to beginning rehearsals for our performance in the I.N.E.C. in Feb. 2014.

LEAVING CERT RESULTS……

Well done to our past pupils– Maud, Aoife, Jonathan and Robert on achieving excellent results in their Leaving Cert Examinations.

While Maud and Aoife are taking a year out prior to beginning their college courses in Primary Teaching and Psychology, Robert is heading off to Trinity College Dublin where he will study Mathematics and Jonathan is continuing his studies in Computers.

We are very proud of you here in Kiltallagh and wish you well in your chosen careers.

SECONDARY SCHOOL

We are delighted to hear that Zach, Colin, Andrew and Tom have settled in very well at their new school in Presentation Secondary School, Milltown. We look forward to having them back to Kiltallagh and letting us know all about this wonderful new chapter in their lives.

NEW JUNIOR INFANTS 2013/2014

A big welcome to our new Junior Infants: Molly, Leanne and Rachel. We are delighted to have you in our school and hope you will all have many happy days with us.

Pictured across are our new junior infants receiving their welcoming medal from An Príomhoide-Paula.

St John’s Parochial School, Tralee

The Mission Statement for St. John’s Parochial School hangs in the hallway, just inside the door of our school – it reads:

"We will Develop the Talents that God has given each Child in a Happy Friendly Atmosphere"

We focus on this, especially at this time of year, as we welcome the school community back for another academic year.

Our new Junior Infants – Alexa, Daniel, Jamie, Marcel, Robert and Timothy – have settled into their new surroundings by now. Also new to our classrooms and adding greatly to the life of our school are Elena in 1st class, Sara in 3rd class and Peter in 5th class.

A big “Thank You All” to the parents who worked so hard on painting the school during the school holidays – especially to Tom who co-ordinated the work of the painting team and spent long hours here himself!

Thanks also to David Frizelle and David Tough for the maintenance – both inside and outside – and garden work and to the parish work party who did a big clean up of the grounds and playground area. All of this work was done on a voluntary basis and
has enhanced the appearance of our school.

We had our Start of Year Service in the Church when the children joined the Rev Joe Hardy and the regular Wednesday morning congregation – thank you Rev Joe for making us feel so welcome. Parents and some grandparents joined in the service also.

One of the first tasks on returning to school was to inspect the school garden. We can report good crops of rhubarb, salads and herbs – we think the birds enjoyed the fruit over the summer, especially the lovely plump raspberries. We were especially pleased with the bumper crop of potatoes – now harvested and distributed – and are keeping an eye on some Brussels sprouts plants! We may have a stand-off with the birds and other wildlife if we are to ensure some sprouts ready for the Christmas dinner!

Charlotte, Marie Blanche and Siofra grasping the nettle!

Finally – and importantly – the senior classes travelled to the National Ploughing Championships we will report on their experiences later.

Slan go foill.

Rathkeale No. 2 National School

After a fine summer and an enjoyable holiday school re-opened in Rathkeale on Monday 2nd September. By now we have all settled back into the swing of things and we look forward to the new school year and all that it brings with it. We were delighted to welcome our three new junior infant pupils, Deirdre, Suzel and David. We pass on our congratulations to the Switzer family on the birth of their son, Tobias.

By the time this goes to print our team of three pupils, Robert, Robyn and Emma will have represented the school at a school’s table quiz in Aughinish.

St John’s National School, Shannon

Editor: We welcome St John’s National School, Shannon to the pages of Newslink, and look forward to regular news in future.

St. John’s N.S. is a two teacher school, under the Patronage of the Church of Ireland, in the Drumgeely area of Shannon. We provide personal attention and a high standard of education in our small classes.

Our recent achievements include Special Merit in the National Texaco Children’s Art Awards, 4th place nationally in the Eason Spelling bee and First and Fourth place in the local Junior Science Quiz. The celebration of our school’s 50 years service to Shannon with Bishop Trevor Williams was a special event for us. We were the first school in Clare to achieve the Active School Flag and we were delighted to win the Inter-schools Sports at Villiera school earlier this year.

We take part in Annual Carol singing, Art competitions, GAA training, Drama, MS Readathon and many other events that add to the children’s lives. In our teaching we aim to offer each child a chance to shine in his/her own way. Our school is bright and colourful and well resourced, with a sunny aspect and an excellent play area. As the new school year begins, we would like to thank our retiring Chairman Canon RC Hanna for his many years of service to our school.

We are delighted to welcome on Board our new Chairman Mr Jackie Mc Nair (Chaplain, Villiers School). We are aware of Mr Mc Nair’s interest in education and look forward to his contribution to the further development of our school.
BOYS HOCKEY

Congratulations to Glenn Morrow, Henry Cooke and Aaron Duffy who recently received sports ties for their commitment, excellence and participation in boys hockey.

We wish them well as they prepare for the all Ireland Schools Qualifying Tournament in Newtown School, Waterford next week.

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE RESULTS

Congratulations to all our TY students who attained excellent results in their Junior Certificate. We wish them well as they embark on our TY programme.

PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

We were joined last week by a film crew who spent two days in and around Villiers taking in all aspects of school life. We look forward to seeing the finished product in the near future.

PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Form 5 and 6 Agricultural Science students attended the Ploughing Championships. A report on their trip will be included in their leaving certificate farm projects.

PREFECT TRIP 2013

A few weekends ago, the 28 strong prefect group from Villiers School went to The UL Activity Centre in Kilalloe for two days. As soon as we arrived we started into a morning’s worth of a team-building game called Crystal Maze. Giant Jenga, handcuffs, and a blind jigsaw puzzle were just some of the challenges teams had to overcome. But in the end, the team with two look-a-like soccer players called the "Fellaini-Bale experience" won.

Before lunch, we were given an introduction to the role of prefectship by Mr. McNair. We spent the afternoon kayaking, windsurfing and canoeing on the lake, getting wet, jumping in and having fun.

On Friday night we moved location to the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel for dinner followed by an evening led by Mr. Sutton discussing how the prefect system works in the school and what prefects should do if a problem arises. The ninth sixth year prefects who had also been prefects last year shared advice and experiences. We hope what we shared was useful to the new prefects and gives them some guidance for the year ahead. When we headed back to the scout hut and scavenged through woods for logs, Glen and David made a magnificent bonfire that burned until morning. There was laughter and chat around the bonfire all night with Joe, Siun and a few others providing us with a musical soundtrack. Saturday morning came around with hot sausages and coffee courtesy of Ms. Crowley.

We walked back to the Activity Centre for some more activity – the high ropes. The strength and encouragement of the group shone through as we reached the top.

Ms. Storey visited before lunch when we were finalising details of some practical aspects of our roles, such as duty groups and lunch club. During lunch we played our final impromptu game of ninjas by the water side! Our last activity was on the water and again we had good fun.

I think the weekend was great and beneficial for everyone there, both in developing friendships with the group and learning about the important role of prefectship and its encouragement to the school environment.

NEWS FROM THE VILLIERS SANCTUARY

You know the term is well and truly under way when last year’s exams are a thing of the past and the current 3rd and 6th years start to become worried about their turn! It’s a strange thing about time - it tends to sneak up on all of us. During Assembly we read the Gospel of Luke’s parable concerning the Dishonest Manager and it made me pause to consider the right use of wealth and possessions. The message, of course, for all of us is that it in this world of consumerism that we inhabit it is not about how much wealth we have, but rather, what we do with it and, more importantly, how we live our lives! We should rejoice in each new day simply because it is a day that the Lord has made. But it is also a gift in the sense that we have a chance to start over each time morning has broken. We have a chance to not be dishonest in things, small or large, and we have a chance to be faithful in things small and large!

The Christian Union group meets every Thursday and this year promise to be an exciting time. The energy of the group and the willingness to share their faith and time with others is something that I personally am always blown away by. We finish each meeting with prayers and it always leaves me refreshed and more than happy to shout "this is the day that the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it". I hope and pray that everyone can do the same.

Blessing and peace,
Chaplain Jackie McNair
**Killaloe & Stradbally Union of Parishes**

**Killaloe, Castleconnell, Clonlara, Mountshannon and Tuamgraney.**

Vacant

Priest in Charge: Canon Stephen Neill  
Tel: 0505 42183  
Mob: 087 232 8172  
Email: stephen.neill@gmail.com

Rev. Lucy Green  
Tel: 062-79941 Mob: 087 667 0425  
Email: lucygreen06ie@yahoo.co.uk

**Harvest Services for the Parishes –**

- **St Caimin’s, Mountshannon –** 6th October at 3.30pm  
- **St Flannan’s Cathedral –** 13th October at 3pm  
- **All Saints, Castleconnell –** 20th October at 3.30pm.

On the 27th October, the Sutton Chorale choir will be singing Choral Evensong in St Flannan’s Cathedral. All are welcome.

We were sad to have to say goodbye to Reverend Stan Evans on the 8th September and will miss his ministry among us. The three congregations joined to wish him well in his new parish of Omey, near Clifden. Many thanks to all those who baked cakes and sandwiches and did all the washing-up afterwards!

**Rev’d Stan’s Institution**

Canon Marie Rowley Brooke attended Rev’d Stan’s Institution as Priest in Charge of the Omey Group of Parishes and writes:-  
“TD Eamon O’Cuiv and the Deputy Mayor of Galway were among the dignitaries who gathered in the packed church of Christ Church, Clifden, to welcome Rev’d Stan Evans as Priest in Charge of the Omey Group of Parishes. Rousing hymns were accompanied on the organ by Daniel Battle from Limerick. Parishioners had travelled from Enniscorthy, Limerick, Killaloe and further afield to join in the celebrations and to show their affection and support, and thanks, for all that Stan has done in the Diocese. We wish Stan and Rosemary every blessing in their new life and ministry.”

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**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

**Parish Dance**

Our annual Parish Dance was held on Thursday, 12th September at Dooly’s Hotel in Birr. Many thanks to Willie and Phyllis Wolfe for organising the dance, and to all who assisted. A delightful and entertaining evening, with nearly €1000 raised for the Church Repair Fund.

**Crinkle Memorial**

Crinkle, just outside of Birr, is where the Leinster Regiment had a huge barracks complex for a century until 1922. On Saturday, 21st September the Archdeacon took part in an unveiling of a memorial as part of an ecumenical service with representation from the Irish Defence Forces and Irish veterans of UN peacekeeping forces, as well as the Leinster Regiment Association.

**Ecumenical Discussions**

Starting on Tuesday, 1st October, there will be an Irish School of Ecumenics discussion series to be held in the Methodist Hall in Birr. The theme will be Justice, and it will be on every Tuesday for five weeks. All are welcome. Starting time will be announced.

**Mothers’ Union**

The Mothers’ Union Opening Service and meeting will be held in Birr Rectory on Wednesday, 23rd October, starting at 8:00 pm.

**GFS**

The GFS Opening Service will be held at the 11:00 am service in Birr Church on Sunday, 13th October. We welcome all our new and returning girls.

**Oxmantown School**

Our new classroom is nearly completed, about a month ahead of schedule. Congratulations to all involved in the project; we hope to have pictures in the next Newslink and an announcement about an official opening.

**Sunday School**

Our Sunday School has resumed in the Birr Vestry, and we are delighted to welcome two new teachers, Jackie Powell and Amy Donohue. Our biggest problem is space – as new children attend, the room gets tighter and tighter.

**‘Perplex the Preacher’**

Our Family Services continue on the second Sunday of each month, with the highlight being ‘Perplex the Preacher’, where children have to bring in something unusual and the Archdeacon has to tell them how it reminds him of God. Many thanks to Sylvia Vaugh and all who help organise the refreshments after the service each month.

**A Sound Investment**

Thanks to Ron Sothern for installing a new microphone at the lectern in Birr. In concert with the new wireless mikes, everyone should be able to hear all the readings, even when the readers are younger members of the congregation.

**Congratulations to Lesley and Stan**

Best wishes to the Revd Lesley Robinson and the Revd Stan Evans on their Institutions to Clontarf and Clifden respectively. The Archdeacon will be Priest-in-Charge of Roscrea Group of Parishes during the vacancy there.

**Harvest Services**

- Birr: Friday, 4th October, 7.30 pm  
- Lorrha: Sunday, 6th October, 7.30 pm  
- Dorrha: Sunday, 13th October, 3.30 pm  
- Lockeen: Sunday, 20th October, 3.30 pm
Our United Dioceses Gathering in Villiers School on Sunday 29th September was an immense success. The theme of the day was ‘Gathering to Go’ – reminding us, in Bishop Trevor’s words, that we do not just gather together as God’s family on Sundays, but go out again strengthened into our communities and the world as channels of God’s love. The November Newslink will include a fuller report, but in the meantime we include pictures of this inspiring event here and on page 17.
Bishops Appoint the Revd Pat Storey as new Bishop of Meath and Kildare

Press Release issued by the Church of Ireland Press Office on 20th September 2013

The House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland meeting yesterday in Dublin appointed the Revd Pat (Patricia) Storey as the new Bishop of Meath and Kildare, to succeed The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, who is now Archbishop of Armagh. The appointment of the new bishop had passed to the House of Bishops as the Episcopal Electoral College which met on 28 May failed to appoint a Bishop of Meath and Kildare dioceses. The Revd Pat Storey is currently Rector of St Augustine’s Parish Church, Londonderry.

Announcing the appointment of the Revd Pat Storey, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, said: ‘Having known Pat Storey since she was an undergraduate and I was Chaplain at Trinity College, Dublin, I very much welcome her as a new bishop. She is a person of great warmth, intelligence and spiritual depth and I am certain that her ministry in the Dioceses of Meath and Kildare and the wider Church will be a blessing to many. We remember her and her family in our prayers.’

Responding, the Revd Pat Storey said: ‘I am both excited and daunted by this new adventure in our lives. I have had an extraordinarily happy experience in St Augustine’s and in this wonderful city which I will be sad to leave. However, I count it an enormous privilege to begin a new phase of my ministry with the people of Meath and Kildare, and I look forward to working with the team of clergy who are already there. I would sincerely ask for your prayers for myself and my family, who are the best family in the world!’

The Revd Pat Storey (53) has been Rector of St Augustine’s, Londonderry (Derry and Raphoe) since 2004. She is married to the Revd Earl Storey and has two adult children, Carolyn and Luke, and a son-in-law Peter. Having grown up in Belfast and studied French and English at Trinity College, Dublin, she trained at the Church of Ireland Theological College (now Institute) and was ordained deacon in 1997 and priest in 1998. She served a Curacy in Ballymena (Connor) and was a Team Vicar in Glenavy (Connor) and a part-time Youth Worker Co-ordinator with the Church of Ireland Youth Department. Among Central Church participation, she is a member of the Standing Committee of the General Synod. The Revd Pat Storey becomes the first woman to be appointed a bishop in the Church of Ireland.

The consecration of the new bishop will take place in due course, followed by enthronement in the diocesan cathedrals thereafter.

Clonmacnoise Summer School, 1st-2nd November 2013

Reconnections - retracing the old monastic paths of the Irish monks in Europe

The Dark Ages, when all of continental Europe is torn apart by plague, famine and marauding barbarians – this is the great time of the Celtic Church, when much of the classical knowledge and artistic skills lost in Europe are preserved and flourish in Irish monastic schools. It is the age when Columba, Coimbanus, Killian, Gall and Aiden bring this learning back into Europe, by setting up new Christian communities from Iona to Bobbio, from St Gall to Wurzburg and as far as Kiev.

The objective of the Clonmacnoise Summer School is to reflect and explore not only the monastic life, but the broader impact of the early medieval city at Clonmacnoise and other communities founded by Irish monks. Questions to be considered include: Is there a shared heritage and what, for instance was the role of women in the early Celtic church? What were the innovations made by the monks? What are the stories of the early saints and are there common rituals still to be found amongst the old centres of learning in continental Europe? Can we draw from the insights of these good men some enlightenment for the modern world? Are there new monastic paths for today that can be sought out?

The 2013 Summer School is to be held from 6pm Friday 1st November to 4pm Saturday 2nd November at St Ciaran’s National School, Clonmacnoise. It will lay the ground work for a comprehensive week long programme to take place in late Summer 2014. For further information contact Brian O’Carroll, tel 086 264 7719, email elyhouse@eircom.net, or see www.facebook.com/clonmacnoisemonastery.
Diocesan Gathering 2013
continued from page 15

Revs Michael and Antje Lebhan and parishioners from Guntersberge Parish in Anhalt enriched the fellowship at Gathering to Go, as guests of Rev Máirt Hanley and Kilcolman Union

St Mary's Cathedral organist and choirmaster Peter Barley leads the choral work shop

Bishop Trevor leads the United Diocese in hymn singing, with the red scarves

Rev Bob Hanna – we see pictures of the photographer too rarely!

Roscrea Group of Parishes
Roscrea, Bourney, Corbally and Kyle
Vacant
Priest in Charge: Ven. Wayne Carney
The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly.
Tel: 057 – 9120021 Mob: 087 – 7865234
Email: mapleire@eircom.net

FARWELL

Sunday, 8th September 2013 was an emotional day in Roscrea Group of Parishes when over 250 people gathered in St. Cronan’s for Rev. Lesley’s Farewell Service. Bishop Trevor was preacher and Rev. Lesley celebrant, with lesson readers representing each church in the Group. Also present in robes were the Lord Abbott and Fr. Malachi and Fr. Laurence from the Cistercian Abbey, Rev. Michael Harding, St. Cronan’s Abbey St., Rev. Brian Griffin, Methodist Minister, Ven Wayne Carney, Jason Patterson and Adrian Hewson. At a reception afterwards in Coláiste Phobal speeches of farewell were made by representatives of the Group, the local churches and the community. Greetings were received from Fr. Tom Corbett PP. and Rev. Stan Evans, both clerical colleagues and friends who were unavoidably absent. Presentations were made on behalf of the Group and all parochial organisations. Rev. Lesley suitably replied and expressed her gratitude and also her pleasure at being able to spend almost nine years of her ministry in Roscrea Group of Parishes. At the time of writing over 50 parishioners and friends are planning to attend the Institution in Clontarf where Fr. Tom Corbett PP. will be the preacher. With all parochial formalities over, all that remains now is to say ‘Thank You’ Lesley, and every blessing in your new sphere of ministry.

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Phone: 061 378116/378000
Fax: 061 378055
Email: doug.howell@culleninsurances.ie
Address: The Square, Newport, Co. Tipperary

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17
More than forty years on this Oxfam slogan from the 1970’s sounds rather patronising – though it still makes perfect sense to help in practical ways to improve life, rather than only handing out temporary help. Especially in emergencies aid is an essential, and is very often very generously given. But when the crisis moment is over and the TV cameras are gone, ordinary life has to be put together again. And there remains the long term grinding poverty through several generations, that people all over the world are trying to drag themselves out of.

I have recently become very interested in the work of www.lendwithcare.org, an innovative web site backed by the Co-Operative Bank Group in the UK. Here it is possible to lend money, from £15, directly to individuals trying to work their way out of poverty in various poor areas of the world.

The microfinance website was set up by aid organisation Care International UK and helps people in Benin, Ecuador, Cambodia, the Philippines, Togo and other countries to set up, or expand, their small business.

Would-be lenders can go onto the website and view the profiles of individuals in these countries. These are loans, not handouts; the money is paid back in instalments, typically over six to twelve months. Once repaid you can choose to withdraw the money or recycle it into another loan. The entrepreneurs receive 100% of the loan; no administrative charges are deducted from them.

The only downside is that you don’t get any interest, but in today’s financial climate that hardly makes any difference. In the vast majority of cases you get your money back in full and on time. In fact lendwithcare say the default rate is virtually zero, only two of all the borrowers defaulted, and that was because they both died! Loans are generally provided by many lenders, each lending small amounts, so in the event of a default the loss to a single lender would be small.

The entrepreneurs have their business plans approved by local microfinance institutions working with Care, and when those plans are approved they are passed on to lendwithcare for inclusion in the scheme. The website is simplicity itself to use, and full of interesting items about all the borrowers, and also whatever the lenders chose to say about themselves. At the end of August lendwithcare were able to announce that so far they have lent £3 million, in 80,000 loans to 5,000 entrepreneurs in seven different countries. This is truly amazing when you consider how most people are lending relatively small amounts, maybe no more than the equivalent of a cup of coffee a day.

Several others and I are now also working locally on a spin off from all of this. I have often chosen dressmakers or tailors to lend to, and noticed one day that one of them was wanting money to purchase more items of haberdashery such as buttons, zips, binding cotton braid etc. As someone who has sewn all her life I have a fair amount of such things, far more than I will ever use now. If I have I am sure others have too. So I asked lendwithcare if it might be possible for them to get these items to anyone who could use them and they said they thought they could. Clearly we did not know if we were talking about a small or large amount, but I said I would try to amass what I could, and get back to them. They have people going out in January who could transport the items.

Please, for these struggling people, turn out your unwanted items, buttons (tied in sets please!), binding, zips, poppers, cotton, needles, etc. ...the list of stuff we all have hidden away is pretty big; why not send it where it will be of use? We can work out how to get it to me, maybe as the clergy visit other churches for Harvest services, or just meet with each other. Just contact me on my landline 067 41687. I will then get it to the people who are going to Africa, somehow!

How good it is for once not to be asking for money!

Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for life.
by Rae Croft, St Mary’s Church, Nenagh

lendwithcare.org
In association with The co-operative

Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day.
Teach him to fish and you feed him for life.
by Rae Croft, St Mary’s Church, Nenagh
Benedictine Spirituality

The first of a series of 5 articles by Rev Gary Paulsen, Rector of Adare & Killmallock Group

BENEDICT THE MAN

There is not much written about Benedict himself but what does stand out is his work and not the person. The teaching of Benedict is seen as a way for human beings to mature as Disciples of Christ. His advice was written some 1,500 years ago and is still used today, perhaps because he understood humanity and our strengths and weaknesses so well.

Benedict was born in Nursia known today as Norcia in the Sabine Hills of central Italy. He went to Rome as a young man to study but was disgusted at the decline in morals in the city, so he withdrew into solitude.

He taught people in the surrounding district and the nearby monastery heard of his reputation and elected him as their leader. After a while however the monks tried to poison him because they wanted to continue with their undisciplined lifestyle.

He left and eventually built a monastery at Monte Cassino in 529. Benedict then wrote his rule of how they were to live together (it has been discovered that it was based on some other writings). Benedict believed in the goodness of human beings and did not lead his monks with suspicion and harshness, but in trust, kindness and brotherly love.

Benedict was a balanced person, and his message is still applicable today, not only for monks but for all who are in search of God.

LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Benedict shows in the 4th chapter of his rule what life in the Presence of God means: ‘remind yourself ... that God’s gaze is upon you wherever you may be.’ And in the 7th chapter ‘... he is always seen by God in heaven, that his actions everywhere are in God’s sight and are reported by angels every hour. The prophet indicates this to us when he shows that our thoughts are always present to God, saying: God searches hearts and minds (Ps 7:10)”

Living in the presence of God means that I constantly let God look into the innermost chambers of my heart, that I bare all before

The garden at Monte Cassino abbey, with statue of St Benedict
God, all my thoughts and feelings, so that God may ask me how much I am attached to myself, and how ready I am to surrender myself to God. It is a continual process of purification. All the thoughts and feelings that rise in me during my daily life, at work or at prayer, are held up to God’s all penetrating light so that God may shine through them. We encounter ourselves at every turn. God in turn confronts us with our own reality so that we can recognize it and allow it to be purified by God.

For Benedict life in the presence of God has another aspect as well. God is present to us as one who speaks to us. The initiative comes from God. Benedict uses some verses of scripture in this regard:

• If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts. Ps 95:8
• And again; if you have ears to hear, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. Rev2:7
• Come listen to me, children, I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Ps 34:11.

Benedict places the words of Scripture on God’s lips in such a way that they are personally addressed to us. It is a question of living with, and from God’s word.

God’s presence is not something that is always the same; it is not like an impersonal space that surrounds us. Instead it is like a trusted person who addresses us in new ways. For Benedict, God is also the spirit who dwells within us and is ever present to us. But we do not melt or dissolve into God. Instead God always approaches us as a partner, as someone who challenges us. God always encounters us in new and surprising ways. So when we sit quietly in our room, we find God in the words, “Here I am” differently than when we recall these words in the midst of a quarrel. We experience God not as a vague atmosphere of the divine, but as one who confronts and challenges us. The word of God does not simply tell me what I am to do, it transforms me.

But living in the presence of God does not mean constantly thinking about God. That would be too much for us. Rather it is a matter of opening oneself to a reality, surrendering oneself to the St.

God who surrounds one. Thus living in the presence of God does not consist of training in concentration, but on the contrary it is about relaxing and letting oneself rest in the reality of God.

Therefore the presence must not so much be carried out in the head but in the body. Our hearts are to rest in God who is present. Our behaviour, our posture, our way of speaking, standing and walking. Our internal collectedness in everything we do should witness to the experience of God who is present. So living in the presence of God according to Benedict shapes all the realms of our human life, whether it be prayer, work, fellowship, relationship with other people, our interaction with creation and so on.

CHRIST IN OUR BROTHER OR SISTER

Fellowship is no contradiction to devout love of God says Benedict. For he says that in our brother or sister we encounter Christ. Therefore faith is expressed in new ways of being with each other. For Benedict the Lord speaks to us through people. Benedict wants us to be serious about our faith in the presence of Christ in our brother and sister. To approach each other through this faith and therefore approach interpersonal problems, tensions, apathies, and aggression through that faith in the reality of Christ in the other. And thereby help us take a step beyond our clear reasoning, beyond our excuses, to take a step toward reality and to take the presence of Christ in our brothers and sisters so seriously that it will shape our attitudes, our behaviour, our words and our views.
Roscrea notes continued from page 17

Autumn

October sees young people back at school and college, farmers busy on the land and parochial organisations and activities commencing again after the long hot summer. We wish all well especially those who are beginning school and college, while we congratulate all who have recently received results in state examinations.

Harvest Thanksgiving

In church life, autumn brings the “Harvests”. Kyle set the scene with a full church welcoming Rev. Rosemary Lindsay, Methodist Minister, Birr as preacher. Sermon thoughts and a tastefully decorated church reminded us of how fortunate we are while people in other lands go hungry. The following are the arrangements for the other Harvest Services in the Group:

Roscrea
Sunday, 6th October @ 7 pm
Harvest Communion
Preacher and celebrant: Rev. Darren McCallig, Chaplain to Trinity College, Dublin

Corbally Friday, 11th October @ 8 pm
Preacher: Mrs Margaret Stephens, Ferns Diocese

Bourney Sunday, 13th October @ 3.30 pm
Preacher: Rev. Fr. Seamus Bohan, PP Tynagh, Co. Galway

Bereavement

Our prayers are with all who mourn the passing of Sisi Whelan (nee Drought), sister-in-law to Pat, and Aunt to Joe, Davina and Cecil in our Parish. Always a welcome visitor to St. Cronan’s, she will be missed. We also remember the family of Victor Murphy, Rathowen, Co. Westmeath especially her sister Violet Duke. The Sick

Best wishes to Isaac Dann and Bert Wallace who are now convalescing after some time in hospital and we continue to remember all who are sick and housebound in our prayers and also at our monthly Healer Prayer Service (Monday, 7th October @ 7 pm)

‘GOOD AS NEW SHOP’

Heather Evans and Vivian Wallace are busy organizing their annual ‘Good as New Shop’ which will be open from Tuesday, October 1st until Saturday, October 4th in aid of the Shoe Box Appeal and Parish Funds. It will be located beside SuperValu in Main Street. Best wishes to the venture and the organizers.

Youth Club

Now in action in Roscrea Methodist Church Hall. All Secondary School Students are welcome. More information from Claire Drought.

Thank You

Sincerest thanks to all who have given of their time recently in assisting with various parochial events and activities, to all who organised Rev. Lesley’s Farewell presentation and assisted with the service in particular the organist, choir and readers, to all involved with the Harvest preparations and to all who are using their skills and talents to develop the parochial organizations. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

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

September has been the month when parish organisations got themselves organised for a new season of activities and witness. In our Nenagh Union, having said goodbye to three members of Junior Polydome Greenhouses

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Congratulations

Lesley Robinson and her family as she begins her new ministry in every blessing in this new ministry. Our best wishes also go to Rev'd Evans in Christ Church, Clifden, and we wish Stan and Rosemary

BEST WISHES

13th October, 3.30 pm, where the guest preacher will be Rev'd Gary Paulsen

Our final Harvest Festival takes place in Killodiernan on Sunday St Mary's and also the School will have had their Harvest Festival.

By the time Newslink appears, we shall have celebrated Harvest in through him and to him are all things. ' were much appreciated.

his thoughtful words based on Romans 11:36 'For from him and to him are all things.' were much appreciated. By the time Newslink appears, we shall have celebrated Harvest in St Mary's and also the School will have had their Harvest Festival. Our final Harvest Festival takes place in Killodiernan on Sunday 13th October, 3.30 pm, where the guest preacher will be Rev'd Gary Paulson. Everyone welcome to great singing and great hospitality!

BEST WISHES

The Rector attended the Service of Welcome for Rev'd Stan Evans in Christ Church, Clifden, and we wish Stan and Rosemary every blessing in this new ministry. Our best wishes also go to Rev'd Lesley Robinson and her family as she begins her new ministry in Clontarf.

STEWARSHIP SUNDAY

We shall be holding a Stewardship Sunday on the last Sunday of the month – an opportunity to give thanks for the generosity of previous parishioners whose legacies have enabled our churches to remain open and functioning, and to give thanks for the generosity and dedication of parishioners today who give so much, both financially and in terms of their voluntary ministries, to enable the mission of the church - the sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ - to continue flourishing.

Our condolences go to Selina Powell following the death of her sister, Christine Whelan.

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.modreeney.com
Stephen’s blog: www.paddyanglican.com

SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

6th October – Trinity 19
9.00 a.m.: Borrisnafarney HC
10.00 a.m.: Ballingarry MP
10.15 a.m.: Borrisokane HC
3.00 p.m.: Cloughjordan – Harvest Thanksgiving – Preacher: Rev'd Susan Green

Saturday 12th October
8.00 p.m. - Harvest Borrisnafarney – Preacher Rev'd Rosemary Lindsey
13th October – Trinity 20
9.00 a.m. Ballingarry H.C.
10.15 a.m. Borrisokane MP.
11.30 a.m. Cloughjordan GFS Enrolment
20th October – Trinity 21
9.00 a.m. Ballingarry M.P.
10.15 a.m. Borrisnafarney MP.
11.30 a.m. Cloughjordan M.P.
NB: Borrisokane Harvest time changed – TBA

Saturday 26th October
8pm – Harvest Ballingarry – Preacher: Rev’d Denis Sandes
27th October – 5th Sunday before Advent
10.15 a.m. Borrisokane MP
11.30 a.m. Cloughjordan HC
6.30 p.m. Templeharry Harvest Festival & Gathering Festival – Preacher Rev’d Gary Paulsen

Congratulations to Diana Cavanagh & Stephen Landy who were wed on Saturday 7th September in Ballingarry Church and also to their twin babies Jamie & Ava who were baptized at the same ceremony. A great day of celebration. We wish Diana & Stephen and their whole family a very happy life together.

Congratulations to Linda and Liam Walshe of Borrisokane on the recent birth of baby Bill Robert. We wish baby Bill Robert every blessing in his life and Linda & Liam every happiness in caring for him.

Welcome into the family of the Church, baby Michael Chadwick, son of Derick & Yvonne Chadwick of Foxboro, Cloughjordan. Andrew was baptized on Sunday September in Borrisnafarney Church. We wish him God's blessing in his life.

Best wishes to John Harding, son of Norman & Veronica Harding of Ballylina, Borrisokane & Yvonne Keohane who are to be wed in Ballygarvan, Co. Cork on Friday 11th October. We wish them every blessing in their marriage.
**Shinrone Group of Parishes**

Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinneity 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
Parish Website: shinrone.blogspot.ie

**SHINRONE PARISH FESTE**

The weather was very kind to the parish and the sun shone as Shinrone held their annual fete. A great crowd turned out in support with all the stalls and raffle doing well. In the end almost €7,000 was raised toward the re-decorating of the church, which was a fantastic result. As usual a donation was made toward the wonderful work of the Birr Community Nursing Unit. Thank you to all who helped make this year’s fete such a success.

**FOOD AND WINE EVENING**

A wonderful fundraising evening was held in Aghancon Community Hall on 18th September with Peter Ward from the Country Choice coffee shop in Nenagh. Peter has been on the Late Late Show and other programmes demonstrating good food and hosted a great evening sampling some of the fine organic wines and cheeses he imports. Over €800 was raised from the event for Aghancon Church. Many thanks to Peter and to everyone who helped and/or supported on the night, especially Ina Blackwell.

**MOTHERS’ UNION SERVICE**

The opening service for the Mothers’ Union will take place on Thursday 10th October at 8.00 p.m. in St Mary’s, Shinrone. This will be followed by the opening meeting and refreshments in Cloghmoyle Schoolhouse. All are very welcome.

**PARISH OFFICE**

Work has now been completed to convert the Rectory garage into a new parish office and meeting room. A wonderful space has been created which will be of great benefit to the Group. Many thanks to all who helped in its creation.

**HARVEST THANKSGIVING**

- Sunday 13th October 3.30 p.m. – Shinrone
- Friday 18th October 7.30 p.m. – Kinneity
- Sunday 20th October 7.30 p.m. – Dunkerrin
- Sun 27th October 3.30 p.m. – Aghancon

**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

As we prepare these notes only a few days away from ‘Gathering to Go’ in Limerick, a short mention of our two-minute parish presentation, making up a collective contribution under the direction of the Rector of Adare. We went for an audio visual approach and it’s thanks to Kilnasoolagh’s cameraman Herbie Knowles and his media professional son-in-law Simon McGuire (Kilnascully TV editor no less !) we were able to jump the technical hurdles. We are forever in the debt of Simon and his gaffer as they covered the Burren and Ennis to make the film. (References to the front man Rector and Kilnascully are being ignored!).

We thank parishioners who have committed themselves to the day and giving up regular home worship.

**HARVESTS**

Ennis parishioners had to forgo two Sundays at home because of Harvest at Kilnasoolagh where the extra fellowship make all the difference. Preacher was Columban former missionary Fr Sean McDonagh, now based in Navan (and Nenagh reared) and a writer and speaker on environmental ethics and third world justice, whose harvest address turned out to be a warm human walk through the Burren and a pilgrimage “lost in wonder, love and praise”, (to quote the hymn “Love Divine all loves excelling”) and a compelling message at Harvest for all pilgrims of salvation set in the cradle of his wondrous mystical creation.

We look forward next to Friday October 4th (also Referendum Day!) and the visit to Drumcliffe’s outreach Harvest of Rev Ray Simpson, of Holy Island Lindisfarne, Founding Guardian of the Society of St Aidan and St Hilda, a worldwide Celtic fellowship. No stranger to our shores, he is an acknowledged retreat leader, conference speaker and writer on church ministry including the ‘new monasticism’. He is also a prolific and influential composer Rub of liturgies and prayers set in the Celtic mould. Ray is meeting with the Clare Pilgrim Way for a Pilgrimage and retreat in and around St Fachnan’s domain of Kilfenora, as well as travelling to Nenagh to join diocesan folk for a follow-up gathering on celtic spiritual development.

And back to Kilnasoolagh Harvest, our thanks to the Clare Music Circle Choir under Mr Claran O’Gorman, for leading the music; to talented teenager Fina Wurm for her instrumental offerings by piano and flute and the decorators and caterers. Collection went to Bishops’s Appeal. Music for the Outreach Harvest in Ennis is the Choir of St Peter and St Paul led Mr Michael Hennessy. Oboist Etain McCooy and violinist Karen Kelly will join our regular organist Nigel Bridge as instrumentalists.

**MARRIAGE**

After many years together Adrian O’Connell and Ruby McKechnie from Kilrush formally tied the knot at the lovely happy occasion in St Columba’s, Drumcliffe, Ennis, when Ruby’s son from her previous marriage (a serving soldier, home on leave from Afghanistan) gave her away and Adrian and Ruby’s son, one of their family of four, acted as bestman. Sharing with the Rector at the ceremony was retired Archdeacon of Tuam, the Venerable Anthony Previte, a keen sailor like Adrian. The groom has worked in the boatbuilding business for many years.

**THEATRE**

St Columba’s gave hospitality to the Dha Lamh Theatre for a short one act play, one of six performed in Ennis on a September night at different venues as part of The Beckett Trail. Directed by Laura Mulcahy, the plays involving a blend of mime, dance and performance art bringing people of all types together through theatre.

**SILENT WALK**

Friday November 22nd is the occasion for a midnight gathering in St Columba’s Church, Ennis as part of a Festival of Light. The candlelight moment is the climax to a Silent Walking Meditation—a procession through the town beginning at the site of the old Mercy Convent, now the Templegate Hotel Complex. Involving citizens of goodwill and with a desire to help create more wholeness within Society this silent meditative, torchlight procession will involve a number of different groups including yoga enthusiasts as well as active Christians, but inclusion is a strong theme. With the festival of Samhain (and it light to darkness theme) well underway by then, the pascal Bonfire planned for the grounds of St Columba’s should prove to be a dramatic and apt backdrop.

**CLERGY**

We pray rich blessing on the Rev Lesley Robinson and the Rev Stan Evans as they leave us for new pastures in Clontarf and Clifden respectively and feel they leave a significant gap in our diocese.

Meanwhile, congratulations and blessing also to the Rev. Sue Watterson, who in securing the vacant post of Rector of Tralee and Dingle Unions makes it a happy case of not hello—goodbye but goodbye-hello again as she reverses her recent departure for St Finbar’s Cathedral.
Greetings from Co. Galway! As you read this I hope that our ‘Gathering Contingent’ will have met up with your ‘Contingent’ and be in a position to say we all made new friends at Villiers.

Best wishes to our young people, especially those embarking on third level education or beginning their chosen career employment. Best of luck to you all and wishing you the best of success.

This year’s weather has brought about a worthy harvest I hope for you all and that you have enjoyed this long awaited good sunny weather. We in this part of the diocese have a number of harvest services to look forward to in which we give thanks to God for all his goodness to us all. (See website for dates)

AROUND THE PARISHES

Clontuskert thanks all its friends for supporting its recent successful sale - money raised to improve the Old School Hall. The ‘Motor Rally’ took place on 1st September - Sunday Service was brought forward to Saturday and saw the largest congregation for a long time. Wonderful to see many family members together in worship.

Ardrahan had a change of time for its first Sunday HC service - a family service, followed by a successful Family Fun day and picnic in Coole Park at which twenty-three of the congregation had fun for a couple of hours.

Holy Trinity hosted the opening service of its two MU branches with a good gathering of members assembling to hear Sr. Chad, formerly Pastoral Care, Portiuncula Hospital, give an inspiring address. The evening concluded in the Rectory with chat over the cuppa.

AUGHRIM COACH-HOUSE

This was a-buzz on 7th and 14th September with lots of young people, mums and a granny supporting our youth workers in preparation for the Pastoral visit of Bishop Trevor from Friday 13th – Sunday 15th September to our parish. The children were busy making props for the Sunday United Family Harvest Service in Aughrim to portray their dramatised version of the Parable of the Sower.

THE BISHOP’S PASTORAL VISIT SEPTEMBER

This started with the visit to the Glebe School Aughrim on Friday morning where Bishop Trevor met some old friends and five newly enrolled children who gave him a very warm welcome -singing hymns and joining in prayer.

Then a visit to the Aughrim Interpretive Centre, followed by meeting a number of community personnel in Ballinasloe involved with out-reach within the Urban and Rural Community.

Bishop Trevor was highly impressed with the recently formed GELS (Galway East Life Support) Association which is very much involved in bringing together the local listening and counselling agencies among other worthy organisations involved in Community work in the vicinity.

Friday evening concluded with a very informative meeting in Gullane’s Hotel when a gathering of over fifty parishioners heard the Bishop address the Diocesan Vision for the future.

Part of Friday and Saturday was also a time of pastoral care to parishioners house-bound and confined to nursing homes. In total ten parishioners received a visit in five locations within the vicinity of Ballinasloe and Aughrim.

The last port of call on Saturday was the Youth Workshop where Bishop Trevor spoke with parents and children alike as they concluded their preparation for the Sunday Family Service.

Sunday morning started with parishioners at a service of holy Communion in Ardrahan and the Vision PowerPoint, and concluded with refreshments in the home of Michael and Brid Taylor.

The climax of the visit was to preach at the United Family Harvest Thanksgiving Service on Sunday afternoon when over 125 parishioners and friends joined in a great celebration at which the young people dramatized the Parable of the Sower. Prayers were read by parishioners and all in attendance showed their appreciation to the Bishop for his visit.

This was followed with a Harvest High Tea in the Rectory Coach-house

WEDDINGS BELLS

The wedding took place in St. John’s Ballinasloe on Saturday 21st September between Violet the daughter of Arthur and Kathleen Newton, Ballinasloe and James the son of Albert and Edna Lunny of Fermanagh. A wonderful day was enjoyed by all and we wish the happy couple every blessing as they start their married life together.

PASTORAL CARE

We continue to remember all parishioners who have health concerns and trust and pray that they may experience the healing presence of Christ in their lives, bringing them renewed health and confidence throughout the days that lie ahead.

PLEASE SEE WEBSITE FOR SERVICE DETAILS
Our regular Parish Newslink correspondent is not available this month to link the news from this part of the Diocese to those of you in other parishes. His skill, in being able to glean gossip suitable for reporting along with facts that can be verified, has ensured his reports as well received within the community as they are by those whose unexpectedly find the Newslink inserted alongside other glossy reads in their transatlantic flight seat pocket. Rachel Battiliana emailed to say how much she enjoyed finding a copy of Newslink along with other literature on her Business Class Flight to Atlanta especially the inspiring reporting of a contemporary event in the world heritage wonder of St Brendan’s Cathedral in Clonfert.

“Well Rachel this month we sadly will not be able to entertain you as you relax over the Appalachians but we valued your feedback and hopefully our regular correspondent will be back at his desk next month. We wish him a speedy recovery.”

Christ Church, Portumna was delighted to welcome Maureen Moss back from the Diocese of Swaziland and to hear (as reported in last month’s Newslink) of her work in one of the Diocesan School’s there. Maureen will share further thoughts on the occasion of the Portumna Harvest at 11am on October 20th.

Harvest in Banagher took place last month (September 22nd) and the Church welcomed Damien Shorten as the preacher. I am writing these notes before Damien has given the sermon but by the time you read them he will be back in Dublin studying theology. Next month we will carry a report of the Service along with a review of the colourful harvest meringues.

Eyrecourt has a Harvest on Sunday October 27th at 7pm. The Preacher is at present on devotions upon the Sacro Monte of Varallo. I think it best not to tell you who he is just in case he cannot come and then you would be disappointed if you came especially to hear him and all you got is a replacement from the Preachers’ Agency.

Very sadly from Eyrecourt we have to report the death of Noel Finney. Noel’s funeral took place in St John the Baptist Church, Eyrecourt on Saturday, September 7th. Noel, from Shannon Grove, where he farmed was a loyal member of the Church and noted in the wider community for his gentle and courteous manner. He leaves his wife, Isabel, who many know throughout the Diocese as the Principal of the parochial school until it closed, and his daughters, Helen, Jacqueline, Hazel, Catherine, Lynn and son Mark. We extend to them our deep sympathies.

On Saturday, August 31st the Baptism took place of Adam Mark Stoddart in Eyrecourt Church. Adam’s parents are Niall and Trish Stoddart and his grandparents are Gibson and Elizabeth Stoddart. We welcome Adam into the family of the Church.

We pray especially for the usually very energetic Ann Menheneott and the diligent scribe Les Bertram that they will soon return to full health.

Edward Hardy of Banagher Church organized a successful Parish outing on Sunday August 25th to St Brigid’s Cathedral, Kildare where the Dean welcomed the party. Subsequently they visited the Japanese Garden and following a period of Zen meditation journeyed to The National Stud and onto the Newbridge Silver Outlet. ‘Treacy of The Heath’ was their last stop where they finely dined. Many thanks to Edward Hardy for his Trip Organiser. The nine comments on Trip Advisor were star loaded.

The Banagher Roof Fund has reached €8,654. This has come from the hugely successful Sale of Work and generous donations. Thank you for all who have played their part in raising this sum.

Hurry up and get better soon, Les. I can’t write another one of these!
JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS

Congratulations and well done to all Junior Certificate candidates.

LIMERICK CITY CULTURE NIGHT

Bells & Bell Ringing at St Mary’s Cathedral on 20 September was a great success, with crowds of all ages attending. Bell ringing lessons and a live video link from the tower and activities for children were the highlights of the night. A great celebration of Limerick’s landmark building. Thank you to the Bell Ringers for a very successful event.

PLANT SALE AND AUTUMN FAIR

This is taking place in Villiers School on Saturday 19th of October which is only a few weeks away. Plant stall, cake sale, book stall, Raffle and teas & coffees are just a few of the things not to be missed. Your support would be very welcome.

WHIST DRIVES

St. Michael’s Church – Saturday 12th October (Raffle); Saturday 9th November & Saturday 7th December (Raffle).

Villiers Square – Saturday 16th November & Saturday 14th December 2013

Adare and Kilmallock Group of Parishes

Adare, Croom, Kilmallock, Kilpeacon

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

We have had some weddings over the summer and it is good to see that people still choose a church in which to get married. There are so many alternatives to a church nowadays and hotels are trying to capture the ‘whole package’ so to speak. There is still something beautiful the moment the bride walks down the aisle and the groom waits and then stand before the witnesses of heaven and earth and before God. Grahame Todd and Alison Hales were married in Adare. We wish them well as they make a new life for themselves in Kildare. Mark Cox and Margaret Costello were married at Kilpeacon church. It is lovely to have them as part of this congregation now.

MOTHERS’ UNION

The Mothers’ Union group in the parishes of Limerick, Askeaton and Adare had their joint service at Adare Church on 16 September. Around thirty gathered to mark the end of the summer holidays and getting back into the routine of their ministry as the Mothers’ Union. They were challenged in the sermon to look at their structure. If the MU is to an effective group they need to look at doing things differently. This is the only way that change will come about. If we keep doing things the same way we cannot expect the result to be any different. The theme they have chosen for this year is ‘Sowing the Future together.’

LAY MINISTRY

The development of lay ministry has taken a step forward with the commissioning of three Parish Readers. Ann Gill, Dorothy Brislane and Phoebe Barret. The church is clergy centred and we need to develop a new way of being church. It is the laity who remain in congregations for many decades and clergy move on. It is the laity that can provide the stability and outreach that is needed. To this end we have also started with week-day services in people’s homes. It is hoped that the rector and readers can develop this ministry. We had a home Eucharist service in Jesse Griffin’s home for example on a Wednesday evening and 30 people were there. Friends, family, neighbours from different denominations. We will see how this develops especially in areas where churches were closed but we still have a family or two living there.

YOUTH

The youth club has commenced again in Adare and next meet on 28 September and then every fortnight. This is a great group of young people and we hope with Niki Downes, Kenneth Baker, and Olivia Gardiner this ministry will grow from strength to strength. It is hoped again that this will be bought into by the central region and instead of starting anew that a strong group be developed. We hope that some music group can also be formed as we move to look at youth orientated services to have them occasionally at first and if there is an interest that this too becomes a regular slot.
It seems hardly a minute since it was high summer, and yet by the time this gets to the pews it will be October. Just as the last edition of Newslink was going to press Askeaton Parish welcomed its two newest members, Isabel Langford and her cousin William Taylor. It was a great joy to welcome them both, they are the second and third baptisms in Askeaton this year. We must be doing something right!

Like everyone else we are looking forward to the Gathering To Go event on 29th September, it is bound to be great. That is, however, not the only thing to look forward to. Our joint Harvest Service will be on Friday 11th October at 8.00 p.m. in Holy Trinity Rathkeale, with the Rev’d Lucy Green as the preacher. Hopefully you will all make an effort to come along and contribute to the event, especially as we are hoping to raise an astonishing amount of money for our local Butterfly Club, which helps and supports families who have children with special needs.

During October and part of November Rev’d Keith Scott will be off on sick leave. While he is away pastoral matters will be attended to by Rev’d Gary Paulsen from Adare. You can reach him on 061 396227 or 085 7640533. Services will take place in all the usual places, but you may find that a Eucharist has to be converted into morning prayer, given the shortage of priests available in our diocese at the moment. Please be patient with us. Keith will be at home, except for the few days he is in hospital so feel free to call in for a chat and he would welcome your prayers for a speedy recovery.

Ashe St., Tralee. Co. Kerry
Parish Office: Teach an tSolais, St. John’s Church,
Rektor: Rev. Sue Watterson
Tel: 066 712 2245 Email: tralee@ardfert.anglican.org

GOOD NEWS
Our big news this month is that our long vacancy will come to an end when the Rev. Sue Watterson takes up duty as our Rector in a Service of Institution to be held in The Church of St. John the Evangelist, Tralee on the evening of Saturday 5th October. Rev Sue is particularly welcomed by the members of our Ministry Team who came to know her during her time in Killarney when she had oversight of Reader training. We are very much looking forward to working with her.

SOUP KITCHEN
One of the most worthwhile uses to which our Parish Centre, Teach an tSolais, is put is the weekly Soup Kitchen which operates each Saturday from 12 noon to 2pm. This service is the brainchild of Collette Price and Dawn Roberts who, with a band of willing volunteers, provide free sandwiches, soup, main meals, desserts, and tea or coffee to whomever wishes to attend. At present they serve about 50 people each week but they hope this number will grow as the news of the service spreads to those who might benefit from it.

ABOUT PEOPLE
We congratulate the McMahon family on the safe arrival of baby Dylan to the delight of Mum and Dad, Trish and Paul, along with grandparents, Mary and Michael Fitzpatrick and Lorna and Kevin McMahon.

Harry George Mutch, the second son of Marion Lean and Steven Mutch, residents of Banger, Co. Down, was welcomed into the Christian Church at a service of Holy Baptism in St. John’s on Saturday 24 August.

Congratulations to Annmarie Blennerhassett, daughter-in-law of our Parish Secretary, Yvonne, who was selected as Best Dressed Lady at this year’s Dublin Horse Show in spite of almost leaving her hat behind in Tralee when she returned to Dublin after the baptism of baby Sam.

We are pleased to hear that St. John’s parishioner, Samuel Kiwanuka, has received his right of residency in Ireland which means that he may now move out from his hostel accommodation and (like so many others) is allowed to look for work. The ashes of Evelyn Giles Mitchell, sister of Trevor Giles, who died on August 8th 2011, as well as those of her husband Frederick L. Mitchell who died on August 5th this year, were interred at a private ceremony conducted by Rev. Joe Hardy and Rev. Michael Savage on Saturday 31st August.

NEW SEASON
Now that the leaves are beginning to fall, or here in Kerry being blown, from the trees, our various parish organisations are awakening from their summer slumbers and stretching their limbs as they look forward to their new season’s activities. We wish The Boys’ Brigade, Youth Club, both Sunday Clubs (Tralee and Ballymacelligott), LINKS, the Healer Prayer Group, the newly formed Wednesday Club and the Cub Scouts who, although unconnected with our parish but meet in our Parish Centre, every blessing on their activities in 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

Askeaton Parish
Langford and Taylor Christenings

Ardfert Diocese

Killarney and Aghadoe Union of Parishes.
Killarney, Aghadoe and Muckross
(Vacant)
Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Máirt Hanley.
Mob: 087-619 4733
Email: rev.hanley@gmail.com

HARVEST FESTIVAL
Our Harvest Festival is rapidly approaching. This year our guest preacher is the Rev. Peter Rhys Thomas (possibly his Killarney debut!) and very importantly the funds raised at the service are being given to the Killarney Friends of Chernobyl fund. This is a very hardworking local charity that has for many years (imagine the Chernobyl disaster took place over 27 years ago) brought children from Chernobyl for a summer break staying with families in Killarney.
GET WELL!

    All our thoughts and prayers are with Hazel Blennerhassett as she continues her road to recovery after surgery. We wish her and all her family God’s strength and support and look forward to having her back amongst us soon.

WELCOME BACK

    Congratulations to Canon Sue Watterson on her appointment as Rector of Tralee Group of Parishes. You are very welcome back to the Kingdom, Sue, and come highly recommended from us in Killarney.

    If variety is the spice of life, then we in Killarney have done rather well so far in this period of vacancy in the parish. Clergy conducting services over the last few months have included Rev. David Hilliard, Joe Hardy, Alan Shaw, Bishop Trevor, Canon Brian Lougheed and Rev. Mairt Hanley as well as our two lay readers Adrian and Andrew. We are thankful to all these for their ministry.

CONGRATULATIONS

    Congratulations to Ben Eadie on success in the Junior Certificate. We wish all students and teachers happiness in their pursuit of knowledge now that they have returned to studies.

TOURISTS AND CHURCH

    We are nearing the end of another busy tourist season in Killarney. The number of people visiting our church remains very high. They come for all sorts of reasons from snapping photos to finding a peaceful place to reflect and pray. Unfortunately, less want to join in our Sunday services than in bygone years. Therein lies the challenge. We meet them at the concerts, we offer up their prayer messages. But there remains a huge potential to provide a witness through an increased presence in the church. Meet the people on their terms!

Kilcolman Union of Parishes

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

    This September must rate as one of the busiest months the parish has had in a long time. We started the month with a bang as we had the commissioning of our new parish reader Barbara. This was a great event well supported by the parish and local community with the Men’s Shed Choir joining us to boost the singing for the service and sing us out at the end. Here is what one parishioner said about the event:

        One Sunday morning about a year ago a lady visited our Church in Killorglin. She was made welcome and invited to join us for tea/ coffee after the service in our adjacent hall. She was impressed by the friendship shown to her so she became a regular attender. Since then she has become a regular reader and then undertook training to become a Parish Reader.

        She became involved in Morning Prayer reading lessons and leading the prayers and finally was commissioned on 1st of September. This goes to show what good can come out of a friendly welcome on a Sunday morning. You never know what talent is sitting in the pews until you get a break like that to open doors into a new opportunity.

        The next Sunday was our Sunday School’s first day back and then we had our harvest. My deepest thanks to all who made the harvest the success it was, all those on BBQ and gazebo duty, the kitchen crew, the clean up gang, all the decorators, the children with their baskets and of course the Dean, Sandra, for coming down to be our harvest preacher.

    Attention is now on the visiting group from Güntersberge who will arrive on Wednesday and go with us to Limerick for the Gathering. There has been a lot of preparation for this trip and here is what Pauline Dobbins of Castlemaine has to say about it:

        “We have formed a link with Pastor Michael Laban of the Lutheran Church and his Güntersberge group of parishes in the Harz region in Germany. The visit which 7 of us made last November to their lovely little town was a great success. We were given a really warm welcome and quickly made friends despite a few language difficulties.

        To raise funds for their return visit we held a very enjoyable garden party combined with a book and cake sale this June in Castlemaine and thanks to all the people who worked so hard on the day we hope we can amply repay the wonderful hospitality we received last year.

        12 of our German friends are with us this week and I would like to say to them all, ”Wir freuen uns, euch hier in Irland begrüssen zu dürfen!”

        Pauline also wrote a few words on the one face that will be missed most during the visit:

        “Music is an important part of our worship and Aine our organist held very useful and interesting singing lessons in St. Michael’s church hall every Wednesday the whole of last year. Some of her young music students have been entertaining us on Sundays in our coffee session after Morning Service, gaining experience in performing before a large group of people. Since she passed away in August we miss her dreadfully as she was a good friend to all of us. Her daughter-in-law Edel has generously stepped in to play the organ for us for the time being.”

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 Mob: 087 1606312
    Email: michael.cavanagh@eircom.net

    NO NOTES SUBMITTED

EDITORIAL continued from page 4...

    And then for something completely different we went to the main Sunday service at Holy Trinity Brompton in London, or HTB as everyone calls it. I was expecting a Eucharist, but it was more like a Stewardship Sunday Service of the Word. The congregation of many hundreds were mostly young adults, but with a sprinkling of oldies. We sang songs from an overhead projector accompanied by a rock band - the drummer locked away behind Perspex screens – many with hands in the air. Marty likened it to an American evangelical mega-church. The Vicar, Nicky Gumbel, spoke powerfully asking us to consider our giving, with just the faintest hint that God might be generous to us if we were to him. HTB has a budget of £9.8 million for 2013, so giving by the large and evidently prosperous congregation is important. HTB does a lot of outreach work. It is the home of the Alpha Course, taken by millions around the world. And 4,300 delegates attended the recent HTB Leadership Conference in the Albert Hall. I was left feeling somewhat suspicious of the big business ethos, though.

    But my criticisms are carping and I let my prejudices show. A God who creates such diverse life on earth must love diversity. Surely God rejoices in the different ways that his people choose to worship him. So let us rejoice in them too, as we walk together the Pilgrim road – we have much to learn from one another.

    God bless, Joe Sanders, Editor.
Superintendent writes

The Methodist District

The Methodist District Superintendent writes

Whilst stationed in Belfast, I found the Belfast to Cork flight very useful in keeping in touch with family, particularly ageing parents, and this flight allowed me to back at my desk by 9am on some occasions.

When one of the planes on this route crashed, there were casualties, but one of those who survived was an attendee at a local Christian conference. On ‘facebook’ God was praised for saving ‘one of His followers.’ Many of us were perplexed by this claim.

Whilst serving as Mission Partners in la Cote d’Ivoire, my wife Eirene and myself were caught up in the aftermath of a Kenyan airways flight from Abidjan to Lagos, that plunged into the sea soon after take-off. Some of the best missionaries and development workers were on board. They perished, a few survived, others fortuitously missed the plane. Why?

Dr Griffith Jones writes:

‘...the piety that sees a sign of divine favour in escape from a sudden danger which destroys other lives, is a spurious and egotistic travesty of the faith that knows that “God spared not His own Son but freely gave him up for us all.” The true Christian will not ask for immunity from... impending calamity, but will ask for the power to overcome the world in a spirit that is courageous...’

We live in a world where people die in accidents, get cancer, perish in earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis. God does not will or cause suffering; Matthew 18:14.

The former Anglican Bishop of Bath and Wells, Peter Price, wrote in his book ‘Undersong’ that there are certain events like accidents, natural disasters, getting ill, which God does not control. This does not prevent God being God. Millions can testify how God helped them to bear pain and grief. To paraphrase Psalm 121; my help comes from God, not my pain, my tragedy, my grief, but my help.

Perhaps we misunderstand God’s almightiness. Almost all the New Testament references to His Almightiness, are about the ultimate triumph of His kingdom. St Paul speaks of his ‘thorn in the flesh’ 2 Corinthians 12:7–10. He pleaded three times with God to cure him. This did not happen. But he was able to hear his Lord say: “my grace is all you need, for my power is stronger when you are weak.”

Not everyone is cured, but let us praise God for the stories of healing which we ignore or dismiss and which are on-going: where there is pain that cannot be relieved but is bravely borne; a disability that cannot be reversed but is no barrier to cheerful living; where a death which cannot be avoided is serenely awaited; these are on-going testimonies to the healing power of God.

Rev Brian D Griffin
Superintendent of the Midlands & Southern District

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Report of Methodist Midland and Southern District Synod

by Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu, Superintendent of the Carlow Kilkenny Circuit

WELCOME

The Midlands and Southern District Synod took place on September 14th 2013 at the Gurteen Agricultural College in County Tipperary from 2.30–5.30pm. The District Superintendent and Chair of the gathering, the Rev. Brian Griffin, called Synod to order by extending a warm welcome to all, especially those who were attending for the first time. Among the latter were the Reverends Bill Mullally who has been newly appointed to the Cork Circuit for the future. It is this awareness of the church being on a journey of the urgent need to continue to ardently seek God’s way forward as to the way forward for the church. In 2006 the 24/7 Prayer movement started enabling local churches to explore new ways and areas of prayer. Consequently, there was an increasing realization of the urgent need to continue to ardently seek God’s way forward for the future. It is this awareness of the church being on a journey on which we need spiritual sensitivity to God that led to the special Conference of 2013.

SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 3:1-17 was read followed by a short commentary reiterating points made by the President, Rev. Dr. Heather Morris, in her Conference inaugural address. They included the following:

- God invites us to follow
- Like Joshua and his people, we need to risk stepping out on the ground we are not certain would hold us up
- It is the only option we have
- And following involves movement
- We are not alone but a people, with God leading us in and through Christ
- We are one people holding one another’s hands
- We are invited; let’s go.

AFTER CONFERENCE WHERE TO?

This was a question referred to Synod by the last annual Conference and most of Synod’s time was spent dealing with this item. The Home Missions Secretary the Rev. Des Bain and Lay Treasurer Mr Tom Wilson had been appointed to deal with this business. In doing so, they informed members about the main emphasis of the annual Methodist Conference which took place in Carickfergus, Northern Ireland, this year. Stating the theme of that conference ‘A People Invited to Follow’, Mr. Bain noted that it was a Conference with a difference, designed to create space for members to listen to God and one another. A specially created video which introduced the theme of that Conference on the first full day of the Representative Session was then played. This was followed by a short review of the journey the Methodist Church in Ireland had taken to date. The milestones included the ‘dreaming dreams’
After a short time of prayer, a video clip was played in which some of those who attended Conference stated their expectations at the beginning and expressed at the end if those expectations were fulfilled.

Members of Synod were then asked whether God was still stirring things since Conference. If so, what are we going to do as individuals, churches, circuits and as a District? An inspiring and encouraging story of a Methodist lady in Dundrum who was stirred to organize a Christian presence at the Electric Picnic this year was told. Over three hundred people visited her tent during the week—posting thoughts on a wall of lament and leaving prayers on an altar she had constructed.

Brainstorming conversations were held between small groups of 3 or 4 people to share what new things they have done in their churches since after Conference. This was followed by a feedback session during which mention was made of several new initiatives including a parenting and alpha course in partnership with a local Catholic church, a Saturday night service in addition to a Sunday morning one and coffee/messy church.

The following three points were noted as coming out of the last Conference:

- God is doing a new thing
- There is a sharper hunger for God
- There is a challenge for a new kind of leadership within the church to empower people

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR DISTRICT?

When this question was put to representatives from our District at Conference, the following questions were posed as a result of the discussions that took place:

1. Is it Ok to reach Catholic people to come to the Methodist Church?
2. How do we bring church to people if they don’t come to church?
3. Is our aim to get people to the Methodist Church or to Christ?
4. What sort of people are we in the church and what are we doing about it?

Members were divided into four groups and each group was given one of the above questions to reflect upon. Some of the points made during the feedback session were as follows:

- Worship is for Christ; it is only organized by Methodists
- Aim is to share Christ outside the building
- Church should be a welcoming church to people to be part of the family of Christ

We need to meet people where they are (become an invitational church)
We should offer Christ not the Methodist church
On a personal level, reaching out is about relationships
We need to look at how we use our church buildings
Prayer can be an important part of bringing church to people
Need to allow the spirit to blow us in directions she chooses

We were reminded that the reason for our existence is growth—not just in numbers, but also in spiritual health. So we need to continually define and redefine our vision, purpose and values. The Methodist DNA is that we are a people of deep personal holiness, engaging in courageous evangelism and offering compassionate social action.

When this special business session ended, the Synod appointed the lay and ministerial representatives to the 2014 Conference.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF HOME MISSION

The Birr, Athlone & Tullamore and Portlaoise Circuits will share a Superintendent Minister from July 2014 assisted by a part-time Minister. Adare & Ballingrane are seeking a part-time Minister from July 2014. It was noted that the success of these arrangements would depend on the availability of a grant that has been requested through Home Missions. A member of Synod expressed his unhappiness that an important decision like this was based purely on financial reasons.

THE SURF PROJECT

Jono Griffin gave a very heartening report on the surfing project and school which he leads. He started this project in 2008 and it has since seen huge interest in it by young people North and South. A successful cross-culture surfing programme with the Basque country is being sponsored by the European Union and has generated much hope for cross-cultural relationships, learning, and even sharing of Christian faith. It is simply a place and space where people can interact and share. A surf school with properly taught lessons has been established; and several successful events have already taken place. The finances are healthy and the project is self-funded.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sahr Yambasu informed Synod about his newly published book ‘Between Africa and the West’ and several copies were bought by members of Synod. The profit of about 4 Euro per book will be going towards supporting a project in Sierra Leone with which he is involved. The Mount Everest Trek and Ploughing Championship events were also announced before the closing prayers.

Methodist News

Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit
Minister: Rev. Elizabeth Hewitt
Methodist Manse, Rathkeale Rd, Adare, Co. Limerick.
Tel: 061 396236
Email: mliz.hewitt7@gmail.com

SERVICE TIMES
Adare: 10.15 am
Ballingrane: 11.45 am
Sunday School during morning services

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

We hope you enjoyed our harvest celebrations this year. Our harvest weekend marked the end of our Year of Anniversaries. It’s been interesting to look back and now we’re very much in the frame of mind to look forward. We face a challenge that all churches face – to be relevant in our community. A group of us from Christ Church will be attending the day conference in Portlaoise - What’s Now for Multi-Ethnic Churches? The hope of this gathering is that it
will nurture, support and inspire multi-ethnic churches for ministry and mission. We attended the event last year and found it really interesting to meet other congregations who are facing similar situations. We’ve welcomed back Open House Limerick to a newly refurbished CB1. The Civic Trust made a fine job of revamping our ground floor space on O’Connell Street and we’re extremely grateful to them. You might have seen some of the work that’s been done if you’ve looked at our Facebook page – Christ Church/Central Buildings.

Bookings have been picking up now for CB2 – the first floor. We’ve had a lovely variety of groups from Blue Box Arts Therapy to City of Culture History and Heritage Pillar to Limerick Volunteer Centre…and more. Perhaps you know a community group who might enjoy using the space for a modest donation; if you do, please suggest that they get in touch.

You may also have noticed that Doras Luimní has moved into the second floor office space. We’re delighted that they’ve joined us. I believe they began their project in Christ Church Hall so they have rather rejoined us! We’re very much looking forward to exploring ways of working together. For anyone who is unfamiliar with their work this is how they describe themselves – ‘Our vision for Ireland is a society where equality and respect for the human rights of migrants are social norms. Doras Luimní aims to promote and uphold the human rights and wellbeing of migrants through personal advocacy, integration development and collaborative advocacy campaigns at the local and national level. We work to change the lives of migrants, change legislation and change society.

Look out for our art and craft exhibition coming soon to CB1. We’ve discovered there’s quite a bit of talent in Christ Church and we’re going to flaunt it – or something like that!

**LIMERICK**

Sunday Service 11.30 am.
Holy Communion 1st Sunday
Family Service 3rd Sunday
Sunday School 1st, 2nd & 4th Sundays
Youth Group 2nd & 4th Sundays
Lectio Divina Tuesday 11 am in the meeting room (access from the lane)
Youth Group Mondays 7.30 – 8.30 pm – contact Rev Vicki Lynch

**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 & Millstreet Methodist Churches**

[ministerev@irishmethodist.org]
Tel: 064 6631613
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 8.00 a.m. – 9.00 a.m.
Bible Study Meetings: Wednesday 7pm.
Bible Study Meetings: Wednesday 8.00 p.m. and Friday 10.00 a.m.
Drop in for coffee each Friday 11.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.
Parent and Toddler Group. Tuesdays 10am – 12pm

**Youth Club (11+) 2nd & 4th Fridays 8-10pm preceded by Youth Bible Group at 7pm.**

**Women’s Fellowship 1st Monday of the month 10am-12noon.**

**KENMARE “GATEWAY” GORTAMULLIN, KILLARNEY ROAD, KENMARE.**

Sunday Service. 11am (preceded by coffee)
(inc. Children’s’ programme)
Weekly Bible Study/Fellowship meetings. Tuesdays at 8.00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 10.00 a.m.
Drop in for coffee each Wednesday 11am – 12.00 p.m.

**MILLSTREET**

Services every Sunday evening at 6.30 p.m. Meeting in Drishane Castle.

**Bible study every Tuesday at 8pm in Millstreet Enterprise Centre on the town square.**

**As well as all the regular activities listed above the Gneeveguilla Home Fellowship group continues to meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursday evenings of each month at 8pm.**

**In Lispole (Dingle) the Home Fellowship group continues on the last Thursday of each month at 8pm. However we are hoping soon to begin another meeting each month in the Gairdin Mhuire Day Care Centre on Green Street in Dingle town. At time of going to print the date of the first meeting is still not confirmed but we should be sure by the next edition.**

**The recently commencement Home Fellowship meeting in Castlesislands continues on the third Monday of each month at 8pm at a home in the town. Contact Laurence for details of the location. Please also keep this new initiative in your prayers.**

**We were blessed by the visit of Pastor Bob Warning and his wife Laurie from California during September. It was a joy to have them sharing with us at various events in our Churches.**

**During September the District Synod of the Methodist Church met in Gurteen and there was a really exciting presentation summarizing what happened at the Annual Conference of our Church in June. We then spent time in groups continuing the conversation as to how we can continue this momentum on our District. We also spent time discussing how to be most effective in our worship, witness and outreach in this region.**

**In October Laurence (who is General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society in Ireland) will attend a special commemoration in Leeds, England. This is to mark the two hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Leeds Methodist Missionary Society which quickly developed to become the Methodist Missionary Society across Britain and Ireland. This is a significant moment to look back and thank God for all that has happened over two hundred years of witness around the world. It is also a time to look for God’s guidance and strength in our ongoing mission “…..across the world, across the street…..”.”**

**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

At the recent ‘farewell’ to the Rev Lesley Robinson, the Rev Brian Griffin gave the following tribute:

“Throughout the last five years, Lesley has been a faithful colleague and friend. Though the youngest Church leader in Roscrea, she has been our natural ecumenical leader, keeping Father Tom Corbett and myself focused on what is coming next.”

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“Lesley’s ambition and bravery have been evident in many of the events she organised and has frequently, if not always, been proved right. The events have all been of a standard not only to challenge but to uplift our spirits as together she envisaged us all ‘moving onwards’. The resurrecting of the Boys’ Brigade was an important achievement.

“Lesley has been a good friend of the Methodists and has generously supported our arranged services and church events. Eirene (wife of Rev Brian) spoke of Lesley’s role to her as Priest, Counsellor and Friend. In the constant moving of Methodist Ministers, often the needs of the ‘wife’ get lost in the workload and local demands. Lesley was always available. Her smile was reassuring and comforting and made one feel truly wanted... thank you Lesley, you will be so missed.”

The Rev Dr Heather Morris, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, will preach at the Birr Methodist Church Harvest Home Service on Sunday 20 October at 7.00 pm. This annual service, has, over the last two years, been a ‘gathering’ of Methodists from 4 circuits in the Midland Region: Birr, Athlone and Tullamore; Portlaoise; North Tipperary; Carlow and Kilkenny.

A second Conference for Multi-ethnic Churches will be held in the Killeshlin Hotel, Portlaoise, on Saturday 5 October 2013, from 10.00 am – 4.15 pm. The Keynote Speaker is the Rev Dr Inderjit Bhogal, Leader of the Corrymeela Community and a former President of the Methodist Conference. Insights from other churches will be provided by Fr Bobby Gilmore and Philip McKinley of the Blanchardstown Methodist Congregation will speak on 'Multi-ethnic Churches as the Role Model for Society.'

Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu in his book “Between Africa and the West” gives a humourous and important insight into the challenges that faced him, leaving a small remote village in Sierra Leone to becoming a Christian missionary in Ireland. He deals with the important and global themes of culture, colonization, change, resistance, conversion, displacement, development ... and the longing for his home country. He does so in an illuminating, thought-provoking refreshingly honest and engaging way. This is a book with a ‘good read’. Tel Dr Sahr: 059 9132445 for copies.

During the month of October the Irish School of Ecumenics are organising another series of ‘Thinking Together’ this time about justice. These will be held in Birr Methodist Church on Tuesday evenings at 8.00 pm.

The Church of Ireland Youth Club met recently in the Roscrea Methodist Church Hall when Jonathan (Jono) Griffin introduced the Surf Project. During the month of October it is planned to introduce the young people to a trip to experience the joy and freedom of surfing at Spanish Point, Co Clare. The motto of the ‘Surf Project’ is “Living Life to the Full.” Jono and Beth are available to speak to Youth Groups; Church Leaders; Schools and Uniformed Organisations around the country. The Surf Project is about empowering people to experience a new dimension to life and new ways of relating to one another. Contact Jono and Beth: 0861282803. info@thesurfproject.org

The Roscrea MWI are organising two events: a “Pretty Pink Party” celebrating being a woman on Tuesday 8 October at 8.00 pm in aid of Breast Cancer Research; and a Table Quiz on Friday 1 November 8.00 pm.

The South Tipperary House Fellowship will meet on Friday 18 October at the Bateman home, Ballylooby, Near Cahir. A welcome is extended to all those who would enjoy a relaxed but informative evening, looking at life issues and sharing books. The evening starts with ‘around the table’ fellowship ... contact Lucy Bateman at 0527442058 for directions.

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Reclaiming Mary

– an extract from the address given by Canon Marie Rowley-Brooke at St Mary’s Cathedral, Limerick, on the Feast Day of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 8th September 2013

In the Church of Ireland our treatment of Mary has tended to follow the method of self-identification that Bishop Trevor so lucidly touched on over the past few months in his conversations about our identity as Anglicans in our United Dioceses. We have inclined in the past to define ourselves by what we believe to be the earliest Gospel written. It’s a narrative that’s not very complimentary either. Mary appears in Chapter 3 with the rest of Jesus’ brothers and sisters to try to remove him from the synagogue where he’s causing a commotion with his radical teaching and healing. She gets quite a putdown for her lack of understanding. But, we have to set this in the context of the whole of Mark’s Gospel where all the disciples are portrayed as someone dim-witted, continually failing to get the point of what Jesus is about.

Mark of course doesn’t contain a nativity story, whereas Luke and Matthew do. Matthew, being a typically orthodox man of his time, relates all the important stuff about Jesus’ birth through the angel’s visitations to Joseph in dreams. Mary does not speak, she is not a silent necessity. John in his Gospel, like Mark, has no Nativity narrative. Instead, he places ‘the mother of Jesus’ (he never mentions her by name) not at the manger, but at the foot of the cross. Here, as in Matthew’s Gospel, she is silent.

It is from the Gospel of Luke, and from Acts of the Apostles that we receive most of our information about Mary, and hear her speak. The Nativity story that we love so much comes primarily from Luke. But are we in danger of keeping Mary perpetually in the crib set, locked into that moving, often far too sentimental image of motherhood? Does Mary, can Mary, do we permit Mary to function other than through her womb?

It is Luke who moves Mary on from that Nativity story, and on from the crucifixion. In one crucial verse in Chapter 1 of Acts of the Apostles, Luke records that after the Resurrection and before Pentecost the disciples were in Jerusalem, ‘together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus as well as his brothers.’ That one little sentence moves Mary from Galilee to the heart of the new community that is to become a Christian community. And so the drama of the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost is experienced by Mary, and it is here I suggest that we can see her moving from mother to disciple.

From Mary’s lips came the great Magnificat, with its

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uncompromising and disturbing promises of God’s actions. “He hath put down the mighty from their seat; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.” Sometimes you know, only the King James translation will do! Words so powerful and disturbing that the reciting or singing of the Magnificat has been banned in times past. Some examples include its proscription in the early 19th century during the British rule in India; the military junta in Argentina forbade its use in the 1970s, and in the 1980s the Guatemalan government banned its singing or recitation.

The Mary who proclaimed the Magnificat and who was present at the coming of the Spirit is the Mary whom I suggest is our Mary; not the Mary of meek and obedient and submissive virtue, that picture that has pleased and satisfied so many churchmen and theologians in years past; that idealised portrait of what they wanted their ideal woman to be. Certainly the Church of Ireland has been complicit in this. Look for instance at hymn No 462: “For Mary, mother of our Lord” – in verse 3 we are invited to sing the words: “in meek obedience she believed, though hard the task assigned”. Why I wonder did our Church of Ireland see it necessary to change those words from the original words by J R Peacey which read, “Brave, holy, virgin, she believed, though hard the task assigned.” Are the qualities of courage and holiness not suitable for Mary, and by extrapolation, not suitable for all women? Let’s kick this patriarchal attitude into touch, and into history. Let us reclaim our Mary; an uncompromising disciple; a woman of action.

In the grounds of Salisbury Cathedral in Wiltshire, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, there is a statue of Mary, created by the sculptor, Elizabeth Frink. It’s entitled “The Walking Madonna”. Mary is portrayed with her back to the cathedral – tremendous symbolism here – her back to all the heavyweight ecclesiastical structures of buildings and organisation that can be such a cumbersome drawback to mission. She is walking – no, not walking – actually she is striding out to the gates that lead to the High Street, where all the mess and muck and pain and despair of the world is preventing God’s beloved people from growing into the persons God created them to be. Mary is bearing the companionate and compassionate Word in a different way than she did as a maiden mother. She bears and brings the Christ as his disciple. And that is the model I suggest that is our today as worshippers in this Cathedral dedicated to her. To stride out into the mess and muck and pain and despair of the world, to bear and bring the companionate and compassionate Word to those who have never heard of it; to be true disciples of Christ.

So on this Feast Day of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Theotokos, Mother of God, may this Cathedral and all of us who work and witness here, firstly, be grateful for the courage of a young girl who freely consented to be the mother of our Lord, and secondly, be faithful to the example of discipleship Mary has shown us. May we be singers of the Magnificat out of the gates of this building and down into the city of Limerick so that God’s great adventure, the Kingdom of God, may come nearer in our time. Amen.

Walking Madonna, by Elizabeth Frink

**PRAYER CORNER**

**Collect Reflection – 21st Sunday after Trinity**

by Rev. Michael Johnston

Merciful Lord,

Grant to your faithful people pardon and peace,

that we may be cleansed from all our sins

and serve you with a quiet mind;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This collect, of medieval origin, is also familiar as being the prayer used by a deacon or lay person after the Confession in Morning and Evening Prayer. It is primarily concerned with the gift of God’s peace – inward peace with God through Christ is necessary before there can be outward peace.

According to the collect this inward peace depends upon these conditions:

- The recognition of God as being merciful. Through the cross God has made it possible for humanity to enter into God’s peace.
- The need for faith. Faithful people are people who are ‘full of faith’, people who believe that what God has promised God will also perform.
- Pardon must come before peace. Peace comes to those who recognise they have been cleansed from all their sins, and which continues day by day as they seek to walk with Christ.
- Finally, peace must lead to service. Peace can only be enjoyed by those who have been lifted out of their own concerns into the larger sphere of concern and service for all God’s people.

**Partners in Prayer – October 2013**

Each Sunday

The Diocese of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory and Bishop Michael Burrows

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

6th October, Trinity 19 (Proper 22), Green

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Sunyani, Ghana, West Africa and The Rt Revd Dr Festus Yebah-Asuamah

Our Diocese: We pray for our farming communities throughout the diocese at this Harvest time

13th October, Trinity 20 (Proper 23), Green

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Tamale, Ghana, West Africa and The Rt Revd Dr Jacob Ayebo

Our Diocese: Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group of Parishes and Canon Stephen Neill

20th October, Trinity 21 (Proper 24), Green

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of the Arctic, Rupert’s Land, Canada, Bishop David Parsons and Suffragan Bishop Darren McCartney

Our Diocese: Killala & Stradbally Union, Rev Lucy Green (Assistant Priest) and all those providing support ministry during the vacancy period

27th October, 5th Sunday before Advent (Proper 25), Green

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Torit, Sudan and The Rt Revd Bernard Oringa Balmoi

Our Diocese: Limerick City Parish, Dean Sandra Pragnell & Rev Jane Galbraith
The promise of peace

God’s word

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27 (NIV)

Place the peace!

Here are five words - if you fit them correctly into the grid above, you’ll make PEACE.

JESUS  AFRAID
PROMISE  ACCEPT
HEARTS

Let’s talk to Jesus!

Dear Jesus, thank you that you have promised us peace. Please help me to turn to you and not be afraid. Amen.

LIONS in the BIBLE

Not just in the arena in Rome, there are quite a few lions mentioned in the Bible...

1. An angel shut the lions’ mouths so that they couldn’t eat him (Daniel, chapter 6)
2. Who will lead the lion, wolf, lamb, goat and calf? (Isaiah, chapter 11)
3. He killed the lions or bears that threatened his father’s flocks (1 Samuel, chapter 17)
4. Who is like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat? (1 Peter, chapter 5)
5. He killed a lion on a day when it had snowed (2 Samuel, chapter 23)
6. The first creature was like a lion, what were the 2nd, 3rd and 4th creatures like? (Revelation, chapter 4)

On which day do lions eat people?

Chewday.

What did the lioness say to her cubs when she taught them to hunt?

‘Don’t go over the road till you see the zebra crossing.’

St IGNATIUS

feast day October 17th

Born in Syria, Ignatius converted to Christianity at an early age and eventually became bishop of Antioch. A tradition arose that he was one of the children whom Jesus had taken in his arms and blessed. Ignatius called himself ‘God Bearers’.

Ignatius is responsible for the first known use of the Greek word ‘katholikos’ meaning universal and whole to describe the church, he wrote: ‘Wherever the bishop appears, there let the people be; as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.

In the year 107, the Roman Emperor Trajan visited Antioch and forced the Christians living there to choose between death and denying Christ. Ignatius would not deny his Lord and so was condemned to be put to death in Rome.

Ignatius bravely met the lions in the Circus Maximus in Rome; dying and living as a witness to his belief.

Ours PAGE

dark a face like a man and a zebra eagle.

dead. In the jungle a zebra says a

I am sure you have a name.

2. A man and a zebra eagle.

3. A man and a zebra eagle.

4. 2. A man and a zebra eagle.

5. 2. A man and a zebra eagle.

6. 2. A man and a zebra eagle.
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