Christ washes the apostles’ feet

by Meister des Hausbuches, 1475 (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin)

If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet (John 13:14)
Life in the Church of Ireland 1600 – 1800

This 250-page book by Robert Wyse Jackson is the result of painstaking research into the turbulent life of clergy and laity of the many faceted Church of Ireland during political upheavals, the influences of plantation and of ecclesiastical establishment. The Rt. Reverend R. J. Jackson, onetime lawyer, country clergymen and eventually Bishop of Limerick (1961-1970), had a deep understanding of both rural and urban 17th and 18th century ecclesiastical society. Here he writes with confidence and uses contemporary quotations to present a true and not merely amusing and exciting, but compulsive read. You can order this book at www.ballinakellapress.com.

Confirmation Registers Now Available

A Bill passed at General Synod 2017 provides for the keeping of Confirmation Registers in parishes. Church of Ireland House, Dublin, now has Confirmation Registers in stock which may be purchased from the online store for €30/£26 (excluding postage) at: http://bit.ly/2BfAyyi. Registers are in A4 size and case-bound, with 64 pages. Each entry allows for the date of birth, name and address, and information on the Baptism and Confirmation of the candidate, to be included.

Any queries about the constitutional requirement to maintain a Confirmation Register can be directed to the Synod Officer, Dr Catherine Smith, at catherine.smith@rcbdub.org or 00 353 (0) 1 4125 656. For queries about the purchase of the registers, please contact Heather Jestin at heather.jestin@rcbdub.org or 00 353 (0) 1 4125 665.

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Bishop Kenneth writes – Ordained Local Ministry

There's been a lot of discussion throughout the Church of Ireland about Ordained Local Ministry (OLM). This new expression of ordained ministry has been approved by General Synod, and bishops have begun conversations in each diocese as to how and when it might be introduced.

In conversation with the bishops it is clear that some common themes are emerging, and some misconceptions are also arising.

What marks OLM out as different is the word “Local”. OLMs will be ordained to address a special need which exists in a local area (either a parish or group of parishes). It will be up to the diocese to decide where such a need exists, and whether the diocese wishes to seek an OLM to serve in that area. The main criteria in deciding whether a local area needs an OLM will be: “Is there a parish or a group of parishes currently not receiving Holy Communion regularly because there is no ordained person available, and this situation is likely to continue into the future?” Only after the diocese has answered this will the next step begin.

It is clear that Ordained Local Ministry is ordination as deacon and then as priest just like any other ordained person, and so must be dealt with by a diocese and by possible candidates with the same degree of seriousness as all ordination.

Central to this is the discernment of vocation, which is done by the church as a whole. In each case a possible candidate will be assessed by the bishop and by at least one clergyperson and lay person who don't know the candidate, and the requirements at this stage will be rigorous and strict, as they should be. This group will decide whether the candidate should be supported in applying to a regional selection conference, which will make recommendations to the bishop.

Several have expressed confusion between the role of a Diocesan Lay Reader and that of an Ordained Local Minister. They are quite distinct ministries, and there is no sense in which OLM is the “next step” for a Diocesan Lay Reader. Quite the contrary. By virtue of his/her licence a Lay Reader has a ministry to the whole diocese and not just to a local area, so many Lay Readers would find being an OLM quite restrictive, and nowhere near as varied as being a Lay Reader.

OLM is not a back door to full time ordained ministry. In fact the legislation at General Synod setting up this ministry specifically excludes transfer to either stipendiary or non-stipendiary ministry.

OLM is still in its infancy. It is a new expression of ministry and will take some time to settle in. There was controversy when Diocesan Lay Readers were permitted by General Synod in 1909, but now that is an essential and much valued form of ministry. Non-stipendiary ministry was debated for years in the 1980’s before it became part of our ordained life. Look at the controversy about women in the ordained ministry which went on for years, but now is an integral part of our church life.

OLM is a new step for us all. We will move gradually and gently with this ministry over the next few years as we explore ways in which it can appropriately become part of our life.

With all good wishes

+ Kenneth

The Rt. Revd. Kenneth Kearon,
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Kilbane House, Golf Links Road,
Castletroy, Limerick V94 X0EF
Tel: +353 (0)61 333635
Email: bishop@limerick.anglican.org

Diocesan Calendar

To place an entry please email the Editor at joc_sanders@iol.ie.

Mon 12th March, 11am-3pm or 7-9pm CME – Living & sustaining a life of prayer, The Rectory, Askeaton, Co Limerick

Tue 13th March, 7.45pm Mission Evening – “Sowing Seeds of Hope”, Rev Adrian McCartney, South Court Hotel, Limerick

Fri 23rd – Sun 25th March UDYC Spring Madness Senior Adventure Weekend (2nd level up), Castledaly, Athlone

Sat 24th March GFS Diocesan Prizeday & Service, Birr

Thu 29th March, 11.30am Maundy Thursday, Diocesan Chrism Eucharist, St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

Fri 13th – Sun 15th April UDYC Midlands Alive Junior Weekend (10-13 yrs), Durrrow, Co Laois

Sat 21st April, 10.30am – 12.30pm UDYC Fundraising Cake Sale & Coffee Morning, Dining Room, Basement Richmond Terrace, Henry Street, Limerick

Sat 21st April, 2.30pm UDYC Annual General Meeting, Dining Room, Basement Richmond Terrace, Henry Street, Limerick

Thu 26th April MU Diocesan Council

Fri 27th – Sun 29th April UDYC Taking a Leading Role part 1 (16+), Django's Hostel, Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary

See also the diocesan website www.limerick.anglican.org/calendar.

Appointment to Kilcolman Union of Parishes

Bishop Kenneth Kearon has announced the appointment of the Revd. Isabel Keegan as priest-in-charge of the parish of Kilcolman, and the Revd. Ann-Marie Stuart as assistant priest in the same parish. They are currently serving in the Diocese of Salisbury in the Church of England, and they are members of the Anglican Franciscan Community. Both have served as incumbents in the past, and Ann-Marie has experience of a ministry of spirituality and hopes to develop this in the diocese.

On hearing the news Isabel and Ann-Marie said: “we are delighted with this opportunity to minister in Co. Kerry which is indeed a very special place.” Bishop Kenneth commented: “I'm pleased to be able to welcome into the diocese two priests with a wide and varied experience of ministry, and I look forward to working with Isabel and Ann-Marie in the near future.”

A date for their Service of Welcome will be announced later.
Editorial – Not what I want

I have been pondering Jesus’s prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, shortly after the Last Supper, just before his betrayal by Judas with a kiss:

‘Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want’ (Mark 14:36).

Jesus is distressed and agitated, we are told. He is certain that what he is doing is the will of God, his loving Father. He knows what is likely to happen next – his execution as a dangerous agitator, perhaps even the agonising death of crucifixion. But he does not want to die – he is a man in the full strength and vigour of his early 30s, he loves life, he loves his friends, and he loves his ministry to those who need healing and forgiveness. So he prays to his loving Father for himself, that his death may be averted – ‘remove this cup from me’.

But that is only half his prayer. Even more important for Jesus than his own distress at the prospect of death is that his loving Father’s will should be done. So he finishes his prayer with ‘yet, not what I want, but what you want’.

This prayer of Jesus should be a model when we pray for ourselves, I think. When I desperately want something, it is right and proper for me to pray to God for it. If I cannot ask God for it, who can I ask? But I must never forget how much more important it is for God’s will to be done, than for my wish to be granted. So I should always finish a prayer for myself with Jesus’s words, ‘yet, not what I want, but what you want’.

In the end, like Jesus, we must trust that our loving Father knows what is best for us.

God bless, Joc Sanders

Data protection in the Church

An information pack is now available to help parishes meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which is coming into effect on 25th May 2018. This will affect all parishes, in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, as it replaces existing law on data protection and gives individuals more rights and protection in how their personal data is being used by organisations.

The pack is available on the Parish Resources section of the Church of Ireland website (http://bit.ly/2DQV09z) and includes a guide to GDPR, an information poster, a compliance checklist, and sample templates and forms.

Personal data is information about a living person which is capable of identifying them e.g. their name, date of birth, address, Personal Public Service Number or National Insurance Number. Parishes must comply with the GDPR’s requirements, in the same way as any other charity or organisation. If charities are not compliant, they can face a fine of up to 4% of their turnover or €20m (or the equivalent in sterling), whichever is larger. Charities will also face fines if they cannot tell individuals what information they are holding about them.

If you have any questions please contact Rebekah Fozzard, Special Projects Manager at the Representative Church Body, by email at rebekah.fozzard@rcbdub.org

Newslink

Newsl ink is the diocesan magazine for the United Diocese of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfern, which also includes the historic dioceses of Aghadace, Clonfert, Emily, Kilfenora and Kilmacduagh. For further information about the United Dioceses see the diocesan web site: www.limerick.anglican.org.

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

Editor

In addition to news from parishes, schools and diocesan organisations, the Editor is delighted to receive articles and letters for publication, as well as suggestions as to how Newsl ink may be improved.

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

Contact details:
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Deadlines

The next issue will be for April 2018, published for Easter Sunday.

All material must reach the Editor by Friday 16th March 2018 before 6.00pm, by email only, unless otherwise agreed.

Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

NEWSLINK ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2018
(UNCHANGED from 2017, for 10 issues February – December, part year pro-rata)
Delivered to pew in bulk €37
Individual copy by post €45
Collected from printer in bulk €30
(contact: Lawson Kirkpatrick, 39 Westfields, Clare Road, Ennis,
Co. Clare. Email: lsmkirkpatrick@outlook.com)

NEWSLINK ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2018
(UNCHANGED from 2017, full page is A4 portrait, half page A5 landscape etc)

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Prayer Corner

Partners in Prayer - March 2018

Each Sunday in March
Church of Ireland: Diocese of Derry & Raphoe and Bishop Ken Good.

4th March, 3rd Sunday of Lent, Violet
Diocese: For those who respond to human need by loving service.

11th March, 4th Sunday of Lent, or Mothering Sunday, Violet
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of England and Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury.
Diocese: For those who transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.

17th March, St Patrick, White
Diocese: For those who have come from overseas to live among us as St Patrick did, that they may find welcome and friendship.

18th March, 5th Sunday of Lent, Violet
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui and Most Revd Paul Kwong, Archbishop of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui & Bishop of Hong Kong Island.
Diocese: For those who strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

25th March, 3rd Sunday of Lent, Palm Sunday, Red or Violet
Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem and for Most Revd Suheil Dawani, Archbishop of Jerusalem & the Middle East and Archbishop in Jerusalem.
All glory, laud and honour, to thee, Redeemer, King, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.
Diocese: For the Kilcolman Union of Parishes and the congregations of St Michael's Church, Killorglin & St Carthage's Church, Castlemaine, as they await the arrival of Rev Isabel Keegan as priest-in-charge, and the Rev Ann-Marie Stuart as assistant priest.

1st April, Easter Day – 1st Sunday of Easter, White or Gold
Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

The Breastplate of St Patrick

I rise today with the power of God to guide me,
the might of God to uphold me,
the wisdom of God to teach me,
the eye of God to watch over me,
the ear of God to hear me,
the word of God to give me speech,
the hand of God to protect me,
the path of God to lie before me,
the shield of God to shelter me,
the host of God to defend me
against the snares of the devil
and the temptations of the world,
against every man who mediates injury to me,
whether far or near.

At-one-ment, not Atonement

Salvation is much more about at-one-ment from God’s side than any needed atonement from our side. Jesus did not come to change the mind of God about humanity (it did not need changing)! Jesus came to change the mind of humanity about God!

God does not love us because we are good; God loves us because God is good. Nothing we can do will either decrease or increase God’s eternal and infinite eagerness to love!

Fr Richard Rohr OFM

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday is famous for two things. The first is one of the final acts that Jesus did before His death: the washing of His own disciples’ feet. (see John 13) Jesus washed His disciples’ feet for a purpose: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is ‘Mandatum novum do vobis.’ The word ‘mundy’ is thus a corruption of the Latin ‘mandatum’ (or command). The ceremony of the ‘washing of the feet’ of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

But Thursday was also important because it was on that night that Jesus first introduced the Lord’s Supper, often called the Eucharist or Holy Communion.

Jesus and his close friends had met in a secret upper room to share the Passover meal together - for the last time. And there Jesus transformed the Passover into the Last Supper, saying, ‘this is my body’ and ‘this is my blood’ as he, the Lamb of God, prepared to die for the sins of the whole world. John’s gospel makes it clear that the Last Supper took place the evening BEFORE the regular Passover meal, and that later Jesus died at the same time that the Passover lambs were killed.

Christ washes the apostles feet – 12th century mosaic in the Cathedral of Monreale, Sicily
Pastoral and Spiritual Care of those with Dementia
The last of a series of 4 articles by Rev Rod Smyth, Rector of Nenagh

In this last article Rev Rod Smyth points to resources which may be found useful in the spiritual care of those with dementia.

This is not an article as such, but rather endeavours to provide a resource bank which those who have the responsibility of caring for the spiritual welfare of those who travel into Dementia may find helpful. It is by no means exhaustive, but I hope some of it will, at the very least, provide a starting point for further thought.

WEBSITES
• Royal College of Nursing, Dementia: Commitment to the Care of People with Dementia in Hospital Settings - www.rcn.org.uk, Publication search code 004235
• Diocese of Exeter Dementia friendly churches - exeter.anglican.org/resources/faith-action/dementia-friendly-churches/
• The Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (Resources and information on Reminiscence Therapy) - www.iriss.org.uk/resources/supporting-those-dementia-reminiscence-therapy-and-life-story-work
• Information on Dementia friendly churches - www.livability.org.uk/church/dementia-friendly-churches
• Candlelight Group: A Pilot Project for People with Dementia - www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/higgins_8_4_04.pdf

BOOKS
Three resources particularly suited to short services of meditation with Dementia patients are available for download from Scripture Union (Google the full title). They are:
• Being with God: A Bible and Prayer Guide for People with Dementia, Words of Faith, (Milton Keynes, Scripture Union, 2010).
• Being with God: A Bible and Prayer Guide for People with Dementia, Words of Peace, (Milton Keynes, Scripture Union, 2010).
• Being with God: A Bible and Prayer Guide for People with Dementia, Words of Hope, (Milton Keynes, Scripture Union, 2010).

Three other useful resources can be found in the following books, providing good practical examples of services for use with dementia patients, and on the care of the caregiver (all available from Amazon – search for the full title):
• Goldsmith, M, In a Strange Land: People with Dementia and the Local Church (London, 4M Publications, 2004) pp 213-220 (Form of service to be used on Admittance to a Nursing Home and A Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving for Friends and Family of People with Dementia in Residential Care)
• Shamy, E, A Guide to the Spiritual Dimension of Care for People with Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementia: More than Body, Brain and Breath (London, Jessica Kingsley, 2003), pp 203-222 (contains advice on visiting and sample services)

For those who are interested in delving deeper into the spiritual and pastoral care of those with dementia, I can provide a longer reading list – just email me at rsmyth6582@btinternet.com.

Church of Ireland
LIMERICK AND KILLALOE
DIOCESAN COUNCIL FOR MISSION

AN INVITATION TO A MISSION EVENING

Tuesday 13th March

IN

SOUTH COURT HOTEL,
RAHEEN, LIMERICK CITY

at 7.45 PM

SOWING SEEDS OF HOPE

SPEAKER
Rev Adrian McCartney

Everyone welcome from all Christian Churches in the local community.

Refreshments will be served before and after the meeting.

Lunchtime Concerts at St Mary’s

1.15pm in St Mary’s Cathedral, Limerick

Wednesday 4th April
Sarah-Ellen Murphy (alto), Peter Barley (piano)
Music by de Falla and Sibelius

Wednesday 11th April
Malcolm Green (piano)
Music by Haydn, Sibelius, Debussy and Chopin

Wednesday 18th April
Eileen Cleary (flute), Peter Barley (piano)
Music by J.S. Bach, Boccherini and Doppler

Free admission - retiring collection in aid of the Companions of St Mary’s Cathedral Music
Bishop Kenneth’s Lent Challenge 2018

Weeks 4 to 7

The Challenge is to use a form of daily prayer every weekday during Lent. An Order for Daily Prayer, together with daily Readings and Collects is provided. Find a quiet time each day in a comfortable chair to pray and to read a Bible reading, either alone or with someone else. It should take about 15 minutes. You will need a Bible.

AN ORDER FOR DAILY PRAYER

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. (John 4.24).

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. Amen.

Psalm 95.1-5

O come let us sing out to the Lord; Let us shout in triumph to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his face with thanksgiving And cry out to him joyfully in psalms.

For the Lord is a great God And a great king above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth And the peaks of the mountains are his also. The sea is his and he made it, His hands moulded dry land.

A Bible Reading (see Daily Readings)

Pause for Reflection on the reading.

Canticle (p 126. Part 2)

You, Christ, are the king of glory, The eternal Son of the Father. When you took our flesh to set us free, You humbly chose the Virgin’s womb. You overcame the sting of death And opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. You are seated at God’s right hand in glory: We believe that you will come to be our judge. Come then, Lord, and help your people, Bought with the price of your own blood, And bring us with your saints To glory everlasting.

Prayers:    For Family and Friends
    For the Church
    For the World
    For those who are sick or in need

Collect of the Day (See Collects)

The Lord’s Prayer

The Ending: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen

Week 4 (Collect)

Merciful Lord,
Grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Monday 5th March.       1 Corinthians 7: 25 - 31
Tuesday 6th March.       1 Corinthians 7: 32 - 40
Wednesday 7th March. 1 Corinthians 8: 1 - 13
Thursday 8th March. 1 Corinthians 9: 1 – 15
Friday 9th March.       1 Corinthians 9: 16 - 27
Saturday 10th March. 1 Corinthians 10: 1 – 13

Week 5 (Collect)

Lord God,
whose blessed Son our Saviour gave his back to the smiters and did not hide his face from shame:
Give us grace to endure the sufferings of this present time with sure confidence in the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Monday 12th March. 1 Corinthians 10: 14 – 11: 1
Tuesday 13th March. 1 Corinthians 11: (2-16) 17-34
Wednesday 14th March. 1 Corinthians 12: 1 – 11
Thursday 15th March. 1 Corinthians 12: 12 – 26
Friday 16th March. 1 Corinthians 12: 27-13: 3
Saturday 17th (St Patrick’s Day) Acts 16: 6 - 10

Week 6 (Collect)

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world:
Grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Monday 19th Mar Matthew 13: 54 - 58
Tuesday 20th Mar 1 Corinthians 14: 20-40
Wednesday 21st Mar 2 Corinthians 2: 14-3:6
Thursday 22nd Mar 2 Corinthians 3: 7 - 18
Friday 23rd Mar 2 Corinthians 4: 1 - 12
Saturday 24th Mar 2 Corinthians 4: 13 - 18

Week 7 (Collect)

Almighty and everlasting God, who, in your tender love towards the human race, sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross:
Grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Wednesday 28th Mar Luke 22: 54-71
Good Friday 30th Mar John 19: 38-42
Easter Eve 31st Mar John 2:18-22
As we journey through Lent preparing for Easter, and before I move on from the contemplation of “This Do In Remembrance Of Me”, I share one further reflection.

Those remembering words are specifically from St. Luke’s Gospel and from Paul’s 1st Letter to the Church in Corinth, which is the earliest record of the Last Supper occasion. Mark and Matthew, both of whom could well have been present, don’t attribute the same injunction to Jesus. It is even more peculiar that John doesn’t record the occasion at all. Instead John gives us a very extended account of the conversation between Jesus and his friends during and after the Last Supper meal. That account is like nothing else that we have received about the life and work of Jesus, whom we have been calling Joshua because it allows us to eavesdrop on a conversation between Jesus and his Father. A conversation of very great intimacy that involves not only himself and his friends who are overhearing him, but also us, twenty centuries on. I am referring to what appears as chapter 17 in our record of John’s Gospel. Read it when you get a moment!

Of equal importance is the context in which that Jesus-Father conversation is set.

John’s words are acutely clear at the opening of chapter 13. In the knowledge that he was to be betrayed by Judas, while at the same time he had come from God and was returning to God, Jesus took a towel and basin and began to wash his friends’ feet. We know the story. In some of our churches it is enacted on Maundy Thursday. As such it is a once-a-year liturgical event. Not so for John, and through him not so for Jesus. This Joshua uses this activity of humble service to introduce a lesson which discloses the nature of God, his own nature as the one who has come from God, and our nature and natures as those whom he has chosen to be his friends. The conversation as recorded by John, which John uses to replace the story of the Last Supper, develops into a disclosure about love and loving; into the disclosure of the care which he, Jesus, and his Father have taken to prepare and provide for his friends’ future; into the disclosure of the at-one-ness of Jesus and his Father; and the further disclosure of the at-one-ness which his friends and himself and his Father can enjoy, which is to be made possible through the coming of his and the Father’s Spirit. And this at-one-ness is to be the condition which allows all this to be possible. And in the first days that at-one-ness did prevail and all things became possible.

After sixty or seventy years of living out the life of Jesus, John knew from both precious and bitter experience that it is the at-one-ness that matters centrally. In the rest of his Gospel John provides many opportunities to assert the importance of the Common Meal of Thanksgiving. Experience has taught him that he should use the most focussing moments of the drama of Jesus’ betrayal and crucifixion to give undiluted pre-eminence to humble service and loving at-one-ness as the key characteristics of God in Christ. Let’s make our Lenten Journey one of discovering the truth of that for ourselves and for our churches.

**Armchair Christmas Quiz**

Rev Denis Sandes reveals the prize-winners and the answers:

Many thanks to all those who took part in our Annual Armchair Christmas Quiz, and to the Diocesan magazines which included the quiz in their Christmas Editions. The proceeds as usual go to Bishop’s Appeal. This is a very worthwhile Charity, in which all of the money raised goes to where it is needed. This year’s emergencies include famine in East Africa and 500,000 Myanmar refugees fleeing from violence. We had over 170 entries this year, many of which were correct. Thanks to the generosity of so many people we made over €1000.

These are the winners, only one local this year: 1st Adeline Farr, Coleraine; 2nd Jacinta Long, Killmacanogue; 3rd A & B Oates, Enniscorthy; 4th Tom Fallon, Moate. Mary Bailey, Sandyford, Valerie Lewis, Dunkerrin, and Marie Kennedy, Kilmoganny also won prizes for “Having a good shot!”

My apologies for errors in two of the clues: I put in a letter too many for Husky, and one too few for Bobtail! We allowed bobcat for this one as it fitted the letters, if not the clue!

**ANSWERS**

This one could be a rug! (C): PERSIAN

Canadian Island: LABRADOR

Darwin’s Ship: BEAGLE

Nearly black hunter: GREYHOUND

Saint of Clairvaux: ST BERNARD

Sounds like a cold coming on! HUSKY

Excellent Viking! GREAT DANE

Uncomfortable for twins (C): SIAMESE

East Croatian: Dalmation

This one leaps: DACHSHUND

Should have a ring in his nose: BULLDOG

Sounds like a hound in a hurry: DACHSHUND

Sad, from the Kingdom: KERRY BLUE

Robbie’s Story (C): BOBTAIL

Be Shone Freeze: BICHON FRISE

Shows the way: POINTER

Neolithic stones: CAIRN TERRIER

Shouldn’t tame it like this: WHIPPET

Named for Charles II: MANX

Inscrutable Egyptian (C): SPHYNX
Archbishops’ statement on repeal of the 8th Amendment

The following statement is from The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, and The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of Ireland.

The tradition of the Church of Ireland would reject an unrestricted access to abortion, while being concerned to ensure provision for hopefully rare circumstances and in a secure medical setting. Where individuals draw such a line will inevitably differ. Instances where the life of the woman is at serious risk have long been regarded within Church of Ireland teaching as situations where termination of a pregnancy would be justifiable. For some, pregnancy after sexual crime or the medical certainty of fatal foetal abnormality might also be seen as circumstances where abortion could be considered as justified. In every situation, however, the church seeks to offer pastoral care sensitive to the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of women and families who find themselves in such difficult situations.

With respect to current proposals:
- We favour a modification of the Article 40.3.3 in such a way that allows for the Oireachtas to have legislative responsibility to address termination of pregnancy, any rights of the unborn and the rights of the pregnant woman within clearly defined boundaries and parameters.
- We recognise the dilemma faced both by legislators and by medical, nursing and healthcare practitioners with regards to access to unrestricted abortion during the early months of pregnancy. However, unrestricted access to abortion in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, or indeed at any stage, is not an ethical position we can accept.
- We would suggest that current legislation should be strengthened to ensure that the needs of pregnant women facing difficult situations can be addressed quickly and comprehensively through improved support services. This will require significant and sustained investment in both medical and mental health services.
- We acknowledge that too often in this debate the voice of women has not been heard. The church will seek to continue to care for and pastorally stand alongside women, and their partners and families, who face immensely difficult situations and dilemmas.

Lenten Quiet Day

The members of Affirming Catholicism are hosting a Quiet day on Saturday March 10th at St Mary's Church, Navan, Co Meath, by kind invitation of Canon John Clarke. It will be led by Revd Grace Clunie. Grace is Priest in charge at Lisnadill, and the Director of Celtic Spirituality in Navan (Armagh). She is also a teacher and writer on Celtic Spirituality and we look forward to a quiet reflective day as we prepare for Easter. There is no charge but please bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. To book email affcathire@gmail.com or telephone Margaret Ainsworth 01 288 5932.

Diocesan Organisations

Girls Friendly Society

LEADERS & HELPERS NIGHT OUT took place on Saturday, 3rd February in Oxmantown National School, Birr at 5.30pm. This year leaders enjoyed an evening of crafts and fine dining. Aileen Hogan provided a workshop on decoupage and the food was provided by leaders. We thank Birr Branch for hosting this event. For more information on Aileen Hogan’s work please see www.shabby.ie

CLOUGHJORDAN BRANCH
Mini-Market continues each week and everybody is enjoying the extra fun that goes with it, not to mention that the proceeds will go to Mission Money and World Project. All support is greatly appreciated. Craft work is progressing together with Bible Study. Looking forward to seeing the results of work done.

During the mid-term break the branch had a very enjoyable meeting when secondary school members joined the group and worked on their crafts. It was an opportunity for them to meet each other and some of the younger girls. It was great to catch up!

NENAGH BRANCH
Girls and leaders had great fun on Saturday, 10th February, when everyone helped open the boxes of new music instruments. We thank Rosemary Smyth for travelling to Belfast to collect the items and ETB for providing the equipment grant to cover the costs. On Sunday girls, with the help of other children in Church, used their new instruments to great effect when they provided the music for ‘Noah’. Many thanks to Rev. Rod Smyth for a wonderful Family Service.
Throughout Ireland this is our third Triennial Fundraiser. This year we are again going to hold our Mums in May Tea. Our little jackets or blankets can be produced without question. They are then packed up and sent off to our projects and as you can see one of those is our knitting project. A variety of items are knitted from baby blankets, baby hats, baby cardigans and toys which are then packed up and sent off to our hospitals where they can be used to welcome a new arrival or to be used in much sadder circumstances when a baby is stillborn and that little life is taken.

This year we want to achieve and how we do it in Mothers' Union.

Diocesan Council Meeting
Thursday 1st March at 8pm in the Rectory, Birr.

Craft judging will take place on Friday 9th March at 7pm in Cloughjordan Methodist Hall. If anyone needs further information or assistance please contact Michelle Armitage, Diocesan Secretary.

Diocesan Prizeday & Service 2018 is on 24th March in Birr. This service will also include the commissioning of the newly elected officers for the Diocese.

Diocesan Camp
Camp is organised for weekend of June 16 – 18 in Durrow Faith Centre. Save the date, don't book anything else and look forward to an action-packed fun weekend. There will be more details after Council Meeting.

Mothers' Union

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
Diocesan Council Office Holders 2018 – 2021
Voting papers are currently being distributed to all Council Members. Results of voting will be announced at next Diocesan Council Meeting on 1st March. Everyone who allowed their names to go forward for nomination to the offices should be commended and thanked for their willingness to fill these essential roles.

Diocesan Council Meeting
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Mothers' Union

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:
April 11th – Diocesan Trustee meeting St. Mary’s church, Nenagh 8pm
April 14th – All Ireland Council meeting, Christ Church, Dublin 10am
April 26th – Diocesan Council Meeting St. Mary’s Church, Nenagh 8pm
May 13th – provisional date for our Diocesan Festival Service, St. Mary’s Cathedral, Limerick details to follow

This year our theme is "Walking in Mary Sumner's Footsteps", and what better theme could we have to describe what we want to achieve and how we do it in Mothers’ Union. Throughout the Diocese our branches are working on various projects and as you can see one of those is our knitting project. A variety of items are knitted from baby blankets, baby hats, baby cardigans and toys which are then packed up and sent off to our hospitals where they can be used to welcome a new arrival or to be used in much sadder circumstances when a baby is stillborn and our little jackets or blankets can be produced without question. This year we are again going to hold our Mums in May Tea parties. Throughout Ireland this is our third Triennial Fundraiser and it enables us to reach out into our communities and share the vision, and the support that Mothers’ Union brings to those who are most vulnerable in our society, both locally and globally. Every penny raised, every Tea Party, no matter how big or small, is so appreciated and the money raised will help with our projects.

The money raised in 2012 and 2015 has enabled Mothers’ Union to:
- Support families affected by Domestic Abuse and Homelessness
- Develop our Away From It All scheme in many dioceses.
- Provide training and support for our Diocesan and All Ireland volunteers.
- Support Family Days.
- Raise awareness in the wider community of the work of Mothers’ Union both locally and globally.
- Extend our giving to Mothers’ Union Worldwide and to the Centenary Fun

The Tea Party packs will be sent to every branch and there are many options to raise funds, but probably the most popular will be an opportunity to share a cup of tea with friends!

Lucy Kavanagh, Diocesan President

ROSCREA MOTHERS’ UNION

RECYCLING – All you need to know.

Roscrea Branch held a group meeting on Recycling on Tues, 13th February which was attended by members from surrounding branches and members from the local Tidy Towns Committee.

The speaker was Dave Corboy from the Recycling Ambassador Programme funded by the Dept. of Communication, Climate Change and Environment. Mr. Corboy stated that 40% of all material in household recycling bins ends up being treated as general waste because of contamination or mixed materials being put in the bins.

The following steps should be adhered to regarding recycling:

Acceptable items: Aluminium cans, tins, food can ie. beans tins, plastic drinks bottles including tops, milk cartons and plastic milk bottles and tops, shampoo and cleaning product containers, cardboard, newspapers, paper, yogurt cartons (but not foil tops) plastic food and veg. trays and egg boxes.

All items must be clean, dry and placed separately in the bin. If an item is dirty or wet, it will contaminate the surrounding items which then ends up in general waste.

Unacceptable items: Tinfoil, foil food trays, cling film, plastic bags, plastic wrapping, crisp bags, disposable cups, plastic toys, buckets or drums.

Glass should not be placed in the household recycling bins, but should be brought to the glass recycling bins found in every town. The initial sorting at the recycling depot is by hand, therefore broken glass can cause severe injuries to the workers.

When the items are sorted and baled, they are shipped mostly to the UK or Holland for re-processing. China used to be a market for re-processing but they are accepting less recently.

It is reckoned in 20 years or so, there will be more plastic in the world’s oceans than fish. This is a frightening prospect. With a little care, we can all add greatly to the environment for future generations.

Following the meeting, and being Shrove Tuesday, we all enjoyed a lovely supper using proper cups in true Mothers’ Union style!

ST. JOHN'S MOTHERS’ UNION, BALLINASLOE

Despite yet another night of inclement weather there was an excellent turnout for St. John's MU AGM and quiz night. Members enjoyed a little care, we can all add greatly to the environment for future generations.

Following the meeting, and being Shrove Tuesday, we all enjoyed a lovely supper using proper cups in true Mothers’ Union style!
A quiz by Valerie Swanwick caused much hilarity where we learnt that a Dugong is a marine mammal and not, as some thought, a dugout canoe and some other hilarious answers!!!

United Diocesan Youth Council

NATIONAL YOUTH FORUM
On Saturday 20th January, the Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) held a National Youth Forum at the City North Hotel in Julianstown, Co. Meath. The delegates from Diocese of Limerick & Killaloe were Adam Gardiner (Askeaton), Robyn Cleary (Nenagh) and James Larkin (Ennis). All three are 5th year students at Villiers School and are regular attenders at UDYC events. They were accompanied to the event by Edward Hardy and myself.

It was a great experience to see so many young people and youth leaders from throughout the country come together and discuss about faith, church life, youth ministry and how we can build up on these things to reach out to young people. It was brilliant to have Nic and Sally Sheppard (Church Army) there who facilitated the program throughout the day and also Archbishop Richard Clarke who opened up the day, as well as launching CIYD’s new Lent resource for young people, FUEL.

FUEL
CIYD’s new Lent resource for young people was launched at the Youth Forum on 20th January. FUEL’s purpose is to enable young people and adults to hear God speaking through his words in the Bible. There are questions to help the reader think through what they have read and space to make creative responses to the passages. FUEL takes the reader through the Gospel of John for the 40 days of Lent, and beyond. If you would like copies of FUEL for your youth group or young people in Church please get in touch with Edward at 087/2907553.

MISSION IS WHAT WE DO!

THE CHURCH EXISTS BY MISSION, AS FIRE EXISTS BY BURNING
(Emil Brunner)

MISSION IS THE CHURCH IN LOVE WITH THE WHOLE WORLD

PARTNERSHIPS WITH SWAZILAND SCHOOLS

The newly re-vamped Diocesan Council for Mission has Africa firmly in its sights with an unfolding project to help aids-torn and drought-ridden Swaziland and its schools by installing water tanks to aid proper conservation and supply and support general hygiene of the children. A key part of the strategy is to include and encourage our own diocesan schools, teachers and children to partner a Swaziland diocesan school and help raise funds to install a water tank in their school.

Our own schools are already being approached to this end and in coming days, with the help of USPG Missionary Society, diocesan folk will be given a fresh picture of life in Swaziland and the needs of its people.

DIACONIC COUNCIL FOR MISSION

Spring Madness Senior Adventure Weekend 2018
Spring Madness Senior Adventure Weekend 2018 will be an action packed weekend taking place at Castledaly Camp & Conference Centre, Castledaly, Athlone, Co. Westmeath at the start of Easter school holidays from Friday 27th – Sunday 29th March 2018 for all those attending Secondary School.

We plan to have many exciting activities over the weekend including: Varied & Lively Times of Worship with teaching, Icebreaker Games, Karting at Galway City Karting, Pure Skill Indoor Sports Activity Centre Galway, Swimming, Slides and Inflatable Obstacle Course at Leisureland Galway, Manhunt, Capture the Flag, Table Quiz, Disco, Lots of good food and a little bit of sleep!!!

The weekend will cost €100 per person or €90 each if more than one from same family attending either this weekend or Midlands Alive Junior Weekend. The fee will include all transport, activities, food and accommodation. Return transport will be available to/from event serving Limerick, Nenagh, Moneygall, Roscrea & Birr.

Final Date for receipt of bookings is Friday 16th March 2018. Thus if you want an adventure weekend book today for Spring Madness Adventure Weekend 2018!!!

Midlands Alive Junior Weekend 2018
Let the adventure begin! Our Midlands Alive Junior Weekend 2018 will take place at the splendid facilities of the Durrow Centre, Knocknagraghly, Durrow, Co. Laois from Friday 13th – Sunday 15th April 2018 for what promises to be an amazing weekend of fun, faith & fellowship. So if you are 10 plus years of age and want a weekend of adventure book today to avoid disappointment!! Much more info next month!

Fundraising Cake Sale & Coffee Morning
This will be the first of our fundraising ventures for 2018 and it will take place in Dining Room, Basement Richmond Terrace, Henry Street, Limerick City from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm on Saturday 21st April 2018. Your support and help for this event would be appreciated.

Annual General Meeting
The Annual General Meeting of UDYC will take place on Saturday 21st April 2018 also in Richmond Terrace with refreshments from 2.30 pm and meeting commencing at 3.00 pm. We encourage everyone from throughout United Diocese to attend.

Taking a Leading Role – Part 1

Have you ever thought about becoming a helper at either parish youth club or diocesan youth council events? If the answer is yes well now’s your chance to do something about it. Well, why not come along and join U.D.Y.C. for the first part of our Basic Youth Leadership Course. This will be the first of three weekend courses designed to train and develop our Youth Leaders of the future.

The first weekend will take place from Friday 27th – Sunday 29th April 2018 Django’s Hostel in Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary. There will be transport from/ to Limerick. The cost for the full weekend will be €80. In order to come on the weekend one must be 16 years on the first weekend.

For more information on any of our events or activities, please contact Edward (087) 2907553 or myself. Email: udyc@limerick.anglican.org or our UDYC Facebook page.

Until next month,
Oscar
Mobile: 086 2476327
MISSION EVENING MARCH 13TH
Meantime as part of our new journey as “missioners” and the need to understand the call to Mission incumbent on all Lenten pilgrims, March 13th, 7.45pm, South Court Hotel, Raheen, Limerick City, is an important date. The speaker at this first public mission evening is Rev Adrian McCartney from Belfast, brother of the Rector of Clonfert Group, Rev Charles McCartney. Adrian leads an innovative alternative worshipping community and will speak to us of his experience of outreach and church renewal, under the title “Sowing seeds of hope.”
ALL ARE WELCOME.
Rev Bob Hanna, Communications Officer

Continuing Ministerial Education

AN INTER-FAITH WALKING TOUR OF LIMERICK
The mosque in Dooradoyle, the site of former synagogues on Wolfe Tone Street, and the old Jewish cemetery in Castletroy were all visiting points during an Interfaith Walking Tour in Limerick organised as part of the diocesan Ministry Training and Education programme on 12th February.

The Limerick Islamic Cultural Centre and Mosque at Old Dooradoyle Road (photo: Patrick Comerford)

The group of clergy and readers met at the Limerick Islamic Cultural Centre and Mosque at Old Dooradoyle Road, established by local Muslims in Limerick. The centre is a converted detached, single-storey bungalow on the Dooradoyle Road, across from the Crescent College Comprehensive. Jumu’ah (congregational) prayers are performed at this mosque each Friday and members also receive Quran lessons.

The group then visited places associated with Limerick’s Jewish Community in Limerick, which was once centred on the Wolfe Tone Street area. Although there is no formal Jewish community centre in the Mid-West region today, a number of Jewish families and individuals are living in the area.

Jews began to settle in Limerick in about 1881, and for a period in the 1890s there were two congregations at Nos. 63 and 72 Wolfe Tone Street, then known as Collooney Street. The sites visited included No 18 Wolfe Tone Street, where Limerick’s rabbi lived from 1889, and former Model School where the Jaffe and Stein families were beaten up in 1892, the former synagogue at Hillview on Wolfe Tone Street, and the site of the former Ashkenazi Orthodox synagogue at 63 Wolfe Tone Street.

From the former Model School on O’Connell Avenue, the group visited the Redemptorist Church at Mount Saint Alphonsus, where Father James Creagh of the Redemptorists preached his anti-Semitic sermons in 1904. The boycott that followed caused serious suffering and hardship among the Jews of Limerick.

A group from the Diocese of Limerick, Ardfert and Killaloe visits the Jewish Cemetery in Castletroy (photo: Joc Sanders)

After lunch in Annacotty, the group visited the Jewish Cemetery in Castletroy which is maintained voluntarily by Limerick Civic Trust. The graves visited include the grave of Limerick’s last rabbi, Simon Gewurtz from Bratislava and the grave of Stuart Klein, who died on 5 March 2012 and who was the last person buried in the cemetery.

At the end of the day, the group also visited Kilmurry, a closed Church of Ireland parish church in the Castletroy area.

The next training day is on Monday 12 March 2018, in the Rectory, Askeaton, Co Limerick, on the topic ‘Maintaining a sustaining a life of prayer.’ Two sessions are offered: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Patrick Comerford
St. Nicholas’ National School, Adare

Well done to our three teams who took part in the recent Credit Union Schools’ Quiz. One of the senior teams came in third place just one point behind the runners up. The other two teams did very well and all team members can be very proud of their efforts on the night.

Prize Day took place on February 9th and Lady Geraldine Dunraven presented each pupil with a prize for their best efforts in 2017. Following the prize giving, 6th class pupils organised afternoon tea in their classroom for all the visitors. The senior pupils had baked all the delicious treats and 6th class pupils served tea and coffee to all the guests. Meanwhile, in the other two classrooms, 5th class pupils served the more junior classes with refreshments. This was a fundraising event which raised over €300 for the Simon Community in Limerick and Make a Wish Foundation. Well done to all concerned for such a successful afternoon.

The senior boys and girls will take part in the Spar 5-a-side soccer tournament at the end of February and we will welcome the team from Postal Bible School on March 13th.

Cloughjordan No.1 National School

We were very saddened to learn of the death of Canon Donald Atkinson last month. Canon Atkinson was Chairperson of our school for many, many years and is still remembered very fondly by our school community. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife Elsie and all the family. They are very much in our thoughts and prayers at this sad time.

We look forward to welcoming Gareth and staff from the Postal Bible School to our school for the Annual Presentation and Prize giving. This is always a great occasion when pupils choose prizes for the work they carried out during the previous calendar year.

Thank you very much to Super Valu, Roscrea who kindly donated an Easter Hamper to the school, to Mrs. Esme Grant for her help with this, and to the shopkeepers in Cloughjordan who are selling lines on our behalf. Funds raised will go towards the school.

Our Parent Teacher Association is busily working to raise much needed funds for our school. A Clothes Collection is taking place this month, with the assistance of Lenrec. Men’s clothing, women’s clothing, children’s clothing, household textiles (curtains, towels, shoes, handbags, belts & soft toys can be dropped into the school, this month, during school hours. The last date for dropping off clothes is 21st March, 2018. All support is very welcome.

The PTA is busily organizing a Monster Raffle, with many, many wonderful prizes. Tickets cost €2 each or 3 for €5 and are now available from the school community. The draw will take place at the beginning of May when prizes with a total value of approx €1500 will be won. Many, many thanks to so many businesses and individuals, from far and near who have donated very generous prizes.

The school is holding a Bring and Buy Sale and Easter Egg raffle before Easter in aid of Tipperary Living Links, and the Diocesan Council for Mission’s project, in association with USPG, to support the provision of water tanks and training in hygiene for some of the primary schools in Swaziland.

Well done to Fiachradh Ahearne Woods, Scott Kenny, Beth Malone and Alex Ryan, our Under 11 team, and to Tom Austin, Lucy Fitzgerald, Odran Fitzmaurice and Zoe Whelan, our Under 13 Team who took part in the Credit Union School’s Quiz in Borrisokane at the end of January. Well done to Ms. Cromer, Ms. Ryan and to parents who prepared the children for this event. Congratulations to our Fifth and Sixth Class team who came 2nd on the night. Thank you very much to Borrisokane Credit Union for, once again, organizing a very successful event for the local schools, for the generous prizes and for the refreshments the children enjoyed on the night.

It was a pleasure to welcome Paddy O’Brien from O’Brien Clinic, Toomevara to school, last month, to talk to our 5th and 6th Class pupils who are participating in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme, and also Michelle Gleson, who joined Mrs. Amanda Hayes & Ms. Cora Scanlan for Dragons’ Den, which assessed each group’s business proposal. Exciting times ahead as the children continue their endeavours and bring their ideas to fruition.

Thank you very much to Paudie Malone, Games Development Officer with the GAA for the kind invitation to our First & Second Class pupils to participate in an indoor hurling blitz in Kilruane MacDonaghs complex and for making all the arrangements. Our enthusiastic hurlers had a wonderful time.

We were delighted to welcome back Rebecca Mooney from Transition Year in Borrisokane Community College for work experience. An extra pair of hands is always a great help!

Kiltallagh National School, Castlemaine

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING

Congratulations to Johnny Horgan, Frank Wharton and Rachel Boyle who represented our school in the Cumann na mBunscol Cross Country Running competition held in Tralee on February 8th. Well done to you all!

BIO-DIVERSITY-STEM

As part of our on-going projects in Bio Diversity, 2nd to 6th class headed off to Mary Immaculate College in Limerick for the RDS Science Exhibition Day. The children really enjoyed this very informative and enlightening trip where they viewed science experiments which were exhibited by pupils from various schools all over Munster. Some schools examined the amount of ‘hidden’ sugar in products, others investigated the power of our senses while others explored blind tasting. The favourite with most pupils was the slime! No surprise there!!
Special thanks to Miss Corcoran (STEM Co-Ordinator) for organising the trip and to James our bus driver for bringing us all back safely.

PANCAKE TUESDAY:
There was a flippin' great time in Kiltallagh School on Tuesday when all the children of the school got to make their very own pancake!! Some of the mouth-watering fillings included Nutella, strawberries, fresh cream, marshmallows and lemon juice. I’m hungry again!!

ASH WEDNESDAY:
The whole school enjoyed a wonderful day on Ash Wednesday, when we joined with St. John’s Parochial School in Tralee for our annual Ash Wednesday Service. It was lovely to cat ch up with our former teacher Miss Maura O’Doherty who is now a permanent teacher there. It was equally nice to renew our acquaintance with Rev Jim who led the service. After the service, we returned to the halla where all the children enjoyed a beetle drive - organised by Chairperson of St. John’s, David. To finish off what was a brilliant day, the children enjoyed some delicious pizza and Rocky Road, followed by a trip to the playground.

Special thanks to the acting principal Patricia, staff and children of the school for their kind invitation and also for their wonderful hospitality.

RITE OF CONFIRMATION.
We wish our sixth class pupil, Patrick Sheehy all the best on Sunday April 15th 2018, when he will receive the Rite of Confirmation in St. Marys Church, Killarney.

St. John’s Parochial School, Tralee
St. John’s Parochial School, Tralee was delighted to welcome the pupils and Staff from Kiltallagh National School, to join with them at the Ash Wednesday Service in St. John the Evangelist Church, Tralee.

The Service was led by Rev. Jim Stephens and involved children from both schools in singing, reading the lessons and leading the prayers along with the usual congregation, teachers and parents. It is hoped that both schools might work together to support the Diocesan Mission project to support schools in Swaziland. Following the Service, all the children joined together for some games and a pizza lunch was enjoyed by all.

Villiers School
Life in Villiers has been busy lately with a combination of trips, matches and mock exams. The Transition Year students have been out on work experience placements and are now back in the rhythm of school life. During mid-term, the skiers and snowboarders jetted off to Italy for some fun in the snow.

MODEL UNITED NATIONS
Our MUN delegates made their way to Krakow in Poland to take part in debates ranging from the Security Council to the World Health Organisation.

RUGBY
The 1st year boys took a trip to the Aviva Stadium to support Ireland versus Italy. The senior boys will be playing in the Munster Cup semi-final against Bantry so best of luck lads!

HOCKEY
In the world of hockey, the senior boys had a well-deserved victory against Bandon Grammar which secured a place in the Munster final against Newtown at home on the 30th of March. Once again good luck to the lads!

NEWS FROM THE VILLIERS SANCTUARY
Mock exams are over and mid-term has been and gone. Everyone here in Villiers is settling back into the rhythm of school life after a busy period. The TY have been on work experience and have found out that the world is much more than sitting in a classroom. The Community Group has been hard at work continuing to raise awareness about social justice issues and the positive promotion of mental health in our community. They have recently become members of Young Saint Vincent De Paul and are looking at ways to engage with the wider community. I am looking forward to the first 6th year retreat which is taking place in Spanish Point and find myself incredibly encouraged by the amount of students who have put their name forward to go. It also highlights the need for some spiritual guidance and space to step outside the stress of the final year in school. The retreat of course is happening during Lent, which is quite an appropriate time for reflection.

SPIRITUAL EXAMINATION
I was reading an article recently, which talked about not only the need for physical examination but also for spiritual examination. If we have a pain in our head then we will go the doctors but what about the thoughts in our head. The Bible urges us to think of good, wholesome and lovely things. Is this what we do? Do we need to change our thought patterns in some way? How is our sight? Do we look at people judgmentally? Do we look down on people? How is our hearing? Do we listen to the needs of others around us? Christians believe that God wants to speak to them – do we spend time listening to God? Does the music that we listen to put good thoughts and information into our minds? How is our speech? A verse in the Book of James in the Bible says that the tongue is small, but can do a lot of harm. Do
we use our mouths to build people up or to tear them down? Do our words make people feel good or sad? Do we need to use our mouths to say sorry? How are our hearts? Are we loving and kind to those around us? Do we need to have a look at the attitudes of our hearts during the season of Lent? We have a choice as to how we use our hands: we can use them to help or to fight, to show care or to abuse, to work hard or to be idle. Are we using our hands, as we should? Our feet take us where we want to go. It may be that during Lent, we need to think about whether we have been going in the right direction: are we following the crowd or going the right way? I would like to encourage everyone to use Lent to carry out your own spiritual medical. Find a quiet space, spend time with God, and ask yourself the question, “am I healthy on the inside?”

PRAYER
Dear God, help us to be willing to examine our lives and to see where we need to make changes. Help us to see the importance of taking time to think and reassess. Thank you for the example of Jesus. At this time of Lent, please help us to consider His love for others. Please help us to demonstrate this love to others. Amen

Until next time,
Blessings and peace
Chaplain Jackie McNair

Killaloe Diocese

Killaloe & Stradbally Union of Parishes

Killaloe, Castleconnell, Clonlara, Mountshannon and Tuamgraney.

Rector & Dean: The Very Rev. Gary Paulsen
The Deanery, Abbey Road, Killaloe, Co. Clare
Tel: 061-374 779
Mob: 085-764 0533
Email: abbeydean2@gmail.com

Norma Wood – nee Hardy, Carrowbane, Ogonneloe, died suddenly at University Hospital Limerick. Her funeral service took place in Ogonneloe on 27 January and was conducted by Dean Gary Paulsen. We continue to remember the family in our prayers especially her husband Donald, children Pamela, Fiona, Desmond, Brendan, Claire, Sean, Gillian and Charlie, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, sisters Susan, Connie and the late Anne, brother Harry, brother in law.

The Reverend Lucy Green is back on duty in Killaloe & Stradbally Union after helping out in Nenagh and Limerick City Parish. Lucy trained here and was ordained in Killaloe Cathedral, so it was a good opportunity for her to be for extended periods in other parishes, and no doubt Lucy and ourselves will all benefit from it. Non stipendiary ministry is such an important ministry role in the diocese. The opportunity to provide the service of Holy Communion is reserved for ordained clergy and although Readers fulfil an important part in providing Sunday services, the provision of Eucharist is important to people in this diocese.

Our Lenten journey has begun with an Ash Wednesday service held at St Flannan’s Cathedral and we also had the imposition of ashes. This is reminder for us to turn and also of our mortality, that we are dust and will return to being part of the earth. It reminds us to make the best use of a very limited window to make a difference in this world as our baptism calls us to do.

Lent challenges us to enter the desert with Christ for 40 days and to go into a wilderness place and to prepare ourselves for the journey of discipleship.

Lent asks us to wrestle with the hard stuff: to pray, to fast, to do something new. To face temptation and our personal demons and yet to choose to follow Christ anyway.

It’s not popular. Its common that many people will show up at church on Easter morning, but few will have spent the last 40 days getting ready. Everyone likes a party; not everyone likes doing the work of preparing for it. You cannot have Easter without Good Friday.

The reality of our lives is that we spend a lot of time lost. We spend a lot of time facing temptation and wrestling with God, a lot of time alone with our demons. Jesus knew what that was like. So in Lent we have the opportunity to spend 40 days not alone but with one who has been there before. Sometimes our wilderness places can do more than challenge us. They can transform us into what God calls us to be. The hardstuff can be our best teachers.

Birr Group of Parishes

Birr, Lorcha, Lockeen, and Dorrha

Rector: The Venerable R. Wayne Carney
Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert
The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly
Tel: 057 912 0021 Mob: 087 786 5234
Email: mapleire@gmail.com
Parish Facebook: www.facebook.com/BirrGroupOfParishes

PRAYERS
We continue to remember Holly Dagg, Tom Dagg, Betty Eades, Pamela Edge, Edwin Harding, Tom Hayes, Pam Reid, and baby Saoirse in our prayers.

CONDOLENCES
Sincere condolences to Helen Fitzgerald, on the death of her brother, John Steepe; to Julie Powell, on the tragic deaths of her aunt and uncle, John and Betty, in a motor vehicle accident; to Desmond Dempsey, on the death of his brother, Joe and to Iris Peavy and her family on the death of her husband, Benny.

CONGRATULATIONS
Best wishes to Cara Gill, daughter of Roy and Claire, and granddaughter of Henry and Anne, who was made a member of the Family of God through the Sacrament of Baptism in Dorrha Church on the 18th of February. Congratulations as well to Peter and Helen Whyte, on the birth of their grandson, Harry Peter Morgan, to their daughter Caroline.

“BRING YOUR CHANGE TO MAKE A CHANGE”

We did it! On the 4th of February, we made it all the way to the front of the church in Birr with our row of coins, a collection for the Midlands Simon Community. The final total: €1200! Many thanks to all who contributed, and most especially to our young people who laid out the coins each Sunday and collected them up afterwards. We will be making the presentation to Midlands Simon on a date to be announced.

TRIP TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Archdeacon and Norma-Jean were in Victoria, British Columbia for a week, to see Norma-Jean’s brother, Lee, who is seriously ill. They are grateful to Suzanne Corcoran for looking after the service in Lorha and the Revd White Spunner for taking the services in Lockeen and Birr, and in Birr on Ash Wednesday, while they were gone.

LENTEN SERVICES

Because of the Archdeacon’s absence, the planned Lenten services in the homes of parishioners were cancelled for this year. Instead, Birr Churches Together are hosting ecumenical services in the

Emily 2023
conference room at the back of St Brendan’s Roman Catholic Church each Wednesday in Lent, starting at 8:00 pm. This is following the same pattern as the sessions held during Advent, and is a time to help us to reflect on our common Sunday Gospels during Lent. All are welcome to the reflection and you don’t have to say a word!

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES
Sunday, 25th March – Palm Sunday
Birr, 11:30 am, Group Family Eucharist
Monday, 26th March – Monday in Holy Week
Lockeen, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist
Tuesday, 27th March – Tuesday in Holy Week
Lorrha, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist
Wednesday, 28th March – Wednesday in Holy Week
Dorrha, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist
Thursday, 29th March – Maundy Thursday
Birr, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist
Friday, 30th March – Good Friday
Birr, 12 noon, Our Lord’s Passion
Saturday, 31st March – Easter Vigil
Lorrha, 8:00 pm, New Fire, Easter Vigil, & First Holy Eucharist of Easter
Sunday, 1st April – Easter Day
Dorrha, 9:30 am, Holy Eucharist
Birr, 11:30 am, Holy Eucharist

Roscrea Group of Parishes
St Burchin’s Church Bourney, Christ Church Corbally, St Molua’s Church Kyle, with St. Cronan’s Church Roscrea
Rector: Canon Jane Galbraith
St. Cronan’s Rectory, Rosemount, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, E53X466
Tel: 0505 21725 Mob: 087 382 5336
Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

FROM THE REGISTERS: Isaac Dann was laid to rest in Dungar after service in St. Cronan’s Church on Wednesday January 31st. 2018. Our deepest condolences are offered to Ruby, Claire and her sisters and their families.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. They are blessed indeed says the Spirit, for they rest from their labours. Revelation. 14.13

Cantóiri Tulach Mhór le Michael Moore. It was difficult to pick out the ‘best bit’ from the concert, organised by parishioner Marina Carry. Was it the young performers? Eve Blackwell, Gemma St. Leger, Luke Blackwell and Isabella Roe among them, all members of Marina’s School of Music. Or, was it Marina and Michael and his beautiful arrangements for harp and piano; or was it Elaine Walshe solo soprano, or Patrick Maher and Gershwin, or those senior tenors and what about the golden oldie, former showband star, ninety years young, showing even the Cantóiri choir, how to do it? The choir gave a performance showing a wide variety of singing talent and style, to a packed banquet hall in Racket Hall

G.F.S. Congratulations to Karen St. Leger on applying for and receiving funding from the Educational Training Board enabling a dizzying frenzy of equipment purchasing, all of which has now

Continued on page 21

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It was a red-letter day for the Roman Catholic parish of Aughrim, in East Galway, when their 150-year-old St. Catherine’s Church was re-opened after fifteen months of renovation works. At the Re-dedication ceremony led by the Bishop of Clonfert, Dr John Kirby, pride of place was given to members of the local Church of Ireland and their Rector, Rev John Godfrey, who had kindly lent their Holy Trinity Church to their neighbours while works were carried out on St. Catherine’s.

EXCHANGING PLAQUES
Bishop Kirby said, “The presence of Rev John Godfrey along with some members of the Church of Ireland, and the exchange of plaques, is a noteworthy feature.” The Parish Priest, Fr Gerry Geraghty thanked the Church of Ireland community for their generosity in placing their church at their disposal, for the past fifteen months, while renovation works were ongoing. "It was a real ecumenical gesture and one we, hopefully, can reciprocate at some stage” said Fr. Geraghty. And at the end of the celebratory Mass, Fr. Geraghty and Rev. John Godfrey exchanged engraved plaques which marked the appreciation and cooperation that marked the historic event. Tom Hannon, chairman of the Pastoral Council, said, “We are eternally grateful to Rev John Godfrey and his parishioners from the Church of Ireland for offering us the use of Holy Trinity Church while the works were being carried out. It has been a mutually enriching spiritual experience for everyone.”

HOW THE C of I GOT INVOLVED
Afterwards Rev John Godfrey told me how the Church of Ireland became involved. It was back in 2015 that Fr Geraghty told him of the proposed renovation works in St. Catherine’s. “I discussed the possibility of helping out with the Select Vestry of the Aughrim Parish Union, by offering the use of our church when works got under way, and they were delighted to oblige. It was a milestone in ecumenical co-operation”. At the first mass said in Holy Trinity Church, Rev Godfrey told the congregation, “On behalf of everyone in Holy Trinity Church, the Aughrim and Ballinasloe Unions and the Bishop of Limerick, I’d like to offer you the warmest of welcomes here tonight. It’s great to know that after years of planning and waiting that work is now under way on your Church. Whether it’s in your own home or in your parish church, getting the builders in is never an easy business – whatever way you look at it, there’s a lot of upheaval. That’s why I was delighted when Fr. Gerry suggested a way of keeping that upheaval to a minimum by celebrating your Masses here in Holy Trinity, whilst the builders are in. It’s great that you will be able to maintain your routine of prayer, here in the village, over the coming months. But more than that, I want you to know that you are doing a wonderful thing for the Church of Ireland community here, by allowing us to offer you this gesture of hospitality. It does our hearts a power of good to know that you are happy to come to us here. I wish you every blessing here over the coming months – but please know that it is we who are blessed by your presence.”

SIGNS OF CHRISTIAN UNITY
Speaking at the Re-dedication ceremony, Rev Godfrey quoted Bishop Kirby’s words at the start of Mass, “May all our worship here be gathered into unity in the heavenly Jerusalem.” He said “With those words in mind, I am deeply grateful to Fr. Gerry for his invitation to representatives of Holy Trinity Church and me to worship here with you today. It’s great to see St. Catherine’s Church looking so well, and to share in the excitement in coming home to your own church. “One of the wonderful by-products of this renovation project has been the simple gesture of hospitality offered and received, as you have been saying mass in Holy Trinity Church for over a year. That simple gesture has done us all good: it has been a sign of Christian unity here. That’s why we are delighted to be able to worship with you here in St. Catherine’s, as a further sign of our unity for which we have all prayed today. I can’t tell you how much good it did us to know that you, the living stones of St. Catherine’s, were lighting up Holy Trinity with your prayers over the last while. “It has been like having two churches beside the rectory here. Thank you for lighting up our church with the life of your church”, concluded Rev. John Godfrey.
The Church of Ireland Bishops’ Appeal, Eco–Congregation Ireland and the Representative Church Body of the Church of Ireland (RCB) are joining forces to promote the Lenten initiative #Jars4Journeys supporting communities affected by climate change.

Bishops’ Appeal Education Advisor Lydia Monds said: “We are inviting people to save an old jam jar or other recyclable container and every time they make a journey that is not by foot or by bike, they can donate to offset the impact of their carbon footprint. The money raised will go towards three conservation projects around the world that support and help build resilience in communities who are most affected by climate change. Bishops’ Appeal and the RCB are match-funding the first €1,000/£1,000 raised. Join us this Lent in being mindful of the impact of our lifestyles on others and on all of creation.”

Three projects will be supported:
- solar–powered ovens for Amazonian communities adversely affected by climate change in Bolivia (Christian Aid);
- conservation farming for self–help groups affected by drought in Ethiopia (Tearfund Ireland); and
- tree planting and water harvesting for communities affected by unpredictable rainfall, drought and deforestation in Kenya (Green Belt Movement).

Anyone can take part in #Jars4Journeys by downloading jam jar labels at www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/campaigns/climate–change and donating every time a journey is taken by car, bus, tram, train or airplane.

Bishops’ Appeal regularly funds projects that build resilience for communities who are most affected by climate change. Eco–Congregation Ireland has a vision to see churches throughout the island of Ireland adopt an eco–approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world. The RCB has undertaken a number of environmental initiatives including ‘keep cups’ for staff, beehives at the RCB offices and joining the Climate Action 100+ investment initiative.

As we enter the Lenten season, Green Anglicans, the Environmental Network of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, calls us to reflect on the great lament of creation and those who share it. Pray with people around the world: Creator, open my heart to the pain of your creation.

Bishop Apimeleki Nadoki Qiliho from Fiji writes:

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Bishop Apimeleki Nadoki Qiliho from Fiji writes:

“Like every indigenous Fijian, I derive my identity and sense of belonging from the vanua (land). Today, the land to which I belong is in crisis. The source of my identity is threatened by the immense changes being brought about by climate change. The seas rise a little more every year, and more frequent, more deadly, and more extreme weather events are occurring. We are working to safeguard a future that is not ours, but our children’s. If we are of one mind, one heart, and one spirit, we can challenge leaders and decision-makers to work effectively to end the calamity that surely awaits us if we continue blindly down this road.”

We lament the destruction of God’s creation and the pain it causes. The archipelago of Fiji is a stark example of how harming creation harms to the human family. Fiji is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change. As a group of low-lying islands, it is vulnerable to the sea level rise that is associated with a warmer world. The rising seas bring salt water into farmlands, disrupting agriculture. Higher seas and storm surges also bring floods, and families find themselves pushed out of their homes.

Because of these vulnerabilities, the entire Fijian village of Vunidogoloa has already been relocated. The nation is bracing for further mass movement, and has created a legal designation of “climate refugee” to accommodate the expected wave of internal migrants.

Despite the uncertainty they face, the people of Fiji have opened their arms to neighbours who are at even greater risk. The people of the nearby nation of Kiribati have purchased 20 sq km of land in Fiji. They have planned to relocate their entire nation when climate change renders their land unliveable. Even as we lament the loss of land and lifeways in Fiji, we give thanks for the grace and warmth of the Fijians, and for the grace of God who always welcomes our repentance.

We invite you to lament. Reflect on what it would feel like to lose your home and be forced to leave your country. Pray for all climate refugees.

“Like every indigenous Fijian, I derive my identity and sense of belonging from the vanua (land). Today, the land to which I belong is in crisis. The source of my identity is threatened by the immense changes being brought about by climate change. The seas rise a little more every year, and more frequent, more deadly, and more extreme weather events are occurring. We are working to safeguard a future that is not ours, but our children’s. If we are of one mind, one heart, and one spirit, we can challenge leaders and decision-makers to work effectively to end the calamity that surely awaits us if we continue blindly down this road.”

We invite you to lament. Reflect on what it would feel like to lose your home and be forced to leave your country. Pray for all climate refugees.

“How deserted lies the city, once so full of people! How like a widow is she, who once was great among the nations!” (Lam. 1:1)

“Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” (Lam. 3:22–23)

Prayer for the Earth from Eco Congregation Ireland

Lord, give us vision and new commitment
To take up the challenges to which you call us,
That in company with all created things
We may sing the joy, the beauty and the glory
That is creation’s song. Amen.
The late Canon Donald Atkinson

Editor: Very many in Killaloe diocese have fond memories of Canon Donald Atkinson, as Rector of Ballinaclough and then Cloughjordan, as Canon, Treasurer and Chancellor of Killaloe Cathedral, and a predecessor of mine as editor of the diocesan magazine. Here is an appreciation of him given by his daughter Shelley at his funeral service in St. James’ Church, Rockcorry, Co. Monaghan, on Wednesday, 14th February 2018.

Thank you all so much for being here today and thank you to all who have helped and supported us over the past few days.

When Dad was a student at the Divinity College in Dublin, one of his lecturers gave him some advice on delivering sermons: ‘If you haven’t struck oil within 5 minutes,’ he said, ‘stop boring.’ I’ll try and heed that advice today. A private man, Dad wouldn’t want me to be going on and on about him anyway. Years ago, when he and Elsie were optimistically discussing their own funerals, he said that the only people to be at his were her, Dougal his springer spaniel, and ‘the children’. I trust that ‘the children’ he was referring to were me and my siblings, and I note that we came last on the list, after the dog. But at least we were on the list. The rest of you are lucky to be here at all.

Dad was devoted to his family, his parish, and to shooting and fishing – not always in that order. My brother Mark said that if Dad ever wrote a book about his life a good title would be ‘My rod, my gun, my God’. But Dad would never have written a book about his life. He had such close dealings with his parishioners at many different times in their lives; they trusted him, and they were right to, because he was discreet, and really believed that no matter what every person deserved his respect.

Dad took up his first parish in Ballinaclough, Co. Tipperary, where he had a very happy ministry before moving to Cloughjordan in the same county. Cloughjordan had had 3 rectors in the previous 10 years and they wanted a man who would stay. And stay he did, for 28 years, until his retirement in 1996, totally committed to the parish and parishioners. Down in Tipperary he fished Lough Derg, often with his good friend Dean Frank Bourke. In his boat, fishing the mayfly, he said they felt nearer to God than anywhere else on earth.

When dementia took hold, Dad faced it with stoicism and courage and with the rock-solid support of my mother Elsie. It was at times very difficult but there were lighter moments. Once he got it into his head that my brother Mark had won Masterchef. I rang home once from Oxford and he thought I was studying there. So dementia at least led him to believe that some of his children were high achievers. When visiting Mum and Dad at home during this time, I was often reminded of the final lines of the poem ‘Ulysses’ by Alfred, Lord Tennyson:

‘Tho’ much is taken, much abides; and tho’
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.’

We love you Dad. Rest in peace.
The illusion of a rising economic tide
by Geoff Scargill, Head of Charitable Services at Protestant Aid

I often wonder what it must be like for someone living in poverty, deprivation or need to read the optimistic articles in our daily newspapers about how unemployment has fallen, that property prices are once again on the rise and that finally, the sun is beginning to shine on a newly invigorated and prosperous Ireland. To most people this is just ‘news’ but to many, it is simply a pack of lies. Not because it isn’t true, but because it is not true for them. The Irish business employers’ group, IBEC, advised recently that, as a nation our ‘net wealth position’ had never been better, but that is like me standing beside the latest Euro Millions Lotto winner with an observer remarking on our high average net worth. Nothing to do with me, mate!

In 2017, a year when unemployment was down to circa 6%, Protestant Aid still received over 1000 General Grant Applications – many of those seeking help were actually employed, confirming the need to eliminate the notion that ‘having a job’ insulates one from all forms of deprivation. The problem is that some were on minimum wage, others deserted by their partners, bereaved, ill (mentally or physically), or had some other element in their lives that caused severe financial distress.

THE STATISTICS CAN NEVER TELL THE REAL STORY

The buoyant statistics don’t show the pain and misery caused by the above, neither do they show the problems caused by the almost boom-time high house prices or more pertinently, by record rent levels. The prospect of saving for a home has for many, become a long-forgotten dream and while most of Europe is perplexed by our obsession with owning a home, it can be devastating to have this aspiration crushed.

When the result of this is having to pay astronomical rents, further reducing the possibility of home ownership, the outlook can seem bleak. According to the CSO Yearbook of Ireland 2016, the average industrial wage was €45,075 per annum for someone working full-time – after tax this results in monthly take home pay of approximately €2800 – considering that it can cost €2000 per month to rent a two-bedroom apartment in Dublin 8 or a three-bedroom house in Killester, you begin to see the problem. That would leave €800 per month for utilities, child-care, transport, food etc – and what about all of those earning below the average industrial wage, of which there are many?

The financial crisis has also left its mark with, in many cases, high levels of household debt putting numerous families on the back-foot when it comes to restoring fiscal normality, with pressure from banks for some, leading to a deterioration in mental and physical well-being.

While the concept of personal responsibility must be a part of the equation, most of the General Grant cases received by Protestant Aid describe situations that are driven by circumstances over which our applicants have no control. Examples include the family who have become homeless because their landlord needed to sell, or the home where illness or bereavement has struck. People apply for assistance for many reasons and they can vary greatly from case to case, but behind each application is a voice calling for help, an individual or family needing reassurance and support. In that context, each of us has a social responsibility - an obligation to act for the benefit of society at large and even a cursory knowledge of our bible will remind us that we also have responsibilities as Christians to each other.

The Greek word ‘allelon’ gives us a valuable steer to the ways in which Christians should serve each other, because it means “one another”, “mutually” or “reciprocally”. It is often used to describe our shared obligations – the responsibility that all Christians have towards one another. Our donors have certainly grasped that concept as they continue to support our vision with consistent generosity – they realise, as we all should do, that while many household incomes have improved over the last few years, the ‘recovery’ for some, is nothing more than a teasing, meaningless word that bears no reality in their day to day lives.

To find out more about Protestant Aid see www.protestantaid.org

Shelf-cleaning in Lent

Think of your soul as a shelf. It has only so much room. You can place whatever things you wish on the shelf, but only at the expense of other things for which there is not room. Too often the shelf is stocked with hatred, prejudice, revenge, envy, lust, selfishness, etc. But when those things take up our shelf space, no room is left for God and God’s will and love and purposes for us. Lent is a time for soul-searching and for “shelf-cleaning”. 

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MICPO (Podiatry)

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www.limerickphysiotherapyclinic.com
arrived and will be so useful on branch Friday nights in Corbally Hall. Confirmation classes have begun in preparation for Bishop Kenneth coming to administer the sacrament on Sunday May 20th. Please remember in your prayers the candidates Danny, Eve, Jack, Stewart, Adam, Gary and Jessica.

Lent is also the time traditionally, when many people like to focus on God’s word in some way. We are using the material written by the Biblical Association of Ireland, one section of which is written by Roscrea’s own Revd. Lesley Robinson. The theme of the studies is ‘As the Father Sent Me so I Send You!’ This is based on The Anglican Communion’s Five Marks of Mission, which are based on Jesus’ own mission. We begin On Tuesday 20th February in the rectory—a morning session and Tuesdays following. 11.00 till 12.00am in the rectory. An evening session, is also planned in the evenings in March.

Alternatively Revd. Shannon sends this invitation;The Methodist North Tipperary Circuit would be delighted for our brothers and sisters-in-Christ from other denominations join us. This is an ecumenical Bible study opportunity for your congregations and yourselves as well during Lent. This will be held in Shinrone Methodist Church on Sunday evenings at 7pm, beginning the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. There are 6 sessions total; one of the Sundays will be an off-night. This is not a “Methodist” study. Also, this study is not about starting up a new program in the church – it’s about looking at where we spend the majority of our time and how God can use us in these places.

ST. PATRICK’S DAY SAT. 17TH.
The celebration of Holy Communion as Gaeilge is scheduled to take place at 11.00 a.m. Bilingual orders of service will be available. We hope, this year, to use the hymns as Gaeilge music supplied on CD by Cumann Na hEaglaise.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES TIMES
Details of special arrangements for these days are to be arranged.

**Monday 8.00 p.m.** St.Molua’s Kyle
**Tuesday 8.00 p.m.** St.Cronan’s Roscrea
**Wednesday 8.00 p.m.** Christ Church Corbally
**Holy Thursday 8.00 p.m.** St.Burchin’s Bourney
**Good Friday (1)11.00a.m.Ed (2)8.00p.m.** (1)Ecumenical Walk of Witness, St. Cronan’s Saturday 8.00 p.m. Lighting of Paschal Candle Christ Church Corbally

ANNUAL SUNDAY LUNCH
A very big thank you to Heather and Leslie Evans who arranged this popular event again this year in Racket Hall. It is great to sit down together over food…preparing for Heather’s Quiz which never fails to aid the digestion. (Hint from last year: count all the windows doors and especially steps and all immovable parts of all churches…it might help?) No it didn’t!

TOWER TALK
St.Cronan’s Tower Restoration is provoking quite a lot of interest around the town. Everyone is invited to come along to the Methodist Hall on Wednesday March 7th at 8.00pm when our builder Henry Thompson will give an illustrated talk revealing the intricacies his work.

Nenagh Union of Parishes
_Nenagh, Templenelly, Ballymackey and Killodiernan_
Rector: Rev Rod Smyth
The Rectory, Church Rd, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.
Tel: 067 32598, Mob: 087 970 6479
Email: rsmyth6582@btinternet.com

SERVICES IN MARCH

**Sunday 4th March The Third Sunday in Lent**
9.30am Templenelly Eucharist – Presiding and Preaching – The Rector
11am St Mary’s, Nenagh Eucharist – Presiding and Preaching – The Rector

**Sunday 11th March The Fourth Sunday in Lent Mothering Sunday**
9.30am Templenelly Eucharist – Presiding and Preaching – The Bishop
11am St Mary’s Nenagh – Matins – The Rector
12.15pm Killodiernan – Matins – The Rector

**Saturday 17th St Patrick 11am St Mary’s The Eucharist**
**Sunday 18th March The Fifth Sunday in Lent**
11am St Mary’s Nenagh, Family Service

**Sunday 25th March Palm Sunday**
9.30am Templenelly – The Liturgy of Palm Sunday – Presiding – The Rector
11am St Mary’s, Nenagh – The Liturgy of Palm Sunday – Presiding – The Rector
12.15pm Killodiernan – Presiding – The Rector

**Monday in Holy Week**
8pm St Mary’s 11am – Eucharist
8pm Templenelly A Service of the Word

**Tuesday in Holy Week**
8pm St Mary’s 11am – Eucharist
8pm Killodiernan – Compline

**Wednesday in Holy Week**
8pm St Mary’s 11am Eucharist
8pm St Mary’s Evening Prayer

**Maundy Thursday**
8pm St Mary’s Eucharist and Stripping of the altar – Presiding and Preaching – The Rector

**Good Friday**
12pm – 3pm St Mary’s The Three Hours – The Rector

**Saturday 31st March – Easter Eve**
8pm Easter Ceremonies and Eucharist – Presiding and Preaching – The Rector

**Sunday 1st April Easter Day**
11am St Mary’s Easter Ceremonies and Eucharist – Presiding and Preaching – The Rector
12.15pm Killodiernan Easter Ceremonies and Eucharist – Presiding and Preaching – The Rector

**FUNERAL OF JOHN & BETTY POWELL**
On the afternoon of Sunday 28th January, St Mary’s, Nenagh, was full to capacity, with many standing outside the church, for the funeral service of John and Betty Powell. John and Betty were greatly loved by all of us in the Nenagh Union and their passing, after a tragic road accident, has left all of us feeling numb and confused. Betty and John were inseparable, and both offered themselves in service to others. They were the sort of people who stayed out of the limelight in life, and yet they have left an imprint for good on so many peoples’ lives. We continue to hold the family circle in our prayers.

**NOAH AT THE FAMILY Eucharist**
The Family Eucharist was one of the highlights of this month’s schedule of services. The Theme was ‘Promises,’ and it was centred on the story of Noah. The children had painted facemasks of animals and we all learned a new chorus – ‘Mr Noah built an ark!’ At the offertory the bread and wine were brought up by the children and, during the Eucharistic Prayer, they stood around the Nave Altar, complete with masks! It was super to have them directly involved in a very powerful way in the liturgy.
During Lent, the Lenten Study Group have been looking at ‘Spiritual Formation’ – contemplating several different traditions of spiritual discipline. Hopefully, there is something which ‘rings a bell’ for us and we come to realise that spiritual discipline is not a ‘one size fits all’ concept. The group meets on Wednesday nights in the back vestry of St Mary’s at 8pm. The first meeting was on 21st February and they continue on February 28th March 7th and 21st.

Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group of Parishes

Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.
Rector: Rev Terry Mitchell
Modreeny Rectory, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 0505 42183
Mob: 087 203 9333
Email: terrym438@gmail.com

FROM THE REGISTERS

On behalf of Margaret Mooney and her family we extend our condolences on the death of Harry (Henry) Hodgins who passed away peacefully on the 12th of January. The Funeral Service was held at St Cronan’s in Roscrea on the 14th of January. Born on the 17th of April 1922 he was 95 years old and will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

On behalf of the Dann family we extend our condolences on the death of Isaac Dann of Killavilla, Roscrea who passed away peacefully on the 29th of January. Isaac was 84 years old and his funeral service was held at St Cronan’s in Roscrea on the 31st of January. He will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

On behalf of the Cloughjordan and Borrisokane Group of Parishes we extend our condolences to the Atkinson family on the death of Canon Donald Atkinson. His funeral was held at St James’ Rockcorry on the 14th of February. Donald had a long and fulfilling ministry in this Group of Parishes and was responsible for the amalgamation of the Borrisokane and Cloughjordan parishes, the establishment of the National School in Cloughjordan and various building projects. He was fondly remembered by all who knew him and will be sorely missed. (see eulogy on page 19)

HOLY BAPTISM

Congratulations to Karen and Michael McLoughney whose daughter Aoibheann was baptised on the 11th of February at St Kieran’s, Cloughjordan.

Baby Aoibheann with her parents Karen and Michael McLoughney following her baptism.
CONFIRMATION
The Confirmation Service is scheduled to take place on the morning of the 24th of June. Anyone in the Group of Parishes who is 12 years or older who wishes to be confirmed please contact the Rector. The date and times for the classes will be announced soon.

GFS
The Diocesan Christmas Craft Day held in Birr on 2nd December was a great success. Girls spent an enjoyable afternoon making crafts and a festive floral decoration. It was a lovely opportunity to meet friends from other branches.

On 6th December Cloughjordan GFS held its Christmas party, enjoying tasty food, Christmas music and of course, a visit from Santa. It was our last meeting for 2017. GFS meetings began again on 17th January. We continue to work on crafts and have also begun Bible Study. Our Mini-Market began on 17th January. We welcome contributions to the stall and your support. Proceeds from the Mini-Market go to Mission Money and World Project. We greatly appreciate the grant received from Tipperary ETB to be spent on equipment which will greatly support our work. We look forward to our Diocesan Service and Prize Day to take place in Birr on Saturday, 24th March.

ARMCHAIR CHRISTMAS QUIZ - See page 8

Shinrone Group of Parishes
Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinnitty and Dunkerrin
Rector: Canon Michael Johnston (On sick leave)
Parish Website: shinrone.blogspot.ie

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd. Canon Ruth Gill
KKilgolan House, Kilcormac, Birr, Co. Offaly. R42 HT20
Phone: 05791 35341: email: ruth_gill40@outlook.ie

Ash Wednesday falls on St. Valentine’s Day, the 14th February and there will be one service in Shinrone at 8 p.m.

SERVICES FOR MARCH
Sunday 4th  10.00 a.m.  Shinrone  Holy Communion
           11.30 a.m.  Aghancon  Holy Communion
Sunday 11th 10.00 a.m.  Shinrone  Morning Prayer
            11.30 a.m.  Aghancon  Morning Prayer
Saturday 17th 10.00 a.m.  Kinnitty  Holy Communion
Sunday 18th 10.00 a.m.  Dunkerrin  Holy Communion
            11.30 a.m.  Kinnitty  Holy Communion
Sunday 25th 10.00 a.m.  Dunkerrin  Morning Prayer
            11.30 a.m.  Kinnitty  Morning Prayer
Saturday 31st 7.00 p.m.  Dunkerrin
Easter Eve: 8.30 p.m.  Kinnitty
Sunday 1st April 10.00 a.m.  Shinrone  Holy Communion
Easter Day: 11.30a.m.  Aghancon  Holy Communion

FROM THE REGISTERS
James David Grant, baby son of David and Christine, Barna, and grandson of Florence and Willie, was baptised in Dunkerrin on Saturday, 27th January. His godparents are Ned Bourke, whose father stood in for him on the day, and Derek and Amanda Grant. James and his family are wished every blessing.

Baby David James Grant with his godparents, Eamon Bourke, Derek and Amanda Grant

Joe Dempsey, The Leap, Aghancon, died on the 29th January and his funeral service was held in Aghancon on the 2nd February. It was no surprise that there was a large attendance at the service and of those who came to support his family in the days before. He had been ill for some time, spending time in hospitals in Tullamore and Dublin. He returned to his family at home for a couple of days before he quietly passed away. Sincere sympathy to his wife Berna, daughters Regina, Marlese and Avril, son Robert, daughter-in-law Jane, grandchildren Bella, Layla and Ryan, brother Des, sisters Margaret, Helen, Sara and Dorothy, sister-in-law, brothers-in-law, nieces, nephews, to his cousin Ray, relatives, neighbours and friends. Robert paid tribute to his father with great humour and respect. Fr. Kieran Blake, the Revd. Janet White Spunner and Archdeacon Carney attended and took part in the service. The internment took place in Dungar Cemetery.

Benny Peavoy, Kinnitty, died peacefully on the 10th February at the Midlands Regional Hospital, Tullamore. He had been ill for a while and had been lovingly cared for by Iris and his family until he needed hospital care. His funeral was held in Kinnitty on the 12th February. The local community and beyond came to show their support to Benny’s wife Iris, son John and daughter Sandra. Many thanks to Mrs. Rita McGuinness who played the organ at the reception and funeral services and for those who came to augment the singing. Fr. Michael O'Meara and the Revd. Janet White Spunner also took part in the service. Following a drive across the Slieve Blooms in beautiful sunshine, Benny was laid to rest in the graveyard at St. Peter’s Church, Mountrath.

Deepest sympathy is extended to both families and friends and our prayer is that while they receive comfort and support of those around them, that they will find peace of heart and mind in the knowledge of God’s love. Sympathy is also offered to the relatives of John and Betty Powell, Nenagh and Rita Armitage, Cloughjordan.

MOTHERS’ UNION
An interesting meeting on the environment was held in Roscrea recently. The closing service for the end of the season will be held on Thursday, 22nd March in Shinrone.
FASHION SHOW IN GLOSTER HOUSE
Plans are well under way for the Fashion Show on Thursday 12th April. The gates will open at 6.45 p.m. with the evening beginning at 7 p.m. for those who wish to view the house. There will be a cheese and wine reception followed by the Fashion Show at 8 p.m. Items to be modelled include Midlands Bridal, Kilcormac, Shaws Roscrea and Galvin’s Menswear, Tullamore.

EASTER GENERAL VESTRY MEETINGS HAVE BEEN ARRANGED:
Tuesday, 13th March in Dunkerrin at 8 p.m.
Wednesday 14th March in Aghancon Community Hall at 8 p.m.
Tuesday 20th March in Kinnitty at 8 p.m.
Thursday 22nd March in Cloughmoyle School, Shinrone at 8 p.m.

Drumcliffe Union with Kilnasoolagh
Ennis, Kilkenny, 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

PERSON OF THE YEAR
It would be hard to over-emphasise the contribution which Mr Nigel Bridge, long-standing member of Drumcliffe Parish has made to the wider Ennis and Clare community. So he has proved to be a popular choice as one of a handful of locals chosen by the Ennis Cluster of Parishes, based around the Cathedral as a Person of the Year.

For well over a half century Nigel has played the organ at St Columba’s Church and organ or piano in many other churches and venues besides, including the Ennis Musical Society’s annual show. He has also made his name and reputation in the field of hospitality and tourism working within local hotel management.

Still an immaculately sprightly figure who belies his pensioner status, Nigel, Drumcliffe’s oldest serving parishioner (along with brother Adrian) was part of the small team who oversaw the official handover of Ennis medieval Priory from the Church of Ireland back to its original owners the Franciscan Community.

Nigel received his certificate of recognition from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Killaloe, The Rt Rev Fintan Monahan, in a ceremony in St Peter Paul Cathedral, Ennis.

BEREAVEMENT AFAR
Our hearts and prayers go out to two Ennis (Drumcliffe) parishioners Mrs Blessed Okeyenbolor and Mrs Carolyn Giani. Blessed prepares with her husband Francis to travel to native Lagos, Nigeria to bury her mother, a reminder for the rest of us of the extra pain of separation for immigrants. Meanwhile, Carolyn, who lives near her daughter in Corofin, has recently returned from Tenerife where her Australian-born father Chris Bavin died suddenly. Retired, he has lived on the island for some 40 years.

STUDY
We were looking forward this Lent to participating together in a prayer-study group each Tuesday, Using material from Bishops Appeal on the theme of Care of the Creation.

HOLY WEEK –EASTER
Bishop Kenneth helps us to commence our Passiontide observance on Palm Sunday when he will celebrate Holy Communion at Kilnasoolagh at 10.00am and Drumcliffe at Noon. We thank all concerned for re-adjusting their schedules to make possible the above arrangements.

CELEBRATION
Mrs Dot Bolster got a special treat for the celebration of her 94th birthday with a visit from her son Mort and his wife Mary, all the way from Vancouver in Canada. Daughter Karen and her family from Dublin and home-based daughter Valerie filled out an expanded congregation for holy communion at Christ Church that weekend, with Rector Bob Hanna presiding.
BAPTISM

The baptism of Olivia Connaughton took place in Ardrahan Church during the Communion service on February 4th. Congratulations and blessings go to all her loved ones, especially her parents Georgina and Marc and her big sister Emily.

ST BRIGID’S DAY on February 1st was marked with a special service of Holy Communion in Holy Trinity Church, Aughrim. The children of The Glebe National School brought St Brigid’s crosses that they had made in class and as part of the service told us their stories about our patron saint.

LENTEN EVENTS

On the Sunday before Lent we were invited to make time during the coming penitential season for the spiritual exercise of ‘going up the holy mountain,’ which involves putting in place the spiritual disciplines needed for transformative encounter with God.

We have all been invited to take up the bishop’s Lent Challenge, using a simple form of daily prayer and Bible readings designed for use at home throughout the week.

A special Ash Wednesday Eucharist was held in Holy Trinity Church, Aughrim, during which children of the Glebe National School led the readings and read the ten commandments.

The Rector was invited by Father Joseph Roche to preach in Labane Church at a vigil mass for the First Sunday in Lent (Feb 17th). He was also asked to submit a Christian Unity article, offering insights into our Church of Ireland parish, for the latest edition of New Horizon, the diocesan magazine for Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora.

Since February 21st we have been coming together for a midweek Lenten Group, Praying Into Advent, which offers us the chance to prayerfully reflect on the lectionary readings for each coming Sunday in Lent. The group meets on Wednesdays from 7pm to 8pm in The Glebe National School until March 21st.

There will be an ecumenical service for the Women’s World Day of Prayer in St Michael’s Church Ballinasloe on March 1st at 8pm.

On Saturday 3rd March those who wish to literally climb the holy mountain will be joining the Rector on a parish pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick.

Mothering Sunday (March 11th) will be marked in St John’s Church, Ballinasloe, with a special craft presentation by the children of the Sunday school to the women of the parish, as part of the 10am Holy Communion service there. We look forward to the baptism of James Newton that day during the 11.30am Family Service in Holy Trinity Church, Aughrim.

St Patrick’s Day will be marked with a special service of Holy Communion in Holy Trinity Church, Aughrim at 11am.

Clonfert Group of Parishes

Clonfert, Banagher, Eyrecourt, and Portumna

Priest in Charge: Rev Charles McCartney

The Rectory, The Hill, Banagher, Co. Offaly. R42T935

Mob: 087 709 4468
Email: dunroamin.mccartney@btopenworld.com

SERVICE TIMES

Portumna – Saturdays 7.00pm HC 3rd Saturday (17th March)
Eyrecourt – Sundays 10.00am HC 2nd Sunday (11th March)
Banagher – Sundays 12.00noon HC 1st sunday (4th March)
Clonfert Cathedral – 5th Sunday Joint Service (29th April)

Thank you to all in the Parish for working hard to accept changes to service times. We will discuss with our Portumna congregation in the next few weeks as you have been leading the way with the trial.

We have enjoyed Saturday evenings in a very relaxed way, reviewing General Vestry Register and a Birthday Party. Even going to Church on a Saturday for us is a first!

Eyrecourt has also been good for me as I arrive early and no rush away to Banagher. Arriving in Banagher a full 30 minutes before Church is a great cushion.

LENT

Bible Study each Thursday 8.00pm in the Rectory

HOLY WEEK:

Portumna – Wednesday @ 8.00pm
Eyrecourt – Maundy Thursday @ 8.00pm Holy Communion
Banagher – Good Friday @ 8.00pm

EASTER

Portumna – Saturday 7.00pm Easter Holy Communion
Eyrecourt – Sunday 10.00am Holy Communion
Banagher – Sunday 12.00noon Holy Communion and Holy Baptism.

The extended McCartney family will arrive in Banagher at Easter and we look forward to our latest granddaughter (Eva Louise) being Baptised at our Easter Celebration. We will condense the service so please do not worry about timings and as we bring our own Sunday School there will be a Children’s theme. It would be great to see all the children and teenagers in our Parish on Easter Sunday.

EASTER GENERAL VESTRIES also known as Easter Vestries proposed dates:

Banagher Friday 16th March @ 8.00pm in the Church.
Eyrecourt Friday 23rd March @ 8.00pm in the Church Hall
Portumna Saturday 24th March @ 8.00pm in the Church

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Ruth and Cecilia will have our first meeting in Banagher Church Sunday 25th February and Palm Sunday 25th March during normal Church time in the Vestry/Kitchen room. Initially we intend to meet on the 4th Sunday of the month, please support our children and teachers in your prayers and we look forward to growing this very valuable ministry. Other Churches in the group are looking at their own situations and perhaps a fun afternoon in Eyrecourt as an ice breaker for our children later in the summer.

LOOKING AHEAD

Banagher Select Vestry are planning a cake sale and cream teas in the Rectory Saturday 16th June to help with Church Finance and an after Church BBQ in August. The Diocesan Board of Mission are planning a big day Sunday 30th September around Clonfert Cathedral with an Act of Worship, Car Treasure Hunt and B.B.Q. We really look forward to our Diocesan Youth taking an active role on
this day. You will notice this is a 5th Sunday so our weekend effort will be dedicated around the Cathedral, we look forward to Dean Gary joining us.

To close thank you for your support recently as Church timings changed very suddenly. Thanks to Jerome for stepping into the breach for a joint Sunday service.

I have been suffering from Gall Stones for some time and had a very surprise call up for surgery. I write these notes just out of hospital and on course for a return to normal duty before this Newsink is published. Modern keyhole surgery certainly has many benefits.

As it happens some modifications/updates to the Rectory have been on going and we look forward to the changes on our return.

Many Thanks again
Charles and Cecilia.

Limerick City Parish
St. Mary’s Cathedral, St. Michael’s and Abington Churches
Dean: Very Rev Niall Sloane
The Deanery, 7 Kilbane, Castletroy, Limerick.
Tel: 061 310 293
Email: dean@limerick.anglican.org
Website: www.lcp.limerick.anglican.org

Curate Assistant: Rev Edna Wakely
50 Ballinvoher, Fr Russell Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick
Tel: 061 302 038, Mob: 086 357 4917
Email: ednawakely@hotmail.com

FROM THE DEAN
As we continue our journey through Lent and Holy Week towards Easter, I encourage you to take note of the services that are being held during this period.

DEAN’S CLINIC
In the Cathedral Office every Tuesday from 7-8 pm.

ST MARY’S 850TH
The programme of events is well underway – please visit www.cathedral.limerick.anglican.org for more information.

ST PATRICK’S DAY
Choral Eucharist will be held in the Cathedral on Saturday 17th March at 3.30pm. The guest preacher will be the Very Rev’d Victor Stacey, sometime Dean of St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin.
MOTHERS’ UNION ANNUAL BEETLE DRIVE
A wonderful evening of fun was had by about 20 children of St. Michael’s School and their parents at our annual Beetle Drive. After the excitement of playing Beetle we had lots of goodies and a cup of tea for the parents. The competition was mighty, including the parents and everyone came away with a prize! The Dean dropped in to see the fun and he thanked all those who helped on the night.

Please contact Branch Chair, Margaret Schutz for further details. New members always welcome.

WHIST DRIVES
Activities continue in 2018
3rd March 2018 – Raffle – St Michael’s
10th March 2018 – Villiers Square.
All start at 7.30pm sharp and €6 to include supper.

ST MICHAEL’S HALL
For booking enquiries please contact the Hall Manager, Suzi Eckhardt.

HOSPITAL VISITING
The Clergy would appreciate being told if parishioners are in hospital, going into hospital, or if they have been discharged, and will be pleased to offer pastoral support. A selection of prayers is available from them or in the Church porches.

PARISH ARCHIVES
We are looking for any photos, information or historical artefacts relating to any of the churches in Limerick City Parish. If you have any such records, please contact the Dean.

READERS AND INTERCESSORS
If you would be interested in reading at services and/or leading the Prayers of the People at Parish Communion once a month please speak to a member of the clergy.

CHILDREN AND CHURCH
We are grateful to the leaders of our Sunday School who have organise a wide range of events and activities. Children who wish to remain in church can avail of the Children’s packs at the back of the church and/or follow along in our Parish Communion services with the ‘I can join in the Holy Communion Service’ booklets.

COELIAC?
Communicants who wish to receive gluten-free bread please inform the Clergy or a Churchwarden

ECO CONGREGATION IRELAND
Keep an eye on the notice board in the Church on news and updates.

FROM THE Registers
Our sympathy and prayers are with all those who have been bereaved

MOTHERS’ UNION ANNUAL BEETLE DRIVE
Having fun at the Mothers’ Union Beetle Drive

Adare and Kilmallock Group of Parishes
Adare, Croom, Kilmallock & Kilpeacon
Rector: Canon Liz Beasley
The Rectory, Adare, Co. Limerick.
Tel: 061 396227 Mob: 087–7199750
Email: revlizadare@gmail.com

CONDOLENCES
Various members of our parishes have lost loved ones in the past month. We have attempted to list them all in our weekly eGleanings, and again offer condolences, as well as prayers for God’s peace and comfort.

The Kilmallock parish lost one of its long-time members and a churchwarden, John Steepe, from cancer in January. John was originally a member of St. Andrew’s, Kilfinnane, before that church closed. His funeral was held at the Kilmallock church on Thursday, 25 January, after which many present went to Kilfinnane, where we were joined by more people. We gathered inside St. Andrew’s for words, prayers, and singing, after which John’s body was buried in the churchyard with his parents. Three priests officiated: Rev. Liz Beasley, Rector; Dr. Philip Knowles, former Dean of Cashel, where John had attended church at one point; and Fr. Michael O’Shea, Parish Priest in Kilfinnane. Our condolences to John’s family and friends, especially his sisters Nellie, Nancy, and Margaret, and his friend Julie, as well as the Kilmallock parish and the Kilfinnane community.

HYMNS
Our Second Friday event in February was a special evensong focused on “The Hymns of Fanny Alexander.” She was a 19th-century poet and author of hymns. Her best-known hymns are “All things bright and beautiful,” “Once in royal David’s city,” and “There is a green hill far away.” Because these are among some of the favourite hymns of our parishioners, we held this service where we learned more about her and sang these favourites, as well as “St. Patrick’s Breastplate” (well, we said some verses) and “Jesus calls us! o’er the tumult.” We rounded out an enjoyable evening with fellowship in Kilpeacon’s Gate Lodge. Thanks to Kilpeacon Church for hosting this service.

LENT
And now Lent is upon us. Our parishes like to have a class during the season; this year we are focusing on the Lord’s Prayer and its implications for how we live. It meets on Wednesday evenings, beginning 21 February, at the Rectory. In addition, five students are preparing for Confirmation, scheduled with Bishop Kenneth for 22 April. And one primary school student is preparing for Baptism.

EASTER
By the time the next issue of Newslink appears, Holy Week and Easter Sunday will already have happened! So below is the schedule of services for our parishes.

- Palm Sunday, 25 March: A service in each parish with the reading of the Passion Gospel.
- Tuesday, 27 March: Tenebrae Service in Croom, 8.00pm
- Wednesday, 28 March: Last Lenten class at the Rectory
- Thursday, 29 March: Maundy Thursday service, with Holy Communion, Adare, 8.00pm
- Friday, 30 March:
  - Children’s service, Kilpeacon Church, 10.00am
  - Good Friday service, Kilmallock Church, 12.00pm
  - Good Friday service, Adare Church, 3.00pm
- Saturday, 31 March: Easter Vigil, Kilpeacon Church, 8.00pm.
- Sunday, 1 April: Holy Communion in each of the parishes, at the following times:
  - Croom: 8.45am
  - Kilmallock: 10.00am
  - Kilpeacon: 10.15am
  - Adare: 12.00pm
The Easter Vigil service, held in Kilpeacon this year for the first time, will include the lighting of the new fire, the reading of the story of salvation from the Old Testament, the renewal of baptismal vows, and Holy Communion to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. It is a longer service than most (about 90 minutes) but a powerful one that helps participants to understand what Easter is all about.

But we’re getting ahead of ourselves! Before Easter comes Lent. A blessed and holy Lent to all.

Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes
Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kilcornan & Kilnaughtin
Priest-in-Charge: Rev Canon Patrick Comerford
The Rectory, Askeaton, Co. Limerick.
Mob: 087 663 5116
Email: revpatrickcomerford@gmail.com

In preparation for Lent, time was spent in the Rectory on a recent Sunday afternoon burning Palm Crosses from Palm Sunday last year to prepare ashes for Ash Wednesday this year.

This is a traditional way of preparing ashes for Ash Wednesday. This year, we are marking Lent, Holy Week and Easter in the Rathkeale and Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes with traditional services and with a Lenten study group meeting in the Rectory.

The study group is meeting in the Rectory on different dates in Lent, using 'All Things Are Possible,' a study course produced by the Anglican mission agency USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel) and exploring how faith in God can change the world. Watch the parish Facebook page for dates and details.

There are services at 8 p.m. each evening in Holy Week, with two noteworthy changes this year. The Good Friday service is being brought forward in the day to the more traditional time of 12 noon to 3 p.m. with a series of reflections on Christ’s journey to Calvary for the Three Hours. Some people will want to drop into Saint Mary’s, Askeaton, for shorter or longer times during these three hours, without feeling they have to stay for the full three hours. Parishioners are invited to drop in, stay a while, and take time to listen to the readings, reflection, pray, and wait a while in the silence.

There is a slight adjustment too to the times of the Easter Eucharists or Celebrations of the Holy Communion this year, with two celebrations on Saturday evening and two on Easter morning.

- **Sunday 4 March (Lent 3):** 9.30, the Parish Eucharist (Holy Communion), Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton; 11.30, Morning Prayer, Saint Brendan's Church, Kilnaughtin, Tarbert.
- **Sunday 11 March (Lent 4, Mothering Sunday):** 9.30, the Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Castletown Church; 11.30, Morning Prayer, Holy Trinity Church, Rathkeale.
- **Saturday 17 March, Saint Patrick’s Day:** 11.00, The Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Saint Mary’s, Askeaton.
- **Sunday 18 March (Lent 5):** 9.30, Morning Prayer, Saint Mary’s, Askeaton; 11.30, the Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Saint Brendan’s, Kilnaughtin, Tarbert.

**HOLY WEEK**

- **Sunday 25 March (Palm Sunday, Lent 6):** 9.30, Morning Prayer, Castletown; 11.30, the Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Holy Trinity, Rathkeale.
- **Monday 26 March:** 8 p.m., Evening Prayer, Saint Mary’s, Askeaton.
- **Tuesday 27 March:** 8 p.m., Late Evening Office, Saint Brendan’s, Kilnaughtin.
- **Wednesday 28 March:** 8 p.m., Compline, Holy Trinity, Rathkeale.
- **Thursday 29 March, Maundy Thursday:** 8 p.m., the Maundy Eucharist, with Washing of the Feet, Castletown Church.
- **Friday 30 March, Good Friday:** 12 noon to 3 p.m.: The Three Hours, Christ’s journey with the Cross to Calvary, Saint Mary’s, Askeaton.
- **Saturday 31 March, Easter Eve:** 8 p.m., The Easter Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Holy Trinity, Rathkeale; 10 p.m., The Easter Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Castletown Church.
- **Sunday 1 April, Easter Day:** 9:30 a.m., the Easter Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Saint Mary’s, Askeaton; 11.30 a.m., the Easter Eucharist (Holy Communion 2), Saint Brendan’s, Kilnaughtin, Tarbert.

**CATHEDRAL/PARISH EXCHANGE**

The Dean of Limerick, the Very Revd Niall Sloane, visited two churches in the parish, Saint Mary’s, Askeaton, and Saint Brendan’s, Kilnaughtin, on the First Sunday in Lent, while Canon Patrick Comerford presided at the Choral Eucharist and preached in Saint Mary’s Cathedral in his capacity as Canon Precentor.

**RECENT FUNERAL**

Richard Arnold Fitzell, Spa Road, Tralee and late of Glencullare, Tarbert, Co Kerry, died unexpectedly on 24 January 2018. He was the son of the late John and Mary Fitzell and brother of the late Bertie. He is survived by his brother Frank, sisters Olive and Lilian, nephew Adrian, niece Alice, cousins, and an extended family. He was brought to Saint Brendan’s Church, Kilnaughtin, on 26 January; his funeral took place on 27 January, and he was buried in the churchyard.

World Day of Prayer: The ecumenical service marking World Day of Prayer takes place at 8 p.m. on Friday 2 March in Cappagh Church.

The Annunciation: Because 25 March is Palm Sunday, the Feast of the Annunciation has been transferred in the Church Calendar to the week after Easter Week. The Feast of the Annunciation will be marked with a celebration of the Eucharist at 11 a.m. on Wednesday 11 April in Saint Mary’s Church, Askeaton.
**Tralee & Dingle Unions of Parishes**

_**Tralee, Ballymacelligott, Ballyseedy, Dingle, Kilgobbin and Killiney**_

**Priest-in-Charge:** Rev Jim Stephens,

_**Teach an Solais, Ashe St., Tralee, Co. Kerry V92 TX59**_

Tel: 066 712 6200 (Office) Mob: 087 052 9107

Email: stjohns.ashestreet@gmail.com or stiolfains@gmail.com

Web: www.traleedingle.ardfert.anglican.org

**CONFIRMATION:**

The confirmation classes began with a service in St John’s on the 14th of January. Our candidates are: Alli Tarrant, Alison McEvoy, Alex Marritz, Amy Darcy, Charlotte Geary, Christina Ronan, Christopher Boyle, Heather Walsh, Kate Feeney, Marc Roberts Kenny and Rosie Giles.

**FAMILY SERVICE:**

A family service centered on the Christingle was held on the 4th February in St John’s to celebrate Candelmas and to mark the end of the season of the Epiphany. Our Sunday club, confirmation candidates and junior choir were all involved. Many thanks to our leaders for their contribution and help in preparing the christingles at Sunday club on the previous Sunday. It was great to see so many children and parents present.

**YOUTH CLUB:**

The parish youth club meets once a month, on the 11th February John Orme and his daughter Charlotte demonstrated how to prepare pizza and rocky road. The young people also made their own pizza and we all enjoyed some of their cooking afterwards.

**ASH WEDNESDAY:**

Lent began on Ash Wednesday, Services were held in St John’s Ashe Street at 11am and in Camp and Ballymacelligott churches at 7pm. At the 11am service in St John’s, we welcomed Kiltallagh National School. It was lovely to see the two schools under Church of Ireland management in Kerry meeting up for worship. This was followed by a Beetle drive, refreshments and some fun in Teach an tSolais which was generously provided by the ladies of Tralee and Ballymacelligott.

**LENTEN STUDY:**

Lenten Study using the BACI booklets on the five marks of mission will be held in Camp and in Ballymacelligott. It is also hoped to incorporate it into the mid week service in Tralee.

**MEETING YOUR NEIGHBOURS:**

The first meeting was facilitated by the Church of Ireland and took place in Teach an tSolais on the 5th February. This involves parishioners from both St John’s. On this occasion we met for evening prayer and a discussion on the Sunday gospel, it was followed by tea and cake, generously provided by the ladies of Tralee and Ballymacelligott.

**SYMPATHY:**

Richard Arnold Fitzell. Richard was always present at the mid week service in St John’s, he would arrive a little early and he always helped to prepare the Church for that service. We missed him on that morning and we will continue to miss his gentle presence in Church and in particular at the mid week service where he will continue to be remembered.

We offer our prayers and sympathy to his sisters Lillian, Olive and to his brother Frank. Niece Alice and Nephew Adrian. His removal and funeral services were held in his native Tarbert.

Dawn Mason, Caherleaheen, Tralee passed away on the morning of the 4th February in KUH. She was in her eighty ninth year. Her removal and funeral services were held in St John’s Ashe street.

Her death was shock to her family who were still grieving for their Dad Tommy who passed away last July. We offer our sympathy to her daughters Yvonne, Vivienne & Lorna, brothers Jackie, Rolie, Reggie, Derek & Errol, sons-in-law Tom, John & Kevin, daughter-in-law Mary, grandchildren, great grandchildren and friends. Her Ashes were interred with her late husband Tommy in Ballyseedy Graveyard on the 17th February.

Helen Giles formerly of Tralee, died in the UK on the 5th February. Her funeral will take place there on the 13th of March and her ashes will be buried at a later date in the family grave in St John’s Oakview in Tralee. She loved to visit Kerry, coming home at least twice a year. Her last visit was in August 2013 for the burial of her sister Evelyn ashes. She trained as a teacher under the Froebel method and spent many happy years in that profession.

We offer our sympathy to her brother Trevor and to his wife Rhona and their families as they prepare to travel for her funeral.

**WOMEN’S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:**

Services are planned for Camp and Tralee on the 2nd of March. The service in Camp will be hosted by the Church of Ireland and the service in Tralee will be hosted by the Bon Secours Order at their Chapel in Tralee. More news next month.

**CONFIRMATION:**

The Confirmation Service will take place in St Mary’s Church Killarney on Sunday 15th April at 11am. There are currently three young people who will be confirmed in the church on that day – so they can gauge what is required for Confirmation – please don’t hesitate to contact the Rector. Confirmation Preparation Course classes will start on Thursday 1 March in the Aghadoe Room at 7pm. The subsequent dates are 15 March, 22 March, 26 March, 5 April and 12 April. At each session one of the parents will also attend (this is a Safeguarding Trust requirement).
KILARNYE MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL:
The Mountain Festival first took place at Kendal in Cumbria in the Lake District in NW England in 2001. Kendal is well known in Killarney as both towns have been twinned since 2004. The 2018 inaugural Killarney Mountain Festival in partnership with Kendal Mountain Festival is taking place here in the Killarney area with over 40 events running from March 9th – 11th. Some events will take place in our church. On Friday 9th at 7:15pm Dhualagiri, Ascent to the White Mountain; and on Saturday 10th at 7pm The Nahanni Whisperer. More significantly for us, our very own Richard Hilliard will be giving an illustrated talk about his epic voyage with a group of people rowing a curragh from Derry to Lona that marked the 1,400th anniversary of St Columba’s own voyage. Richard’s talk is at 10am on March 10th. At 3pm on the same day a talk by local historian Thomas O’Sullivan is entitled Siúlóid na n-Dán (Walking with the Legends). All are welcome and all of our church events are free.

A WELCOME FROM ST MARY’S:
The Bishop has announced the appointment to the parish of Killorglin of the Revd Sister Isabel Keegan with the Revd Sister Ann-Marie Stuart. Unfortunately we don’t have a date yet so we have no plans for their reception service. I hope I will have the date in time for the issue of Newslink on 1st April. In the meantime work is underway by the Select Vestry to have the place looking good when they do arrive. They are coming to us on a three year appointment with the arrival of two Priests working as a team. The Rev Isabel Keegan and the Rev Ann-Marie Stuart. Unfortunately we don’t have a date yet so we have no plans for their reception service. I hope I will have the date in time for the issue of Newslink on 1st April. In the meantime work is underway by the Select Vestry to have the place looking good when they do arrive. They are coming to us on a three year appointment with the arrival of two Priests working as a team. The Rev Isabel Keegan

ST PATRICK’S FESTIVAL CONCERT:
On Monday March 19th we will be holding a special St Patrick’s Festival concert at St Mary’s commencing at 8pm. This will be performed by the Killarney School of Music under the baton of Padraig Buckley and promises to be a very entertaining evening. After that we will be into full swing for our 2018 concert season and this year’s programme of choir and orchestral performances looks very promising. If anybody would like to receive regular communications on forthcoming concerts or events please email concerts@churchofthesloes.ie or visit our website churchofthesloes.ie.

SPRING:
As I finish these notes the dogs come in wreathed in Knocknagree snow – yet again – and I’m tempted to think that this winter will never end, but already the signs and signals are there to be seen. My mind is drawn to Robert Browning’s beautiful 19th c. poem from his play Pippa Passes and all that’s really required now is a smile and a towel!

The year’s at the spring,
And day’s at the morn;
Morning’s at seven;
The hill-side’s dew-pearled;
The lark’s on the wing;
The snail’s on the thorn;
God’s in his Heaven—
All’s right with the world!

Kilcolman Union of Parishes
St Michael’s, Iveragh Road, Killorglin
& St Carthage, Kiltaclagh Road, Castlemaine.
Vacant.
Priest-in-Charge: Archdeacon Simon Lumby,
Mob 086 8703997 & Tel 064 66 31832.
Parish Postal Address: St Michael’s Church, Iveragh Road, Killorglin,
Co. Kerry.
Web: www.kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org

SERVICES:-
St Carthage Sunday 9.45am.
St Michael’s Sunday 11am followed by refreshments.
During the vacancy:-

Holy Communion 2nd& 4th Sundays in both churches,
Morning Prayer 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays.
We have a Sunday School for our Parish Children in St Michael’s Hall on
2nd& 4th Sundays @ 11am.

LOOKING AHEAD.
The Rev Brian Rogers will be with us on the 2nd and 4th Sundays for Holy Communion until Easter and we will have Morning Prayer in both Churches on the other Sundays of the months. The Rev Joe Hardy is to be with us for Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday in Killorglin at 8pm. There will also be a special service on Good Friday at 8pm in Killorglin.

NEW PRIESTS.
At long last our vacancy status is to change, maybe at the end of April, with the arrival of two Priests as a team. The Rev Isabel Keegan and the Rev Ann-Marie Stuart. Unfortunately we don’t have a date yet so we have no plans for their reception service. I hope I will have the date in time for the issue of Newslink on 1st April. In the meantime work is underway by the Select Vestry to have the place looking good when they do arrive. They are coming to us on a three year appointment during which time the renovation of the Rectory in Miltown is to be well on the way to completion. It would be helpful if we got a fine summer so that the external work can be completed. If the building was sealed it would be easier to get on with the internal work. We can’t fix the weather so we just have to take what we get. We are looking forward to a new challenge in the parish and hopefully we will rise up out of the ashes to become one of the leading parishes in Kerry.

Speaking of challenges I hope you are all living with the Bishop’s Lent Challenge.
Easter is next.

Kenmare & Dromod Union of Parishes
Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville and Valenti
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

The South-West of the Kingdom of Kerry has a biorhythm of its own – wideawake from Easter to October, little catnap during November, energetically celebrating the Nativity in December, sending the Plough out with the congregation’s blessing in January, then relaxing into slumber in February and March before the natural cycle brings us back to Easter via the Lenten meditation awakening.

Which is a long, roundabout way of saying that not much happens in February down in this small corner. Not strictly true actually – although there was little if anything in the way of front-page news to report, there has been significant activity in terms of planning.

March will see the annual Christians Together in Kenmare service for the World Day of Prayer, this year to be held in the Gateway Methodist, organised jointly between Holy Cross, St Patrick’s and the Gateway congregations.

The same venue (a modern building which has a kitchen, effective heating and up-to-date presentation facilities – not that we in St Patrick’s covet our brothers and sisters building, of course...) will host the joint Lent Study – this year based on the film ‘The Theory of Everything’, the remarkable story of Jane and Stephen Hawking. The issues cover the Science/religion debate, relationships in difficult times, learning to accept weakness, associated mental and physical suffering, and the meaning and mystery of the Cross in relation to all of these issues.

The success of last years’ ‘Coffee Concerts’ with the very talented Soundbridge Sessions will be repeated, possibly with guest musicians, and we look forward to a number of Choral and Orchestral Concerts.
ranging from Pre-mediaeval Celtic, Irish traditional, Baroque and Jazz through to Contemporary musical styles.

But in all of these, we depend on the Holy Spirit’s guidance to ensure that in word, music and our welcome, Christ’s Holy Name is honoured and that people both from the local area and visitors from far and wide have the opportunity to draw nearer to Him and to receive His blessing.

PS: We in the Kenmare and Dromod Union would wish to add our thanks and appreciation to Ed and Jean Ritchie, who have retired from ministry in the Gateway Methodist Church. Their love, support and service have been a blessing to all of us, and we pray for a peaceful and fulfilling retirement, looking forward to their occasional (and, we hope, frequent) visits back to Kenmare.

Methodist News

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

Throughout Lent I have been reading work by Fr Michael Paul Gallagher SJ and I thought I’d share a little here.

Michael Paul was a renowned lecturer and author of books on faith and contemporary culture. He lectured in English in UCD for over ten years in the 1970s and 80s before going to Rome, where he lectured in theology in the Gregorian University. Shortly before his death he recorded a series of short videos for the Jesuit Guide to Making Good Decisions.

Following is the text that compliments the short video ‘Trust.’

What is wonderfully surprising in Ignatian spirituality is the invitation to trust our deepest desire. That desire is God’s unique gift to us, guiding us along the path to God. Many of us have learned to think of God’s will as something outside ourselves, an external blueprint that we must follow. Nothing is further from the truth; we find God within ourselves when we get in touch with our deepest desire. Of course that doesn’t come easily: we have all sorts of competing desires, and we need to pay close attention to them if we are to sift through them and unearth what is at our core.

There is an ancient legend from India that says, once upon a time, humans shared in God’s wisdom, but that they so abused it that God and his heavenly court decided to take it away from them and hide it until they were mature enough to appreciate it.

But where should they hide it? One angel suggested, ‘Let us bury it deep within the earth,’ but God said, ‘No, they will dig down into the earth and find it.’ Another angel said, ‘Let’s take it to the top of the highest mountain and hide it there,’ while another said, ‘Let’s hide it in the depth of the ocean.’ But God rejected both suggestions: ‘They will eventually climb every mountain and explore the depths of every sea.’

‘Then there is nowhere to hide it,’ said the angels. God thought for a long time and then said, ‘Here is what we will do. We will hide it deep within their being; they will never think of looking there.’ And since then, the story goes, humans have been searching outside themselves for their deepest meaning, never realising that is buried within them in their deep heart’s core.

The time has come for us to start listening to our deepest self. Ask the Lord to help you.

I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me. – St Paul
My me is God, I know no other self save in him. – St Catherine of Genoa

Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit

Minister: Rev. Ruth Watt
Methodist Manse, Rathkeale Road, Adare, Co. Limerick.
Tel: 061 396 236 Email: watt_ruth@yahoo.ie

The journey through Lent and to Easter has well begun. Are we continuing to seek God’s renewal in our lives as we prepare for Easter? Are we still seeking renewal in body, in mind, in spirit? This is a time when we should be preparing, and repairing our lives for the risen Christ. And none of this is easy. It IS easy to slip into bad habits of eating and exercise. It IS easy to allow our viewing and reading to become wasteful and unedifying. It IS easy for us to relegate our relationship with God to the back pages of our lives. And so, if we have allowed ourselves to fall into bad or poor practices let us use these last weeks of Lent as a time to build new habits, new practices, and new and improved relationships (both with God and with others). They say it takes 30 days to make something a habit, let’s take the 31 days of March to begin being renewed in body, mind and spirit.

SERVICES FOR MARCH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Rev. Ruth Watt</td>
<td>Services of Holy Communion</td>
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<td>11th</td>
<td>Rev. Ruth Watt</td>
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<td>17th</td>
<td>Rev. Ruth Watt</td>
<td>Saturday evening Service in Adare @ 8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>Rev. Ruth Watt</td>
<td>Sunday morning Service in Ballingrane @ 11am</td>
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<td>25th</td>
<td>Mrs. Siobhán Wheeler</td>
<td>Palm Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th</td>
<td>Rev. Ruth Watt</td>
<td>Wednesday Evening service in Adare @ 8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>30th</td>
<td>Rev. Ruth Watt</td>
<td>Good Friday Service in Ballingrane @ 8pm</td>
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Unless otherwise stated services are in Adare @ 10:15am and in Ballingrane @ 11:45am
Amen. We pray in Jesus’ Name. In the power of Your Spirit send us out to share that love with human hearts as the Spirit breathes. May this love make us catch that is, which is seen supremely in Jesus, and which is brought home to us courage and boldness as we walk with You. We pray for Your blessing on the Methodist Church in Ireland; give us courage and boldness as we walk with You. We pray for Your blessing on the Methodist Church in Ireland; give us courage and boldness as we walk with You. We pray for Your blessing on our communities and for protection from all that harms. We celebrate the wonder of your love which creates and forms all that is, which is seen supremely in Jesus, and which is brought home to human hearts as the Spirit breathes. May this love make us catch our breath and turn our lives upside down. In the power of Your Spirit send us out to share that love with others. We pray in Jesus’ Name. Amen.
There is an old Jewish saying: God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods – our human mothers – all of them have been part of the celebration of ‘Mothering Sunday’ – as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as ‘live-in’ servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families – which is how ‘Mothering Sunday’ got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cake called a Simnel cake traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed and in many ways now resembles the American Mothers’ Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.

The agenda for the meeting included: migration, direct provision and overseas aid; the impact of Brexit on Ireland and Northern Ireland; abortion and the 8th Amendment to the Constitution; homelessness, social housing and wider economic issues; and Education issues.

The delegation representing the Government included the Taoiseach, Mr Leo Varadkar TD; Mr Richard Bruton, Minister for Education & Skills; Mr Charlie Flanagan, Minister for Justice and Equality; Ms Heather Humphries, Minister for Business, Enterprise & Innovation; Mr Simon Harris, Minister for Health; Mr Shane Ross, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport; Ms Regina Doherty, Minister for Employment Affairs & Social Protection; Mr Ciaran Cannon, Minister for State at the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade; Mr Martin Fraser, Secretary General, Department of the Taoiseach; Mr Brian Murphy, Chief of Staff, Department of the Taoiseach, and Ms Miriam Dollard, Protocol & General Division, Department of the Taoiseach.

After the meeting, Archbishop Richard Clarke, on behalf of the three Churches, said, ‘We welcomed the opportunity to meet the Taoiseach and his ministers today as part of the Church-State dialogue, which we were assured will be a continuing and constructive two-way conversation. Our wide-ranging discussion included many of the most important and pressing social and ethical matters relating to contemporary Irish society.’
A short story from the Bible

Moses: a Hebrew adopted by an Egyptian princess. He killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave, and hid the body.

The next day...

Are you going to kill me like you killed that Egyptian?

Moses had to run away from Egypt.

Why are you beating up one of your own people?

One day, on Sinai Mountain, he saw a burning bush that didn't burn up. Now God had got Moses' attention, He said.

He went to Midian, got married and looked after his father-in-law's sheep.

You will go to Pharaoh and tell him to let my people leave Egypt.

It's not a choice. Your brother Aaron can help you.

No! I'd rather not do that!

Aaron and Moses met up and went to see Pharaoh.

Our God says you must let all his people leave Egypt.

Your God means nothing to me. I will never change my mind. Your people can never leave!

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