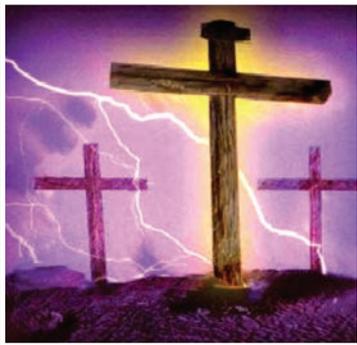


NEWSLINK

The Magazine of the Church of Ireland United Dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfert

INSIDE

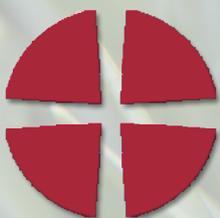
Good Friday - George Flynn P16



Easter - Lesley Robinson P17



Bishop's Invitation	P3
Human Sexuality Debate	P5
Eco Congregation Ireland	P14
Genealogy Day	P26
District Superintendent	P27
Collect Reflection	P29
Childrens page	P30

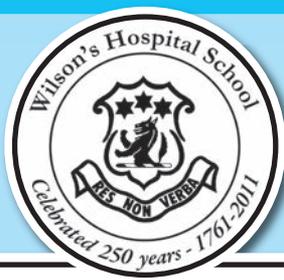


including Methodist District News

Snowdrops for Mothering Sunday, 10th March



Don't forget, clocks go forward on Easter morning this year!



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The Bishop Writes



Dear Friends,

Joni Mitchell is one of my favourite singer/songwriters. She can catch real wisdom in a phrase like this one from 'Big Yellow Taxi':

"Don't it always seem to go

That you don't know what you've got til its gone"

Joyce and I are just back from Bangalore in Southern India. Driving through this sprawling city which has grown at an alarming pace in the last decade, on one side of the road you can see the ultra modern skyscraper buildings of 'InfoSys', an Indian owned multinational IT company. On the other side of the road are ramshackle shops of peasant traders. A single road and its traffic divide these two contrasting worlds. But the problems of uncontrolled growth are beginning to show. Miles from the city, farmers are affected by the booming city. They have to rely on bore holes to find water at a depth of 800 feet below ground. Not long ago you could find water at 80 foot. What will happen when the wells run dry? Much has been gained, but is anyone thinking about what is being lost? You don't know what you've got til its gone!

For many of us life is hectically busy. In all the hurry we can forget what is important. Even for those who are retired there are plenty of distractions to divert them from quiet reflection. Lent is about taking stock of who we really are, so that we might be raised with our Lord to new life on Easter Day.

Reflection is essential for our Christian life as individuals. It is also important for our Parochial and Diocesan life. In last months Newslink I wrote about four themes which could help us as we reflected on how to grow in Confidence, Community, Caring and Celebration. I know some of you are thinking about these themes during Lent. That's part of what we need to reflect on.

Also during Lent, I am inviting people of the Dioceses, lay and ordained to reflect on our Vision of the Diocese in 2025. The discussion has already started with the clergy and some lay people who are actively involved in parish ministry. The conversation now needs to include many more people in the parishes so that through

our listening to one another, in an open and prayerful way, we can discern what God's will is for us as members of the Church of Ireland in this part of the country.

Consider yourself invited to the Bishops Lenten Talk in your area. You have a contribution to make and you are most welcome. I ask only one thing. Please tell your Rector that you are planning to come, so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

The details are as follows:

Central Group of Parishes

Limerick, Adare, Rathkeale, Killaloe, Ennis, Nenagh Groups or Unions
Thursday 28th February 7.30 – 9.30pm at St Michael's Parish Church Hall, Pery Square, Limerick

Southern Group of Parishes

Killarney, Killorglin, Kenmare, Tralee Groups or Unions
Thursday 7th March 7.30 – 9.30pm at St Mary's Church of Ireland Parish Church, Killarney

Northern Group of Parishes

Birr, Roscrea, Cloughjordan, Shinrone, Banagher and Aughrim Groups or Unions.

Thursday 14th March 7.30 – 9.30pm at Church of Ireland Parish Hall, Birr Road, Borrisokane

Hope to see you at one of these meetings.

Your Bishop

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



Letters to the Editor

Filling Vacancies

Sir,

Having announced his appointment to a new post some weeks earlier, our previous Rector moved on to his new parish in mid September 2012. In January 2013 the Church of Ireland took its first steps in the search for a new Incumbent when we hosted a visit from the Diocesan Ministry and Resources Committee. The Committee submitted a favourable report to the Diocesan Council and a Certificate of Stipend has been issued, which means that our nominators are now in a position to advertise the vacancy, in the hope that a new Rector will be instituted sometime later this year.

This week we heard that His Holiness the Pope has announced his intention to retire on February 28th. It has already been announced that a Conclave of Cardinals will be held in Rome during the first two weeks of March. The Church of Rome is confident that a new Pope will be elected in time to lead the Easter Celebrations.

Ergo, there will be a new Bishop in Rome long before there is a new Rector in the Tralee and Dingle Group of Parishes. Without implying the least criticism of the individuals involved, who are no doubt bound by rules and protocols, is one of these two great institutions out of touch with the requirements of the 21st century?

Yours, etc.,

Peter Keane, Tralee and Dingle Unions of Parishes, 15 Feb 2013.

Clonfert overlooked

Sir,

On reading the article 'What is Newslink' in the February issue I was very upset and perturbed that you did not mention Clonfert.

Clonfert is a vibrant part of our United Dioceses. We have two very active groups of parishes as well as a GEM of a Cathedral which is world renowned for its ancient doorway. It has recently been chosen to represent the whole of Southern Ireland on the Google World Wonders Project. A lot of work goes into the beautiful Cathedral to keep it in good condition. So please include Clonfert as a part of the United Dioceses in future.

Yours, etc.,

Olive Kenny, Meadow Lodge, Banagher, Co. Offaly, 16 Feb 2013.

Editor: Thanks to Olive for drawing my attention to this inadvertent error – I certainly had no intention to slight the historic diocese of Clonfert, which remains alive and well and vibrant! And it is no wonder that St Brendan's Cathedral has been chosen as a Google World Wonder, because it is a real gem – see <http://www.google.com/intl/en/culturalinstitute/worldwonders/brendans-cathedral/>.

DEADLINES

The next issue will be published for Sunday 7th April 2013.

All material must reach the Editor by Friday 22nd March 2013 before 6.00pm, by email only, unless otherwise agreed.

Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

Editorial

I've been reflecting with others this Lent about how we communicate with young people about our Christian faith. It is vitally important that we do so well, because they are the future. That is why Newslink unashamedly gives so much space to youth and schools. If faith seems irrelevant to young people – or even dangerous, as new atheists tell them – then we have failed to pass on the good news that Jesus brought and they will be poorer for it.

There is no shortage of primary school children in most churches – thanks both to our schools and to the dedicated youth leaders in organisations like the GFS and Boys' Brigade. We must recognise and celebrate their work. But there are much smaller numbers of teens and twenty-somethings in our pews. Are we failing somehow to reach them, to communicate with them?

Like others, I sometimes worry that we may be losing our young people, and with them our churches' future. But that need not be so, and there is much we can do to avoid it if we work on it together.

Part of the reason we do not see young people in the pews is because so many leave – first to boarding school, on to college, and then off to work elsewhere in Ireland or abroad. But there is no reason why faith should not travel with them! That is why chaplaincy services are so important, both in boarding schools like Villiers and in colleges. Our diocese should surely talk to chaplaincies about how we can best support the work they do, and link it back into the parishes.

Another reason we don't see them is precisely because they are young and we are older! Can you remember how painfully embarrassing your parents were in your teens and twenties? It is natural for young people to form groups apart from their parents.

They must explore and find their own faith among their own peer group. That is why the work of the United Diocesan Youth Council is so important. Every parish should actively seek close, supportive links with UDYC and other diocesan youth organisations so that young people have plenty of faith formation opportunities.

Diocesan Calendar

Thu 7th Mar, 7.30pm

Bishop's Lenten Talk – Southern group of parishes

Sat 9th Mar, 8pm

Whist Drive with Raffle at St. Michael's, Limerick City

Thu 14th Mar, 7.30pm

Bishop's Lenten Talk – Northern group of parishes

Sat 16th Mar, 8.15pm

Whist Drive at Aghancon Hall

Sat 16th Mar

Christ Church Limerick Genealogy & Family History Day

Sat 23rd Mar, 6.30pm

"Darkness & Light" Concert, St Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe

Tue 26th Mar, 8pm

Kilcolman Book Club, St Michael's Hall, Killorglin

Sun Apr 7th, 12 noon

Confirmations, Kenmare

Sun Apr 14th, 9.30am

Confirmations, Castleconnell

Newslink

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

Newslink also covers Methodist Midlands and Southern District Circuits within the boundaries of the Church of Ireland Diocese. In addition to parochial news, the Editor is delighted to receive articles and letters for publication, as well as suggestions as to how Newslink may be improved.

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

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NEWSLINK ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2013

(Reduced by 5% from 2012)

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	10 x Colour	10 x B&W	Colour	B&W
Full Page	1193	1069	154	143
Half Page	596	534	77	71
Third Page	398	357	51	48
Quarter Page	299	268	39	36
Eighth Page	149	133	19	18



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Human Sexuality Debate - the next steps

by the Rt Rev Patrick Rooke, Bishop of Tuam



Over the past year, every meeting of the Standing Committee has had an agenda item 'Human Sexuality in the context of Christian Belief'. This took us through the conference in the Slieve Russell Hotel in Co Cavan, the debate at last year's General Synod and on to what 'the next steps' should be.

The third part of the General Synod Resolution required the Standing Committee 'to progress work on the issue of Human Sexuality in the context

of Christian belief and to bring a proposal to General Synod 2013 for the formation of a Select Committee with terms of reference including reporting procedures'. The Standing Committee has now reached some conclusions on its response to this and has suggested a three-phased response.

DIOCESAN LISTENING/DIALOGUE

First, the Standing Committee is encouraging each diocesan bishop to initiate a local diocesan 'respectful listening/dialogue process' over the coming months. The formation of a number of small groups is recommended as the best way to ensure 'a safe space' for participants.

The purpose is to enable participants to become better informed and also to highlight the priorities for each diocese. Obviously these groups will operate differently from diocese to diocese; in some they may happen on one particular day, in others, over a period of months for a couple of hours at a time. Perhaps they will be within parishes, or broadened to rural deaneries, or wider still! Participants in some dioceses may be all who are interested in taking part, in others, those participating may be confined to diocesan synod members or parish vestries. For some people, participation may be the start of a process, others will come with a good knowledge; hence the importance of establishing where people are at and which issues need to be addressed.

Standing Committee has been reluctant to direct dioceses on the content of these discussions but did recommend that the study of Scripture should be an important focus and involve hearing the views of those who understand the texts from conservative and liberal perspectives. It also felt that the stories and views of a spectrum of gay and lesbian people, and their families, should be heard and that facilitation should be informed and sensitive.

INTER-DIOCESAN CONFERENCES

The next phase would be an 'Inter-Diocesan Tripartite Conference' to be held in the Autumn. With twelve dioceses, four such conferences are anticipated and the groupings will be Connor, Kilmore and Cashel; Down, Meath and Cork; Derry, Armagh and Dublin; and Clogher, Tuam and Limerick.

A committee of six will organise each conference – two from each of the participating dioceses. These committees, along with their bishops, will be responsible for the venues, programmes and participants at their respective conferences.

At the request of the Standing Committee, some funds have been allocated to support dioceses in running these tripartite conferences. Internal diocesan funding, however, will also be required.

SELECT COMMITTEE

The third phase involves a proposal for a Select Committee, as required by the General Synod Resolution. A resolution will be brought to the General Synod in May proposing the appointment of such a committee to enable the listening, dialogue and learning process on all issues concerning human sexuality in the context of Christian belief to continue.

The Standing Committee's proposal is that this Select Committee be appointed for an initial two year period, which may be extended for a further two years on the recommendation of the Standing Committee to the General Synod. The Select Committee will be required to report to the Standing Committee on its work twice a year, in November and April.

The proposed Select Committee's work would be broad enough to cover any issue under the heading 'Human Sexuality in the context of Christian belief' and would be at liberty to find its own focus. It would also be entitled to bring whatever resolutions seem appropriate via the Standing Committee to the General Synod.

The Standing Committee will propose names to the General Synod of people to serve on this Select Committee. It will also propose that the Select Committee be empowered to co-opt up to four others with special skills and experience and to consult as widely as possible.

It is hoped that what is being suggested by the Standing Committee, in response to the request of the General Synod, will enable a large cross section of Church of Ireland people to engage with the issues. These are undoubtedly complex and contentious, but it is surely right and proper, that as a Christian community, we engage with them in a reflective and informed manner.

The Blessington Millennium Choir

Presents

"DARKNESS AND LIGHT"

The Crucifixion by John Stainer

Musical Director: Yvonne O'Connor
Soloists: Irene Kavanagh, Soprano
Victor Coe, Baritone
Organist: Trevor Selby

and

The Aer Lingus Traditional Music Ensemble
plays Carolan and O'Riada

on

Saturday 23rd March 2013 at 6.30pm

In

St. Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe
By kind invitation of the Cathedral Board

.....
Tickets €10, from Whelan's Grocery Store, Opposite Cathedral
or at the Door
Proceeds in aid of Cathedral; Restoration Fund



Girls Friendly Society

BIRR BRANCH

Birr Branch held their annual Enrolment Service during Holy Communion Service in St. Brendan's church on Sunday 27th January. All the girls took an active part in the Service which was lovely. Thank you to Archdeacon Carney for putting so much thought and preparation into this act of worship.

CLOUGHJORDAN BRANCH

The Cloughjordan Branch has started a mini market to raise funds for the GFS missionaries. The weekly market is supported by parents and girls.

The Girls and Leaders are busy completing their badge work which are 'Church Knowledge', 'GFS Knowledge' and 'Health & Hygiene'.



Cloughjordan Branch Mini Market.



Friendly Cloughjordan girls

ROSCREA BRANCH

The girls are working hard to get the crafts and Bible Study finished. Leaders organised a Beauty Party for the Secondary School members of the branch last Saturday evening. Twelve girls attended and were treated to a very informative talk and demonstration by Beauty Therapist, Serena Cooper. One girl had a Facial, another had a Manicure and a third girl enjoyed a tan treatment. Serena explained

the danger of using sun beds and used her Laptop to show the damage done - SCARY. Cancer can develop from the use of sun beds and not using sun cream. Girls learnt that everyone should use sun cream all the year round and that wind can also damage the skin. The evening finished with supper and chat. There are plans to have another get together when the examinations are over.

NENAGH BRANCH

GFS and Boys Brigade joined together for Family Worship in St. Mary's Church, Nenagh on Sunday 17th February. The theme of the service was 'A Heart for God' using material from the Bible Study Syllabus. This was a joyful service and well done to the children. Thank you to the leaders from each group for encouraging the children to take such an active part in Family Worship.

LEADER TRAINING

On the 21st January leaders enjoyed an evening of training with Amanda of Petals Flower Shop, Roscrea. Amanda demonstrated how to make corsages to wear as a buttonhole or to attach to a handbag. Thank you to the leaders of Cloughjordan for providing the hall in Moneygall and lovely refreshments.



GFS Leaders training evening in Moneygall

UP COMING EVENTS

Central Council Meeting: Saturday, 23rd February at 10.30 am in Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin. Each Diocese is asked to return All Ireland Competition Silver Cups at the meeting. Please note that the Craft Advisory Committee will meet after lunch.

Competitions: Branches are busy completing their Crafts and Bible Study for competition. All entries must be in the Parochial Hall, Roscrea at 2.15pm on Saturday, 9th March for judging. Any branch with cups and trophies please return them to Florence Reid on the day. This is to ensure that they are ready to present to this year's winners.

Diocesan Service & Prize Giving Day: Saturday, 23rd March in Brendan's church, Birr at 2.30pm followed by refreshments and stalls in the Oxmantown School Hall. On display will be crafts from the Handcraft Syllabus and Bible Syllabus. This is also a major fund raising event for the GFS so please support the sales tables - cakes, plants etc. All are welcome to the Service and to view the wonderful talent of all the GFS girls in the Diocese. Best of luck to everyone preparing for the day.

Diocesan Council Meeting: 18th April, in St. Brendan's Hall, Birr, 8pm

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

Central Council Meeting

Saturday, 23rd February Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin

Diocesan Council Meeting

18th April, St. Brendan's Hall, Birr, 8pm

Competitions

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

Diocesan Service & Prize Giving Day

Saturday, 23rd March in Birr at 2.30pm

Diocesan Camp

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



1ST NENAGH COMPANY

Firstly, a big thank you to Tullamore for hosting a brilliant night of Arts & Crafts on 25th January for the Midland Region. We took 7 boys and, as they always do when we take them anywhere, they behaved extremely well. We were only able to take Juniors as, with the journey added, it would be too late a night for the Anchors. But their turn will come – they will get a visit soon enough! It was a great night, topped off by Nenagh boys picking up 2 lovely prizes!

17th Feb was St. Mary's Nenagh Family Worship where the boys performed their version of David & Goliath. They were fantastic! The practice paid off and they all showed what great readers and confident actors they are! The next Family Worship on March 16th will give us the opportunity to have our new flag, very kindly made by Rae Croft, blessed by Canon Marie – in nice time for the Nenagh St. Patrick's Day Parade!

In the meantime at the next meeting on Wednesday we will march the boys off to the Heritage Centre gatehouse and gaol for a tour around, then back to the Hall for some crafts, games & bible chat.

Mothers' Union

On the 10th of December last a very enjoyable Songs of Praise was held in Cloughjordan. Members nominated favourite hymns and the ten most requested were sung. Canon Stephen Neill, Rector of Cloughjordan and Mrs Eileen Armitage gave a brief background to each hymn and the congregation sang beautifully led by Mr John Armitage on the keyboard.

February in Birr, there will be an evening of "Hat Making" and in March Aghancon look forward to welcoming Ossory MU Chaplain Canon Ian Poulton at their Overseas meeting.

In Ballinasloe in March there will be a Beauty Evening with our own Beauty specialist demonstrating and also a Hair Specialist to demonstrate various techniques and answer many of the questions we all have.

April in Ballinasloe – there will be a very valuable meeting held on the techniques used for CPR and the Heimlich Manoeuvre given by a qualified paramedic. Venue: Gullane's Hotel at 8pm – All welcome.

Also in April, Diocesan Trustees have been invited to Derry & Raphoe for the weekend.

Invitation to an afternoon tea party!

Wednesday 1st May 2013

2.30 to 4.30 p.m. in Aghancon

Community Hall

Mrs. Margaret Crawford, All-Ireland Indoor Members Unit Co-ordinator, is looking forward to meeting everyone and joining in the fun and chat.



United Diocesan Youth Council of Limerick and Killaloe

SPRING MADNESS 2013

Friday 15th March – Monday 18th March 2013 (St. Patrick's Bank Holiday Weekend) at Castledaly Manor Camp & Conference Centre, Castledaly, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Return transport from/to Limerick-Nenagh-Roscrea-Birr-Navan-Trim-Naas-Edenderry-Tullamore. Cost from €0.13 plus years.

Spring Madness is a weekend for teenagers who seek, and an excellent opportunity to renew friendships from Anois, Summer Madness and many other youth events. It will also be an opportunity to make new friends for this year's Summer Madness and Anois events. This will be a joint event with the Meath & Kildare Diocesan Youth Council. We also hope to be joined by young people and leaders from other dioceses throughout the country.

The event will take place at the new venue of Castledaly Manor Camp & Conference Centre, Castledaly, Athlone, Co. Westmeath from Friday 15th – Sunday 18th March 2013. Castledaly Manor is located on the outskirts of the quiet village of Castledaly about 10 minutes from Athlone, on mature parklands with a walled garden and a millpond

Yes, Jasper Rutherford direct from main stage at Summer Madness will be our guest speaker for the main part of the weekend.

He will be assisted by Rev. Lesley Robinson who will lead our times of worship and who will be our speaker for the later part of the weekend. So for some good worship don't miss out on what promises to be a splendid opportunity!

Of course some fabulous activities will also be on offer throughout the weekend. It is planned to travel to Midland Karting in Longford on Saturday. On Sunday we will travel to Galway to join the St. Patrick's Day Parade, shopping, swimming at Leisureland and a highlight of the day will be Pureskill Fusion of Sport (www.pureskill.ie), using advanced automated electronic technologies – Pureskill Fusion of Sport is the first of its kind in the world!!!!

With some splendid facilities on site there will be opportunities for indoor soccer and uni- hoc in sports hall, pool, table tennis, swings. As always there will games, talent show, disco and some chill time etc. Thus if you want an action packed weekend book today for Spring Madness 2013!!!

MULTI ACTIVITY OVERNIGHT SLEEPOVER 2013

Saturday 23rd March – Sunday 24th March 2013, at Aghancon Community Hall, Aghancon, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary. Return Transport from/to Limerick-Nenagh-Toomevara-Moneygall- Roscrea. Cost from €50. 3rd – 6th Class National School.

A brand new event incorporating the very best of UDYC. Multi Activity Days and Junior Weekends. The event will take place at the new Aghancon Community Hall from 10.00 am on Saturday 23rd March and ending at 3.00 pm on Sunday 24th March 2013. It is hoped that we will be joined by some young people and leaders from Tuam Diocesan Youth Council.

The programme will include exciting worship workshops with drama, art, prayer, discussion, games, and discovery and of course with ever popular worship songs. The group will also join the parish of Aghancon for Palm Sunday worship on Sunday morning. It is planned to travel to Birr Outdoor Education Centre for Saturday afternoon and partake in a number of outdoor activities including: zip line, climbing tower, archery and team challenges. Afterwards there will be a swim at Birr Leisure Centre followed by fast food at ever famous Tony's Café. On Saturday evening there will be games, table quiz and a disco and some chill time. Thus an opportunity for an action packed sleepover overnight event.

TAKING A LEADING ROLE Part 2

The second youth leadership weekend will take place from Friday 5th – Sunday 7th April 2013 at Catherine McCauley House, Spanish Point, Co. Clare. This weekend is specifically for all those that participated at our first weekend in October last year. Please note that information about the weekend will be distributed shortly.

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

Until next month,

Damian

Email: 05shortend@gmail.com

SCHOOL NEWS

St. Nicholas' National School, Adare

Pupils in 5th and 6th classes were once again involved in the mixed team section of the Limerick Spikeball tournament held in Villiers School on January 23rd. Well done to the two teams, the Vipers and the Sharks. Both teams played very well on the day, with the Sharks making it to the finals, where they were narrowly beaten by the Limerick Jets. It was a very exciting tournament with both teams playing to their strengths and showing great team spirit.

The senior pupils are working on the next edition of our school magazine under the guidance of Ieteke Oggel. We look forward to reading all the St. Nick's news before the Easter break. We were delighted to welcome back David Ryan, a fifth year student in Coláiste an Trócaire, for a week's work experience. David spent a week with us last year and hopes to pursue a career in teaching in the future.

Chess club has started once again after school on Thursdays. We had twenty-four budding chess players at our first session. Congratulations to Greg Ramendik who was runner-up in the recent Munster under-8 competition, a wonderful achievement for a young player.

Prize Day will take place on Friday 22nd February at 1.30pm. Bishop Trevor Williams will present prizes to all pupils for their efforts over the past year in school. Afterwards the senior pupils will organise a coffee afternoon in aid of the Simon Community and the Leprosy Mission.

The school will host an open afternoon and evening on Tuesday



Reading buddies in St. Nicholas' National School

26th February. This will give parents who may be interested in enrolling their child in St. Nicholas' School an opportunity to find out what happens here.

We look forward to the annual visit of Noel and Liza McMeekin who will present prizes to pupils who have completed Bible Times lessons during the year. They will visit Adare on the 12th March.

Seachtain na Gaeilge will take place during the week beginning 11th March when pupils will be involved in many activities to promote Irish.

St Mary's No. 2 National School Nenagh

Spring is here at last and our school garden has come back to life with a carpet of crocus plants to greet us every morning.

After a most enjoyable series of workshops, we offer a warm "Go raibh maith agat" to Claire Neelin who taught Irish Dancing as part of our Physical Education programme. Rugby coaching continues with Mr Pat Fitzpatrick every Monday. Our tennis programme returns in March with Anne Fitzpatrick.

On Shrove Tuesday we had our annual pancake celebration in the school, followed by our Lenten Service. Our Lenten Project this year is "Colour Us Happy" in association with the Bishop's Appeal. It is a very worthwhile project which provides pencil cases to children in Swaziland. Conditions in schools there are basic and resources are needed.

Our students are excited to be participating in the Eason's Spelling Bee, a national spelling competition. The Tipperary Final is to be held in the Gaelscoil on February 28th.

Congratulations to our school team who represented St. Mary's in the Credit Union Table Quiz recently. Emily Bradley, Anna Mae Powell, Maruna Manthe and Denis Sheehy did a fantastic job and took home fourth prize. Well Done!

A huge thanks you to Ms Aoife Everard who taught the Senior Classes in Mrs Maher's absence. She did a wonderful job and we appreciate all her hard work.

Mrs Maher will be returning this month and we look forward to having her back with us again.



St Cronan's National School Roscrea

Well done to 5th & 6th class pupils and their parents who provided a feast of tasty homemade pancakes for everyone on Shrove Tuesday. This marked the launch of our Lenten Project, raising €270.00 – much needed funds for Luyengo Farm Project in Swaziland.

The theme for our 6th Green Flag is Global Citizenship – Litter and Waste. During the next two years we will be focussing on the origins of some of the food we eat and on the most efficient methods of waste disposal.

A huge thank you to the Parents' Association Committee for their trojan work in organising yet another very enjoyable school dance in the Templemore Arms Hotel on February 16th. Thank you to all those who bought and sold tickets, donated spot prizes and contributed in any way to the success of the night.

Enrolment forms for September 2013 are now available. Please contact the school office – 0505 21636.

Cloughjordan No.1 National School

We wish Mrs Grace and her husband Barry all the very best as Mrs Grace goes on maternity leave, and look forward excitedly to hearing her good news. We extend a warm welcome to Miss Yvonne Ryan to teach Fifth and Sixth Class over the coming months, and hope that she will be very happy as part of our school. Welcome home to Miss Whiteford from her adventures abroad. We were delighted to hear the news of her engagement to Mark Crawford. We wish Emma and Mark every happiness together and congratulate them on their engagement.

It was a pleasure to welcome back last month three of our past pupils, Ben Armitage, Adam Donaldson and Adrian Hayes, who are now in Transition Year on work experience. We look forward to welcoming Emilee Austin and Melissa Mooney, also past pupils who are now in Transition Year, on work experience at the end of February and early March. We are grateful to all five for all their help throughout the school during their time with us and wish them continued success in their secondary education.

It was also a pleasure to welcome Rev Janet White Spinner to assembly recently and to give her the used postage stamps collected throughout the year which she will pass on to Canine Partners, a charity which trains assistance dogs to transform the lives of people with disabilities. Rev Janet enthralled us all with stories of her travels abroad, including her adventures riding an elephant! Thank you very much to everybody who continues to collect used stamps for the school.

Thank you very much to everybody who supported our PTA's recent bag-packing fundraising venture in Dunnes Stores, Roscrea. The PTA raised in excess of €900 and is very grateful for the support of so many people.

We look forward to welcoming Noel and Liza from the Postal Bible School back to our school on 1st March. We are very grateful to them for their work throughout the year for our pupils and for the generous prizes which the pupils will receive for their work on the Postal Bible Times.

The school is now enrolling pupils for September 2013. If you would like information about enrolment please call in to the school, telephone 0505-42318 or email cloughjordannsn1@gmail.com. Completed enrolment forms should be returned to the school by the end of March.

Congratulations to our U11 team of Hugh Guest, Sarah Armitage, Laura Hayes and Jackie Wakefield who came second in their section of the Credit Union Schools' Quiz in Borrisokane last month, and to our U13 team of Ian Armitage, Robert Guest, Ruán Ó hAnluain and Lucy Warmington who won their section of the quiz and go through to the next round in Nenagh. The teams and school are very grateful to

Borrisokane Credit Union for the very generous individual and school prizes received on the night.

Congratulations also to Olivia Grant and Rebecca Mooney who won lovely prizes in Cloughjordan Drama Group's "The Maiden Aunt" Art Competition recently.

Well done to Donncha Speight Burns, one of our Third Class pupils, who singlehandedly organised another cake sale in school last month and raised €75.89 for the Irish Cancer Society. This was a tremendous achievement by Donncha and we congratulate him on his success.

Congratulations to Cyril Harding who took part locally in Operation Transformation over recent weeks. Cyril very generously took part in a fundraiser for our school, for which we are very grateful.

The school was delighted to receive news from An Taisce last month that our application for renewal of our international Green Flag award was successful and we will be awarded our Fourth Green Flag. Thank you very much to Ms. Cromer and her pupils for co-ordinating our school's application and to Miss Jean Ryan who has taken over responsibility for this important work while Ms. Cromer is on leave. Well done to all the boys and girls on this tremendous achievement.



Pupils participating in a Lovely WOW Day - Walk on Wednesday for Valentine's Day

Kiltallagh National School

The children in Kiltallagh National School are certainly blossoming this spring.

The pupils from the senior room - Zach, Naoise and Tom Stephens, are busy preparing for the second round of the National Schools Debating Competition, having won their first round over St. Michael's National School, Sneem. Following a very articulate and vibrant debate, they convinced the judging panel that 'Ryan Air is the best way to travel'. Their motion for the second round is 'The Irish Language is a dying tongue' with Kiltallagh National School opposing the motion. The boys along with their teachers Miss O' Connor and their Principal Bean Uí Bhriain have put in tremendous work and their opponents - St. John's Parochial School in Tralee - will need to have a very strong and convincing argument ready. We wish them the best of luck in the Education Centre, Tralee on next Tuesday.

Our senior room pupils have proved themselves very knowledgeable when they won both the junior and the senior section of the Credit Union Quiz last week following lots of practice. They now progress to the next round in Tralee in early March. Well done to the junior team of Katie Boyle, Emily Evans McCullagh, Rosa Horgan and Charlotte Orme and the senior team of Andrew Boyle, Tom Stephens, Naoise Buckley and Zach Buckley and their coach Deirdre O' Sullivan.

This week in Kiltallagh School we had the return of one of past pupils Robert Leask who was a recent winner in his category in the Young Scientist Competition in the RDS - individual senior technology. Robert explained his project to all the students which was

a compass for drawing ellipses (ovals), which are a fairly important mathematical shape. The main reason for his invention is because ellipses take 5 or 10 minutes to draw manually. It's for woodwork, metalwork, architects, engineers, and draughtsperson really. Robert pointed out that speed and accuracy were his main reasons for designing this compass.

Two years ago, another past pupil Aoife Stephens won her category in the Young Scientist in the RDS, with a project on Clicker Training for horses. We are very proud of our past pupils and wish them both every success as they sit their Leaving Certificate in June 2013.

All the children and staff enjoyed some delicious pancakes on pancake Tuesday which was followed by our special service on Ash Wednesday where Rev. Máirt Hanley led the children and staff of our school to mark the beginning of our Lenten journey. The children sang beautifully and read prayers for those persecuted because of their religion, the homeless, and the hungry and for relief workers all over the world.

As part of our campaign to help the less fortunate, this Lent we will endeavour to raise funds to help the needy in Malawi, a project being undertaken by another past pupil, Lilian Leask. The programme Lilian will be working on is specifically aimed at increasing the productivity of the staple crop for the majority of poor families – maize. This is done through intercropping nitrogen fixing trees with the maize. The programme has proven to be very effective, increasing yields of maize up to 50% for smallholder farmers, therefore increasing their income, levels of nutrition and ability to send children to school. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 171 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index. Lilian will spend six months in Malawi assessing the impact this project is having on the resources of poor families, designing survey tools and collecting data to ensure the successes and knowledge are shared with other communities across Africa and other countries worldwide.

Oxmantown National School Birr



Mrs Colton receiving cheque from the manager at Jerros, Birr

CARD SALES

The sales of the Children's Christmas cards which were sold through Jerros boutique in Birr raised one hundred Euros. This was a lovely idea in that all of the children's cards were printed and were then bought by the parents through the shop. The mothers of the two winning entries got vouchers to spend in the boutique.

PANCAKE DAY

The Parent's Association, in what has become an annual and popular tradition, came into the School on Shrove Tuesday and made



Senior Infant Pupils enjoying pancakes

vast quantities of pancakes, which they sold to the pupils in aid of the Children's Hospital in Tallaght. Thanks to Stuart Smith, Breeda Phealan O'Meara and Georgina and Amy Armitage who made hundreds of pancakes and delicious chocolate sauce.

NEW CLASSROOM

At time of writing these notes we are still waiting for word from the Council regarding their decision on the new classroom.

GYMNASTICS

The Parent's Association are part funding gymnastics classes with Mrs. Emer Feehan which are due to start next week and will run until Easter. These are always popular classes with all from infants to sixth class.

St John's Parochial School Tralee

Students are enjoying their mid-term break after a few very busy weeks. In addition to keeping up with their school-work, they found time to exercise their artistic side by doing some wonderful art work on the school boundary wall. The art work shows young people involved in sporting and other extra curricular activities and certainly brightens up the view on the way into the school yard.

Our Debating Team excelled at the first round of the Schools Debates in the Education Centre and will return for the next round of debates later this month.



St. John's Parochial School Debating Team

Villiers School



VILLIERS ANNOUNCES EXPANSION

The Headmistress of Villiers School, on behalf of the Board of Governors is delighted to announce that Villiers School has purchased a significant property adjoining the School.

The School has enjoyed a long period of increasing numbers from 1986. In 2011 the numbers were 560 and in 2012 numbers rose to 612. A carefully planned expansion has gradually increased accommodation and facilities to the existing campus.

The Board of Governors see the urgent need as additional classrooms, expansion of boarding facilities, a new library, meeting rooms, language laboratory and increased sporting facilities. The acquisition provides scope for such development. This opportunity to purchase a property adjacent to the school – the former home of the Russell family at Derravoher – is a once in a lifetime opportunity which will provide for the School's needs into the future and include much needed space for additional facilities. The Board, after lengthy negotiations, has purchased the property with the support of the School's bankers.

SPANISH EXCHANGE

A group of 1st and 2nd year Villiers students of Spanish are just back from a winter week of sun, sea and sand. This was part of our third annual visit to partner school IES Carlos III in Aguadulce, Almeria on the south east corner of Spain. They travelled out with Ms. Sexton and Mr. McCrohan on January 29th and returned February 5th.

The exchange is an educational one, with a mix of culture, language, work, rest and play. In Spain students spent time working in school, going on school excursions as well as visiting the nearby provincial capital Almeria. The beach and swimming played a big part with the locals walking the promenade in winter garb and our hale and hearty students swimming at dusk. Students were with the host families for the evenings and weekend experiencing first hand the Spanish language and culture. We are pleased to hear they return with much more confidence in their oral Spanish and find their motivation to study the language is very high.

Seventeen IES Carlos III students will be with us from March 14th to 21st. It is our turn to return the compliment. We extend a huge bienvenida to them and urge everyone to give them a C ad Mile F ilte.

We would like to thank both schools, the parents and the Villiers PTA for their support of this very worthwhile exchange.

John Mc Crohan

VILLIERS SKI TRIP

The half term break saw a party of 76 from Villiers travel to the pretty village of Andalo in the Trentino region of Italy for the annual school ski trip. With the dramatic backdrop of the Dolomite Mountains, the group enjoyed fantastic ski conditions after witnessing a fall of about 18 inches of snow on the second day and overnight.

With three groups of beginner skiers and two groups of experienced skiers, plus an intrepid group of snowboarders, there were challenges galore for all and the rate of progress and learning was impressive. Kept busy all week with ice carting, skating, swimming and the inevitable disco, fun was had on and off the slopes. On one evening the group enjoyed a 'ski show' which was a unique experience, topped off by one of the best firework displays we have seen. This marked part of a carnival which Andalo enjoyed while we were there.

Back to Ireland late on Saturday night/Sunday morning, giving everyone a day to recover before return to school on Monday! Thanks to all who made this a great trip, memorable for all the right reasons. Where to in 2014?

See back cover for group photo...



Pancakes-a-plenty!

The students took part in the Christingle Service in Church and played piano and keyboard to accompany their rendition of Bind Us Together Lord.

The entire school family attended the Ash Wednesday service and did the readings for the day. Shrove Tuesday saw them enjoying pancakes in Teach an tSolais.

Looking ahead, they will be involved in a family service on Mothering Sunday.

Finally, we are looking forward to the resumption of swimming classes early in March. Thanks to the parents for their work in helping teachers in the organisation of these events.

Rathkeale No. 2 National School

We all visited Limerick County Council water treatment plant near Askeaton recently. This was part of our Green Schools Project. To obtain our third Green Flag we must learn all about water, and the conservation of water, as well as keep up our work on litter and waste and energy. On arrival at the water treatment plant we were greeted by our guide for the visit. We were shown where and how the water is treated before it gets to our homes. The pupils were fascinated to learn that by adding certain chemicals to the water silt and other solid particles come together. These solid particles cannot then fit through the grids at the bottom of the tanks, before the water filters through sand beds, which removes even smaller particles. Chlorine is then added before the water leaves the plant.

We recently took a water meter reading and were delighted to see that we were using an average of 4 litres of water per person during the school day. We also took an overnight reading to make sure we didn't have any water leaks. Wednesday 20th February will be an important day for us too as it is our Water Action Day. The pupils have been busy designing t-shirts to wear for the day. We will have a visit from a member of An Taisce who will carry out some water experiments with the pupils.

Congratulations to our two teams who recently took part in the Credit Union Table Quiz in Rathkeale House Hotel. Our senior team finished in joint 4th position and we were all very proud of them.

**Have you considered advertising
in Newslink?
See page 4 for rates and details.**

News from the Viliers Sanctuary

by *Chaplain Jackie McNair*

After a lot of hard work and determination the Prayer Garden is almost ready! A huge thank you to all concerned especially to Anita Mahon for her leadership and to Mike Kersley for his passion and drive in this project! This promises to be a wonderful addition to the school as we will have a special place for people to get in touch with God and to help deal with whatever issues that may be present for them. We hope to have a special opening for the Garden shortly and hopefully by this time next month we will have a few photographs to show for all our efforts.

We have entered the season of Lent and the plan is to have a Lenten Reflection in the Sanctuary every Thursday at Lunchtime. This gives everyone an opportunity to share their Lenten journey and hopefully to not only be encouraged but also to show encouragement to others.

Plans are still afoot for a CU trip and it is also hoped that this will happen before the next monthly magazine so once again we may have a few photos of our trip to show.

Blessing and peace to all during this Lent

Diocesan Board of Mission

The Spring Mission Evening was held at 8 pm on Wednesday 6th Feb at the Woodlands House Hotel, Adare.

The Treasurer reported that the total donations for the Luyengo Farm Project, Swaziland now stood at just over €39,000. Hopefully we will have reached our target of €40,000 by the end of Lent. Apart from the project in Swaziland, €3250 had also been sent to the Saldhana Mining Disaster Fund in South Africa. The Chairman expressed the sincere thanks of the Mission Board for the generosity shown by parishioners throughout the Diocese, especially in the current climate of economic hardship.

The main speaker was Andy McCormick, Parish Development Worker with CMS Ireland. Andy took as his topic, 'Modern developments in mission at home & abroad'. Nowadays Christian Mission overseas is mainly about 'partnership', especially with regards to linking parishes in Ireland with specific parishes in developing countries. This approach generates the sense of 'a level playing field' based on co-operation, and an exchange of personnel and of ideas

concerning worship and ways of living out the Gospel message. Andy went on to give specific examples of 'linked parishes' with East Africa, and an outline of how the system was working.

Mission on the home front, in a rapidly changing society, requires a totally different approach to working in developing countries. Mission in western society is no longer about bums on seats on a Sunday, but ordinary Christians being 'salt and light' with each other wherever they are. Nowadays, church membership is ditched in favour of looser, more fluid congregational structures. However we should not get depressed - the Holy Spirit is at work. Far from being in a state of terminal decline, 'Christ's body' is adapting to modern culture while maintaining the same message of love and grace, and is changing to meet the needs of future generations. The task of making the Christian message relevant to modern society is a great challenge and can be very demanding both physically and mentally.

Archdeacon Wayne Carney thanked Andy for a very informative presentation, especially with regards to mission at home.

David Frizelle (Secretary/Treasurer)

Killaloe Diocese

Killaloe & Stradbally Union

Killaloe, Castleconnell, Clonlara, Mountshannon and Tuamgraney.

Vacant

Priest in Charge: Rev. Stan Evans

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Mob: 087 636 9473

Email: stanevans@eircom.net

The Rev. Lucy Green

Tel: 062-79941 Mob: 087 667 0425

Email: lucygreen06ie@yahoo.co.uk

HOLY BAPTISM

On Saturday 16th February, Caitlin Margaret Aoibh, daughter of Amy and Daniel Battle, was baptized IN St Flannan's Cathedral into the Church of God by Revd Stan, ably assisted by Caitlin's sister Aoife and brother William who took great pride in lighting the Baptismal Candle. May she shine as a light for Christ all the days of her life!

ECUMENICAL CELEBRATION

This year marks 1600 years of Christian worship on the site of All Saints in Stradbally, Castleconnell. To mark this there are very special celebrations in the village and a service of prayer and thanksgiving is being planned as we go to press. The envisaged date is Sunday May

5th at 3.00pm and we will confirm all in our next issue of Newlink.

CONFIRMATION DATE

April 14th with see Bishop Trevor visiting All Saints, Castleconnell (9.30am) for our Confirmation Service with Holy Eucharist.

Also at that service Bishop Trevor will dedicate a beautiful new altar frontal and veil, gifted to All Saints by Rita Harris and her family. Rita as readers will know was Verger in St Mary's Cathedral for an incredible 45 years, and now she worships with us in All Saints. This is a most generous gift which will enhance our worship for years to come. Thank you Rita!

COME AND JOIN US!

This is a Diocesan wide invitation - please do come and share with us on Saturday 23rd March at 6.30pm for the most wonderful concert evening. The first half of this will offer The Crucifixion by John Stainer - performed by the Blessington Millennium Choir (who will be joined by other choir members from the community and also singers from Villiers School). The second half of the concert will be brought to us by the Aer Lingus Traditional Ensemble. Our resident Organist - Trevor Selby will also accompany this exciting presentation.

Tickets are €10 and can be purchased at several outlets but are selling quickly - so please do not miss out - ring Revd Stan on 087 6369473 for further information.

Proceeds will go to the Restoration Fund of our beautiful Cathedral.

CONCERT DATES FOR THE DIARY

April 19th 7.30pm, St Flannan's Cathedral, Kincora Choral Concert
May 4th 8pm, St Flannan's Cathedral, Community Choral Concert
June 14-16th, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Music Festival
'The Viennese Phenomenon'

EASTER CELEBRATIONS

Services for Holy Week and Easter are as follows:

St Flannan's Cathedral

Palm Sunday – Liturgy of the Passion – 11.30am Holy Communion
Rite 1 – with the Blessington Millennium Choir
During Holy Week there will be a short service of Special Observance on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in the Cathedral at 7.30pm as we walk with our Lord to the foot of the cross – please join us.

Maundy Thursday, Holy Eucharist, 7.30pm, Revd Stan Evans
Good Friday, The Three Hours, 12 Noon – 3pm, Revd Lucy Green
Easter Day, Holy Easter Eucharist, 11.30am, Revd Stan Evans

All Saints, Stradbally, Castleconnell

Good Friday Liturgy, 7.30pm, Revd Stan Evans
Easter Day, Holy Easter Eucharist, 9.30am, Revd Lucy Green

St Caimin's, Inniscealtra (Mountshannon)

Good Friday Liturgy, 2pm -3pm, Revd Stan Evans
Easter Day, Holy Easter Eucharist, 9.30am, Revd Stan Evans

*Sweet Sacrament divine,
Earth's light and jubilee,
In thy far depths doth shine
The Godhead's majesty.
Sweet light, so shine on us, we pray,
That earthly joys may fade away,
Sweet Sacrament divine*

The Birr Group of Parishes

Birr, Lorrha, Lockeen, and Dorrha
Rector: Venerable R. Wayne Carney
Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert
The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly
Tel: 057-912-0021 Mob: 087-786-5234
Email: mapleire@eircom.net
Assistant Priest: The Rev. Ruth Gill
Kilgolan House, Kilcormac, Co. Offaly
Tel: 057-913-5341 Mob: 087-948-4402
Email: ruth_gill40@hotmail.com

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

Our series of Lenten talks continues at the County Arms Hotel in Birr at 8:00 pm each Tuesday, with speakers from the Irish School of Ecumenics.

- Tuesday 5th March - Dr. Andrew Pierce will expand on comparisons of St Luke's narrative with the account in St Matthew's Gospel (and to a lesser extent, Mark).
- Tuesday 12th March - The Very Revd Tom Gordon will look at The Lord's Prayer as one of the places where we encounter the acknowledgement of temptation as a present reality.
- Tuesday 26th March - A panel consisting of speakers from over the evenings, offering an opportunity for reflection on some of the issues and concerns that will have been raised.

All are welcome to the sessions, which will end at 9:00 pm with tea and coffee.



continued p15...



**Adare Methodist Church Flower Festival
Friday 10th - Sunday 12th May 2013**

Open:

Friday 10th May: Opening Ceremony at 7.30pm

Saturday 11th May: 10.00am - 6.00pm

**Sunday 12th May: 12 noon - 7.00pm,
Closing Service at 7.30pm**

Admission €8 to include tea/coffee and cake

Groups welcome

Email adareflowerfestival@eircom.net for more information

A celebration of the heritage of the Methodist people of Adare

Eco-Congregation Ireland encourages churches to become greener

by Fiona Murdoch, Communications Officer, Eco-Congregation Ireland

Churches – and individual Christians – must foster a green approach to all aspects of church life, including worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, children's and youth work as well as community outreach and contact with the developing world.

That is the message of Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI) – a project of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, which is supported by the Church of Ireland as well as the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ireland.

The ECI website – www.ecocongregationireland.com – has an extensive range of resources that covers all aspects of church life. These are a useful tool for clergy, youth workers and anyone else involved in running a busy parish.

ECI encourages churches to hold at least a few environment-themed services each year, as well as including one eco prayer in each Sunday service. As well as harvest festival, other good times to hold a special service are Environment Sunday (the first Sunday in June) and any Sunday during Creation Time, which runs from September 1 to October 4. ECI helps prepare Creation Time resources each year, which are perfect for the busy rector, as they include sermon notes, liturgy, prayers etc. These are free to download from the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website – www.ctbi.org.uk.

Churches are also encouraged to take practical steps to care for the environment. Not every church will be in a position to undertake a major project like installing solar panels or a wind turbine, but there is no reason why every parish shouldn't be using energy-efficient light bulbs, eco-friendly cleaning materials and recycling, composting etc.

Sunday School teachers and youth workers should be including the environment in their sessions. Young people readily take to the eco cause and love taking part in bulb-

planting, litter picks, Walk/Cycle to Church Sundays etc.

Anyone interested in finding out more about how to green a parish is invited to attend an ECI Roadshow in Kilkenny on Saturday 20th April from 2-5pm. This will include an opportunity to hear from parishes in the diocese of Cashel and Ossory about the kinds of eco initiatives they have undertaken. Keep an eye on the ECI website for details nearer the time.

ECI runs an award scheme for parishes that have undertaken eco initiatives. Two Church of Ireland parishes have received awards so far: St Molua's in Belfast and Rathfarnham Parish in Dublin. To find out what these – and other churches – have done to achieve these awards, see the eco-examples section of the website.

We were delighted that over 140 people attended our inaugural conference, which was held in Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Co Down, last September. The theme was "God's Creation – Our Responsibility?"

In his opening address, "Is the Bible Green? Reading Scripture Ecologically", Prof David Horrell, Professor of New Testament Studies at the University of Exeter, suggested that, while the Bible did not offer a blueprint for creation or environmental ethics, passages like Psalms 19 and 104 and Job 38 helped generate a positive vision of the value, beauty and ultimate worth of the whole earth.

Addressing the topic "A New Humanity: The Quest for Well-being in the 21st Century", Rev Peter-Owen Jones said he believed there would be a revolution against capitalism in the next 20 years and that it would need to be one that recognised that "all life is connected".



Planting a tree at Dromantine

going to engender a sense of communal, or individual, well-being. We could never have peace on earth until we made peace with the natural world. "Christianity needs urgently to embrace a bigger vision of peace on earth," he said.

The other speakers were Prof Stephen Williams, Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological College, Belfast, Dr Anne Primavesi, Fellow of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Study of Religion, Birkbeck College, University of London, and Dr Alastair McIntosh, Fellow of the Centre for Human Ecology, Glasgow.

The scripts of the talks are available to download from the ECI website.

Six trees were planted in the grounds of Dromantine by representatives of the different denominations and communities attending the conference. Rev Andrew Orr, Rector of Tullow, planted one of the trees and a blessing was read by Rev Elaine Murray, Rector of Carrigaline.



Rathfarnham Parish Eco Group Carbon Cutting Cycle

The Sussex-based Anglican vicar and author, who is well-known for his BBC series, *Around the World in 80 Faiths* and *How to Live a Simple Life*, said that a system that set each individual human being against each other was never



Peter Owen-Jones at the ECI Conference

ST BRENDAN'S MARKET

At the Market AGM it was decided to give a donation of €1580 to Birr parish, and a donation Dóchas, the Cancer Support Group. We are grateful to the Market members for all they do for the parish and the community.

PASTORAL

Some parishioners have had to spend some time in hospital. They are wished continuing progress in recovery and a return to better health. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who are ill or infirm and with those who care for them, may God surround them with his healing power and love.

MOTHERS' UNION

Members and friends had a most enjoyable meal in Roscrea Golf Club on Friday 18th January. Many thanks to Rose and Joan for making the arrangements.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

Sunday, 24th March

Palm Sunday, Birr, 11:30 am, Group Service of Holy Communion

Monday, 25th March

Monday in Holy Week, Lockeen, 8:00 pm, Compline

Tuesday, 26th March

Tuesday in Holy Week, Lorrha, 8:00 pm, Compline

Wednesday, 27th March

Wednesday in Holy Week, Dorrha, 8:00 pm, Compline

Thursday, 28th March

Maundy Thursday, Birr, 8:00 pm, Holy Communion

Friday, 29th March, Good Friday

Birr, 12 noon, Family Service

Birr, 8:00 pm, Compline

Saturday, 30th March

Easter Vigil, Lorrha, 8:00 pm, Holy Communion

Sunday, 31st March, Easter Day

Lockeen, 9:30 am, Holy Communion

Lorrha, 10:00 am, Holy Communion

Birr, 11:00 am, Holy Communion

Please note that Birr Service time changes to 11am for Summer Time.

BIRR RECTORY

Many thanks to Angela Jupe and Derek Coulter for their detailed presentation on the options of renovating or selling the Rectory at our recent congregational meeting. If it was decided to sell the Rectory, it has been suggested that late spring is the best time, so we have a year to carefully consider the options.

Roscrea Group of Parishes

Roscrea, Bourney, Corbally and Kyle

Priest in Charge: The Rev. Lesley Robinson

St. Cronan's Rectory, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.

Tel: 0505 - 21725 Mob: 087 - 9091561

Email: kandlrobinson@eircom.net

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Wednesday 6th March: Holy Communion, Roscrea 8pm

Wednesday 13th March: Holy Communion, Corbally 8pm

Wednesday 20th March, Holy Communion, Bourney 8pm

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

Wednesday 27th March: EP Kyle 8pm

Maundy Thursday (28th March): HC Roscrea 8pm

Good Friday (29th March)

Ecumenical Walk, Roscrea 11am;

Service of Mediation on the Cross, Bourney 8pm.

Holy Saturday (30th March): Easter Vigil, Corbally 9pm

Easter Day (31st March): HC Bourney 9.30am; Roscrea 10.45am

contd... p18

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What Good Friday means to me

by Rev. George Flynn, Rector of the Aughrim & Ballinasloe Unions of Parishes

Like most children, I remember as a child Good Friday meant no meat for dinner and three more days to Easter eggs!

As time passed by and my understanding grew, I gradually became aware of the significance of the church festivals, and in particular the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ that I reflect on today, with fondest memories of my time as a parishioner of St Paul's Church, Glenageary. My late Mother was responsible for bringing me to Church and to Christ at an early age, in around the mid 1950s. The Lenten weekly services and especially the Good Friday readings eventually made an impact upon me, as I was captivated with wonder and amazement and suddenly realised the significance of what had taken place as described in our New Testament.

As the years passed by and the story became familiar to me, I was delighted to learn that our parish Dramatic Society planned to present a dramatized performance of the Passion of Christ in the Church on the Thursday and Friday during Holy Week in the mid 1960s. I still value the experience of seeing the narrative brought to life, as with my parishioner friends we acted the various parts, including young children making up numbers in the crowd scenes. Even though my part was just one of the robbers, this did not diminish the excitement of taking part, because everyone involved played their part 'as real' and together we created a very realistic interpretation of this most special time in our Christian lectionary.

I recall most vividly this production and the efforts of the backstage crew to make all the effects so dramatic and real:

- The transformation of the excited crowd from Palm Sunday to their angry, boisterous heckling in the trial scene,
- The effect of the cock crowing and Peter sobbing,
- The onlookers' angry calls to crucify him,
- The sound effect of the nails being hammered home,

- The dramatic cry of Christ "Eloi, Eloi lama sabactani",
- His last audible sigh, as he gave up the ghost,
- The thunder sound effects, the blackout, and the eerie feeling that hung over the congregation.

Then in the distant east window a single spot light shone from outside in the grounds upon the cross where Jesus was crucified. All was empty... all was bare... Jesus had been laid in the tomb.

That was the end of the performance. But being there helped me appreciate fully what had actually taken place, as I hope all Christian followers do. As we all know, the crucifixion of Jesus was not an ending, but the beginning of our Christian Faith. It leads us to the joyful celebration of Easter Sunday when we realise:

- He has risen,
- He has overcome death on the cross,
- He is now our living, loving risen Lord
- Who continues to oversee our lives from his throne in heaven.

The bare cross that we see in our churches and wear around our necks reminds us that our Lord defeated the cross, and that He is for ever with us, our living daily companion in our journey of life. As each child is welcomed into the Christian fellowship of our faith at baptism, the sign of the Cross is placed on the forehead, marking her or him for Jesus with His sign.

Many special moments have lived with me since those days. They are brought so much to life as I repeat the special narrative each Good Friday, with parishioners reading the parts from their pews, with appropriate hymns, and the entire congregation playing the crowd of the onlookers.

I haven't done so yet, but someday I may organise a full dramatized version, so that others young and old can experience for themselves the impact of this defining moment of history.

To quote part of a poem by Mrs.Verna Mae Thomas:

*I carry a cross in my pocket
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.
It's not for identification
For all the world to see
It's simply an understanding
Between my Saviour and me.*



What Easter means to me

by Rev. Lesley Robinson,
Priest-in-Charge,
Roscrea Group of Parishes



Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayst rise:
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name,
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

from Easter, by George Herbert

The Easter story is one which should surely inspire us to lift our hearts and voices. It's a story of the victory of life over death; of good over evil; of light over darkness. It's a story which happened in time, but for all time; to one person but for all people.

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead that first Easter morning is at the very heart of our faith as Christians. It is, or should be, what sustains us through the windy paths of this treacherous journey of life. It's what distinguishes us from those who say Jesus was just a prophet, or a great teacher, or a good man; because for us, the risen Jesus proves that God did indeed become incarnate that first Christmas, and that the greatest story ever told did not end on the Hill of Calvary, but in a nearby garden.

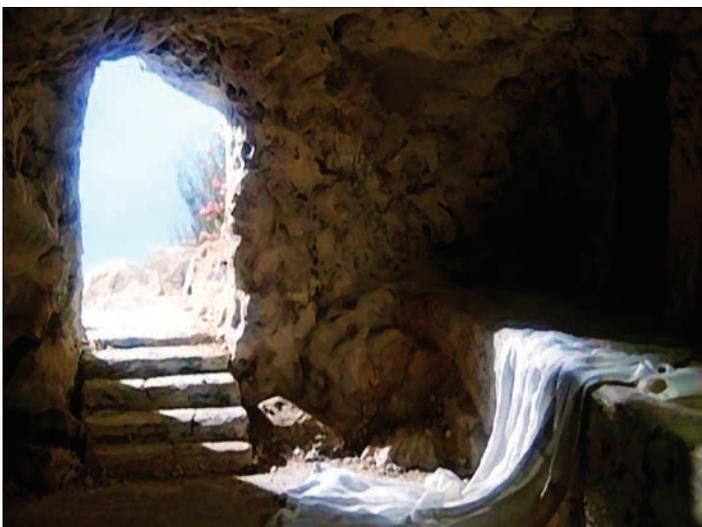
But the Father did not raise the Son from the dead just to prove that he could (Jesus showed in the wilderness with Satan that he wasn't into ostentatious theatrical performances), but because there was something much more valuable to God than pride at stake: us. George Herbert catches the essence of it beautifully in the image of the risen Lord taking us by the hand so that we might rise with him and share in his new life, and his victory over death.

Most obviously - and most importantly - the resurrection of Jesus from the dead means that we too will rise to new life after death. On the day of writing this article, Ash Wednesday, I conducted a funeral service and was very struck by the consistent thread of references to new life and resurrection in the liturgy. When we stand by the grave of a loved one, surely nothing can bring us any real sense of consolation except our sure and certain faith that 'death has been swallowed up in victory'. No matter how much pain we know in the parting, we trust that it is only a temporary separation: that life has been changed, not ended, and it is only the limits of our mortal eyes which prevent us from seeing the new life into which the departed one has entered.

But the good (or even better) news is that we don't have to wait until we die, or lose a loved one, to experience the new life on offer in the Risen Christ. From the moment of our baptisms we are born again by water and the Spirit, 'dying to sin so that we may live his risen life'. This doesn't mean we will be sinless or perfect, but for me, the new life on offer in Christ's resurrection, given to me at my baptism, means that every time I fail miserably to be the person he wants me to be - the person I long to be - the slate is wiped clean and I can start all over again. Another chance, a new day: new life. Sin will never have the final word in my life, because the final word was bellowed from the cross and echoed loudly around the chambers of the empty tomb.

Easter is synonymous with Spring, and all around us at present are signs of new life: in the fields, in the gardens, on the trees. Spring reminds us that God is constantly about the business of creation and re-creation as we see birth and growth continue the miraculous cycle of life, reminding us that death and decay are but finite stages in the infinite goodness and mercy of God.

This Easter may the joy of Christ's resurrection fill all our hearts, and may we live our new and risen lives to the full here on earth as we await being numbered among the company of the redeemed in heaven.



'The Tomb is empty!'



The Resurrection of Christ by Raphael'

NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Thomas and Lorraine Hodgins, Bourney, on the safe arrival of their first child: a daughter, Rachel.

DEPARTURE

Francie Davis, Cappalahan, Roscrea departed this life on 11th February in the care of Patterson's Nursing Home, aged 88 years. She was buried in the Quaker Burial Ground, Rockforest following a well attended service in Corbally Church on Ash Wednesday, 13th February. Our prayerful condolences to all her relatives and friends.

CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE

This year's ecumenical service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held in St. Cronan's Church of Ireland last Friday evening when Bishop Kieran O'Reilly, Roman Catholic Bishop of Killaloe, preached to a large congregation comprising of members of all the Christian communities in the town. Bishop O'Reilly received a very warm welcome on what was his first visit to the Church of Ireland in Roscrea, and he spoke of his delight at being present as he explored the theme of justice, based on a quotation from the prophecy of Micah. The service had been compiled by an ecumenical group in south India and the Bishop used his own experiences of India to talk about the need to break down existing barriers and open doors which remain closed on the journey to greater unity between the churches and to justice for all. The service was led by the Rev. Lesley, assisted by Fr. Tom Corbett, PP., the Rev. Brian Griffin, Methodist Minister, Adrian Hewson, and Pastor Ken Baker, of the Elim Pentecostal church. Prayers and readings were done by members of all four communities including June Wallace and Jonathan Roe. Roscrea Community Choir enhanced the music under the direction and accompaniment of Joan Murray, while our own Marjorie McCorduck played the organ for the congregational hymns. After the service the congregation enjoyed refreshments in the church, the friendly and relaxed atmosphere befitting the excellent ecumenical relations which exist between the different church communities in Roscrea. Thanks to all who helped in any way.

CONDOLENCES

Our prayerful condolences are with Glen Carter and family on the death of his father, Edward; to Robbie Connor and family on the death of his brother, James; and to Vivienne Wallace and family on the death of her brother-in-law, Tommy Threlfall.

PARISH LUNCH

Forty three parishioners and friends enjoyed a beautiful meal and lots of fun together at the Parish Lunch in the Damer Court Hotel, on 27th January. A dingbats sheet quiz and bingo added to the afternoon's entertainment and a good time was had by all present.



Eyes down for the Bingo during the Parish Lunch

Nenagh Union of Parishes

Nenagh, Templederry, Ballymackey and Killodiernan.

Rector: Revd. Canon Marie Rowley-Brooke
St. Mary's Rectory, Church Road, Nenagh. Co. Tipperary.

Tel: 067-32598 Mob: 085-1474792

Email: revdmarie@eircom.net

SUNDAY SERVICES

9.30 am Templederry, 1st 2nd and 4th Sundays.

11.00 am St Mary's Nenagh

12.15 pm, Killodiernan, 2nd and 4th Sundays

GODLY PLAY

On the 20th January Dr. Jessie Rodgers, who is a parishioner at Abington Church, came to St Mary's to demonstrate with our children an aspect of Godly Play during Family Worship. Laura Clarke and Audrey Clarke-Gordon had attended a workshop on this Montessori based approach to religion for children, which uses scripture stories, important church events and well known parables to explore faith questions and ideas. Dr Rodgers seated the children in the chancel, and shared with them the creation story, using coloured tiles in a very reflective way.

CANDLEMAS

The season of Epiphany ended with the traditional service of Candlemas at St Mary's, complete with candles! As we sang in the lovely Candlemas carol that tells the story of Simeon and Anna greeting the baby Jesus: "Christmas meets Easter on Candlemas Day". Then the following week we were straight onto...

SHROVE TUESDAY

... when the children from St Mary's School came to church for a service to help them to understand the meaning of Lent, and to receive copies of 'Love Life, Live Lent' booklets with activities and ideas to think about during the six weeks. The pupils will be supporting the schools in Swaziland during Lent with a pencil case project.

ASH WEDNESDAY

... was marked by the service of Communion and Ashing as we prepared to move into the holy season of Lent.

FAMILY WORSHIP

... took place on the first Sunday of Lent, and both GFS and Boys' Brigade played big parts. Both groups led prayers. In addition Boys' Brigade did a presentation of the story of David and Goliath, and GFS a presentation of the story of Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples.

As always there was some great singing and lovely refreshments afterwards!



Fr. Tom Corbett PP, Adrian Hewson, Rev. Lesley Robinson, Bishop Kieran O'Reilly and Rev. Brian Griffin following the Service of Prayer for the Week of Christian Unity



GFS girls at Family Worship



Boys Brigade presenting 'David & Goliath'

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- Mobile - Philip 087 6874775

Philip@jjryanundertakers.com - www.jjryanundertakers.com

RTE NATIONWIDE

... came to St Mary's to do a feature on the Rector; this was a great opportunity to show off our Junior Choir who thoroughly enjoyed the experience of being filmed on Take 1, and then Take 2, and then Take 3! The TV crew chatted with parishioners and also visited Killodiernan Church. The Rectory dogs had both been sent off to the canine hair-dresser the previous day so that they would look beautiful on camera!

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Our two choirs will lead the moving service "The Way of the Cross", a sequence of readings, prayers, choir items and congregational hymns. We did this for the first time last year, and it was greatly appreciated by all who attended.

GOOD FRIDAY

In addition to our usual service, and Walk of Witness in Templederry, we propose to hold a children's service and workshop, involving Easter gardens and hot cross buns on Good Friday morning.

EASTER DAY

Services at the usual times in all three churches, with lighting of the new Paschal Candles.

PRAYERS

We hold Violet Moorhead, Mildred Clarke and John Randall in our prayers as they recover from illnesses and accidents. We ask you also to pray for our Confirmation candidates Zoë Hayes, Grace Langley, Luke Mooney and Devin Rusk.

Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group

Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.

The Rev. Canon Stephen Neill

Modreeny Rectory, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary.

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

Email: stephen.neill@gmail.com

Parish website: www.modreeny.com

Stephen's blog: www.paddyanglican.com

RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS ON A RECENT JOURNEY

I had the pleasure of a trip to the East Coast of the United States last month and spent time in New York, Virginia and Washington DC. During my visit I did all the usual tourist things and visited quite a few churches, some of them of great historic and cultural significance. They included Holy Trinity Church on Wall Street very close to Ground Zero, the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine at the edge of New York's Harlem district (the largest place of worship in the United States, and still unfinished well over a hundred years since construction began) and the Riverside Church also in New York which has perhaps the most famous pulpit in America and has hosted Martin Luther King among others and is famous for its inclusive ministry. They were all remarkable, not just for their architecture and the atmosphere of worship that pervaded each, but also for their rootedness in their local communities and their outreach to those same communities.

However the most profound experience of my trip did not happen in any of these beautiful buildings but in a private home in Alexandria, Virginia where I was a guest alongside a community of Tibetan monks who were visiting the area to highlight the Tibetan cause and to spread the teachings of the Dalai Lama, from whose monastery in India they originated.

I have never come across a group of people who were so transparent to and enlivened by their religion. In their flowing robes and bare feet they projected both beauty and simplicity. They had little English but enough that helped by their Irish driver Sean, we were able to share a most enjoyable time together. They insisted on bringing me out as a guest to an Asian buffet which was truly wonderful, though there were some items on offer that I quickly bypassed in favour of a more recognizable foods. I heard some of their stories of spending over a month making their escape from Chinese persecution in Tibet and how some of them had lost family members and friends in the process. I heard how these gentle loving souls were sometimes greeted with outright hostility by those who believed they were a threat to the Chinese regime. But amid all this I saw the most extraordinary graciousness and generosity. They took delight in my enjoyment and I felt constantly humbled by their own so natural humility. As they chanted their prayers spontaneously at breakfast, which they cooked for all the household, I felt I was participating in a meal that was more than a meal, but primarily a spiritual experience.

I learnt so much from them, not just about their beliefs and philosophies but also about how to be a better Christian. Humility is something that is at the core of Christian discipleship and in my encounter with those monks I was privileged to see humility in its purest form. We have so much to learn from those with whom we differ.

BAPTISMS

Emma Margaret Hayes, daughter of George & Amanda of Finnoe, Borrisokane was baptised in Borrisokane Church on Sunday 3rd February.

Ryan James Cavanagh, son of John & Diane of Templemore Road, Cloughjordan was baptised in St. Kieran's Church Cloughjordan on Sunday 3rd February.

We wish both these children of God every blessing in their lives as we welcome them into the fellowship of faith in our parish.



Canon Stephen with Tibetan monks

CONFIRMATION 2013

This year our parish Confirmation is on 12th May at 11am in St. Kieran's Church, Cloughjordan. Classes will be starting shortly and any prospective candidates should give their names to the rector as soon as possible.

BEREAVEMENT

Our sincere condolences and prayers are expressed to Eoin & Michelle Harding of Borrisokane parish on the sad loss of their child Fionn. Fionn's funeral took place in Terryglass church on Sunday 13th January where the rector and Fr Michael Coonan led the liturgy. Fionn was laid to rest alongside his grandparents Willie and Dorothy Harding.



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Further information can be found on our website or by contacting the School Office.
Newtown School, Newtown Road, Waterford, Ireland.

Tel: +353 51 860 200
Email: info@newtownschool.ie
Web: www.newtownschool.ie

EASTER VESTRIES

Dates have now been fixed for our annual Easter General Vestry meetings to which all parishioners are welcome and have a right to attend. The dates are as follows:

- Borrisokane: Monday 11th March at 8pm – Venue to be confirmed (Church or Hall)
- Borrisnafarney/Templeharry: Wednesday 13th March at 8.30pm in Moneygall Hall
- Cloughjordan/Ballingarry: Thursday 21st March at 8pm in St. Kieran's Hall – Venue to be confirmed (St. Kieran's Hall or Church).

Shinrone Group of Parishes

Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinnitty and Dunkerrin

Rector: The Rev. Michael Johnston

Tel: 0505-47164 Mob: 086-6086567

Email: shinrone@killaloe.anglican.org

DUNKERRIN & KINNITTY SERVICES

From the beginning of February the services in Dunkerrin and Kinnitty churches are taking place on alternate Sundays for the time being. Services will take place at 9.00am and will be in Dunkerrin on the 1st and 3rd Sundays and Kinnitty on the 2nd and 4th. Group services on 5th Sundays will continue to be at 11.00am in each of the churches in the Group.

LENTEN SERVICES

During Lent there will be Lenten Eucharists taking place in each of the churches on Wednesdays evenings at 7.30pm. This is a good chance to both 'give something up' for Lent (time which we would normally devote to ourselves and instead devote it to God) and to 'take something up' (an extra spiritual discipline). In March the services will be as follows:

- 6th March – Dunkerrin
- 13th March – Aghancon
- 20th March – Shinrone
- 27th March (Holy Week) – Kinnitty

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

- 27th March (Spy Wednesday) 7.30pm – Kinnitty
- 28th March (Maundy Thursday) 7.30pm – Aghancon
- 29th March (Good Friday)
 - 3.00pm – Shinrone
 - 7.30pm – Dunkerrin
- 30th March (Easter Vigil) 7.30pm – Kinnitty
- 31st March (Easter Day)
 - 9.00am – Dunkerrin
 - 10.25am – Shinrone
 - 11.45am – Aghancon

LINK VISIT

On Monday 1st April a group of 16 will depart from Ireland for an ecumenical visit to our link church of Harzgerode in Germany. Over the course of a week we'll have a chance to meet old friends and make new ones and to explore this interesting area, as well as further afield in Leipzig and Berlin. Everyone is very much looking forward to the trip, and many thanks to all who supported the fundraising Table Quiz held on 15 February. It was much appreciated.

SYMPATHIES

Our thoughts and prayers are with Maisie Carter and the whole Carter family as they mourn the loss of Eddie who passed away on 24th January. A well-attended service was held in Shinrone church on Saturday 26 January before his funeral and burial took place at an equally packed service on Sunday 27 in St Anne's parish church, Knocknarea, County Sligo. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Drumcliffe Union with Kilnasoolagh

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

Rector: Rev. Chancellor Robert Charles Hanna

The Rectory, Bindon Street, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Tel: 065 – 6820109 Mob: 086 2167040

Email: bobhanna@eircom.net

Parish website: www.churchofirelandclare.com

WOMENS WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Devised by the Christian Women of Malaysia, this is scheduled to take place in St Columba's Ennis on Friday March 1st at 11.00am under the theme title "Let Justice Prevail". Mrs Frances Bailey has agreed to introduce the service.

BIBLE STUDY

Lenten study of scripture is open to any parishioners who care to accept the invitation of Jackie and Andrea McNair to their Sixmilebridge home on Monday evenings at 7.15pm. Tel 087 7765973

CONFIRMATION

Classes take place on Saturday mornings at 11am through March and April and early May in preparation for Confirmation in Ennis.

PROTESTANT ORPHANS

Bishop Trevor chaired the AGM at St Columba's Church Ennis on Friday 15th February. Mrs Jennie Shaw acting as Secretary/Treasurer convened the meeting. Clare Protestant Orphans Society is supported by the only two Grouped parishes in Clare, Killaloe and Drumcliffe. In recent years the society has allocated from its limited funds cash used for school uniforms, books and transport when needs of local families were identified. Canon Bob Hanna and Rev Stan Evans are contacts

FAIR PLAY

David Courtney is no stranger to Newslink readers with his exploits: as a writer – his paperback is still in the shops, on coastal rescue as a helicopter pilot, and now a very busy Ryan Air Senior Captain flying out of Shannon. A father of four girls and husband to schoolteacher Linda, he is now setting his sights on a possible Olympic appearance in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 as an athletics coach. A former Irish javelin champion in his youth, David is building up his coaching credentials in field Sports and is nurturing one or two young hopefuls for Ireland in four years time. David keeps his hand in by competing in the veterans competitions and had the honour of taking a first in the javelin at the Seniors event at the opening meeting of Ireland's brilliant new indoor stadium in Athlone.



David Courtney (centre) with other veteran athletes

PRESIDENT'S VISIT

February 22nd will see the visit of President Michael Higgins to Ennis to mark the 180th Anniversary of the opening of St Peter and St Paul Cathedral Church, Ennis. The Rector will represent the Group Parishes and the Church of Ireland at the event, and pass on greetings to Fr Tom Hogan, Administrator.

Clonfert Diocese

Aughrim & Ballinasloe Unions of Parishes

Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Ardrahan, Clontuskert and Woodlawn

Rector: Rev. George Flynn

The Rectory, Aughrim, Co Galway

Tel: 090 9673735 Mob: 087 20 74739

Email: georgeandgwyn@eircom.net

Parish website: www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org

Greetings once again to all our readers - here's hoping that the continuous wet weather will come to an end sooner rather than later, to allow everything around us to dry out and enable our farming community to progress with the work schedule that has suffered far too long from our long spell of unpleasant weather.

The season of Lent has already started and you will see that a weekly schedule of services will be held in our extended parishes. We follow the journey of Christ leading to the dramatic events of Holy week and then the joyful Easter morning good news.

VISION, MISSION & MINISTRY

To support Bishop Trevor in his endeavour to address the 'Vision, Mission and Ministry' within our Diocese and parishes, there will be a short service each week followed by a discussion over a cuppa tea, looking ahead and addressing these headings. A time to address our needs, address our discipleship and our role as parishioners within the community and our dioceses in general. I hope that everyone will make a big effort to give their support to these services. I would also hope that some of our young people will attend these services and make their views known under these headings.

THE GLEBE SCHOOL AUGHIRM

In a short space of time our Primary school will be heading into the final term of another successful year. Plans are underway to hold another 'Open Day' to promote our school and endeavour to increase our numbers with the view to enrol sufficient numbers to engage the services of a second teacher. I ask all our readers who may know families within the catchment area of Aughrim/Ballinasloe to promote our school. Anyone requiring any details should contact me as soon as possible and a meeting can be arranged with the Principal.

LENREC LTD.

Lenrec Ltd is a Clothes, Textile and Phones recycling company based in Kilkenny. They collect such items and at the same time make payment to charitable organisations who conduct collections to raise funds. Ardrahan Parish have undertaken a couple of collections in the past few years raising much needed funds.

As Springtime draws near I bring this to your attention, as the time might be right for parishes to spring clean and launch a fund raising effort to support the upkeep of their churches.

It works like this: parishioners clear out any unwanted NON SOILED clothes or textile items, (torn or intact), shoes, boots, or any unwanted mobile phones; the company then weighs the plastic bags and gives the donor a rate per bag etc for their chosen cause.

ARDRAHAN CHURCH PROJECTS

The Diocesan Council and the Property Committee of the Representative Church Body have approved our submissions for the Sunday School Room and the improved entrance to our Church grounds. Although there will be a further delay before both projects can commence, yet there is now light at the end of our long dark tunnel. I hope that after deliberations with Co. Galway Engineers, and responses to quotation enquiries, the way will be clear to commence work on one or both projects sooner rather than later.

CONGRATULATIONS

This past month has brought much cheer to a number of parishioners. Congratulations go to June Seale of Woodlawn and Dermot Morrissey of Ahascragh on their recent engagement, and best wishes to them as they prepare for their wedding day in due course. To Noel, Alma, and (Holly and Josh) Maher of Ardrahan we extend our delight and best wishes on the birth of another daughter.

PASTORAL CARE

Our deepest sympathy is extended to all readers who have experienced bereavements in recent weeks. We trust that the presence of Christ will support them through these days of sadness. To those who have health concerns may the healing Spirit of Christ surround the sick, as we trust and pray in faith that they may be restored to fullness of health, and look forward to a future of renewed health and happiness in the company of their loved ones and friends.

MICHAEL McCULLAGH

Michael is well known in the area as our organist in St. John's Ballinasloe and at a reception in Gullanne's Hotel recently, Michael has re-launched his Auctioneering and Estate Agency Business in Ballinasloe at 30 Society Street, tel. 086 2550877 or Email michaelmccullagh30@gmail.com.

REMAINING LENTEN SERVICES AND DISCUSSIONS

Friday 8th March, 8pm, St Matthew's Clontuskert

Friday 15th March, 8pm, Woodlawn

Friday 22nd March, 8pm, St John's Ballinasloe, Mothers' Union

End of Year Service

Friday 29th March, 8pm, Holy Trinity Aughrim, Passion Story

SUNDAY WEEKLY SERVICES AS PER WEB SITE

The Clonfert Group of Parishes

Clonfert, Banagher, Eyrecourt, and Portumna

The Rev. Alan Nevin

Priest in Charge: Very Rev. Patrick L. Towers

Tel: (090) 9684547. Mob: (086) 8140649

Email: towers@iol.ie

SERVICES FOR MARCH

Sunday 3rd March. Normal services in all three Church's.

Wednesday 6th March. Holy Communion 11am at Eliza Lodge Nursing Home.

Sunday 10th March. Mothering Sunday. A service of Morning Prayer at the usual times, where at St Paul's Banagher we hope to encourage Mothers and Children to come and join us. Refreshments, including a special baked Simnel cake, will be served afterwards.

Sunday 17th March, St Patrick's Day. A combined Group Eucharist at St Paul's Banagher at 11am. Hopefully there will be some celebrations in the town later in the day.

HOLY WEEK

(Sunday March 24th to Saturday sunset March 30th)

Palm Sunday, March 24th:

9am: Commemoration of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, at Portumna.

10.30am: Liturgy of the Word, at St John's Eyrecourt.

12noon: Liturgy of Palm Sunday, at St Paul's Banagher.

Maundy Thursday. Group Liturgy 7pm at Eyrecourt.

Good Friday. Group Liturgy Good Friday 11am in Clonfert Cathedral.

EASTER SERVICES commencing on Saturday evening, 30th March:
(Note the clocks go forward on Easter Day)

7 pm Saturday at Portumna, Easter Vigil and Easter Eucharist

10.30am Easter Day at Eyrecourt (The Easter Eucharist)

12.00noon Easter Day at Banagher (The Easter Eucharist)

If in doubt over any service time or liturgy please call the Rev'd Patrick Towers on 086 8140649

MORE REPAIRS

This time in St John the Baptist Church Eyrecourt. Before the congregation disappeared into the void below the Church we have completed the renewal of the flooring beneath the pews. After the completion of this job the opportunity was taken to give the Church a good spring clean. We would like to give a big thank you to everyone involved with getting this job done so effectively.

FUN DAY

On Sunday 27th January, after a combined service at St Pauls Banagher nearly fifty people travelled to the Shearwater Hotel in

Ballinasloe for heavily disguised birthday party lunch. We had disguised the party as a Parish Lunch whilst we planned the lunch as a Birthday treat for the Rev'd Patrick Towers. It was a great success and all enjoyed it so much, the meal was great, the company was better. Many thanks to the people that came, the hotel staff, and the lovely birthday cake made by Elizabeth Stoddard. We wish Patrick many, many happy returns.

SWAZILAND

Maureen Moss from Portumna is planning a trip to Swaziland later this year to help with teaching in the schools for several weeks. As anyone who has done this before knows it can be long and protracted work to plan such a trip. We wish Maureen all the luck and stamina for this trip and hope all will go well for her and pray that God will keep her safe. Maureen has collected well over a hundred pencil cases for the schools in Swaziland and wishes to say a big thank you to all have contributed.

Limerick Diocese

Limerick City Parish

St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's Pery Sq., Abington

The Very Rev. Sandra Pragnell

The Deanery, 7 Kilbane,

Castletroy, Limerick

Tel: 061-338697 Mob: 087-2658592

Email: sandrapragnell@eircom.net

The Rev. Jane Galbraith

50 Ballinvoher, Fr. Russell Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick

Tel: 061-302038 Mobile: 085-1450804

Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

LENT 2013

The Thursday morning Eucharists in St Mary's Cathedral at 10.30am will include a short Lenten address, which can be discussed over coffee afterwards for those who wish. Also, on Saturdays at 1pm in the Cathedral there will be a 'Hunger Lunch' of soup and bread, with donations going to the Simon Community.

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday in each church at the usual time.

Holy Week evening services will include a series of addresses by the Dean: Monday - Abington 8pm, Tuesday and Wednesday - St Michael's 8pm, Maundy Thursday - Cathedral 8pm.

On Good Friday the Three Hours will be observed at the Cathedral - 12noon-2pm prayer, music, scripture and silence. At 3pm the Choir will join us for the Liturgy of the Cross, and the final address.

On Easter Eve (30th March) there will be an Easter Egg Hunt for our younger parishioners in the grounds of the Cathedral at 5.30pm followed by a simple Easter Vigil.

FOLLOWING THE CROSS

On Good Friday morning we invite people from the different churches in the city to follow the Cross in silence through the city centre. We gather at St Mary's Cathedral ready to leave at 10.30am, and walk up O'Connell Street to conclude at St John's RC Cathedral. Do join us.

THE HEALING SERVICE

... held at St Mary's Cathedral on the Sunday before Lent attracted over 30 people. The Church's Ministry of Healing is a vital part of our mission and we now plan to hold a Healing Service 3 or 4 times a year.

SINCERE SYMPATHY

... to Harry Howes, his family and relatives on the death of his sister, Ellen Devlin in the UK on 30th of January, and to Sheelagh Morrow, her family and relatives on the death of her mother, Nance McLindon in Enniscorthy, on 15th February.

WHIST DRIVES

The last one of the season will be held in St. Michael's Church Hall on Saturday 9th of March with a Raffle starting at 8 pm sharp. Admission including supper E5. We welcome your support.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2013

International and interdenominational, a global movement of informed prayer and prayerful action. All are welcome. The service is prepared by Christian women in France. The theme is 'I was a Stranger and you Welcomed Me'. Thursday 7th March at 10.30 a.m. in Villiers Square.

MUSIC.

On Sunday 14th March members of the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Association will be attending the morning service of Choral Matins at St Mary's Cathedral at 11.15am.

Adare & Kilmallock Group of Parishes

Adare, Croom, Kilmallock, Kilpeacon

The Rev. Gary Paulsen

The Rectory, Adare, Co Limerick

Tel: 061 396227 Mob: 085 764 0533

Email: adarector@gmail.com

It was a year ago that Muriel Penney, Susan Clarke and Kathleen Shire died - we give God thanks for them and continue to pray for their families who remember and miss them at this time. Yet there is a circle of life, and on 3rd February we celebrated the baptism of Senan Gill, and congratulate Wesley and Clare.

This year the Lenten season is upon us very quickly. We started this on 12th February with our short penitential service at Adare church, followed by our pancake and fun evening. This was followed the next day with our Ash Wednesday service at 8 in the evening which significantly marks the beginning of Lent. I was so encouraged to see so many attend this service as we started this new liturgical season. This year we stepped out of the conservative box a bit and had the imposition of ashes - after all it is Ash Wednesday!

I was looking at a documentary about a group of people who enter a monastery in order to experience silence. Fr. Christopher who leads this programme talks to the group. He asks them, if they knew they had some terminal disease and the cure would be one hour of therapy everyday, would they do it? Of course!! was the unanimous response. He then goes on to say that he believes silence would be a tonic for the toxic world of being busy, multitasking, being stressed and complaining of having no time. In silence they can begin to

experience a new lease of life connected to God. Maybe this Lenten season you could try some of this life saving silence and commit to some time in prayer therapy. I think we have too much theology and not enough spirituality. Theologians speak about God while Mystics experience God. For our wholeness and holiness we need to pause, have a mystical experience.

Last year we had a series of films which hopefully was food for thought and discussion and this year the Lenten journey will look like this:

At St Nicholas' Church, Adare we will continue through March to follow a DVD presentation by Marcus Borg called 'Embracing an Adult Faith'

6th March, Session 3, Salvation

13th March, Session 4, Practise

20th March, Session 5, Community

24th March, Palm Sunday services in all churches in the group starting outside the churches and processing into the church with palms.

HOLY WEEK

Monday 25th, 8pm, Tenebrae at Croom

Tuesday 26th, 8pm, Taizé at Kilmallock

Wed 27th, 8pm, Seder meal at Kilpeacon

Thurs 28th, Maundy Thursday,

8pm, Foot washing and Holy Eucharist at Adare

Fri 29th, Good Friday:

Children's service at Kilpeacon at 10 am

Good Friday service at Kilmallock at 12

Good Friday service at 3.00 pm at Adare

Saturday 30th, Kilmallock Easter vigil service

Sunday 31st Easter day:

Adare at 6.00 Easter Dawn service. Fire and Eucharist

Croom 9.15 Easter Eucharist

Kilpeacon 10.30 Easter Eucharist

Kilmallock 10.00 Service of the Word by Stanley Wallace

Adare 12.00 Service of the Word by Stanley Wallace



Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes

Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kilcornan & Kilnaughtin

Rector: The Rev. Keith Scott

The Rectory, Askeaton, Co. Limerick

Tel: 061 - 398647 Mob: 087 2885169

E-mail: rathkeale@limerick.anglican.org

It is that time of year again, the time of the Lenten and Easter rush. As we prepare ourselves for the central festival of the Christian year, which proclaims the central truth of Christianity, that Jesus Christ is risen, there is always something else to do in the parish: an extra study group or service or preparations for the Easter General Vestries. And then there are all those services for Holy Week and Easter itself. All these extras can put a strain upon already busy lives driven by the pressures of the world around us. As Christians, however, we need to assess the priorities of our lives, and ask ourselves what is at the very heart and core of our lives, why we do what we do. If our lives are given purpose and meaning by the Good News of God in Jesus Christ, if what is at the heart of our living is being a witness to this Good News by the power of the Spirit, then we will make the time to be built up in Christ the priority of the next few weeks, and bend the rest of life's interminable demands around that. Here is what is happening in our parish.

LENT STUDY GROUP

We are exploring how to make good sense of Scripture. We meet in Rathkeale National School No. 2, usually on a Wednesday at 8:00 p.m. but contact Rev'd Keith to confirm.

HOLY WEEK

Tuesday 26th March, St. Brendan's Tarbert, 8pm, Evening prayer

Wednesday 27th March, Castletown, Kilcornan, 8pm, Evening Prayer

Thursday 28th March, St. Mary's Askeaton, 8pm, Eucharist

Friday 29th March, Holy Trinity Rathkeale, 8pm, Tenebrae

EASTER

Sat. 30th March, Castletown Kilcornan, 10:30 pm, Liturgy of the light
Sunday 31st March

Holy Trinity Rathkeale, 9am, Eucharist

St. Mary's Askeaton, 10:30 am, Eucharist

St. Brendan's Tarbert, 12:00 noon, Eucharist

EASTER GENERAL VESTRIES

These will take place after Easter.

Ardfert Diocese

Tralee & Dingle Unions of Parishes

Tralee, Ballymacelligott, Ballyseedy, Dingle, Kilgobbin and Killiney

(Vacant)

Parish Office: Teach an tSolais, St. John's Church,

Ashe St., Tralee. Co. Kerry

Tel: 066 712 2245 Email: tralee@ardfert.anglican.org

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Jim Stephens

Kilderry, Miltown, Co. Kerry.

Tel: 066-976 7735 Mobile: 087-052 9107

Email: stiofain.s@gmail.com

SUNDAY SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Ballyseedy: 9.45 a.m. 1st, 2nd & 3rd Sundays

Kilgobbin: 10 a.m. every Sunday

Tralee: 10.45 a.m. every Sunday

Ballymacelligott: 12 Noon every Sunday

Dingle: 12 Noon every Sunday

LENTEN SERVICES

As well as the usual Wednesday 11am Service in Tralee, there will also be Evening Services at 8pm in Ballymacelligott and Kilgobbin Churches on each Wednesday in Lent.

SERVICES IN HOLY WEEK

Evening Services will be held in Ballyseedy Church at 8pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in Holy Week. Good Friday Services will be held in St. John's, Tralee at 2.30pm and at 8pm in Ballymacelligott Church.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Our congratulations to:

... Betty and Robert Groves who, having already won one of Lee Strand CoOp's Monthly Awards during 2012, have gone on to win outright, the overall Lee Strand Quality Milk Award for 2012.

... Carol and John Mason who also won one of the Monthly Quality Milk Awards in 2012.

... Peter and Lisa West, now resident in Boston, on the birth of their son Declan John, who arrived on 8 February. Big brother Owen is delighted!

... Nicola Siye and David Power who announced their engagement over the Christmas period.

BALLYMACELLIGOTT

Ballymacelligott Parish had a problem of how to provide for their growing young population while having no accommodation for their religious education. They solved it by not just enclosing, but soundproofing, the area under the balcony at the rear of the church. They now boast a thriving Sunday Club of more than a dozen members aged from 3 to 9 which meets on alternate Sundays under the guidance of Winnie Knightly, Linda Butler and Anne Shannahon. Well done!



Ballymacelligott Sunday Club

PENINSULAR PARISHES

We extend grateful thanks to Father John Buckley for making the Sacred Heart Church in Annascaul available to us for the Funeral Service, according to the Church of Ireland Rite, of the late Joan Davey which was conducted by Rev. Jim Stephens on Friday 1 February.

ORGAN REBUILDING

By the time you read these notes the rebuilding of the 1884 organ in St. John's, Tralee will have commenced. The work is expected to take several months.

HIS HOLINESS THE POPE

The announcement that His Holiness is soon to retire has come as a complete surprise to all Christian Churches. He has served his Church well in difficult and trying times and has demonstrated both his wisdom in knowing when the time has come to pass the burden of office to a younger successor and the courage to act on that knowledge. We join with our Roman Catholic neighbours in praying that the Holy Spirit may guide the hearts and minds of those who must decide on a successor.

Killarney & Aghadoe

Union of Parishes

Killarney, Aghadoe and Muckross

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Canon Susan Watterson.

The Rectory, Rookery Rd. Ballycasheen, Killarney, Co. Kerry

Tel: 064 66 31832 Mob: 087 689 2025

Email: smwatt1@gmail.com

SERVICES

Sunday 3rd, Holy Communion at 11.am

Sunday 10th, Service of the Word for Mothering Sunday at 11am

Sunday 17th, Holy Communion at 11am

Sunday 24th, Palm Sunday Holy Communion at 11am

Monday 25th, Service of the Word 10.30am

Tuesday 26th, Service of the Word 10.30am

Wednesday 27th, Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday, Tenebrae at 8pm.

Good Friday:

1.30pm - 2.30pm Music for the Passion –The Reproaches by Sanders, Tenebrae by Haydn.

2.30pm -3pm 'At the Foot of the Cross' (please feel free to come and go during the day).

Easter Day, Family Eucharist at 11am.

OTHER NOTICES

The Bishop's Lenten visit to Kerry to discuss Vision, Mission and Ministry is to be on Monday 4th March at 7.30pm in St. Mary's Church Killarney.

The Book-club will meet in the Malton Hotel on Thursday 7th at 8pm to discuss *Inishowen* by Joseph O'Connor.

There will be a group meeting in church to pray together each Tuesday morning during Lent at 10.30am. All are welcome to join us.

There is a concert in St. Mary's Church on March 9th at 8pm.

The Saints Chorale Student Choir from New Jersey. Admission is free – retiring collection.

Our Easter Day service will be followed by an Egg Hunt as usual.

Kilcolman Union of Parishes

Kilcolman, Kiltallagh and Glenbeigh

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Máirt Hanley

20 Knocklyne, Sunhill, Killorglin, Co. Kerry.

Mob: 087-619 4733

Email: rev.hanley@gmail.com

Greetings all,

Thanks to all who helped out the other Sunday in Killorglin for the double baptism, it was a lovely service and congratulations to Darragh and Andrew and all the Doherty clan.

GÜNTERSBERGE

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

CONFIRMATIONS

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

LADIES' DINNER

The annual Ladies Dinner, on the Monday before Lent, was held this year on the 11th of February in the Towers Hotel in Glenbeigh. Much fun was had by all and I gather there was lots of dancing. A lot of money was also raised, with proceeds going to Cystic Fibrosis, St Josephs Home and Alzheimers. Well done Dorothea.

CHRISTIAN UNITY

We had our monthly mid week service on January 24th and since it was the week of prayer for Christian Unity, our parish and school got together with Ballyfinnan NS as we did last year, this time in St. Carthage's R.C Church. This was a great event and Fr. Luke arrived back from holidays just in time to join us at the end of the service. It was especially nice to hear all the children singing together.

On the evening of Sunday 20th of January, we hosted the main service for Christian unity week in mid Kerry. It was a lovely service and a great pleasure to be joined by Fr. Michael from St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Pastor Seagun from the Redeemed Christian Church, as well as some of the other pastors and people from Free Churches in south Kerry. Thanks to Lettie, Christine and Carmel for doing the teas and showing our brothers and sisters in Christ that we may all be equal in

Gods eyes, but nobody beats our baking!

ASH WEDNESDAY

Our midweek service in February was on Ash Wednesday at noon in Kiltallagh church. We were as ever joined by the school to burn our sins and think about the forgiveness of God. It was also nice to be able to offer a cuppa to those that didn't have to go back to school, which we hope to do again. Our next midweek service in Kiltallagh will be on the 21st March, the feast day of Thomas Cranmer who wrote the Prayer Book - all are welcome.

KILCOLMAN CRICKET CLUB

The AGM was held at St. Michael's church hall on Monday 18th February at 8.00pm. A full account will be on the parish website www.kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org.

The main point of the meeting was to say that last season went ok, but we would hope to get more people on board, and we need to get some cash together for equipment, so we can have good regular training in order to get people involved. If you have any questions please contact me or Charlie Smith, Neadine, Curraheen, Glenbeigh, tel 066 976 8530 or 085 140 6029.

NEWS SHEETS 2013

Pauline Dobbins has volunteered to be our parish publisher and be the 'go to' person for our newsletters, so if anyone has anything for newsletters from now on, please forward to Pauline at paulinedobbins@gmail.com.

Kenmare & Dromod Union of Parishes

Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville and Valentia

Priest-in-Charge: The Rev. Michael Cavanagh

St Patrick's Rectory, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

Tel: 064 664 8566 Mob: 087 1606312

Email: michael.cavanagh@eircom.net

KIDS' SHED

You've heard about the Men's Shed movement - motto: 'Women talk face to face, men talk shoulder to shoulder?' Well, Kids talk to anyone who will listen to what **they** say instead of treating them like they have **nothing** to say. In turn, they love to listen - provided it's said in a language they understand. They deserve to hear the gospel - but without the complication that adults often bring. The message is simple. God loves you. He sent Jesus to show how much. And because of that, when we've heard His story, we can celebrate it in song, craftwork, play, and pray. And in the process, learn from each other, too.

Kids' Shed is for 4-8 year-olds (within broad tolerances!) who come together once a month to the Rectory resource room to do all of the above. It's a different kind of church - but its church nonetheless...

ST BRIDGID'S ROOM

This is going to be the biggest project in the Kenmare & Dromod Union for some time - not just an extension to St Patrick's, but a retreat and conference centre for Christian communities across the country, allowing them the opportunity to share fellowship and spend time together in God's own Kingdom of Kerry. More details in the next issue.

Christ Church Limerick 200 Year Anniversary Genealogy & Family History Day

As part of Christ Church Limerick's 200 year anniversary celebrations we are planning to hold a Genealogy & Family History day in our O'Connell St. Church on the 16th March.

In 2013 the Methodist Church, on its present site in the city, will be 200 years old and in the same year the Presbyterians will have been in Limerick for over 350 years. Christ Church Limerick became a United Presbyterian and Methodist Church over 40 years ago and continues to thrive. In this anniversary year we are celebrating all of this history and these significant historical milestones.

As a United Presbyterian and Methodist Church in Limerick we are in the unique position to be able to bring together family history records from our combined churches. We have also very close links with

other local churches, and in particular the Church of Ireland where we share certain responsibilities in relation to governance of the local schools with a Protestant ethos. We are planning to bring together all the available Church Registers and School Roll Books for our community on the Saturday of the St. Patrick's Day weekend for anyone, from complete novice up to experienced genealogist, to review. We also hope to have some Catholic Registers available on the day.

Due to the relatively small Protestant Community in Limerick, it is understandable that over the centuries there have been significant inter-denomination marriages and community interactions. Consequently, for family history enthusiasts and novices alike, the opportunity to review all these documents together is significant.

For the novice genealogist or someone who just wants to find out more about their own family we will have volunteers on hand to assist them to find their family records and help them to commence building their own family tree. To make the search as rewarding as possible we would advise anyone intending to come on the day to have done a little family research beforehand. e.g. Find out all the names of your grandparents, any significant dates and where they were from. Obscure Christian Names are particularly useful in helping to confirm connections. We also intend to have internet access available in the Church on the day to allow people to commence initial searches on some of the very useful internet sites that are available on-line.

For the more experienced genealogist with particular connections in the Limerick area the opportunity to review these records in the one location should be very exciting. We expect to have available on the day:- Limerick Methodist Registers from 1842, Limerick Presbyterian Registers from 1829, Christ Church Limerick Minute Books, Adare/Balingrane registers, Limerick Church of Ireland registers, Limerick Baptist Church

registers, St. Michael's National School Roll books, Villiers School roll books, etc.

On the day, Michael Wheeler, a genealogical enthusiast, will give a talk on his own extended Wheeler family research entitled "Silver Bells of Memory". His talk will focus on the historical and intriguing aspects that he has encountered whilst researching his own family tree. Of particular interest will be the topic on Irish History from a

Protestant stand point, a view not normally explored by historians.

For further details of the 'Genealogy & Family History Day' please contact Michael Wheeler mgbwheeler@hotmail.com.

For further details of the events organised for the year or for any other information on Christ Church, please make contact with the Rev Vicki Lynch. Her e-mail address is: vickilynch@eircom.net

The Methodist District Superintendent writes



The unwavering opposition to gambling is a long-standing tradition within Methodism which goes back to John Wesley, Methodism's founder. There were clear rules for the societies on the positive duties of Christians: visiting the sick and prisoners, giving employment opportunities to fellow Methodists. However, equally clear and leaving no doubt were those rules concerning many features of 18th century social life to be avoided which included theatre, dancing and gambling, the use of spirituous liquor (teetotalism was not encouraged in this period) and showy clothes. All were forbidden.

Today, in Athy, Co. Kildare, the Methodist Church is used both as a theatre and a church. Prohibitions on dancing and alcohol have begun to be relaxed. The Manual of Laws still do not permit raffles, guessing and other competitions which involved the spirit of gaming, on Methodist premises.

In 1987, the Methodist Conference opposed the introduction of the lottery in the Republic of Ireland and expected members to refrain from buying lottery tickets. This form of gambling is seen to be yet another way of transferring money from our neighbours' pockets to our own and the pockets of others, without rendering any kind of service. It is known as the 'poor people's tax' because many who buy are themselves in need of a monetary boost. Buying lottery tickets therefore, amounts to an exploitation of the poor.

The Methodist Conference in 2012 did not contradict the view that the lottery is evil, yet in a sudden pragmatic decision decided by a narrow majority to accept lottery funding under certain conditions. This provoked a heated debate through synods and circuits throughout Methodism. The Methodist Newsletter featured a flood of letters from dismayed and concerned members.

The need of larger funding sources is most keenly felt by the City Missions for their social action programmes. But it is argued that the end does not justify the means, no matter how worthy

the cause, by means that are evil, the lottery. The General Committee of the Methodist Church has appealed to the Superintendents of the City Missions not to apply for lottery funds until a proper theological discussion takes place at this year's Conference in Carrickfergus from June 12-16.

The lottery is just another facet of gambling which in its ramifications is a vast social disease. There are almost 100,000 problem gamblers in the Republic who are more likely to divorce, drink excessively, abuse spouses and children and attempt suicide.

It should be noted, that as a country we do not have the social or medical resources to cope with the enormous consequences provoked by problem gamblers.

There can be no argument about 'redeeming' lottery money. Would you accept as a gift a used car which you knew had been stolen? To redeem something involves changing its nature. It is not possible to redeem the means by which lottery money was raised.

William Temple, former Archbishop of Canterbury cites some theological reasons why gambling is wrong in itself:

- i) Making chance the arbiter, subverts the God given moral order and thus the stability of life
- ii) It contradicts the biblical principle of stewardship. What we possess is not our own. It belongs to God and gambling involves needlessly risking what belongs to God.
- iii) It promotes self-interest and profiting from the loss of another.
- iv) It appeals to covetousness which is condemned by the Ten Commandments and by the teaching of Jesus.

Yours in Christ

Rev Brian Griffin

Superintendent of the Midlands and Southern District.

Methodist News

Adare & Balingrane Methodist Circuit

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

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - Friday 1st March

We look forward each year to two services in our area:

Adare: 10.30am in Holy Trinity Abbey, Adare - Speaker: Rev Liz Hewitt

Balingrane: 8.00pm in St James RC Church, Cappagh
BIBLE STUDY GROUP

... will meet at 8.00pm in the Manse on Wednesday 13 March
UNITED FELLOWSHIP AT CHARLEVILLE

... 7.30pm Sunday 17th March, in the Convent
MWI

Methodist Women in Ireland will meet at 8.00pm on Wednesday 20th March in Balingrane Church. The speaker will be Sheila Dundon, a nutritional therapist.

MIDLANDS & SOUTHERN DISTRICT SYNOD

Synod meets twice a year to discuss the work and mission of the churches on our District. The next meeting is on Saturday 9 March and we are pleased to be welcoming members of Synod to Adare Methodist Church on this occasion.

HOLY WEEK

Wednesday 27th March, Reflection at 8.00pm in Adare Church

Good Friday 29th March, Readings and prayers for Good Friday at 8.00pm in Ballingrane Church

EASTER DAY

11.00am United Easter Celebration and Holy Communion in Adare Church

ADVANCE NOTICE – FLOWER FESTIVAL

In Adare Methodist Church, Friday 10th – Sunday 12th May 2013. The theme will explore our Methodist and Community Heritage in Adare. We are looking forward very much to the Flower Festival. We are inviting flower arrangers from the community as well as our congregations to contribute their talents. The group arranging the event are working hard to make it a really notable event and have also been busy fund-raising to sponsor the event. Three energetic members of the Circuit are participating in the Adare 10K Run/Walk on 24th February and are being sponsored for the Festival Fund.

Christ Church Limerick, United Presbyterian & Methodist and Christ Church Shannon, joint Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland

The Rev. Vicki Lynch

The Manse, 15 Aylesbury,

Clonmacken, Limerick.

Tel: 061 325325 Mobile: 086 8292073

Email: vickilynch@eircom.net

COMMUNITY BIBLE EXPERIENCE

As we began Lent so we began the Community Bible Experience. We'd been looking for ways to continue to grow together as community and just as I was wondering what the best way would be, the Community Bible Experience came into view! You may already have seen it or taken part, but if you haven't you can 'Google' it.

Basically the New Testament has had the chapters and verses format removed and been reordered with the hope that, as the website says – 'This revolutionary approach makes it easier to read larger sections and fully comprehend and experience the Bible's power and meaning. And as you become immersed in God's Story alongside others – sharing, questioning, understanding, you are transformed...just like it was meant to be! And, even if that does sound a bit aspirational and maybe a bit slick, actually I think that is what will happen. I'll let you know!

YOUTH ALPHA COURSE

We've also just embarked on a Youth Alpha course which is going to be interesting. It's a forum where young people can ask questions – any questions! And, after experiencing the first evening, I think the young people will embrace that idea wholeheartedly.

OTHER NEWS

We welcomed back Rev Peter McDowell to preach on Sunday February 17th. It was good for people to catch up and hear what Peter and his family are up to now. He'd obviously made a lot of good friends in Limerick and everyone had time to talk over coffee and lunch afterwards.

The Methodist Team on Mission (youth work interns) will be visiting during the week after Saint Patrick's Day so we're very much looking forward to that. We'll keep everyone informed of what's going on and we'd love people to come and take part. Their visit ends with a Christian Youth Surfing Weekend in Lahinch run by Jono and Beth

Griffin. If you're interested give me a call and I'll put you in touch.

GENEALOGY DAY

And, of course, our Genealogy Day on Saturday March 16th in Christ Church – come and be curious about the past! We're delighted that Emma Gilleece, who you may remember co-ordinated Open House Limerick, has now come on board to assist with the coordination of this event.

Also look out for activity in the ground floor of Central Buildings in Holy Week.....

LIMERICK

Sunday Service 11.30am.

Holy Communion 1st Sunday

Family Service 3rd Sunday

Sunday School 1st, 2nd & 4th Sundays

Youth Group 2nd & 4th Sundays

Midweek Holy Communion Wednesday 10am beginning February 13th

Lectio Divina Tuesday 11am in the meeting room (access from the lane)

Discovery Group (adults) Monday 7.30 – 8.30pm (The Manse, 15 Aylesbury, Clonmacken)

Youth Alpha Wednesday 7- 8pm (The Manse, 15 Aylesbury, Clonmacken)

SHANNON

Fellowship group 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7pm – contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details

Holy Communion every 2nd Sunday 6pm – contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details

Killarney & Kenmare Methodist Churches

[part of the Cork South & Kerry Circuit]

Minister: Rev. Laurence Graham

10 Flesk Grove, Killarney, Co. Kerry.

Tel: 064 6631613

Email: laurence.graham@irishmethodist.org

Web site: www.irishmethodist.org/kerry

Kenmare Lay Pastoral Team:

Ed & Jean Ritchie

Tel: 064 6620580

KILLARNEY METHODIST CHURCH EAST AVENUE, KILLARNEY

Sunday Services: 9 and 11am (inc. Children's programme at 11)

Prayer meetings: Monday – Thursday 8am – 9am

Bible Study Meetings: Wednesday 8pm, Friday 10am

Drop in for coffee each Friday: 11am. – 12pm.

Parent and Toddler Group: Tuesdays 10am – 12pm

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

KENMARE "Gateway" Gortamullin, Killarney Road, Kenmare.

Sunday Service: 11am (preceded by coffee, inc. Children's programme)

Weekly Bible Study/Fellowship meetings: Tuesdays at 8pm (Prayer time at 7pm), Wednesdays at 10am.

Drop in for coffee: each Wednesday 11am – 12pm.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Gneeveguilla Home fellowship group on Thursdays 7th and 21st March at 8pm. Contact Laurence for directions to the venue.

In Killarney the monthly men's breakfast will meet on Saturday 9th March from 8.30 – 10am. Speaker Brian Callan from Cork.

South Kerry Parkinson's Association meet in Killarney Methodist Church on the second Monday in March (10th) at 7.30pm.

Services in Millstreet continue every Sunday evening at 6.30 pm, but we have changed venue and now meet at Drishane Castle. We expect this to be a temporary arrangement but that is where our meetings will be until further notice. Also in Millstreet a mid-week prayer and Bible study fellowship is meeting each Tuesday night at 8.00 pm. Contact Laurence for details of venue.

Meeting for Prayer, Praise and Bible Study in Lispolé near Dingle continues on the last Thursday of each month. Next meeting 28th March.

A Women's Fellowship group is now established in Killarney meeting on the first Monday of each month at 10.00 am. A group is also scheduled to begin soon in Kenmare.

North Tipperary Methodist Circuit

Minister: Rev Brian Griffin

The Manse, The Mall, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary

Tel: 0505 21670 Mobile: 087 987 0755

Email: beg08@eircom.net

During Lent, members are participating in the series 'Lead us not into temptation' led by speakers from the Irish School Ecumenics.

- On Tuesday 5th March Dr Andrew Pierce will compare how the different gospel writers treat the subject of temptation.
- On Tuesday 12 March Rev Tom Gordon will look at the Lord's Prayer where temptation is recognised as a present reality.
- The final meeting of the series on Tuesday 26 March will host a panel of speakers offering an opportunity for reflection on the issues raised in the series.

All the talks take place in the County Arms Hotel, Birr, at 8.00 pm

Collect Reflection – Good Friday

by Rev. Michael Johnston, Shinrone Union of Parishes

*Almighty Father,
Look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

The contemporary collect for Good Friday is a modernising of one of the three traditional Prayer Book collects for use on that day. It began life as a Latin Postcommunion Prayer for use on the Wednesday in Holy Week in the medieval Sarum liturgy – hence the reference to our Lord's betrayal, for 'Spy' Wednesday has traditionally been the day on which Christ's betrayal is remembered. In the Prayer Book it was traditionally the first of three collects said on this day, which represented an expanding circle of intercession – the local church ('family') in the first; the whole Church (all Christians) in the second; and all people, especially those who did not know Christ, in the third. The third has now been dropped in our present Prayer Book due to the language used, but the second is still appointed for use in its traditional form.

The phrase 'content to be betrayed' in our present collect may strike us now as being unusual; but in fact the word 'content' is a translation of the original Latin 'non dubitavit' which means 'did not hesitate' – a phrase which gives a much more powerful understanding

On Saturday 9 March the Midlands and Southern District Synod will be held in Adare.

Tuesday 19th March Mrs Gillian Kingston – Lay Leader of the MCI – will speak on the Covenant between Methodist and Church of Ireland at the Preachers' Meeting in Birr Methodist Church at 8.00 pm.

MWI (Methodist Women of Ireland): Tuesday 12th March, 8.00 pm. Marjorie Lamb will address the Roscrea meeting on Quaker Life at the Roscrea meeting. Tuesday 19th March 8.00 pm Rev Irene Morrow to speak on the King James version of the Bible at the Borrisokane meeting. Sunday 24th March, 7.00 pm the Annual MWI service, Shinrone. Speaker Mrs Maureen Weir, All-Ireland President of MWI.

During Holy Week (March 24-30) Methodists will join with the Church of Ireland, Cloughjordan and Borrisokane group, for the Maundy Thursday Service of Holy Communion and on Good Friday will join in the ecumenical processions in Roscrea and Cloughjordan. Also on Good Friday at 8.00 pm a United Circuit Service in Shinrone.

The Easter Day Services:

Borrisokane, 10.15 am, Rev Brian Griffin

Cloughjordan, 10.15 am, Rev Tom Kingston

Roscrea, 1.45 am, Rev Brian Griffin

Shinrone, 7.00 pm, Rev Tom Kinston

In preparation for the Conference of 2013 which meets in June in Carrickfergus, Co Antrim, Methodists are invited to complete a short survey to enable us to focus on discerning the priorities that should shape our future. The Church believes we are being called to listen to God's voice and be launched into mission. The survey can be completed on the Methodist website: www.irishmethodist.org

of Jesus' action. We are reminded on this day of Jesus' freely-given self-offering of himself; that 'when the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem' for the accomplishment of his passion. (Lk 9: 51).

Partners in Prayer – March 2013

Each Sunday

The Diocese of Derry & Raphoe and Bishop Kenneth Good

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

3rd March, Lent 3, Purple/Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Matlosane (formerly Klerksdorp) in South Africa, and The Rt Revd Stephen Diseko

Our Diocese: For the Bishop's Lenten gatherings and for a shared vision for the future for our diocese

10th March, Lent 4 – Mothering Sunday, Purple/Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Medak (South India) and The Rt Revd Thalari Samuel Kanaka Prasad

Our Diocese: We pray for the work and witness of the Mothers Union throughout the diocese and all agencies that support families in crisis

17th March, Lent 5, Purple/Violet OR St. Patrick, White

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Mississippi (USA) and The Rt Revd Duncan Gray

C of I: We pray for our own land and for the voice of the Church to be one that promotes Peace, Justice, Mercy & Dignity for all

24th March, Lent 6 – Palm Sunday, Red/Purple/Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Diocese of Jerusalem, The Rt Revd Suheil Dawani and for the peace of Jerusalem. "All glory, laud and honour, to Thee, Redeemer, King, to Whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring"

Our Diocese: We pray for the ongoing Easter Vestry meetings throughout the diocese and all those who are elected to serve the church on Select Vestries

31st March, EASTER SUNDAY, White or Gold

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: "Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!

our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!

who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!

suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!"

Our Diocese: We pray for new life in our diocese that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ may breathe new energy into our service in the World.



Safe in the hand of Jesus



Barney says

Hello friends,

Jesus once said he was the Good Shepherd. A shepherd knows every one of their sheep and will do anything to protect them from harm.

A shepherd will protect sheep from wolves and ensure they never get left behind. The sheep will have enough grass to eat and they will be safe at night. Everything a sheep needs!

Jesus was right to say he was like a shepherd. In John 10, he even says that if you let him into your life, no one can snatch you out of his hand. We are safe in Jesus!

Jesus also promised that we will be with him forever. Wow!

To be his sheep, we need to get to know him and listen to his voice. That's a challenge for each of us.

Love Barney

Barney's jokes

What is the end of Easter?
The letter R!

What does an Easter chick do to get fit?
Eggercise!

THE STAND IN

It's not me; I didn't do it. Is it always *someone else* when the teacher asks 'who made this mess', or Mum says 'who broke this?' And if we hadn't done it, would we offer to clean up the mess or pay for what is broken out of our pocket money? Even though it wasn't our fault and we hadn't done anything wrong?

The answer is probably 'no'. Why should we? It wasn't our fault! It wouldn't be fair! But then things often aren't fair. It wasn't fair that the crowds in Jerusalem that first Easter shouted 'release



God's word

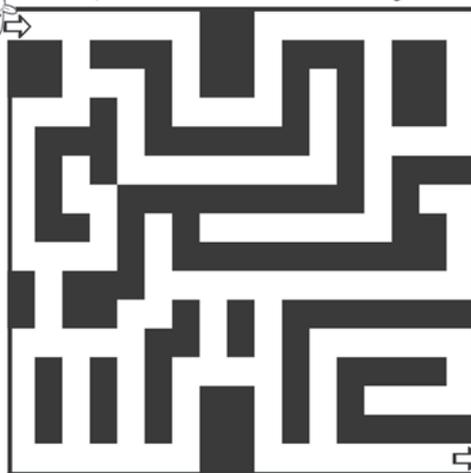
My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

John 10:27-28 (NIV)



Find the shepherd

Can you help the sheep find his way back to his shepherd? Follow the trail and don't get lost!



Let's talk to Jesus!

Dear Jesus, thank you that you want to be a Good Shepherd to us and that we will be safe in your hands. Amen.

WHO? ME?

The answers to this Bible quiz are all words that begin with the letters **M E** ... answers at the bottom of the page

1. Was with Daniel in the lions' den? (Daniel, 3)
2. Is another name for Malta where St Paul was shipwrecked? (Acts, 28)
3. Who did Jesus call blessed, and said they would inherit the earth? (Matthew, 5)
4. Proverbs 17 says that a merry or cheerful heart is like what?
5. What were James and John doing when they first met Jesus? (Mark, 1)
6. Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to yeast mixed with what? (Luke, 13)
7. King Saul's eldest daughter's name (1 Samuel, 14)

When did medicine first appear in the Bible?

When God gave Moses the tablets.



1. Meshach
2. Mellita
3. the meek
4. good medicine
5. mending their nets
6. three measures of flour
7. Merab





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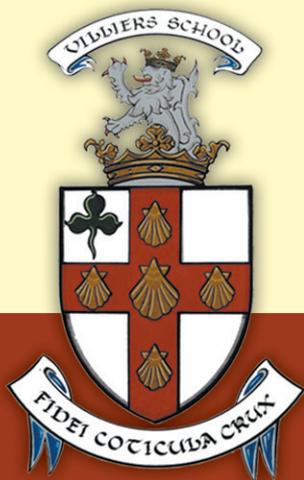
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