



# NEWSLINK

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

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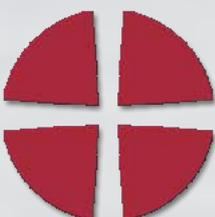
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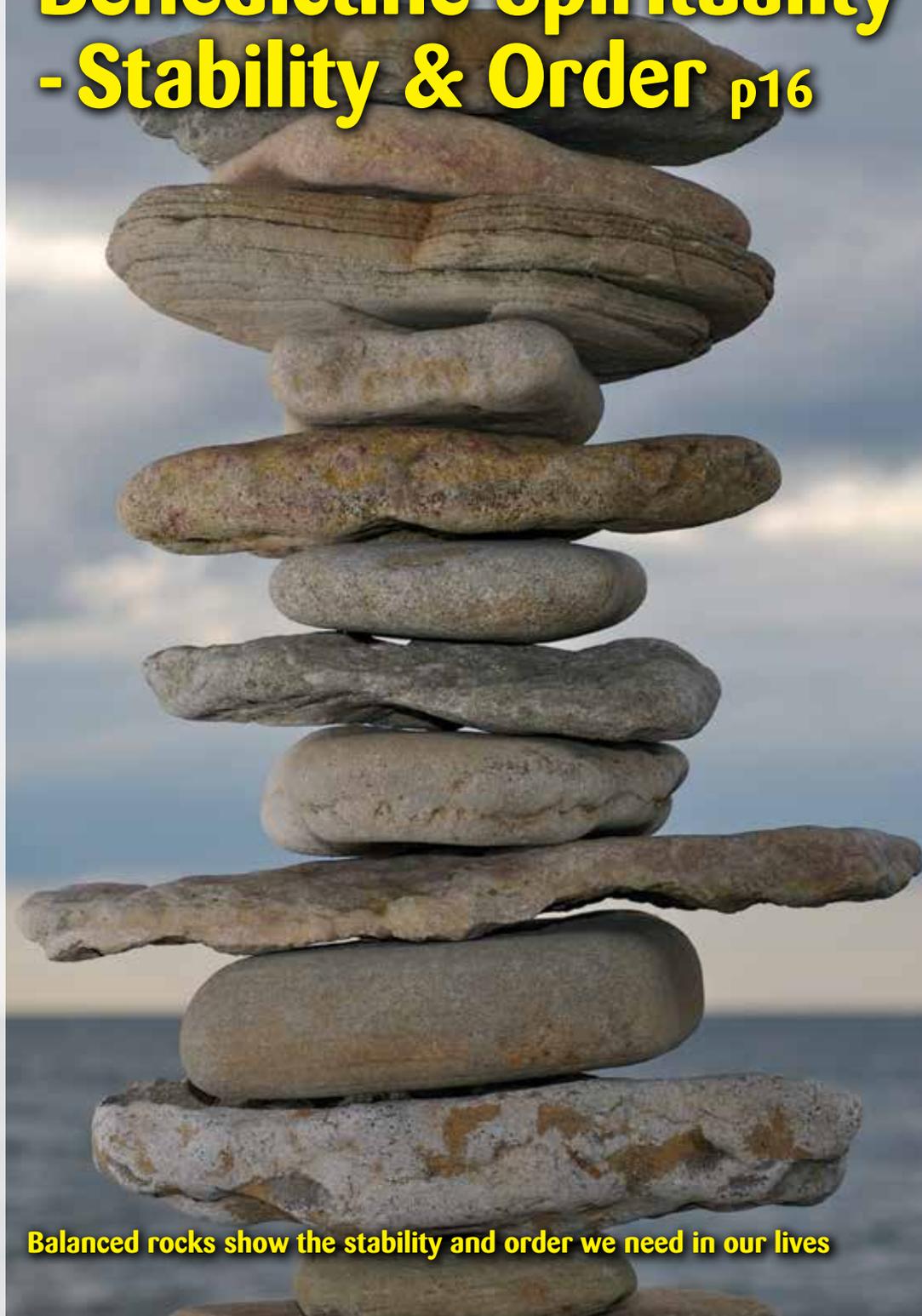
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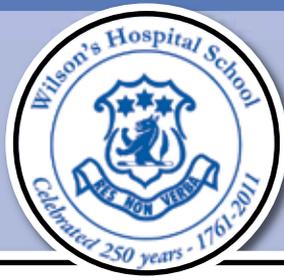


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Balanced rocks show the stability and order we need in our lives



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# The Bishop Writes

## Living Together While in Disagreement and Discernment



General Synod members from our Diocese (together with some young people) will be joining with representatives from the Dioceses of Tuam and Clogher for a conference which is part of the General Synod's listening process on the topic of Human Sexuality in the context of Christian Belief. Dioceses have been grouped intentionally into threes to reflect something of the diversity within the Church of Ireland. The conference will be held on Saturday 15th February 2014 from 10:30 am – 4:30 pm at The McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris, Co. Mayo.

The title of the conference is "Living Together While in Disagreement and Discernment". The focus will be on how Christian people can go forward on the journey of faith, even when there is an absence of consensus in dealing with a range of divisive issues including, but by no means exclusively, human sexuality. After the conference we will be taking up the topic as a Diocese. Ultimately the topic will come back to General Synod but hopefully the decision will be taken calmly and carefully, having thought carefully, prayed constantly and worked hard at dealing with the conflict. It is this latter aspect which will be to the fore in this conference – how do we deal with conflict in a way which opens the possibility of a positive outcome.

48 people from Limerick and Killaloe will attend; General Synod members and additional youth representatives. It is of the utmost importance that those who we have elected as our members of General Synod are present. This is a responsibility which is much more than personal preference for the subject matter, it is a duty which our General Synod members are required to undertake for our Diocese and for the Church of Ireland.

### WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

There are some in our Church who say "the Bible teaches that homosexual acts are contrary to God's will. The Church must not be swept along with popular opinion and social trends". This group predicts that if the Church changes its teaching on this issue, the Church will split.

There are others who say that "the Anglican way is to use scripture, tradition and reason to discern God's will. The Church has changed its mind on the ordination of women, and the practice of slavery." This group don't want to be held back by a 'narrow' view of Scripture.

It is fair to say that both sides would prefer not to be having this debate. But it is also true that the greatest danger in any conflict is that we don't give it the attention it needs.

### WHAT NORMALLY HAPPENS IN A CONFLICT?

When conflict arises there is first the instinct to distance yourself from the opposition. After that we gather with those who hold similar views to ourselves in order to launch a strengthened attack on 'the enemy'. So communication breaks down and the conflict escalates. If the conflict is not facilitated in some way, it is likely that the original disagreement takes second place to the need to retaliate to what the others have just said or done.

I have met some who have said, there is no problem in this Diocese because we all think that the traditional teaching of the Church needs to move on. This is not the case. I have heard very clearly other voices within our Diocese who maintain that sexual intimacy should be confined to a man and a woman within marriage. There are no doubt others who haven't given the matter much thought and still others who are confused and haven't made up their minds.

Elsewhere in the Anglican Communion the battle over this subject has caused serious damage to the Church. Anglicans have taken their dispute to the courts to settle their respective rights to property, money and jobs. This has deepened the division and heightened the pain. Reconciliation is, humanly speaking, impossible for many.

We have to ask, is it possible this could happen in the Church of Ireland? My reply is that within any conflict there is the potential for positive or negative outcomes. Good things can come from conflict if we pay careful attention to maintaining clear, open, trusting and caring relationships with those with whom we disagree. If you are a member of General Synod, I expect you to be at this conference. If you are not a member of General Synod I ask you to engage with the Diocesan follow up process which will be announced later. I ask everyone to pray personally and at Church services for this conference and the Unity of our Church as we ask the Holy Spirit to lead us into Truth.

Yours in Christ  
+Trevor

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In conflict	Our goal
We are often weak, ie confused, fearful, and unsure of what to do.	Is to become less anxious, clearer, more confident, more organised. We need to be empowered.
We are self-absorbed, defensive, suspicious, and incapable of seeing beyond ourselves to the needs and interests of others.	Is to move from self-absorption to recognition - to being more open, attentive, and responsive to the perspective and situation of another

Destructive Conflicts	Constructive Conflicts
People are rigid, inflexible, insistent.	People change, adjust, compromise.
People interact with the intent to protect self and hurt the other.	People interact with an intent to learn instead of an intent to protect.
People become stuck in, and defined by, a particular conflict	People do not stay stuck in a conflict; conflicts move and change
Increased fear, anger and insecurity.	Increased self-esteem in the participants.
"Fight pattern" (desire to destroy the other's argument or their person) or "Flight pattern" (avoidance, resentment).	Increased motivation for positive connection with others.
Parties only look out for their own self-interests	Parties have a relationship focus
Presence of demeaning verbal and non-verbal communication	Presence of empathy.
Primarily competitive and destructive, marked by domination and subordination patterns.	Primarily cooperative, marked by egalitarian relationships.

# Diocesan Calendar

(for updates see Diocesan web site - [www.limerick.anglican.org](http://www.limerick.anglican.org))

## 15th February

Tripartite Conference 'Living Together', The McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris, Co. Mayo. 10.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

U.D.Y.C. Youth Fellowship Group (7.30pm - 9.30 pm), Kilmurry Church Arts & Community Centre, Castletroy, Limerick. 5yr plus secondary school.

## 20TH FEBRUARY

Kilcolman Book Club, St. Michael's Hall, Killorglin.

## 7th - 9th March

U.D.Y.C. Spring Madness with Cork Diocesan Youth Council, Carhue Centre, Bandon, Co. Cork, 13 plus years.

## 15th March

U.D.Y.C. Youth Fellowship Group (7.30pm - 9.30 pm). Kilmurry Church Arts & Community Centre, Castletroy, Limerick. 5yr plus secondary school.

## 21st - 23rd March

U.D.Y.C. West Alive Weekend with Tuam Diocesan Youth Council. Esker Youth Village, Esker, Athenry, Co. Galway. 10- 13 Year Olds

## 25TH MARCH

8 pm Kilcolman Book Club, St. Michael's Hall, Killorglin.

## 19th April

U.D.Y.C. Youth Fellowship Group (7.30pm - 9.30 pm). Kilmurry Church Arts & Community Centre, Castletroy, Limerick. 5yr plus secondary school.

## 26th April

U.D.Y.C. Annual General Meeting @ 3.00 pm, Kilmurry Church Arts & Community Centre, Castletroy, Limerick. All Welcome.

## 17th May

U.D.Y.C. Youth Fellowship Group (7.30pm - 9.30 pm). Kilmurry Church Arts & Community Centre, Castletroy, Limerick. 5yr plus secondary school.

## 30th May- 2nd June

Diocesan Confirmation Weekend. Catherine Mc Cauley House, Spanish Point, Co. Clare. 2013 & 2014 Confirmation Candidates.

# Newslink

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

Newslink also covers Methodist Midlands and Southern District Circuits within the boundaries of the Church of Ireland Diocese. Newslink received a 'Highly Commended' award in the Church of Ireland Communications Competition for diocesan magazines at General Synod 2013.

## EDITOR

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

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

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## Deadlines

The next issue will be for March 2014, published for Sunday 2nd March 2014. **All material must reach the Editor by Friday 14th February 2013 before 6.00pm, by email only to [newslink@limerick.anglican.org](mailto:newslink@limerick.anglican.org), unless otherwise agreed.** Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

## NEWSLINK ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2014

(10 issues, new subscriptions pro rata)

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(Contact Peter Schutz, Ardhu, Castletroy, Co. Limerick, Email: [peterrschutz@gmail.com](mailto:peterrschutz@gmail.com))

## NEWSLINK ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2014

	Rate per annum (Euro)		Rate per single issue (Euro)	
	10 x Colour	10 x B&W	Colour	B&W
Full Page	1193	1069	154	143
Half Page	596	534	77	71
Quarter Page	299	268	39	36
Eighth Page	149	133	19	18

## Letter to the Editor

### HABERDASHERY

Sir,

Following my request in Newslink for unwanted haberdashery a few months ago I am glad to be able to say that I have sent off ten kilos of high quality and useful items to England. They will be taken to Benin and Togo next month. Depending on how easy this was to do, and on their reception, I may possibly repeat the exercise later in the year. I would like to thank everybody who responded so kindly. Their efforts and thoughts are much appreciated by the CARE charity.

Yours, etc.,

Rae Croft, Nenagh Union of Parishes



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# Holy Reading during Lent

by Dean Gary Paulsen

Last summer the clergy met with Bishop Trevor in Adare and had a day together talking about ministry. One of the many things to come out of this was that we would do something as a Diocese during Lent this year. Out of this reflection it became evident that all of us, the clergy and laity, should become more familiar with scripture and prayer. This then led to the bishop having Dom Mark Ephrem Nolan lead us at the annual clergy conference in Dingle on the subject of Lectio Divina or Sacred/Holy Reading.

Some months later we are entering this season of Lent commencing with Ash Wednesday on 5 March this year. It is the intention that during the five weeks after Ash Wednesday and Holy week that groups within parishes will meet to engage in Holy Reading and reflection.

The advantage of this method is that it can be done by anyone regardless of your knowledge or lack of knowledge of scripture or age. It is a method that will be done during Lent in groups and it is also hoped that we will continue this discipline in some form in the days and years ahead.

It would entail meeting in a group ideally of not more than 15. A scripture text will be read. This scripture will be the gospel text for the following Sunday.

This Bible Study method was introduced by the African Delegation to the Lambeth Conference. It is known by both names: "Lambeth" and "African." It is rooted in the ancient method of praying the scriptures, known as Lectio Divina, or "Holy Reading".



Hands on the Bible - Sketch by Albrecht Dürer

1. **Opening Prayer:** *O Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.*
2. One individual reads passages slowly.
3. Each person identifies the word or phrase that catches their attention.
4. Each shares the word or phrase around the group. (3-5 minutes, NO DISCUSSION)
5. Another person reads the passage slowly (from a different translation, if possible.)

6. Each person identifies where this passage touches their life today. (1 minute)
7. Each shares. (3-5 minutes, NO DISCUSSION)
8. Passage is read a third time (another reader and translation, if possible.)
9. Each person names or writes: "From what I've heard and shared, what do I believe God wants me to do or be? Is God inviting me to change in any way? (5 minutes)
10. Each shares their answer. (5-10 minutes, NO DISCUSSION)
11. Each prays from the person on their right, naming what was shared in other steps. (some might be more comfortable if to pray silently) (5 minutes)
12. Close with the international and ecumenical translation of the Lord's Prayer: *Our Father in heaven...*

Even if a person is unable to read but just listen (sometimes our eyesight just goes with age), then they are able to participate. There will be a facilitator for each group to lead, keep time and order and so on. It will be gentle and basic. A deep theological reflection and knowledge is certainly not what this is about. It is simply, 'What is God saying to me in this text?' It does not matter what anyone else thinks or says. We will enjoy that holy space together, in support, love and patience with one another.

It is our hope that everyone will make the time and have the courage to participate this Lenton season. We want Gods spirit to lead us into all truth and it is important that we make the time to listen to what God is saying to all of us, not only clergy.

Training for facilitators will take place in each of our three regions, North, Central and South. It is hoped that Clergy and Readers will attend these sessions which will be about two hours long. Listen out for these announcements if you are neither clergy nor a reader but would like to attend and be a facilitator. We will put that information up on the Diocesan website.

## Church of Ireland

LIMERICK AND KILLALOE  
DIOCESAN BOARD OF MISSION

\*\*\*\*\*

AN INVITATION TO A MISSION EVENING

**TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup>. FEBRUARY 2014**

THE WOODLANDS HOUSE HOTEL ,ADARE

AT: 8.00 P.M.

- **TAILGATING THE GOD OF MISSION IN SOUTH KERRY AND NORTH WEST CORK.**

**BY:- Rev. LAURENCE GRAHAM.**

**(SUPT. MINISTER, CORK SOUTH & KERRY CIRCUIT FOR THE METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND)**

- **REPORTS BY PARISH MISSION REPRESENTATIVES.**

- **A.O.B.**

- **Everyone** (irrespective of Christian denomination) with an interest in mission both within their local community and overseas is very welcome to attend.

- Refreshments will be served both before and after the meeting

# Máirt's Musings – Greening Towns in Killorglin

by Rev Máirt Hanley, Kilcolman Union

Killorglin seems to be quite a lucky town at the moment. We were chosen to take part in a great food waste project in the summer which was shown on RTE over Christmas – you may have seen a well known Lay Preacher, and particularly his eldest son, take centre stage with the featuring of Champ's Supermarket. The latest project that the town is getting involved in is a piloting of the Greening Towns Initiative. This is going to be some what akin to the Green Flags for schools and businesses but covering communities.

The Roman Catholic parish and Church of Ireland parish have been asked to be involved because of our track records of raising green issues. It was decided that the first area we would look at would be Biodiversity, which sits well with our faith. As Christians we are called to love God and therefore to love and care for God's creation – Adam's original job description was more or less as Environmental Officer after all! The idea of the richness and blessing there is in diversity also speaks to me as an Anglican. Luckily we have just the person to represent the parish in this undertaking, so over to Ron Kimber MSc (Environmental Decision Making – OU), Cricket Captain and Environmental agent:

*"On 24th October I attended a Presentation Evening in St. Michael's Church Hall organised by Killorglin Tidy Towns Committee. It was a very informative evening, with speakers explaining a variety of issues including Food Waste, Japanese Knotweed, The River Laune Angling Society and Bee Keeping. Whilst there I was introduced to Rosie Magee, who is responsible for Biodiversity Projects and was invited to join her team.*

## Tree and Plant Identification

*"The following Saturday I took part in a walk along the River Laune that was guided by a professional ecologist (Billy Flynn), who identified the trees and plants that we saw and gave us some facts and also some myths about them. Unfortunately it was Billy's last day in Killorglin before his return home to Monaghan. The following Saturday I attended the Biodiversity Exhibition in The Church on the Hill.*

*This featured work by a local artist and children from our schools that had worked with him. In the afternoon Amanda Saunders and I took a group of parents and children along The Railway Walk to identify and label some of the trees. Amanda and I in turn were required to talk about the various species of trees we encountered. It was amazing how we could use the information that we had learned only the previous week on that walk to inform our group about the trees!*



## Wildflower Plug Plants

*"On Thursday 9th January I went along to a meeting of the Greening Committee, which was hosted by Bridin Mulhall, Greening Communities Co-ordinator of An Taisce. Also in attendance were Rosie Magee, Liz McCarthy and Declan Crowley. Declan reported that he would be getting wild flower plug plants and that there may be some available for planting in small plots around the town. Bridin spoke about The Travel Flag, this included such issues as: Park & Ride, Walk on Wednesdays (WOW) and Cycle on Wednesdays (COW).*

## Nestbox Sites

*"On Saturday 11th January I went out around the town with James Daly of the Biodiversity Committee. Our task was to locate suitable sites for bird nesting boxes. Fortunately we had a lovely sunny morning and were able to identify and map 12 sites for the boxes. There are different types of boxes to accommodate various species of birds. The boxes have already been made by the members of Killorglin Men's Shed, who have done a great job!"*

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## Noye's Fludde

by Benjamin Britten in St Mary's Cathedral

**STOP PRESS!!!** Bishop Trevor writes:

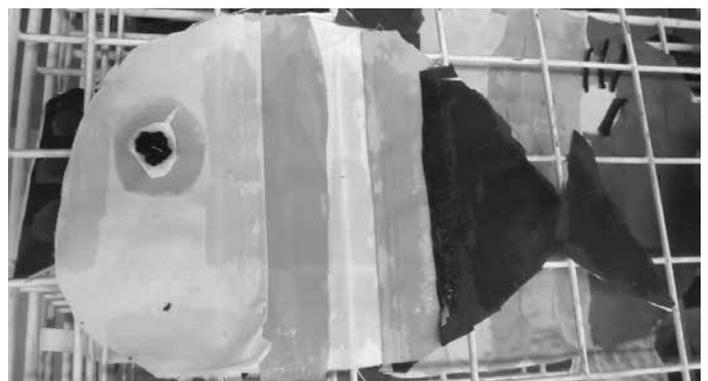
Let me draw your attention to a major event which Peter Barley, St Mary's Cathedral Organist has initiated as St Mary's Cathedral's contribution to Limerick, City of Culture 2014. Do put the dates in your diary now – the production opens on Friday 28th March and runs until Tuesday 1st April. I ask you to support this major undertaking and contribution of our Church to the City of Culture programme.

A rather special production will be taking place in St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick at the end of March. Noye's Fludde (Noah's Flood) by Benjamin Britten re-tells the well-loved story of Noah and his Ark. The libretto is taken from a medieval Chester Miracle Play, and the opera takes us from the initial depiction of God's wrath and the subsequent storm and flood through to the peace of God's covenant with his people at the conclusion, all magically reflected in Britten's masterly score.

Mask and costume making workshops have been taking place in schools in preparation for the production and rehearsals are also underway. This production involves many children from across Limerick, as there are solo roles for children and also a chorus of children playing the parts of the animals! There are also young people playing in the orchestra.

We are very grateful for the generous financial support of Limerick Regeneration, of Limerick City of Culture, the Buckley

Foundation, the All churches Trust and the Trench Trust, together with donations and sponsorship from private donors and businesses.



A fish for Noye's Fludde, made by pupils of St Michael's NS, Limerick

# Girls Friendly Society

## Nenagh

Nenagh girls enjoyed a lovely Christmas party when they joined with Junior Choir and Boys Brigade on the 19th December in St. Mary's School. Many thanks to leaders from all the Parish groups who provide a fun evening for the children. GFS will meet again on Saturday, 15th February in the Croft Hall, St. Mary's No. 2 National School. Branch Enrolment Service will take place on Sunday, 16th February 2014 at 11am in St. Mary's Church.

## Roscrea

Some of the girls went to Annaharvey for a fun afternoon before Christmas. They had pony rides, met Mrs Claus, saw Santa's workshop, met lots of animals, sang their way through a maze and eventually ended up meeting the great man himself. The girls did a great job with the church decoration especially the tree. The poor angel had to be dropped from the balcony to the top of the Christmas tree! We wish all the girls, leaders and parents a very Happy New Year.

## Cloughjordan

We had a thoroughly enjoyable Christmas Craft Day in Nenagh on 30th November last. We made a calendar, Christmas cards, a decoration from an old CD, a small wreath decoration, a reindeer



*Nenagh Girls Cookery Badge work*

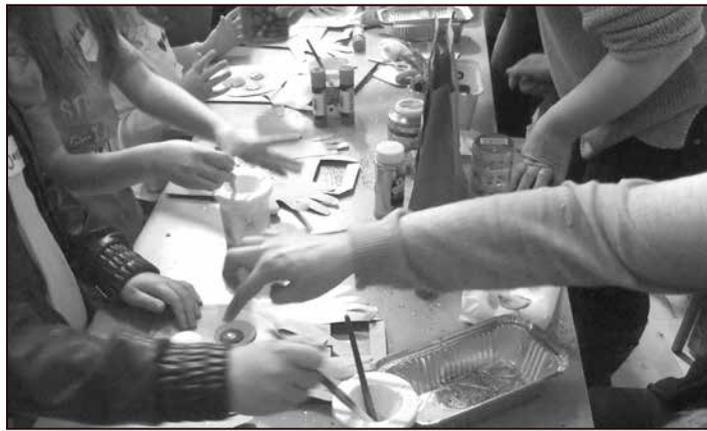
bag and an origami star. We used seasonal foliage and artificial flowers for our flower arrangements. At the end of the afternoon we had a splendid display of our handiwork. We continued our chat during refreshments. Our thanks go to everybody who made the day such a success. Our Christmas Party took place on 4th December. We had games, music, delicious food and a visit from Santa of course. We had great fun and it was a lovely way to end our meetings for 2013. Our Mini-Market has begun and takes place weekly. Proceeds go to Mission money.

## Diocesan Events:

GFS Diocesan Leaders and Helpers Night Out was held on 25th January at Carrig, Ballycommon. Many thanks to all who helped make it such an enjoyable occasion and contributed towards the donation given to the Special Care Baby Unit of Crumlin Children's Hospital.

**22nd March** - all Craft and Bible Study entries must be on display in the Methodist Church Hall, Roscrea by 2pm for judging

**5th April** Diocesan service and Prize giving - hosted by Roscrea Branch at Corbally Church and Hall 2.30pm (Roscrea Group)



*Many hands busy at work*



How can Boys' Brigade work? Let me count the ways...

A few years ago Canon Marie Rowley-Brooke spoke to me about Boys' Brigade and what a good idea it would be in our Parish. I agreed, but didn't take the bait. Something told me even then though that she would get me eventually...At the start of 2012 Canon Marie invited Philip Daley, National Director of BB in the Republic, to give a presentation to any interested parents.

There was enough enthusiasm and it clearly was a great organisation, so we gathered up a few willing leaders, planned an "Open Evening" with games, refreshments and information and from that signed up our first 8 members! It may seem like an impossible task when the only people willing to take on the task have absolutely no professional/organisational experience of children. Even when all you are equipped with is enthusiasm, a bit

of energy and the knowledge that there has to be something for the boys that is active, but not always necessarily sporty then you are ready to start!

Any parish or Union that has boys, but doesn't have a Boys' Brigade Company, is really without something very valuable in my opinion. Our boys just love being together. We have 21 members now including 7 nationalities, 3 schools and 4 churches such diversity! We try to make the activities as varied as possible too from the games we play at our meetings, through Bible subjects Ger, our Captain chats to the boys about, places we visit like the Civil Defence and the Courthouse, the crafts we do...to the people who visit us like the fascinating Nicki Croft with guide dog Wyn and the inspiring fitness coach Kevin Murray.

There is so much resource to draw from, usually free, to entertain, educate, occupy and inspire the boys (including the excellent activity manuals that BB provides). Occasionally we get chance to meet up with other companies at regional events and it's great to see the boys chatting away to their "new friends"!

So what are you waiting for? Go for it - you will be so glad you did!

# Mothers' Union

## THE SUDAN

A message has come from Mary Sumner House asking us to pray for the members in Sudan during the unrest there. There are 53,000 members in the Sudan, mostly in the South, and there is a great concern for their safety and that of their families. Please remember them in your prayers

"We pray for all members, may God be with them in every part of their lives, encouraging them and leading them, sheltering and strengthening them so that they may work to your praise and glory. Amen"

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

### Limerick

Congratulations to all those who organised and participated in a very successful Beetle Drive in Limerick earlier this month. Much fun was had by all.

### Birr

On Thursday 14th November all roads seemed to lead to Dooley's Hotel in Birr for an evening especially for younger people, when nearly 100 turned up, (including more mature members!) to listen to Ms Caroline Ryan, an image consultant, who explained and demonstrated how to dress to suit shape, size and age.

During the break many ladies spoke to Caroline personally while raffle tickets were sold for prizes which had been donated by Roscrea, Birr, Cloughjordan/Borrisokane and Shinrone/Aghancon branches. After the break Caroline spoke on wardrobe management and how to keep in good shape. After the meeting the hotel provided tea/coffee and a lovely selection of sandwiches and the local branches provided tray bakes.

Talking to people after the meeting, the general feeling was that the younger ladies enjoyed very much that kind of evening and asked if we would do something similar again. The evening

was sponsored by funds from the "Mum's in May" fund and was organised by Eileen Armitage and Betty Delahunt from the Action and Outreach Unit and Ina Blackwell DP

### Cloughjordan

Another enjoyable evening was held in Cloughjordan on December 21st. with a sing song. The theme was "Songs from the Shows", with John Armitage on the keyboard. John and his wife also sang a lovely duet. The ladies of the branch provided hot drinks and lovely Christmas treats. Many thanks to Eileen and Angel for organising this evening.

### St. John's Ballinasloe

"Phenomenal" is how Sean Quilty, representing the Athlone Women's Refuge, described the amount of non perishable groceries and other gifts generously contributed by the Parishioners at the Ballinasloe Carol Service. This collection is organised by St. John's Mothers' Union every year, and in addition five beautiful blankets hand knit by Muriel Cobban and edged by Kathleen Newton and Marjorie Salter were also given to the Refuge.

At the Service Mr Quilty spoke movingly of the work of the Refuge and how very much these gifts are appreciated



Presentation of Quilt

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# United Diocesan Youth Council

## Annual Christmas Dinner Dance –

by Ciara Fitzell (Tralee)

The dresses and suits were all out on display at the U.D.Y.C. Annual Dinner Dance in December. I think I speak for everybody when I say; a great night of fun and fellowship was had by all! The evening began with a traditional Christmas dinner. The musical entertainment was provided by the band "The QT" and disco by "DJ Antoin" which continued until the early hours of the morning. I had never attended before and hopefully it was the first of many to come. It was without a doubt a great social event where everyone could catch up with those from around the diocese and beyond. For me, the highlight was the disco. The countdown begins for the 2014 Dinner Dance!

## Music Quiz Sheets –

Beverley Callender (Kilpeacon)

A big thank you to all who bought and sold music quiz sheets, we really appreciate your support. €448 was added to U.D.Y.C. funds. The winners were: First: Sally Fossitt, Co. Limerick, Second: The Cheatley Family, Limerick, Third: Harry Howes, Limerick.

### The answers:

1. Fiddle, 2. French Horn, 3. Tuba, 4. Recorder, 5. Panpipes, 6. Banjo, 7. Reed, 8. Cornet, 9. Viola, 10. Clarion, 11. Washboard, 12. Fife, 13. Harp, 14. Whistle, 15. Maracas, 16. Flute, 17. Mandolin, 18. Trombone, 19. Triangle, 20. Cello, 21. Bassoon, 22. Pipe Organ, 23. Clarinet, 24. Cymbal, 25. Piano.

*Please note that question 7 was excluded on everyone's results in the interests of fairness, as "reed" is part of an instrument, not an instrument.*

## **Junior Christmas Day Trip -**

by John Phair (Banagher Parish)

On 27th December we enjoyed an action packed day on U.D.Y.C. Junior day trip. We started by going to the National Aquatic centre where we met up with a group from Clontarf Parish. Later we travelled to the R.D.S. for 'Santa's Christmas Circus' with the Fossett family. Afterwards we split into groups of four including a leader and set off around the R.D.S. I was curious about one particular stall it had a big sign beside it which said the words "Spanish Churros". A member of my group pointed out to me that he had tried them before and recommended that I try them. So after indulging in the lovely "Spanish Churros" we decided to return to the rest of our group. We then prepared for ice-skating where I attempted to slowly walk around the rink by holding onto the wall beside me. But by the end of the session and thanks to a few of my friends helping me out I managed to learn how to ice-skate around the rink. We then travelled to Kylemore Karting where I recall reaching a speed of 30km per hour going round the circuit. We concluded the day by heading off to Mc Donald's for a much enjoyed meal.

## **Senior Christmas Day Trip -**

by Katie and Emma Phair (Banagher Parish)

On 29th December we enjoyed an action-packed day of fun, faith and fellowship in Dublin on the Senior Day Trip 2013. Each year, we find Christmas a rather quiet time and always find ourselves counting down the days to the annual day trip, where we get the chance to make new friends and meet up with old friends. On arrival in Dublin we met up with a group from Mullingar Union of Parishes, and started off the day participating in an inspirational Fresh Expression of worship in Holy Trinity Church, Rathmines. There we enjoyed an enlightening talk by Scott Evans. Very refreshed and with a new outlook on life for the New Year, we set off for Funderland at the RDS. Here we all got a bit carried away with our unlimited wrist bands for the rides!

We then went on to try our luck at ice skating which for some proved to be successful although we were was satisfied to have avoided falling! Ice skating was followed by a much appreciated meal at Mc Donald's. And what better way to round off the day than with a trip to Kylemore Karting. We arrived home just after midnight satisfied and a bit on the tired side. What a great way to brighten up the Christmas holidays and to finish an awesome year.

## **Upcoming Events**

### **International Exchange trip to Germany**

We are delighted to report that we now have our full quota of participants with deposits paid for our trip to Germany next summer.

### **Spring Madness Weekend with Cork Diocesan Youth Council**

Friday 7th March – Sunday 9th March 2014

Carhue, Bandon, Co. Cork

13 + years

Return Transport from/to Roscrea- Moneygall – Nenagh – Limerick – Mallow – Cork

Cost from €80 plus €20 for return transport if required.

Spring Madness is a weekend for teenagers who seek an opportunity to renew many of the friendships from Anois, Summer Madness and many other youth events, and an opportunity to make new friends for this year's Summer Madness and Anois.

Rev. Sarah Marry, curate at Douglas Union of Parishes will be speaker at our worship times throughout the weekend.

Of course some fabulous activities will also be on offer

throughout the weekend – Kartworld in Watergrasshill ([www.kartworld.ie](http://www.kartworld.ie)) for a mix of activities including Karting, Archery, Laser Combat, Sumo Wrestling, Puzzle Zone & Multi Ski Walker. On site activities will include indoor soccer and uni- hoc, giant games & table tennis, as well as games, talent show, disco and some chill time etc.

**Please note that the closing date for bookings is strictly Friday 28th February 2014.**

### **West Alive Weekend with Tuam Diocesan Youth Council**

Friday 21st March – Sunday 23rd March 2014

Esker Youth Village, Esker, Athenry, Co. Galway

10- 13 years

Return Transport from/to Limerick – Nenagh- Moneygall- Roscrea- Birr

Cost from €80 plus €20 for return transport if required.

The programme will include worship ; games; walks; trip to Galway; Swimming at Leisureland; Bowling and Climbing Wall, Inflatable slides at City Limits Galway; Supermac's; Disco; Talent Show and lots more. We are delighted that Amy McCrea from Church of Ireland Youth Department has agreed to be our worship speaker for the weekend and her plan is to use the "What Would Jesus Do" (W.W.J.D.) programme . Please note that the closing date for bookings is strictly Friday 14th March 2014.

Annual General Meeting

**The AGM of the United Diocesan Youth Council of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfert will take place on Saturday 26th April 2014 in Kilmurry Church Community & Arts Centre, Castletroy, Limerick.** The meeting will begin with the Eucharist at 3 p.m. in thanksgiving to God for the year of ministry that is past, and in worshipful preparation for the year ahead, in communion with Christ and one another. All are welcome to attend this meeting, and it would be great to see as many people from around the United Dioceses who are interested to attend, participate, and support the Youth Council and our young people for the valuable role they play in the life and mission of the Diocese. Feel free to contact me for more information or with any questions.

### **Youth Ministry**

I would also like to mention that anyone who would like to know about opportunities for themselves, or young people they know, to share more fully in the life of their local Church, or indeed, who would just like to ask some questions or who need some encouragement, do not hesitate to contact me at the below address.

Further information about any UDYC activities can be got from Edward (087) 2907553 or myself, on our website (<http://udyc.ie/>) and on our UDYC facebook page.

Until next month,

Damian

Mobile: 087 / 2274663

Email: [05shortend@gmail.com](mailto:05shortend@gmail.com)

# SCHOOL NEWS

## St. John's National School, Shannon

St. John's NS in Shannon is officially the smartest school in Co. Clare! That's according to a recent quiz run by Clare FM in conjunction with Avonmore. Breakfast Show presenter, Ciara Revins, travelled throughout the county, challenging pupils to complete a ten-question quiz in 90 seconds and our team, St. John's United, was the only team to score an impressive 10/10! Pupils Arainn Daley, Kyra Collins, Owen Meehan and Aaron Duggan are no strangers to quiz success as three of the four team members recently achieved first place in the science quiz held in Shannon to mark Science Week.

We travelled to Clare FM HQ in Ennis just before Christmas to receive our prize. Pictured below are the winning team, their supporters and Ciara Revins of Clare FM.



St John's Quiz Champions

In other news, St. John's NS recently welcomed the Liam McCarthy cup to the school. We are great supporters of the Clare Senior Hurling team and were delighted to meet players Aaron Cunningham and Podge Collins. Backroom staff member, Michael Collins, also attended. The pupils sang a rousing rendition of "We're On the Road to Croke" for all assembled. Parents, teachers and pupils alike were delighted to meet the players and staff and were eager to get their hands on the coveted trophy!



Liam McCarthy in class

## St. Nicholas' National School, Adare

A Happy New Year to everyone! 2014 is a very special year for St. Nicholas' N.S. as we celebrate our 200th birthday. We plan to have a number of events during the year to celebrate this special birthday. We ended 2013 with lots of activities in school. The pupils spent an evening carol-singing in the Crescent Shopping Centre and we also performed at the Live Crib in Adare. Although it was a very wet afternoon crowds of people still came along to this wonderful event. Pupils also sang "The Zither Carol" at the Carol Service in St. Nicholas' Church on Sunday 22nd December.

One of the highlights of the school year is our Christmas party when each classroom puts on a play or musical. This year families and friends were entertained by three great mini-productions, with wonderful performances from all the pupils. Many thanks to all the teachers for their hard work in preparing the pupils for the stage and to Michael Ramendik who filmed the event. The Parents' Association Committee prepared and served the lovely refreshments and Santa managed to make an appearance despite the terrible wind and rain. He got a rousing Adare welcome and he didn't disappoint the children as he brought a present for everyone.

School re-opened on Monday 6th January and already we are preparing for some upcoming events. The senior pupils will take part in a spikeball tournament in Villiers on January 29th and our annual Prize Day will be held in the school hall on Friday 7th February. The Parents' Association will host a Fashion Show in the Dunraven Arms Hotel on the 27th February and we look forward to seeing some familiar faces on the catwalk! The school will hold an open afternoon/evening on Tuesday 25th February. The afternoon session will take place at 3.30pm and the evening session will begin at 8.00pm. Enrolment forms and school booklets are available from the school secretary.

Congratulations to the pupils who participated in M.S. Readathon this year and raised some money for this worthy charity.

## St Mary's National School, Nenagh

The year's at the spring  
and day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The Hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
the snail's on the thorn;  
God in His Heaven -  
All's right with the world!  
*Robert Browning*

Céad Míle Fáilte romhaimh air ais to all of our school community after the Christmas Holidays. We look forward to a happy and productive 2014. We returned to school on 6th January - just in time to catch the first green shoots of our crocus crop peeping through the soil. Spring is in the air and the signs of new growth are everywhere.

The ancient Roman poet Juvenal famously quoted "orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano".... a sound mind in a healthy body. Our school coaching programme aims to offer our pupils a broad range of physical activities and skills development. To this end, we begin the year with Gymnastics in January and Dance in February. A special warm welcome to Mrs Quin, who returns to us after her Maternity Leave. We are very fortunate to have a committed and hard-working Parent's Council. Many thanks to the Council for their fundraising drive in December. They packed groceries in Dunnes Stores.

The Council also ran a raffle on the day of the Christmas concert. Well done to all involved! Wishing all the members of our school and church communities a very Happy New Year, Athbhliain Faoi Mhaise Daoibh go léir!

## St Michael's National School, Limerick

The hard-earned Cake Sale money was very quickly put to good use to help the three-day film-making workshop. Fifth and Sixth Classes were privileged to work alongside people working in the industry. The three days culminated in each group producing a short five-minute film, using every day experiences such as a surprise birthday party, top-of-the-class rivalry and teenagers' idea of house-minding going awry!

St Michael's NS, as always, remembered those less well-off and raised €335 from the Carol Service collection and €105 from carol-singing in the Milk Market. This was handed over to Novas Initiatives who provides services to single adults, families and children who are disadvantaged and socially excluded, primarily those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

We had a wonderful response to the collection of old and unwanted clothes, shoes and soft toys, co-ordinated by Joanne Conlon from the PTA. Over €208 was raised for the school. A disappointing day was spent bag-packing at Tesco's this year. Hopefully next year will be better.

We are delighted to welcome Ian O'Brien as a visiting Resource Teacher to our school. His male presence is greatly appreciated as a change from the all-female staff. We wish our Principal, Rosalind Stevenson well as she recuperates from her operation. We are very fortunate to have Sinéad Franklin return to us to deputise in her absence. Sinéad was teaching in the school last year, but sadly as a result of losing our EAL post, she had to move on.

Fifth and Sixth Classes have been fortunate to be involved in the design and production of some of the costumes for the Opera Project, Noye's Fludde, to be held in St Mary's Cathedral in March, as part of Limerick City of Culture 2014 (see photo pg5). The fabric fish are now complete and the pupils are looking forward to putting their creativity into working on masks. It has been wonderful to have the expertise of Emma Fisher to guide and inspire them. Some of the children auditioned for solo and chorus singing places. So far Seán Ngué Awane has been successful in securing a place - congratulations!

## St. Cronan's National School, Roscrea,

January 2014 has proved to be a busy start to the New Year. St. Cronan's National School will be celebrating 40 years in Rosemount, Roscrea. Preparations are well under way and will take place on the 1st & 2nd February. On Saturday 1st February the Parents' Association are organising a Hot Buffet and Dance in the County Arms Hotel in Birr, including a Mini Auction and Prizes on the night. This promises to be a fantastic night with family, friends and neighbours. We look forward to the presence of past pupils from St. Cronan's National School who attended during the last 40 years. On Sunday 2nd February the present pupils will lead a Church Service at 2.30 pm in St. Cronan's Church followed by refreshments in the school. All are welcome to attend. Our sincere thanks to the Parents' Association and all the parents who are helping to make this 40th Anniversary a wonderful occasion.

### UP COMING EVENTS.

#### February.

Hockey. George Blackwell will coach hockey for 4 weeks.  
Bag2school: If you have any unwanted Adult's /Children's Clothing, Bedding, Soft Toys, Paired Shoes, Hats, Belts and Handbags we would appreciate if you left them into our school from

Monday 3rd – 5th February for collection on 6th February.

#### March

Tennis; Gail O'Meara will coach tennis lessons for 6weeks  
Pancake Tuesday Tuesday 4th March, launching our Lenten Project.

## Cloughjordan National School

Congratulations to Zoe Whelan, Josh Caplice and Alex Armitage who each won prizes from Borriskane Credit Union in the Credit Union Poster Competition 2013. Thank you very much to the Credit Union for the very generous prizes, and also for the sweets which were enjoyed by all pupils in school before Christmas.

It was wonderful to see such a large congregation at our school Carol Service in St. Kieran's Church on 18th December. Well done to everybody who took part in the service and thank you for the generous offertory of €664 on the night, in aid of the autistic unit at Borriskane Community College. This money was presented to members of Borriskane Community College Parents Association at a special assembly in school.

We hope that Anna and Maro Spangenberg have safely returned to live in Germany by now and wish them every happiness for the future. We hope that they will keep in touch and look forward to seeing them again, briefly, in a few weeks. We were delighted to welcome Eve O'Connor to Senior Infants last month and hope that she, and her parents, will be very happy as part of our school community.

Third - Sixth Classes are continuing their preparations for participating in the CBOI Peace Proms Concert when school re-opens. They will perform along with over 800 children from twenty national schools in the University of Limerick on Sat 8th February at 2pm. Tickets for the concert are open to all and available on [www.peaceproms.com](http://www.peaceproms.com) or from Savins music shop in Limerick. The Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland (CBOI) was established in 1995 as a peace initiative and is now composed of 120 young people from all over Ireland – north and south. The CBOI is internationally recognised as one of Ireland's flagship peace initiatives and has become one of the most acclaimed youth orchestras that Ireland has ever produced. This promises to be an occasion not to be missed.

Enrolment application forms for September 2014 enrolment in Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. are now available from the school. If you would like an application form please contact the school on 0505 42318 or email: [principal.cloughjordan.no1.ns@gmail.com](mailto:principal.cloughjordan.no1.ns@gmail.com)

Thank you very much to everybody who supported the PTA's "Occupational Surnames Quiz". Once again, we are very grateful to Mrs. Miriam Henderson for setting the quiz. The prize winners and answers will be in next month's edition of Newslink.



Presentation to Borriskane Community College.

## Kiltallagh National School, Castlemaine

A very Happy New Year to Newslink readers throughout the Diocese from all in Kiltallagh N.S. We have all settled back into school life in Kiltallagh N.S. after a wonderful Christmas Break.

The children of the senior room are eagerly awaiting their first performance in the up-coming Peace Proms Production at the INEC, in Killarney, on February 9th 2014 and are busy putting the finishing touches to their choral repertoire. Peace Proms is a unique and ambitious musical education programme when 7,500 children from 250 schools all over Ireland participate annually.

Peace Proms is a musical and unique celebration and provides a unique platform for young people to showcase their talent while promoting peace, unity and tolerance through music.

The aim of the programme is to educate, entertain and engage children and young pupils in music and to enrich their lives with musical experiences and performances and by providing a stimulating music programme that nurtures and advances their musical, social and cultural development. We are all looking forward with anticipation to this up-coming concert as it promises to be a most wonderful experience for both pupils and parents alike.

Bliain nua faoi shéan agus faoi mhaise díbh go léir ó Scoil Cill Tullaigh.



*Kiltallagh students taking part in the Peace Proms*

## Oxmantown National School, Birr

### ART COMPETITION

Congratulations to Jessica Rusu and to her teacher Mrs. Hamilton on winning a poster competition which was organised by Offaly County Council to promote the conservation of water. Jessica's poster was included in a calendar published by the Council and she got vouchers for art and craft materials.

### NATIVITY PLAY

We produced a Nativity Play at St. Brendan's Church Birr this December, it is as always very difficult to find a role for everyone which is why our Holy Family were visited by thirty shepherds and they in turn had been visited by thirty of the most angelic angels. Thanks to Archdeacon Carney for organising the heating for rehearsals and to Cailin Keavney for doing the make up for the principal characters and to Mrs. Hodgins for playing the organ to accompany our singing.

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

We held our annual Christmas party on the last day of term, thanks to the parents for the usual plentiful supply of party food and to Santa for paying his visit too. The teachers hope that the children will have lovely memories of their school parties.

### SCHOOL SAFE CYCLING INITIATIVE

The pupils from second to sixth class took part in the safe cycling initiative in January, a facilitator brought bikes and helmets to the school so each child got to improve their cycling skills and to be trained in road safety. Half of the cost of this project is being provided by the County Council.

### NEW INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARD

We are very grateful to the members of Birr Lions Club for purchasing an interactive whiteboard for the new classroom.

### 'MADNESS' THE SHOW

The fifth and sixth class pupils went to 'Madness' the musical in November which was staged by Birr Community School it was a fun night and congratulations to Wren Higgins on winning a prize for her poster to advertise the show. The junior classes went to a Christmas show at Oxmantown Theatre and really enjoyed it.



*Smiling Shepherds*



*Winning poster picture!*

## Rathkeale No.2 National School

Christmas celebrations got off to a great start in Holy Trinity Church, Rathkeale on Wednesday 18th December. This year the pupils performed a unique interpretation of Cindrella, written and directed by Yasmin O'Grady. Everybody acted their part so well and sang their hearts out during the performance. A short musical interlude followed the pantomime, directed by our music teacher, Gerry Cantillon. Again everybody took part in this wonderful, colourful concert. We extend our thanks to both Yasmin and Gerry for all their work in preparing the children for the concert. School reopened on Monday 6th January and everybody is now back into the swing of things. We're all looking forward to the recommencement of swimming lessons in Askeaton Pool in February. The swimming lessons are always a highlight of the school year.

Following on from their "Walkability Study", the Green School

Committee are thinking about road safety and how improvements could be made in Rathkeale to make the streets safer for pedestrians. Our pupils organised a Pyjama Day to raise funds for Fields of Life. In total they raised enough to purchase a mosquito net, four hens and two pigs from the Fields of Life Gifts for Life programme.



## Villiers School

### BOYS HOCKEY

As we now approach the business end of the season, we wish all our boys teams the best of luck in their upcoming cup matches. Our seniors play Ashton School away, our juniors play Bandon Grammar away, our minors play Middleton College away and finally our 1st years play Newtown School.

Recent matches have seen our senior B's win 3-1 v Kilkenny College, and our minors draw 1-1 with Kilkenny. Our seniors had two cup warm-up games in Dublin v King's Hospital School and Wesley College, with two draws. Commendable results considering Wesley were All-Ireland Schools finalists again this year.

Congratulations to David Cardy on his selection to represent Munster at u21 level and Andrew Tutty who continues to excel and has reached the last twenty four of the Irish under 16 panel.

### BOYS RUGBY

Congratulations to past pupil Toby Ademakin who recently represented Munster at u19 level v Australia in Thomond Park.

Our seniors recently lost in the second round of the King Cup. Our juniors are through to the Mungret Shield semi-final v Bandon Grammar and the King Cup quarter final v Tralee.

Our 1st and 2nd yrs continue to be involved in friendlies and blitzes. Congratulations to our 1st yrs, who beat both Clements and Munchins in their most recent blitz.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TRIP

On February 8th a group of Villiers International Students will visit Galway as part of an Irish Cultural Weekend. Students will have an opportunity to visit "The City of the Tribes," as well as sampling some traditional Irish cuisine. The highlight of the trip is will be to An Taidhbhearc for a production of Ann Henning Jocelyn's "Only Our Own." The play follows one nation's journey from a highly polarized society after the War of Independence to a modern integrated one, ready at last to rise above age-old bitter divisions. Students may also have the opportunity to meet with the playwright. The weekend will finish with a visit to Coole Park, a critical landmark in the history of Irish literature and culture.

### TY DRAMA

'The Dreamers' is this year's theatrical extravaganza from Villiers School. Known for their innovative and unusual shows over the years, this year will be no different. The show boasts a cast of over 90 with all students getting a wonderful chance to experience theatre making in all of its components, quite literally from page to stage. The students will be involved in set and prop making, sound and light operation, singing and dancing as well as massive ensemble movement and acting pieces which will characterise this show. 'The Dreamers' is set to be a visually arresting show in a genre that has never hit Limerick before - Steam Punk. Watch press for more details - Wednesday and Thursday, February 12th and 13th

at the Millennium Theatre, LIT, directed by Ann Blake and Niamh Bowen. Tickets available from school reception.

### VILLIERS BT YOUNG SCIENTIST TRIP

Villiers Form 2 students visited the BT Young Scientist Exhibition. At the exhibition, students visited the special acts including; The World of Robots, the Science Museum and Space Exploration. They saw all the different projects on display ranging from Social Sciences to Technology and a lot of fun was had visiting companies who had games and activities on display. The students are preparing to enter into the local Science Exhibition "Scifest" soon and visiting the BT Young Scientist has inspired them and given them plenty of ideas of their projects.

### NEWS FROM THE VILLIERS SANCTUARY

The excitement of Christmas is but a distant memory as we settle into a new year here at Villiers. A year full of promise, hope and for the exam students a certain amount of understandable trepidation. Even though this Christmas was tinged with some sadness as we lost some friends and loved ones, as I write this however I cannot help but be filled with positivity for all that the future holds. This of course is down to the fact that together with the Community Group I went to the Cycle Against Suicide Student Leader Congress in the RDS in Dublin. A magnificent occasion, where we listened to Jim Breen speak out and encourage us to take the message of 'it's okay to not feel okay and it's absolutely okay to ask for help'.

We read the story of the call of Peter to become a fisher of men in the gospel of Matthew at assembly, and it struck me just how blessed we all were, to see that response to the call from God by Jim Breen, when he decided to start the campaign to remove the stigma that is attached to mental health issues. There is something quite extraordinary about witnessing 4000 young people all pledging to bring back that message to their schools, communities and homes and to be the encourager for others who just may need the strength to ask for help.

We all certainly had a wonderful time and I want to take this opportunity to thank all the students for everything that they do in Villiers - projects like our thought for the week posters, and our random acts of kindness involving lollipops and free hugs! A big thank you also to Miss Ciara Downey who came with us to offer her help and support.

It is the small things that we all can do that can make such an amazing difference to someone. We try here at Villiers to get everyone in our community to take on the role of the Good Samaritan and there is no question that our Community group do just that!

Now it's up to the rest of us to rise and respond to that call to go out and make the world a better place for all!

God bless!!

Chaplain Jackie McNair

# New Archdeacon & Canons Installed

Report by Joc Sanders, Newslink Editor

Sunday 19th January saw the installation of Susan Watterson as Archdeacon of Limerick and Ardfert, and new canons of the joint chapters of the Cathedral churches of St. Flannan's Killaloe and St. Mary's Limerick: Marie Rowley-Brooke as Treasurer, George Flynn as Canon of Inniscattery and Michael Johnston as Canon of St Munchin's & Tulloh. The ceremony took place in St. Mary's Cathedral Limerick in the context of a magnificent Sung Evensong. The choir sang beautifully, conducted by Peter Barley of St Mary's, and the organ was played by Trevor Selby of St. Flannan's.

Bishop Trevor's fine sermon was addressed to all in the United Dioceses, not just to those present in St Mary's Cathedral. He invites us to make a new beginning and encourages us to work together with other parishes. Only together can we meet the huge challenge of diminishing numbers, to become Churches which attract new members, Churches to which we can invite others to 'Come and See' what true Christian community is about.

Because it is important that we should all have the opportunity to reflect on his words, which build on his 'Vision, Ministry & Mission' initiative, it is included in the side box. Do take the time to read it!



The newly installed (l-r): Canon Michael Johnston, Canon Marie Rowley-Brooke, Bishop Trevor Williams, Canon George Flynn, Archdeacon Sue Watterson



The Chapter is now up to full strength

## Come & See - Together we Can!

Extracts from Bishop Trevor's sermon at the Installation of Canons



We are here to support and pray for those who are appointed and installed to new ministries. With existing members of the Chapter they are appointed to be leaders among us as we work together to be the Church God has called us to be.

### COME AND SEE

Three words leap out from the Gospel reading we have just heard (John 1:43-51): "Come and See", as Philip said to Nathanael.

The Limerick City of Culture is a great opportunity for people to Come and See Limerick. In a programme which will both surprise and delight, Limerick will be seen for what it is: a hub of creativity, alive with the arts, rich in heritage and history, with communities working positively for the common good in celebrating all that is good in life. This is the Limerick you don't read about in the Newspapers very often. Come and See!

"Come and See" also helps us to understand what the Church is about. Just as the City of Culture will help you meet the real Limerick, so if you Come and See the Church you will find out what Christian faith is all about.

Essentially Churches are Meeting places. It is so important to meet together as parishioners. But what transforms Churches into something very different from any other club or group we belong to is this: in Church we meet with Jesus. At our baptism each one of us meets with Jesus and we believe our lives are turned around by the Good News of God's love for us and for the whole world. And like Philip and every other member of the Church we invite others to "Come and See".

As a Christian community we are a welcoming community, caring for each other, but caring for the stranger even more. Loving one another, but loving the outcast, the oppressed, the burdened, the needy even more. We are Jesus people. And when people come and see, as they visit our churches, they should see Jesus, just as Nathaniel did when he met Jesus for the first time.

### CHANGE OR PERISH

I have been with you for almost six year now as your Bishop. I have encountered so many great, loyal, Church of Ireland people, with deep personal Christian faith. But I also know we are struggling. Our time and energy are consumed looking after so many buildings, with so few people, let alone supporting the Diocese and the Church of Ireland as a whole. And for some, it's all too much. The question we have to ask ourselves is this: How long can this go on? I am serious when I say, 'unless we change, I fear we will perish'.

What can be done? One approach would be to reduce the w number of buildings we have to look after. That has been tried and some people argue there is much more to do. I am not one of them. Closing Churches is not something I will be doing. Why? Because there is an alternative, which is far better.

## OUR CONGREGATIONS CAN GROW

... if we set our mind to it, if we ask prayerfully how our churches can become places to invite people to Come and See, places where people who visit meet a caring community in the way that Jesus cared. You see I believe the most powerful energy in our world is the love of God - when people engage with it, it transforms the devastation of Good Friday into the celebration of Easter Morning.

In one of our parishes in Kerry there is a Soup Kitchen where free meals are available for anybody. This parish is working together with local community groups, hotels and volunteers from other churches to run the Soup Kitchen week by week - a clear example of the kind of caring Jesus had for the needy of his day. Come and See. No parish could do this on its own, but working together, you know we could. Let's dream the dream of what we can do together!

Here at St Mary's Cathedral in the year of Limerick City of Culture, Peter Barley has taken the initiative to stage a production of Benjamin Britten's Noye's Fludde, in collaboration with the schools in the city. It is a massive undertaking and is a huge contribution from our Cathedral and its members to the City of Culture programme

In this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Churches in Birr have agreed to work together, doing everything together apart from what sincere conscience would prevent. That is amazing. What is more is that they have found funding to employ a post graduate research student in ecumenism, to make sure that they do it. I and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Killaloe have both approved, endorsed and encouraged this exciting development. Working together amazing things are possible!

## CHALLENGE

Over the past number of years, at clergy conferences and parish consultations we have been thinking about parishes working together in our Diocese. We have formed three areas of our Diocese, North, Centre and South, to make working together more manageable. The Northern Area will be led by Archdeacon Wayne Carney, the Southern Area by Archdeacon Susan Watterson and the Central Area by the Dean Sandra Pragnell and Dean Gary Paulsen.

This will demand of us all a new commitment - not only to the church we attend, but to the other Churches in our parish, and then to the Diocesan Area in which we are placed. I hear from some clergy that this or that congregation 'won't travel', not even to special events in their own Group or Union. This attitude spells death to me. We must broaden our vision and our commitment if we are to be the body of Christ together, interdependent, supporting one another. Not divided between 'us' and 'them'.

Already in the Southern area there are plans to work together to have a Diocesan Area Youth Event every month to explore ministry among toddlers and their parents. No one parish could do this. But together they can. See what I mean?

And our Cathedrals, where do they fit in? They are mother Churches, nurturing the spiritual life of the Dioceses, to which all can Come and See what it means to be the body of Christ. Members of the Chapter link our parish communities to their mother Church. The two Deans have this vision for our Cathedrals: to be centres of spiritual life where people can Come and See Jesus. Again this is a new commitment but the possibilities are really exciting.

## TOGETHER WE CAN

So this service of installation is an invitation to a new beginning. I and your clergy will be encouraging you as parishioners to think outside the box of your Church building, to engage with other parishes around you, to support them as they support you in joint projects and initiatives. To adopt the motto "Together we can"

We can meet the huge challenge of diminishing numbers, threatening eventual closure of churches. But to do so we must work together to become Churches which attract new members, Churches to which we can invite others to Come and See what true Christian community is about: "Come with us to Church to see the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ".

May our Cathedrals be such places, may our parish churches be such places, where people may Come and See Jesus, as Nathanael did.

# God loves me!



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# Benedictine Spirituality - Stability & Order

The 4th of a series of 5 articles by Rev Gary Paulsen

Benedict speaks of *Stabilitas* – stability – in his rule for monks. This was his medicine for restlessness. We live in a restless time when people are forced to move more often and establish themselves each time in new environments, but Benedict says that fixed points are a blessing. Monasteries which remain in the same place for centuries, and communities that stay together for life, are a place of security for many. There is a set pattern and everyone knows when evening prayer and other offices will be.

Many people have developed a sense of the importance of being able to rely on a solid community. This is so true I believe of children. They need to grow up in a stable environment. If our children can have such an environment they will grow up to be whole adults.

In modern times we see people unable to commit. People are afraid to tie themselves down in marriage; they want to try it out first. People hesitate to choose a profession, they want to leave their options open. And so they go on living indecisively without any solid ties. But instead of the free life they hoped for, they reap rootlessness, insecurity and fear of living. There are certainly many causes for this fear of commitment. One is the lifestyle that is increasingly demanded of people today; flexibility on the job, your profession and so on.

It is said that depression is more frequent in modern times as the soul protests this flexibility – the soul senses this need for solid roots and it needs stability in order to grow. So maybe Benedict's *Stabilitas* can be like medicine for people who feel lost in these restless times. In some way every one needs commitment, but this commitment will only come if you have sufficient strength and trust in yourself. But when a community of people has committed themselves closely together, then they can bear each other's weaknesses, and give confidence to each other to take their own step forward, whether in a family, church, or monastery.

Our churches are places for communities to meet, pray, share joys and sorrows, celebrate, birth and mourn in death. There was a time when the church and its buildings and people were the center of community life. Our human need is to feel at home, to feel earthed, to somehow know that we belong. There are so many things that demand our attention and we can feel quite bewildered rushing from one thing to another.

## STABILITY

Yet if we know we are committed to a particular community or situation it is in that community that we need to persevere. Stability is more than just an enclosure or space and it is more than geographical. Stability is also commitment to situations and persons. And stability is then achieved through perseverance and holding on even under severe strain without trying to escape. Matthew 10, 'he who endures to the end will be saved'.

Stability in the sense of some geographical space is unattainable and irrelevant; stability in terms of some internal space is attainable. And if we are aware of God's presence everywhere we then do not have to seek God everywhere. Because if I can't find God where I am then I will never find God. This is the heart of stability: knowing that God is everywhere, being aware of the presence of God.

So instead of constantly running away; we should stick it out where we find ourselves, in our context and with our people. This in no way says there are not situations that you just have to get out of for your own well-being. This might be abuse or violence to name a few of many that would require a move. We persevere and hold onto the certainty of God. People run away from their situations and have

no perseverance of seeing something through. When the going gets tough the tough gets going.

## ORDER

A further element of Benedictine life is order. The order of the days that bring clear structure into the course of daily life, which then divides the day into times of prayer, work, silence, speech, solitude and so on. There is a right time for everything. The right time for prayer is just as important as the right time for work. The ordering of the day brings about peace in our lives and our homes.

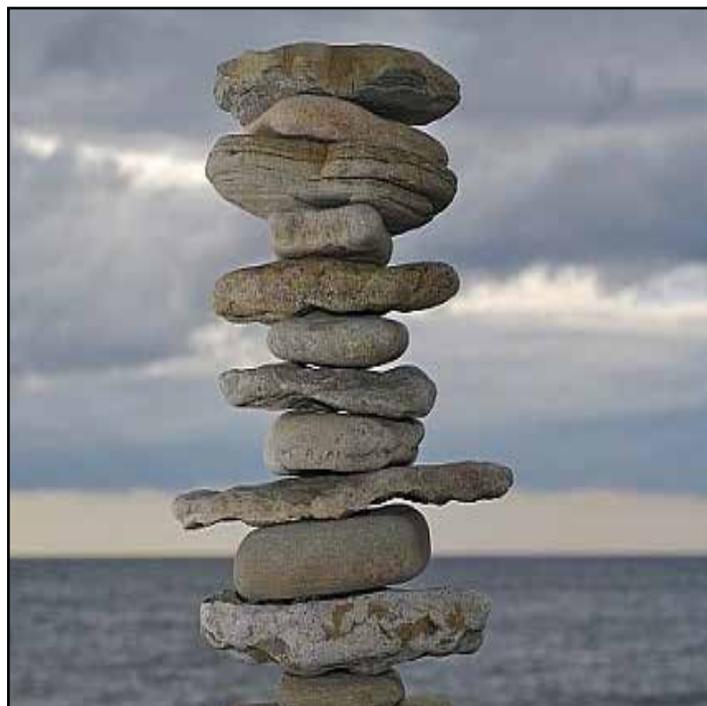
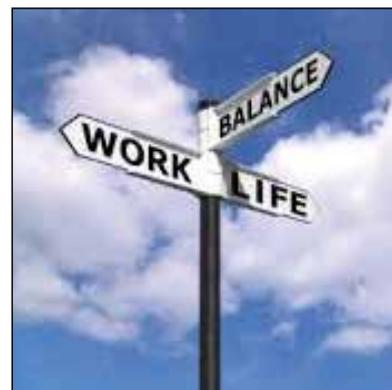
When everything is too hectic, when you cannot rely on anything you become apathetic. And you have no more motivation to give yourself to your work, your family, your church. You become depressed. Order, for Benedict, brings about healing because if you subject yourself to this order you will be ruled by it internally and find wholeness. A clear order makes possible a clear life.

## BALANCE

Benedict says this is beyond military drill and stiff principles, but helps us beyond responding to our moods but subjecting the moods to a self determined order. So in order you find balance. You stop work because that time allocated is done. Now it is time for prayer. Then for family. Then for chores. Then for relaxing. And so on.

So you create the space to fit in everything and to do this requires discipline. To switch off from work and focus on your family when it is time for family.

I always saying jokingly, but also quite seriously, don't disturb me on a Friday as it is my Sabbath. I take the day off from routine of ministry. Time for myself. Everyone always has crises, they think theirs is the only crises in the world, and they expect me to drop everything. This might sound a hard approach but it is vital to me remaining whole, or I will become depressed. The same in your situation. We need to have a balance brought about by leading



ordered lives. Prayer is just as important as work, as your family and so on. Order your life. And yes there are always times you have to make exceptions, as long as this does not become the norm.

We serve a God of order who brought creation out of chaos. We know the sun rises in the morning and sets at night, we are aware of the seasons. We see a steady pattern in creation. Modern life will kill you if you don't bring about stability and order. Benedict says we need to give form and shape to our lives and not to the dictates of moods or needs. I like it that we have a beautiful liturgy of the Eucharist, which follows a pattern and order of worship, which gives stability and order. We know what follows next, and in that we find comfort and not uncertainty. So order your lives that you can live in peace with yourself without anxiety or depression.

## Villiers' Staff travel to Zimbabwe with Christian Aid

In March, Jackie McNair, Chaplain and teacher in Villiers School, along with Karen Gillespie, a House Parent at Villiers School, will join a team of eight Christian Aid Ireland supporters as they travel to Zimbabwe in Southern Africa. The group, all from different churches and communities throughout Ireland, will travel with Andrew Coleman, Christian Aid South West Ireland co-ordinator, to spend ten days visiting Christian Aid partners around Zimbabwe. They will see how these local partners are empowering men, women and children to overcome the challenges they face and to bring about a transformation in their communities.

Jackie McNair, from Sixmilebridge Co. Clare but originally from Donegal, is also a Diocesan Reader and a member of the Diocesan Council for Mission with a very active interest in mission work. Jackie and his music teacher wife, Andrea, are very involved in St. Mary's Cathedral Limerick Choir, and music, in the school and Dioceses..



*Jackie McNair, Villiers Chaplain*

God loves me!



Karen Gillespie from Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary, is also a Tutor in Limerick Institute of Technology and comes from a very active youth work background. A graduate from LIT with a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies in Social Care, Karen has worked with many young people in a variety of settings including Roscrea Education Centre and the Learning Hub Limerick. As a volunteer with the United Diocesan Youth Council of Limerick and Killaloe for many years, Karen has also spent time as an active committee member. Coming from a local farming family in Cloughjordan she has an interest in agriculture. She is a member of Cloughjordan Methodist Church which is part of North Tipperary Methodist Circuit.

Jackie and Karen have this to say: "We are really looking forward to this wonderful opportunity to observe and visit some of Christian's Aid projects in Zimbabwe. We feel that seeing first hand where funding goes will be an amazing and exciting occasion; to meet the local people, talk with them and hear the development of individual projects and to see the difference Christian Aid has made to their lives."

Karen is organising a Christian Aid Coffee morning to raise funds for projects in Zimbabwe in Cloughjordan Methodist Church Hall on Friday the 21st of February at 10am. Donations are welcome. Karen appreciates all the support she is receiving from her church and local community. For more information contact Karen Gillespie (086)0569695



*Karen Gillespie, Cloughjordan Methodist*



Even off duty, the Treasurer's favourite trick was balancing money.

# A New Dean for Killaloe

Report by Sandra Lefroy

On Thursday, 12th December the Rev. Gary Alexander Paulsen was instituted and installed as Rector of Killaloe & Stradbally Unions and Dean of Killaloe and Clonfert at an impressive and well-attended service in St. Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe. The ceremony was conducted by the Right Rev. Trevor Williams, Bishop of Limerick & Killaloe, assisted by the Venerable Wayne Carney, Archdeacon of Killaloe and Rector of Birr Group and the Rev. Michael Johnston, Diocesan Registrar and Rector of Shinrone Group. The Precentor and Rector of Cloughjordan & Borrisokane, Canon Stephen Neill, gave a most appropriate address and the event was marked by the wonderful sense of occasion that we have learned to expect from these great church celebrations.

The Cathedral was host to a congregation of some 170 people, among whom the parishes were particularly pleased to welcome Father Pat Malone of Portroe (on this occasion also representing Bishop Kieran O'Reilly), Father James Grace of Killaloe and Father Ted Rahelly of Ballina, as well as the Rev. Brian Griffin from the North Tipperary Methodist Circuit. Lessons were read by Hon. Grania Weir and John Lefroy, Diocesan Lay Readers, and the Gospel by Rev. Lucy Green. The new Dean was also very well supported by members of the Chapter.

As is customary, the Churchwardens from the three parishes of Killaloe, Mountshannon and Stradbally played their part in the service, presenting the various symbols of the teaching, pastoral and sacramental ministry of an incumbent.

The Castleconnell Sunday School was also represented in this part of the service by Jennifer Daly, with Fiona Stapleton acting as Crucifer for the procession. Music for the service, under the skilful direction of Trevor Selby, was an uplifting choral exercise, with the congregational singing all but raising the ancient rafters of this historic building. Following the celebration of the Eucharist and the singing of one of Dean Gary's favourite hymns, "Here I am, Lord", the Cathedral bells pealed out in celebration of the beginning of this new phase in the history of the Cathedral, as the congregation repaired across the bridge to Ballina for refreshments at the Lakeside Hotel.



Clergy at Dean Gary Paulsen's installation in St Flannan's Cathedral



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# Killaloe Diocese

## Killaloe & Stradbally Union of Parishes

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

Rector & Dean: The Very Rev. Gary Paulsen  
The Deanery, Abbey Road, Killaloe, Co. Clare  
Tel: 061-376 687

Mob: 085-764 0533

Email: abbeydean2@gmail.com

Rev. Lucy Green

Tel: 062-79941 Mob: 087 667 0425

Email: lucygreen06ie@yahoo.co.uk

The new Rector and Dean of the Union has arrived and is now in place. The Institution service took place on 12 December at the Cathedral and so begins a new chapter in this union of parishes. As usual before Christmas, Carol Services took place in three of the churches and all of them were well attended by parishioners and the local community. In Mountshannon the local school attended the service along with the school principal, Jim Jones, and parents. The church was decorated and it felt like Christmas. The children sang some favourite tunes. Fr John Jones the local Parish Priest was in attendance and it is hoped that some more community events will take place at St Caiman's in the future.

At All Saints Stradbally also saw the local community supporting the Lesson and Carol Service, with Fr Brendan reading the final lesson. The Sunday School children also managed to make Rev Gary feel welcome by verse and presenting him with a key they made to open new doors, a book with the names and photos of parishioners to make his life easier in remembering who they were. Also name tags for the parishioners so that week by week everyone could get to know one another's names. A lovely painting depicting Christmas was also done and the usual tree, lights and decorations.



*Brian and Dan ringing in the New Year.*

At Killaloe we gathered in a somewhat cold church as the timer had tripped with all the foul weather, so it was a somewhat cool reception. However people did not let a bit of cold put them off by singing with great gusto. It was good to see visitors here as well and we hope the local visitors will make it a habit to attend all that we do at St Flannan's in the future.

We had many visitors at our Christmas services in all the churches. It is always so lovely to see people return home and celebrate with one another. This does make Christmas such a special time of the year, when families not only share the Eucharist

together in the various churches but can also celebrate together around their own tables at home, just like Jesus did with those close to him. Those lovely words from scripture that can transform the ordinary into holy, when we bring God into our spaces, *'Do this as often as you can to remember me.'*

At the Cathedral on New Year's Eve we had a short service of reflection and what we hoped for the New Year and committed it to God. Those who were there then went up to ring the bells and ring the countdown to midnight. This was co-ordinated with Brian Brislane and David O'Brien of the committee for the Brian Boru Year 2014, and then there were fireworks from the surrounding hills. A great way to start the New Year!

The Christmas decorations are down as we get on with our common life. The days are getting brighter each morning and this gives all hope for the future. The light has come into the world and we too want to manifest this truth that God is with us - EMMANUEL!

2014 is going to be a wonderful year and we will count our blessings each day, and remain positive and be the bearers of good news. If God is for us who can be against us.

## Birr Group of Parishes

*Birr, Lorrha, Lockeen, and Dorrha*

Rector: Venerable R. Wayne Carney

Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert

The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly

Tel: 057-912-0021 Mob: 087-786-5234

Email: mapleire@eircom.net

Assistant Priest: Rev. Ruth Gill

Kilgolan House, Kilcormac, Co. Offaly

Tel: 057-913-5341 Mob: 087-948-4402

Email: ruth\_gill40@hotmail.com

## Christmas

Many thanks to all who helped make our Christmas celebrations so special this year. Our 'Carols in the Rectory' evening was very well-attended, and everyone left well-fed and sung-out. The Ecumenical Carol Service, held this year in St Brendan's Roman Catholic Church, was also a wonderful evening, with the Choral Society supplemented by two other choirs. Amidst all our regular Christmas services, our Christmas Eve Family Eucharist stands out, as Lockeen Church was packed to see the Christmas story enacted by the children once again.

## Glastonbury Thorn

On St Stephen's Day, a number of Birr residents gathered beside St Brendan's Well in the Castle Demesne as a Glastonbury Thorn Tree was planted. Salters Sterling explained the history of the original Glastonbury Thorn, believed to have been planted by St Joseph of Arimathea in Glastonbury, England, when he stuck his walking stick into the ground and it rooted. According to the legend, Joseph was an uncle of the Virgin Mary, and visited England as part of his tin-trading business. The thorn tree rooted, and blooms twice a year, around Christmas and Easter, and cuttings from the original tree do the same. There may be a connection between St Brendan's Monastery in Birr and the monastery in Glastonbury. After it was planted, the thorn tree was blessed by Archdeacon Carney and the Methodist minister, the Revd Rosemary Lindsay, with water from the ancient St Brendan's Well.

## Pastoral

Derek Kenny has been in hospital for some time, but at this writing is moved to the nursing home in Borrisokane. It's good to see him on the mend. We are also delighted to have Barbara Haslam back to church in Birr, and Whitten Gill in Dorrha.

## Roscrea Group of Parishes

*Roscrea, Bourney, Corbally and Kyle*

Vacant

Priest in Charge: Ven. Wayne Carney

The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly.

Tel: 057 – 9120021 Mob: 087 – 7865234

Email: [mapleire@eircom.net](mailto:mapleire@eircom.net)

### Holy Baptism

23rd November 2013 in St. Cronan's – Bill Robert Walsh, infant son of Liam and Linda (nee Connor) Walsh, Galross, Borrisokane with Rev. Stephen Neill officiating.

### Burials

18th November 2013 in Dungar – Wilhelmina Hickie, Verdant Hill, Roscrea.

2nd January 2014 in Dungar – Pearl Rafter, The Mall, Roscrea.

10th January 2014 in Dungar – Gladys Young, Carrig Hill, Roscrea.

Our Parish has lost three loyal parishioners, all worshippers in St. Cronan's where their funeral services were held and each played an active role in parochial life.

Mina Hickey, a native of Roscrea, retired from Belfast, and was keenly interested in parochial affairs. We remember her sister, Jean, at this time. Pearl Rafter was the first ever Lady Churchwarden in St. Cronan's and fulfilled her role with the dignity and elegance always associated with her personality. In the peace of her own home, she slipped away quietly after an illness on New Year's Eve. We sympathise with her daughters, Rosaline and Lilian, their families and all her family circle.

Gladys Young struggled with Alzheimer's for many years and after a short illness peacefully released from her earthly suffering into the freedom of the nearer presence of God. An enrolling member of Roscrea Mothers' Union and Cub Scout leader, her major contribution to parochial life was recognized at her funeral service. We offer our sincere sympathy to Des, Alison, Colin, Stephen, Rachel and all the family circle at this sad time.

The care offered to all three ladies in their closing years by family members and in Gladys' case also by the staff of Villa Marie, was certainly an example of the Christian message in action in this parish.

### Bereavements

Sadly, there have also been a number of other bereaved families within the parish since our last notes. The passing of little baby, Iris Reid, aged just 19 days, caused widespread shock and sorrow and we prayerfully remember her grandparents Des and Florence in this parish, also her parents Richard and Rachel and brother Eli.

We sympathise with the family of Charles Chance, Ballybritt. A short service was held in the Funeral Home prior to removal to the Crematorium in Dublin.

Our deepest sympathy to Florence Roe and to all the family of Ned Whitten who was laid to rest in Dungar on Christmas Eve following service in Aghancon.

The passing of Bob Stanley (Borris-in-Ossary) came as a shock to those who knew him, as until recently he assisted in caring for his brother George; and to George, Violet, Hazel and Jean, we extend our deepest sympathy.

### The Sick

Our thoughts and prayers are with Eddie Clare in the Mater Hospital in Dublin following a severe hunting accident. He is missed from his work sphere and his church pew and we feel for his family. Also we remember George Stanley in Clover Lodge and wish him well. Bert Wallace, Alice Jackson, Harry Parr and William Wallace are now all home again and doing well.

### Christmas

It's now a distant memory but was well celebrated in the parish. Liturgical celebrations opened with an Advent/Christmas Carol Service in Kyle and two days later St. Cronan's School Carol Service was held in St. Cronan's where pupils brought food items for the local Lions' Club Appeal. Well prepared, the pupils through symbol, reading and singing introduced the congregation to 'The Traditions of Christmas'. Jennifer Dann's solo items will be long remembered as a feature of Corbally's traditional Carol Service, where it was also good to see so many parishioners volunteering to read lessons. Bourney's candlelight Service brightened up a dark night with its continuous rows of candles from the gate to the sanctuary. It was good to see so many young soloists and readers. The Carol 'Cedar of Lebanon' brought back primary school memories to many at Roscrea's Festival of Lessons and Carols, while 'We three Kings' were in full voice. It was a pleasure to have Fr. Tom Corbett, PP and Rev. Tom Kingston, Methodist Church share in the readings while the Lord Abbott read the Christmas Gospel.

The Philippines Disaster benefitted from a retiring collection. The ministrations of the Archdeacon, the Rev. Janet White-Spunner, Nuala Dudley (lay reader from Raphoe Diocese and native of Bourney) and Jason Patterson were greatly appreciated at this exceptionally busy time.

### Congratulations

To Alice Jackson, Florrie Clarke and Betty Benn, all of whom celebrated 90th birthdays since our last issue. While we don't usually include 40th birthdays, this one is worthy of note - St. Cronan's N.S. is 40 years open in 2014 and celebrations are planned for early February. Welcome to 'Middle Age'!

### MU, YC, BB, GFS

Heather Evans' home was an ideal setting for the Christmas get-together of members and provided ample parking for the reindeer! The Youth Club had a magnificent party and has the potential for a parochial Cookery School! The BB held a successful Monster Raffle while the GFS updated their horse-riding skills in Portlaoise. Well done to all the organisers and a Happy New Year to all our parishioners and readers.

## Nenagh Union of Parishes

*Nenagh, Templederry, Ballymackey and Killodiernan.*

Rector: Canon Marie Rowley-Brooke

*Holly Cottage, Sallypark, Latteragh, Nenagh, Co Tipperary*

Tel: 067-32598 Mob: 085-1474792

Email: [canonmarie@me.com](mailto:canonmarie@me.com)

To summarise our Advent, Christmas and Epiphany celebrations just wonderful! All enabled and enhanced by a great team of singers in Junior and main choirs, organists, musicians (the first visit of



*New robes for St Mary's choirs*

Nenagh Town Band to St Mary's to join in our Carol Service), readers, decorators, flower-arrangers, cleaners, printers, angel-creators, refreshment teams, power-point technicians, photographers, Nativity knitters, Christmas-tree provider.....all coming together with their many and varied talents, and offering the gifts of their time and energy for what is a very special time.

Whilst there isn't space to list everything we did in the Union, we must make special mention of the two Community Carol events in Templederry and Killodiernan which together raised €900 for St. John's Ward, Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin, and the St Mary's Carol Service which raised over €500 to be divided between North Tipperary Alzheimer Group, and Suaimhneas, Nenagh. With hasty organisation, new robes were called up for the growing Junior Choir, which arrived just in time, and in addition, the senior choir enjoyed wearing their new robes - thank you to the anonymous donor of funds!

And whilst it seems a long time ago now, we must also celebrate the 170+ filled pencil cases for the Anglican schools in Swaziland Diocese that formed part of our Mission Sunday giving back in November. In addition, Rae Croft has collected up some 10kg of haberdashery notions which will soon be on their way to Benin and Togo to enable people to start up and maintain their small sewing businesses - many thanks to all who gave to both these good causes.

We were all greatly saddened by the passing of Mildred Clarke, a faithful and loyal member of our choir and community whose lovely gifts of welcoming and hospitality will be sorely missed, and our condolences go to all the Clarke family, not just for Mildred's passing, but also the loss of Pearl Rafter. In addition we express our condolences to Franny Youngusband and her family following the death of her mother, Daphne Hawes, and to the family and friends of the late Rosemary Martinson, one-time resident of Rivervale Nursing Home.

We congratulate Peter and Natasha Clarke on the birth of Eve, a sister for Hollie. Congratulations also to Philip Kelly on his engagement to Emer Connolly - Philip is the son of Joe and Lynne Kelly. And congratulations to Roisin Rowley-Brooke on achieving her PhD with her dissertation on 'Bleed-Through Document Image Restoration', and who has also been appointed as Organ Scholar in Kilkenny Cathedral.

We're delighted that parishioners who have been ill or in hospital are now on the mend; please hold them in your prayers - Clodagh Allman-Smith, Jack Bayly, Jean Blackwell, Ann McKee Walsh and Elizabeth Stephens. It may be February by the time you read this, but it's not too late to wish all Newslink readers a happy, healthful and spirit-filled 2014!

## Cloughjordan and Borrisokane

*Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.*

Rector: Canon Stephen Neill

Modreeny Rectory, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary.

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

Email: [stephen.neill@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.neill@gmail.com)

Parish website: [www.modreeny.com](http://www.modreeny.com)

Stephen's blog: [www.paddyanglican.com](http://www.paddyanglican.com)

### CHRISTMAS 2013

Thanks to all who worked so hard to prepare for all the services and other events over Christmas - It was wonderful to see such a great turnout at the Christmas Day services and indeed at the school carol service which must have been the biggest ever.

### SYMPATHY

Christmas marked a very sad time for some who lost loved ones over the festive season and we remember in our prayers the Whitten & Clarke families at their time of bereavement. Deepest sympathy

also to the Hodgins Family on the death of Desmond Hill. Thanks from Freddy McBride, To everyone who called to the house, rang, sent messages left cards and gifts for me while I spent 6 months in hospital very ill, It was much appreciated. Kind regards. Freddy McBride, Newtown House, Cloughjordan.

### BAPTISMS

Bill Robert Walshe, son of Liam & Lynda Walshe of Borrisokane was baptised on Saturday 23rd November in St. Cronan's Church, Roscrea, Lynda's home parish and where she and Liam were married. Canon Stephen conducted the baptism by kind permission of Archdeacon Carney (Priest-in-charge). (Photo attached of Bill's baptism)

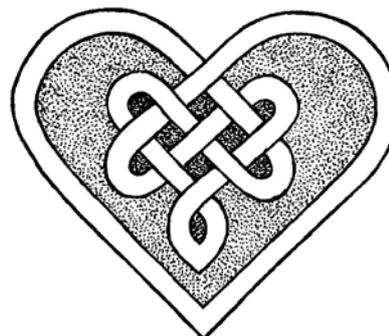
Saul Benjamin Dann, son of Ivan & Gemma Dann of Ballynevin, Borrisokane was baptised on 15th December in Ballingarry Church.

We wish these children of God every blessing in their lives.



*Bill with his parents and Canon Stephen*

*Confirmation 2014: The Bishop will be visiting the parish on Sunday 1st June for the rite of Confirmation. Please let the Rector know as soon as possible if you wish to be confirmed this year.*



## **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

### **MERVYN GROVES**

Mervyn Groves made it by only a few days into 2014 before finally succumbing to the embolism which caused his removal to Limerick Regional Hospital and away from Carrigorrnan Nursing Home, his abode along with Marguerite his wife, for almost a year.

He rests far away from his native Hampshire in Ennistymon Graveyard, next to the old Church of Ireland church.

Methodist from childhood, Mervyn settled comfortably into the Anglican worship and ethos within Drumcliffe Group and became a pillar of consistency as a churchwarden and glebewarden and attender of weekly worship. Shy, modest and gentle, he made friends wherever he went and his annual vocation as Santa Claus in Corofin village was certainly one popular memory when a good representation of neighbours from there and thereabouts turned up at his funeral in St Columba's.

Two of Mervyn's three children from an earlier marriage, Alison and Laura and one granddaughter Paula made the trip from Cornwall. The funeral was conducted by the Rector. Former and present Parish Priests in Corofin, Fr Damian Nolan and Fr Ger Nash shared in the funeral rite.

Mr Nigel Bridge, whose organ and piano playing meant much to Mervyn, led the music and Mrs Monica Morgan Kearney, a neighbour sang the solo "God be with you till we meet again."

In her personal word Mervyn's eldest daughter Alison paid tribute to care afforded to Mervyn whilst he was in Carrigorrnan Nursing Home. Invaluable support over past months by Jenny and Mike Shaw has done much to compensate for the absence of close family in Ireland. Mervyn's grave is close to that of his former Church family friend Norman McDonald of Lahinch, whose enthusiasm for care of families and elderly throughout the Group of parishes helped inspire Mervyn's own devotion and service.

Marguerite and Mervyn enjoyed an exciting time before his retirement as an architect in the Gulf States. They chose Ireland to retire to largely because Marguerite's Welsh born brother and sister-in-law had settled in Clare. As if to mark this, Mervyn's cortege went out to the sound of the Welsh Morryston Male Voice Choir.



*Coptic Girls at Kilnasullagh*

### **CHRISTMAS**

An active Advent of activity – concerts and carols – led up to, again, a wonderful Nativity Feast of Egyptian, Coptic and Evangelical nurtured Christian sisters Margaret and Mary from Giza in the land of the Pyramids, whose testimony of struggle and martyrdom in a hostile Moslem culture matched the dark side of the Christmas story...the Flight into Egypt. Margaret played guitar

and Mary sang a hymn in Arabic. They were being recruited for the forthcoming Christian Unity Week Service in St Columba's Church and for witness to pupils in local schools.

Good News also at Christmas came to Catherine Doherty-Louer, who became a great-grandmother for the second time with the birth of Max William, son of Jasmine and brother to Calum in St Athan, South Wales. Congratulation, thanksgiving and blessings have been extended!

## **Clonfert Diocese**

### **Aughrim & Ballinasloe Unions of Parishes**

Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Ardrahan, Clontuskert and Woodlawn

Rector: Canon George Flynn

The Rectory, Aughrim, Co Galway

Tel: 090 9673735 Mob: 087 20 74739

Email: georgeandwyn@eircom.net

**Parish website:** [www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org](http://www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org) Greetings for the New Year from Clonfert's Northern Parishes!

### **THE SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS DINNER**

14th December was the day 'Sixteen high mileage club' members gathered in the Rectory for their bi-annual dinner. Sadly this year our numbers had reduced as Helen, Lily, Doris and Arthur had been called home to eternal rest. We missed these friends and welcomed some new members. All enjoyed a wonderful meal and the day concluded with a celebration of Holy Communion.

### **CAROLS**

Good numbers of parishioners and friends gathered for our traditional Carol Services in Ballinasloe, Aughrim and Ardrahan, followed with Carol Singing in Ballinderry and Millrace Nursing Homes for the residents.

### **AHASCRAUGH**

On 6th December Ahascragh held its annual musical evening. A 'packed church' of friends and parishioners enjoy a great evening's entertainment with artistes from the locality performing. Many thanks to all who supported this evening and to those who provided refreshments afterwards.

### **CHILDREN'S NATIVITY AND CAROLS**

Our young people's Christmas workshops put together an evening's entertainment for family parishioners and friends in the Coach-house Aughrim. Some twenty youngsters under the guidance of a number of committed adults performed a modern version of the Nativity, which was very well received and augurs well for the years ahead. Following their performance a visit from Santa brought great excitement and a gift to all the children, concluding with a party which brought the successful night to a very happy ending.

### **ARDRAHAN SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Had their special day when they made a visit to Labane Nursing Home and performed their drama entitled "and snag a number of carols". Which was well received by the staff and, most of all, by the residents. Thanks to Fraoch and Ailve for all their work with the children and organising this visit.

Many thanks to all who supported the CHRISTMAS SHEET QUIZ. In aid of our Youth Work programmes.

### **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

All six parishes had a Holy Communion Service and each was well attended. I must say that the Christmas Eve services have special appeal as the final service concludes as midnight approaches and

on returning to the Rectory, my family takes time to see Christmas in with a chat and exchange of seasonal greetings, and once the final Christmas morning service has concluded we gather around the Christmas table, which is a special occasion for us every year.

The Sunday after Christmas was a fifth Sunday and a Family Service was held in Holy Trinity Aughrim where a gathering of over fifty parishioners came to a service seeing out the Old Year and welcoming in the New Year. The service was split into two sections with hymns, readings and prayers appropriate to the Old and to the New Year.

## BEREAVEMENTS

Deepest sympathy is extended to Michael and Breege Taylor of Ardrahan on the death of Michael's mother Martha Anderson Taylor and to his siblings Michelle, Millicent, Richard and the extended family. Martha was laid to rest in Ardrahan graveyard.

It is also with deepest regret that this past month the people of Aughrim and the surrounding area have said farewell to their most senior parishioner Elizabeth (Betty) Walshe nee Sowerby. Betty was five days away from her 95th birthday and is survived by her sister Annie and a large extended family..

May the families of the deceased find comfort and peace in the presence of Christ our Saviour.

## 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

The Portumna Active Retirement Annual Ecumenical service, was held in the Retirement Village on the 5th December. The relaxed and enjoyable service was led jointly by our own Rev Patrick Towers and Father Lawless from St Bridget's' R.C. Church. This was followed by a Carol Service, tea and goodies.

A very successful Coffee Evening was held in the Eyrecourt Day Care Centre on the 29th Nov. The cake sale in aid of Hospice raised €1,400. A great achievement.

Alex Kenny age 7 – an enthusiastic member of Eyrecourt helped during Advent by lighting the candles on the wreath. Alex also took up the offering. Mission Sunday attracted a large gathering in Eyrecourt for the Baptism of Noel, son of Sam and Jackie Lankoande.

## BAPTISM

We welcome into the Church family, Aaron Richard Kenny, baby son for David and Bronagh and Grandson for Freda. Born on the 22nd of October We are also delighted to welcome, Luke, born on the 1st January to Irene and Liam Darcey, and the first grandchild for Joy and John Howard.

## CHRISTMAS

Christ Church Portumna was once again the setting for the Christmas Eve service. The Church was full and a warm welcome was given to all who attended. Carols by Candle Light, a warm red glow and the lights on the tree, put everyone in the true Christmas spirit. A lovely service followed by Hot Mince pies and spicy Punch. An evening of warmth and friendship.

Banagher church was beautifully decorated and full to capacity, for the Christmas Day service – a lovely Tree, flowers and decorations – all making a wonderful setting in which to celebrate the Birth of Christ.

Thanks to Banagher Town for providing Christmas Trees at St. Paul's Gate and at St Paul's Hall. The trees suffered during the storms

but the lights looked good.

Many thanks to everyone who helped with the decorating, cleaning and preparation. A Candlelight Carol service was held in Clonfert Cathedral on 29th December. Although a cold night the service was well attended. The proceeds from the collection were given to COPE – a charity Rev Patrick Towers in very involved with.

A Holy Communion Service was held at Eliza Lodge Nursing Home during Christmas Week, because the Oratory was in use the Service had to be held in an office, so the usual attendance from the Church were not able to attend. The Residents look forward to the service each month and chatting to Rev. Towers after the service.

Tuesday 4th January I was delighted to welcome into the church a group of students from the Youth Reach Centre. They were there to see the similarities and differences in the two churches here in Portumna. We had a very interesting Q&A session as none of them had experience of anything other than the RC church.

There were the usual questions about Statues and Pictures. The majority thought it was right for Priests to be allowed to marry.

The idea of the Congregation having hymn books and being able to stand and sing was "really cool".

I was asked why, if there are so few of us, don't we go across the road and join them?.....A very good question.



*Portumna Active Retirement Ecumenical Service*



*Christmas Eve, Christchurch, Portumna*

# Limerick Diocese

## Limerick City Parish

St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's Pery Sq. and Abington  
Dean: The Very Rev. Sandra Pragnell  
The Deanery, 7 Kilbane,  
Castletroy, Limerick  
Tel: 061-338697 Mob: 087-2658592  
Email: sandrapragnell@eircom.net

## BEREAVEMENTS

14th December - Margaret McDonnell. - our sincere sympathy to her son Johnny and daughter Pamela, their families and relatives.

17th December - Marie-Louise Alexandra Beckers Kearney, formerly of Villiers School - our sincere sympathy to her husband Brian, their daughter Edwine, sons Aidan and Paul, their families, relatives and friends.

22nd December - Patrick Moore, Ontario, Canada - our sincere sympathy to his sister Kokie Moore, organist at Abington Church.

2nd January - Maureen, Clancy, USA - our sincere sympathy to her Aunt Phyllis Gale, their families and relatives.

## BURIAL OF ASHES

On 10th January 2014 at St Mary's Cathedral, Sheila Patricia Fogerty (nee Haselbeck). Lord, in you the dead find life forever.

## CHRISTMAS STALL AND COME AND SING CAROLS

Christmas Stall and Come and Sing Carols in St Mary's Cathedral on Saturday 7th December 2013 - many thanks to all who helped make this such a success - we raised €1,480 for Limerick City Parish.

## WHIST DRIVES: ST.MICHAEL'S CHRISTMAS WHISDRIVE

Whist Drives in St. Michael's Christmas Whist Drive was held on Saturday 7th December with 7½ tables. Raffle Prize winners were 1st Mona Lawless (Hamper kindly sponsored by Niall Johnston) and other raffle winners were Betty Kingston, Avril Condell and Gillian Cheatley. Many thanks to all who provided mince pies, tray bakes and donated many lovely prizes. for the Christmas Drive.

## DECORATING OUR CHURCHES FOR CHRISTMAS

The Dean wishes to thank all who organized, took part in and attended the wonderfully uplifting Advent, Christmas and Epiphany services in our three churches. And we look forward to greater things in this City of Culture Year. She also thanks those who helped decorate and/or supplied materials. The results of their talents and ability were much admired and appreciated. Thank you to the Brickenden family who once again donated a lovely Christmas Tree to the Cathedral.

## MOTHERS' UNION

A big thank you to all those who donated to the Mothers' Union Hamper Appeal. Two lovely hampers of food and toiletries, were donated to Thomond House Women's Hostel and St. Patrick's Men's Hostel in Clare Street.

## ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL

St. Mary's Cathedral was delighted to be able to host the official launch of the City of Culture 2014. The first major event which our Organist Peter Barley is organising in the Cathedral is the children's opera by Benjamin Britten, "Noyes' Fludde:" it involves a lot of outreach to children from local schools. Dates of performances are 28 March to 1st April. So watch

## Adare and Kilmallock Group of Parishes

Adare, Croom, Kilmallock, Kilpeacon

Vacant

Priest-in-charge: Rev. Maurice Sirr

Address: 17A Knock Hill, Ennis Road, Limerick

Tel: 061 277 372

Mob: 087 254 1121

Email: msirr@iol.ie

Ann Gill has very kindly obliged to be the contributor of notes for Newslink on this and hopefully on other occasions as well.

Tributes were paid to our Rector, Gary Paulsen, at his last service in Adare on December 1, 2013. We wish him well as he starts his new ministry as Rector of Killaloe and Stradbally Union of Parishes and Dean of Killaloe Cathedral.

Members of the parish attended his installation in Killaloe Cathedral on December 12 and attended the reception afterwards in the Lakeside Hotel where speeches of welcome and farewell were eloquently delivered by Bishop Trevor and by Gary's old and new parishioners.

We had a busy and wonderful Christmas season in our with Carol Services and nativity events making the season one of joy and prayer for us all. We welcomed Rev Maurice Sirr whom the Bishop has appointed as Priest-in-Charge during the vacancy and thank him most sincerely for all his care in guiding us in the beautiful liturgy of the season. We appreciate the fact that he so seamlessly integrated into our parish at such short notice and with much kindness and care. Together we will work and care for our parish till we welcome a new incumbent. Advertisements have already appeared seeking our new rector with February 14 as a closing date for applications.

Every year there are jobs that we as parishioners take for granted. I would like to mention a few of these tasks; beautiful festive flowers, the Order of Service for the Caro's and the readers of the lessons (even the reluctant ones), the musicians; we were delighted to have Michael Young as organist for the Carol and Christmas services, both of which were so well attended. Others who deserve mention are the crib makers (takes time, to put up and take down) and of course our children who are themselves the cheer of the season and who contribute to our services with their own songs of praise. Let us not omit our Wardens and Readers, who during a vacancy are always on duty and now have new responsibilities for the smooth ordering of services Sunday by Sunday. We give thanks and well done to all who gave their time and service to our parish this year and especially to you the congregations - our sisters and brothers in Christ. May the New Year bring us all every blessing.

Dean Gary returned for a wedding on January 11, 2014, the first in this year, a joyful occasion indeed when Sarah Ormson and David Jones married in St. Nicholas, Adare. The sun shone all day to add to the beauty of the bride and the occasion. We wish them a long and happy life together.

This year the Ecumenical Service marking the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity took place on Sunday, 16th January in Adare Methodist Church when the special preacher will be Bishop Brendan, the new Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick. Looking to the future, we in Adare are hosting the World Day of Prayer this year on Friday, March 7; both men and women are invited and welcome to attend. The theme this year is "Streams in the Desert," and was prepared by the Christian Women of Egypt and is an international and inter-denominational service, a global movement of informed prayer and prayerful action.

The first day of Lent (Ash Wednesday) falls on March 5th. This is the beginning of the penitential season which leads us up to Holy Week and Easter Day.

Service times in the churches in the parish continue at their usual times.

## Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes

Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kilcornan & Kilnaughtin

Rector: Rev. Keith Scott

The Rectory, Askeaton, Co. Limerick

Tel: 061 – 398647 Mob: 087 2885169

E-mail: rathkeale@limerick.anglican.org

It was a busy Christmas time for our parishes. We began December with a very successful parish fund raiser in the form of a cookery demonstration from Frank Moynahan. Frank certainly had plenty of ideas and inspiration to offer to the cooks of the parish in time for Christmas. On the same evening we were pleased to present a cheque to the Rathkeale Butterfly Club in support of their work with children with special needs and their families. This was money we had raised through our harvest service.

The coming few weeks will also be busy. We start March with our Ash Wednesday service in St. Mary's Askeaton at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 5th of March. This year we hope to be running the diocesan Lent programme, so please make this a priority in your lives during Lent.

This year's World Day of Prayer meeting is being hosted in Rathkeale on Friday March 7th. The service will take place at 8.00 p.m. If you can help at all please make the effort to come to the meetings to organise the service as announced in services through January and February. It will also be our turn to host the area Mothers' Union service on March 25th at 8.00 p.m in St. Mary's Askeaton. The preacher will be Dean Sandra Pragnell.

We were much saddened at the death of long time Castletown parishioner Sam Downes. Sam was buried at Castletown on December 16th, the preacher was his long time friend and one time parish priest, the Rev'd Patrick Towers. Sam had been an active member of our parish and Select Vestry member for many years and his children and grandchildren are still very much a part of our life and worship. We extend our prayerful sympathy to his widow Ena and to all the family.

Our congratulations go to Wendy White and Mark Mullins who were married in Perth, Australia on 17th January. We hope for an opportunity to celebrate with them when they return to Ireland later this year or early next year.



*At the Cookery Demonstration*



*Presentation to Butterfly Club.*

# Ardfert Diocese

## Tralee & Dingle Unions of Parishes

Tralee, Ballymacelligott, Ballyseedy, Dingle, Kilgobbin and Killiney

Rector: Ven. Sue Watterson

Archdeacon of Limerick, Ardfert and Aghadoe

45 Liosdara, Oakpark, Tralee, Co. Kerry

Mob: 087 689 2025 Email: smwatt1@gmail.com

Associate Priest: Rev. Jane Galbraith

Mob: 085 145 0804

Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

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

Ashe St., Tralee. Co. Kerry

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

### Service Times

St. John's Tralee 10.45am.

Ballyseedy 9.45am.

Ballymacelligott 12noon.

Kilgobbin 10am St. James Dingle 12noon.

Holy Communion Tralee on 1st, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 11am,

Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands for Healing on 3rd Wednesday 11am.

This year we have not joined in the usual worship and meetings for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Tralee, as an Ecumenical Service has been arranged for the Sunday before Lent – 2nd March at 7pm. The new Roman Catholic Bishop of Kerry, Bishop Ray will join Bishop Trevor in a dialogue as part of the service. The venue is the Dominican Church in Tralee, all are welcome.

On Dec 29th Heather Groves and Jerry Sugrue along with young Jake, brought baby Ruby Margaret for baptism and she was welcomed into the Ballyseedy Church Family.

On January 26th Siofra Eistir Catriona and Roisin Niamh, daughters of Colm and Pam Costelloe were also baptised in Ballyseedy, a lovely surprise occasion for Pam's Mum, Hester Hill.

On Friday 21st February at 7pm, there will be a Memorial Service for the late Sir Anthony Denny who died in Somerset in September 2013. It is many years since the Denny family lived in their Castle in Tralee, and apart from the Denny Bible which is kept in St. John's Tralee, and the ancient family graves and monuments around the Church very little evidence remains today of the Denny family. The most obvious legacy is the fine architecture on Denny St, most of the buildings were constructed with stone from the demolished Castle. Sir Anthony's son Tom, a stained glass artist, is to create a window for St. John's Roman Catholic Church as an act of reconciliation for the unfortunate history associated with some of the Denny's years as Landlords. All are welcome to the service.

### News from the West

Christmas Day Splash! Great admiration goes to Mrs. Kathy Roberts of St. James's, Dingle. A swimmer on and off for sixty years, Kathy took the plunge all alone, in Ventry! She stayed in for four minutes but was walloped by a wave on the way out, which submerged her completely. Kathy raised €260.00 for Kerry Hospice. Congratulations Kathy.

### Kathleen McKew

Deepest sympathies are extended to the family and friends of Kathleen(Kay) McKew. Kay died on Sunday January 5th in the loving care of the staff of Cuil Did in Nursing Home, Tralee. Kay was the wife of the late Revd. John Porter McKew Rector of Kilgobbin and St. James's, Dingle; from 1961 to 1972.

## **Killarney and Aghadoe Union of Parishes**

Killarney, Aghadoe and Muckross

Vacant

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Máirt Hanley.

Mob: 087-619 4733

Email: rev.hanley@gmail.com

### **New Year – New Beginnings**

There's possibly no better way to begin any New Year than celebrating the baptism of a child and 2014 was ushered in on January 12th in St Mary's with Reverend Máirt welcoming Elizabeth, daughter of Hannah and Charles, to the Christian fold. Congratulations all round and God's guidance and eternal love to the happy family.

### **Parochial Visit**

By their very nature all vacancies are nervous times for any congregation, so it was very heartening to receive such a warm visit from the Diocesan Ministry Committee on January 14th. Our visitors, led by Archdeacon Wayne Carney, included Dean Gary Paulsen, Revd. Ruth Gill, Mr Robert Roe and Canon Stephen Neill; The former St Mary's incumbent Archdeacon-elect, Sue Watterson was also in attendance. Whatever the outcome of the visit may result in, the receptive listening power of all of our visitors to our ambitions for the future gives us strength and determination to sustain and grow our ministry for congregation and visitors alike. During the course of their stopover the Committee were shown around the church and the currently vacant rectory and they expressed their contentment in the appearance and upkeep of both.

### **Future Possibilities**

The wisdom of the late, great, West Limerick genius, Michael Hartnett first captured me in 1975 with the release of his ageless collection "A Farewell to English", which includes one of the most revealing sonnets ever written – The Possibility that has been Overlooked is the Future. In the poem Hartnett deals with the ordinary and makes it extraordinary with simplicity and ease. When Andy Eadie gave his sermon at St Mary's on January 5th the Christmas season was drawing towards its end and we were all inclined to have an "easy" service to wrap the festive season up. However, Andy reminded us of what we had achieved during the vacancy during the previous 7 months and the potential as to what we could achieve providing we stayed unified and focussed on the Word of God. It's almost 40 years since Hartnett first published his beautiful poem and Andy reminded us – and we constantly need reminding – that some things never change; the future is still full of possibilities and we, in St Mary's, can make anything happen provided we are willing to work towards achieving our goals!

### **Concerts**

With the foregoing in mind, we have taken a leap of faith and teamed up with Killarney Chamber of Tourism & Commerce in an exiting partnership for 2014. Our concert season will be supported by Chamber through promotion via the media and through their many members to their visiting clients. As a lead-in to this venture we are organising a "stained glass windows tour" with refreshments provided for Chamber members during early March. We hope that this will encourage the business and hospitality community to urge their clients to visit the church and attend our concerts and services throughout the year. We are also compiling a mailing list for concert attendees who wish to be advised of events at the church and we hope to see an increased number of locals attending regularly. Any Newslink readers who wish to be included in this mailing list should forward their contact details to myself at [scrahanmf@eircom.net](mailto:scrahanmf@eircom.net) or by post to Andrew Eadie, Kerry Woollen Mills, Beaufort, Killarney.

## **Railings**

Work is about to commence on repairing the damaged section of railing and a proposal to do extensive maintenance and repair on the remaining section is well advanced. Once again Killarney Chamber of Tourism & Commerce have pledged support – in terms of manpower – for this venture, so we look forward to further enhancing of the appearance of the exterior of St Mary's before the Summer season begins. If any Newslink readers have experience of restoring cast iron railings and are willing to give us assistance and / or advice, we would be more than interested in hearing from them!

## **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

Parish Website: [www.kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org](http://www.kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org)

The visit to our parish by Pfarrer Dr. Michael Labahn and his wife Antje together with a group of their parishioners from Güntersberge was a huge success in September and the friendships formed during that visit were renewed at Christmas when many Christmas good wishes and gifts were exchanged in both directions. One of the special touches for us was the illuminated star which was a gift from our German friends. It was suspended over the crib in St Michael's Church during the Festive Season. We are very sorry to hear that Pfarrer Michael has had to step down from his post because of ill health. Our thoughts are with him and his wife at this difficult time and we wish him a speedy recovery in the New Year.

Sunday school at Kilcolman Union of Parishes has started for 2014. We are looking forward to the coming few months and have a number of activities lined up, one being for the children to decorate stones with bible verses for the prayer/meditation garden, and who knows we may get a bit of gardening out of them too! Also with the monthly family services we hope to get the children more involved in the services by leading the prayers, doing readings or maybe a sketch or two. We are also looking forward to the New Year as we have increased our headcount for Sunday school teachers by one. We welcome Caroline Fehilly on board! Hopefully, in the coming months we may recruit a few more! It is always good to have new members to bring new ideas and suggestions and so help keep the children interested and help them learn about the Christian way.

Our Parish website has been renewed and now features a calendar with dates up as far as October filling up fast. So if you want to plan events or have some good ideas you can take a look at that first and see where things might fit in.

The other new piece of tech is the parish gmail, [cofidmkerry@gmail.com](mailto:cofidmkerry@gmail.com). If you email to this you can receive all the emails that we email out!

## **Kenmare & Dromod Union of Parishes**

Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville and Valentia

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Michael Cavanagh

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

Tel: 064 664 8566 Mob: 087 1606312

Email: [michael.cavanagh@eircom.net](mailto:michael.cavanagh@eircom.net)

Every year, at the first January service, we invite all who come to church to take one or more cards containing a verse or so from scripture as the inspiration for the year. We are encouraged take as many as we wish for ourselves (and to send them to family and friends), and to place them in our houses where they can be readily seen, both as a constant reminder for reflection every time we notice them – and as a witness to visitors who might wonder

and ask what the scripture means, giving us an opportunity to share our faith.

For 2014, the verses are John 1:1 & 14 – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.*

The word 'Word' – the translation of the Greek 'Logos' – has so many meanings; some of the most evocative perhaps being 'God's thought uttered, His poem read, His vision painted onto canvas.' We

give thanks that all of them are brought together in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

In the year to come, we look forward to the Word living among us – in our children's work, in our worship and other church activities, in our engagement with the wider community, in our relationships with friends who proclaim Jesus as Lord but who express that faith in different ways, in the inevitable joys and sadnesses we shall experience – knowing that through all these, His grace will be all we need.

# The Methodist District Superintendent writes



At the beginning of each New Year the Methodist Churches renew their commitment to God through the Covenant Service. This is our response to the God who committed Himself to us at Christmas, in the birth of Jesus. This service is a celebration of all that God has done for us and an affirmation that we give our lives and choices to God.

The Covenant Service goes back to John Wesley's time. He wanted a form of worship which would help people to open themselves to God more fully. In 1755, Wesley created such a Service, using material from the writings of the 17th Century puritans, Joseph and Richard Alleine. Over succeeding generations the Methodist Church has made changes to the service so that it continues to be relevant to the congregations using it.

The aim of the Service is to help people hear God's offer and challenge; to provide space for God to prompt, and for people to respond. And yet, more than this. For the Covenant Service is not just between individuals and God, it is by and of the whole congregation.

The Covenant Service is recognised as a unique contribution of the Methodist Church to the liturgy of the Universal Church. Other denominations now use it also, including some Church of Ireland parishes.

*"The days are surely coming says the Lord when I will make a new Covenant... I will put my law with them, I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31. 31-33"*

These words are read as part of the Covenant Service and I believe they are the clearest prophecy of the Christian faith in the Old Testament.

The focal point of the Service is the Covenant prayer:

*"I am no longer my own but yours,  
Your will, not mine be done in all things,  
wherever you may place me,  
in all that I do and in all that I may endure;  
when there is work for me and when there is none;  
when I am troubled and when I am at peace  
Your will be done  
when I am valued and when I am disregarded;  
when I find fulfilment and when it is lacking';  
when I have all things, and when I have nothing.  
I willingly offer  
all I have and am to serve you as and where you choose.  
Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
You are mine and I am yours.  
May it be so for ever.  
Let this covenant now made on earth be fulfilled in heaven.  
Amen.*

This prayer has been compared to a set of New Year resolutions, but ones that emphasize the importance of doing and being, as much as believing. Most Methodists find this prayer quite tough to repeat and really mean it. However the Covenant Prayer is prefaced by the following words:

*... "Yet the power to do all these things is given to us in Christ, who strengthens us."*

Rev Brian D Griffin  
Superintendent of the Midlands & Southern District

## Methodist News

### Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit

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

#### SERVICE TIMES

Adare: 10.15 am

Ballingrane: 11.45 am

Holy Communion on the 1st Sunday of the month

Sunday School during morning services

First of all, may I wish all Newslink readers a belated Happy and blessed New Year from the Methodists in Adare and Ballingrane!

Members of the Circuit were involved in three events to mark the

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. On the evening of Sunday 19th January we attended our monthly Fellowship Group in Charleville, when we join with friends from the Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic Churches in the area. Canon Sean Cotter and Sr Martina led us in a reading, meditation and prayers from the WPCU Service.

Secondly, our MWI (Methodist Women in Ireland) meeting was planned for Wednesday 22nd January at Ballingrane Church. The members invited visitors from our neighbouring churches in Cappagh, Askeaton and Rathkeale to join us for worship and prayer – again using some of the material from the Week of Prayer service.

Thirdly, it was the turn of the churches in Adare. On Sunday evening 26th January the 3 churches in the village joined together for a united service in the Methodist Church. Revd Maurice Sirr and Fr Joe Noonan took part in the service with Revd Liz Hewitt.

The guest preacher was the RC Bishop of Limerick, Bishop Brendan Leahy. It was a great privilege to welcome him to our Methodist Church.

We are looking forward to welcoming the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Revd Dr Heather Morris, to our Circuit on Thursday 13th February. Everyone is invited to attend a meeting with her that evening when there will be an opportunity to hear of her vision for the future life and mission of the Church. Also to share hospitality with her in an informal way over a good 'Methodist' supper!

The Bible Study Group will meet on Wednesdays at 8.00 pm in the Manse on 12th & 26th February. We have been looking at the lives and faith of various women in the Bible and talking about what we can learn from their example to help us in our daily walk with Christ.

## **Christ Church Limerick, united Presbyterian & Methodist and Christ Church Shannon, joint Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland**

Minister: Rev. Vicki Lynch

The Manse, 15 Aylesbury,

Clonmacken, Limerick.

Tel: 061 325325 Mobile: 086 8292073

Email: [vickilynch@eircom.net](mailto:vickilynch@eircom.net)

Hopefully you came along to and enjoyed yourselves at our launch of Central Buildings Cultural and Networking hub for Limerick City of Culture, with input from ourselves of course, the Civic Trust, Lynshig, Music Generation, Honest Arts Production Company, Doras Luimni and other wonderful supporters. If you did, you will also have had a look at *Scratching the Surface* an exhibition which showcases three artists that reinterpret the textures of the world around us 'scratching the surface to reveal unseen elements.' And by now I imagine you've seen the Limerick City of Culture catalogue at [www.limerickcityofculture.ie](http://www.limerickcityofculture.ie). It looks very exciting. Limerick is really going to be shown at its very best this year if the first quarter is anything to go by. And, of course there are so many other things going on to experience and enjoy. There are a few things that Christ Church and Central Buildings are involved in.

From March 13th through to April 23rd the City of Churches exhibition will be in CB1. This Exhibition examines the ecclesiastical architecture and social heritage of the many faiths in Limerick. It looks at these churches/places of worship through their records, their buildings and their impact on the social history of Limerick. See [archives@limerickcity.ie](mailto:archives@limerickcity.ie).

Following on from our well received Genealogy Day in 2012 there will be another opportunity for people 'to take ownership of their own history' this year on March 15th in Christ Church. This really was a very enjoyable event last year with a great buzz so do come along again or decide to give it a try. There will be Church registrars from major denominations, stands from the Royal Munster Fusiliers, Limerick City Archives, Thomond Archaeological & Historical Society, Clare Roots Society, Limerick Genealogy, the Irish Georgian Society (Limerick Chapter) and more. Visitors will also be able to receive free genealogical help and advice.

See [www.facebook.com/GenealogyDay2014](http://www.facebook.com/GenealogyDay2014).

We will definitely be welcoming the Surf Project to CB1 in 2014 so keep a look out and don't forget to check them out at <http://www.thesurfproject.org>.

Anna-Victoria, our youth worker, has started a pop-up Irish café in partnership with Mary Immaculate College – details on our

Facebook page. Please don't think 'it's not for me because I'm not a fluent Irish speaker.' Absolutely any level of Irish speaker is most welcome including those who have no Irish at all.

And remember Central Buildings is available throughout the year as a public meeting and exhibition space on our ground floor (CB1) or in our large meeting room upstairs (CB2) for as a bookable venue for meetings, interviews, etc. I don't think anyone could miss us at 51a O'Connell Street in our new City of Culture colours! See [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/)



*Central Buildings 2014*

## **Killarney, Kenmare & Millstreet Methodist Churches**

*[part of the Cork South & Kerry Circuit]*

Minister: Rev. Laurence Graham

10 Flesk Grove, Killarney, Co. Kerry.

### **Sunday Services.**

9 and 11 a.m. (inc. Children's' programme at 11)

### **Prayer meetings**

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 8.00 a. m. – 9.00 a. m.

Wednesday 9.15-10 a. m.

### **Bible Study Meetings**

Wednesday 8.00 p. m.

Friday 10.00 a. m.

### **Drop in for coffee**

Each Friday 11.00 a. m. – 12.00 p.m.

### **Parent and Toddler Group**

Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

### **Impact Youth Club (13+)**

1st, 3rd & 5th Fridays 8-10 p.m.

### **Kingdom Krew Junior Youth Club (9-13)**

2nd Friday 7-8.30 p.m.

### **Women's Fellowship**

2nd Monday of the month 10 a.m.-12noon.

### **KENMARE "Gateway" Gortamullin, Killarney Road, Kenmare.**

Sunday Service. 11a.m. (preceded by coffee)

(inc. Children's' programme)

### **Weekly Bible Study/Fellowship meetings**

Tuesdays at 8.00 p.m.

Wednesdays at 10.00 a.m.

Drop in for coffee each Wednesday 11am – 12.00 p.m.

## MILLSTREET

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

Bible study every Tuesday at 8 p.m. in "The Lighthouse" Centre on the town square. Entitled "Step by Step Bible Group" this group is open to anyone who wants to know more about the Bible and grow in their faith.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

As well as all the regular activities listed above the Gneeveguilla Home Fellowship group will meet on Thursdays 2nd and 16th January at 8pm.

Dingle monthly meetings are now well established in the Gairdin Mhuire Day Care Centre on Green Street in Dingle town on the second Sunday of each month at 7pm. Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday 12th January. The Home Fellowship group continues to meet in Lispole on the last Thursday of the month at 8pm. The next meeting is 30th January.

In Castleisland we've been meeting once a month in a home since the summer on the third Monday of each month. From January we hope to move these meetings to a more public venue. It will continue to be the third Monday of each month at 8pm but now we will be meeting at the North and East Kerry Development Centre in Castleisland town. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 20th January. Contact Laurence for details of the location if you're not sure where it is. Please also pray for this new initiative.

In Millstreet we've just taken possession of our new premises on the town square. In early January a sign will be going up over the premises called "Lighthouse". We pray that these premises will enable "The Light of the World" to be proclaimed in the area. Our Tuesday evening Bible studies have already begun to meet there and we also hope to have the centre open on Thursday mornings for people to drop in with coffee and conversation. We're also partnering with "Unbound" Christian bookshop to have Christian literature etc. on sale. Please continue to pray for this initiative. We also continue Sunday night services in Drishane Castle Asylum Seeker Hostel at 6.30pm each Sunday night. This meeting also incorporates a children's programme which many children attend. Men's Breakfast in Killarney is scheduled for Saturday 11th January from 8.30 – 10.00 a. m. The two Tims will lead us in their annual quiz – always good fun.

Some ladies in Killarney have begun a ladies lifestyle club called "No Biscuits". This is an opportunity for women to fellowship together while also sharing ideas for healthy lifestyle choices. Next meeting is 6th January at 11am.

On Monday 13th January the Killarney Women's Fellowship group will embark on the "Christianity Rediscovered" course. This will run from 10am – 12noon. It is of course open to everyone so contact Laurence for further details if interested. The Women's Fellowship is also planning a series of Saturday evening Pot Luck Suppers followed by a talk. These will begin in February. Watch this space for details.

On Saturday 1st February will be our Midlands & Southern District World Mission Conference taking place in Ardfallen in Cork from 10am – 4pm. Then from 4.30pm to 6pm we hope to share in a District worship celebration together. It should be a great day. Try to be there. Details from your minister.

## 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

A new series of bible studies on the theme "Women of the Bible" has begun. The studies include looking at the Suffering Woman -childlessness; abuse; being unloved; alone; th conflicting nest; the Courageous Woman; Exemplary Women Disciples; the Good Woman; Women and Jesus; Women in the early Church; the feminine dimension of God.

These studies take place on Monday evenings in Borrisokane Methodist Church Hall at 7.30 pm and on Wednesday evenings in The Manse, The Mall, Roscrea, at 8.00 pm.

Karen Gillespie from the Cloughjordan congregation has been chosen to join a Christian Aid Team going to view projects in Zimbabwe, in March. Recently Karen organized what became a hugely successful fund-raising walk that realised €1,102 which will be given to the projects.

MWI Cloughjordan/Borrisokane branch will meet on Tuesday 18 February in Cloughjordan, when Gillian Kingston will speak on "A trip to the Vatican" at 8.00 pm. There is a formal invitation extended to the Mother's Union and Irish Countrywomen's Association to attend.

MWI Roscrea branch are organising a "Step-back in Time" antiques tea-party in Roscrea Methodist Church Hall on Friday 28 February at 8.00 pm.

The opportunity to learn more about our world mission is available to all members of the Circuit in the Cork Methodist Church for the Annual District Global Vision Conference, on Saturday 22 February. The Conference begins at 10.30 am for coffee and registration. The programme which features Rev David Nixon who served 12 years in Zambia will start at 11.00 am. David is now Secretary for World Development of the Methodist Church in Ireland. Mr. Alan McElhinney is also a guest speaker. Alan served in Nepal and in Southern Africa where he enables street children to receive schooling. The programme is entitled "School in a Bag".

And for the young people on the Circuit, there is the District Weekend for secondary school ages and upwards, entitled "Deeper". The weekend will take place from 22 February - 2 March in Bandon, Co. Cork. The speakers are Amy Jennings and Jono Griffin. More details and bookings with Raymond Ruttle: Tel: 087 6984775.

Beth Dinsmore-Griffin is leading a fund-raising trek to Everest Base Camp in October 2014. There are only 8 places left and they are open to anyone who might be interested.

Contact: [beth@irishmethodist.org](mailto:beth@irishmethodist.org)



Walk in aid of Christian Aid.

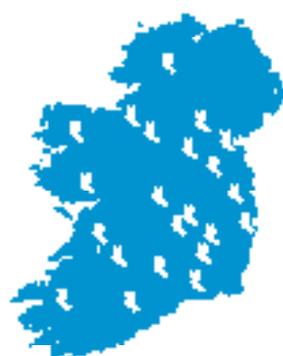


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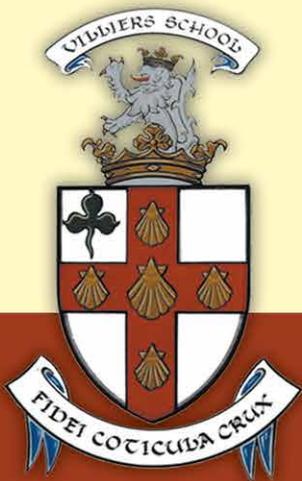
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