



# NEWSLINK

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

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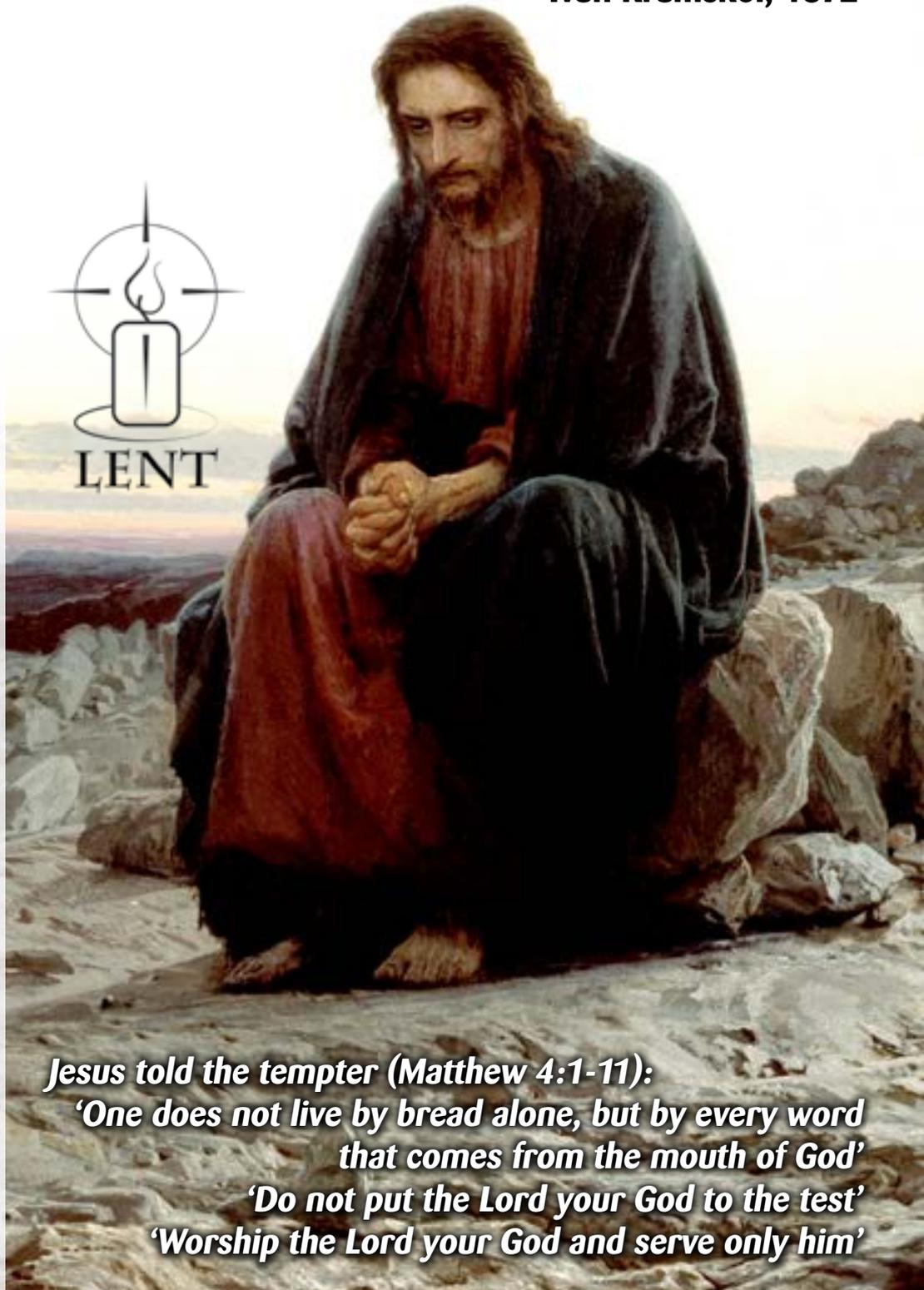
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## Christ in the Wilderness

Ivan Kramskoi, 1872



**Jesus told the tempter (Matthew 4:1-11):**  
**'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'**  
**'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'**  
**'Worship the Lord your God and serve only him'**



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# Bishop Kenneth writes – Mindfulness in Lent

One of the great things about going into a bookshop instead of buying on-line is the opportunity to wander into areas and topics you wouldn't normally be interested in. So recently I found myself looking at shelves filled with books about Mindfulness. I was surprised at how many there were, and in my opinion how similar they all were. Included on the shelves were adult colouring books to help concentration.

Most of the books focussed on the human need for quiet, a time apart, the need to seek times of quietness and stillness, and to finding opportunities to concentrate on something other than ourselves and our immediate needs.

Though Mindfulness is a 'new' subject, the ideas behind it are well grounded in human history. All the great civilisations of the world have some form of retreat, whether yoga, Tibetan monks, or holy mountains as places of rest and mediation. Christianity has expressed this along at least two distinct tracks – church seasons of the year like Advent and Lent, and the practice of retreats.

Lent, which we've just begun, is a time for pause and reflection. It roots itself in the time Jesus spent in the wilderness to think about his ministry and how he would bring the Good News of God to the people of Palestine. He had 'options' as we would say today, or 'temptations' as the Bible puts it, to use power or magic to convey his message. He decided not to pursue those routes and instead began his amazing ministry and teaching for about 3 years, a path which eventually led to his death and then his triumph which we celebrate at Easter.

Lent is one of those times of mindfulness, one time to turn away from the busyness of day to day life and to focus on deeper questions.

The Lent Challenge is an opportunity to take a few minutes each day to look away from our immediate concerns and look to God and listen to his Word, and in the light of that to raise our hearts in prayer about the things that concern us deeply.



St John's Gospel, from which most of our daily readings are taken, is the most reflective and thoughtful of the gospels. Not only does St John tell the story of Jesus as the other gospels do, he also includes more of Jesus' words and reflections, and seeks to interpret the meaning of the events he is recording.

Bookshops and authors have discovered Mindfulness as a new section on the bookshelves. As Christians we too have our own form of mindfulness – times when we turn our attention from our daily concerns and look to higher things. In so doing this Lent we are looking to the deepest reality of all – to the wonderful mystery of God, Creator and Redeemer, to the story of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, the truest story even told.

With all good wishes

+Kenneth

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## Diocesan Calendar

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

**Fri 10th – Sun 12th March** MU All-Ireland Triennial Conference, An Grianan

**Wed 22nd March, 7.30pm** MU Diocesan Trustees meeting, Nenagh Church

**Sat 1st April, 10.30–12.30** UDYC Fundraising Cake Sale & Coffee Morning, Adare Methodist Hall

**Sat 1st April, 2.30pm** UDYC Annual General Meeting, Adare Methodist Hall

**Sat 1st April 2.30pm** GFS Diocesan Service & Prize Day, Borrisokane Church

**Wed 5th April, 7.30pm** MU Diocesan Council Meeting, Moneygall Hall

**Wed 5th April** Mission Evening – Archdeacon Simon Lumby on Spiritual Tourism, Teach an Solas, Tralee

**Thu 6th April, 11.15am** MU All-Ireland Holy Communion Service, Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin (hosted by Limerick & Killaloe)

**Fri 7th – Sun 9th April** UDYC South West Alive Junior Weekend, Muckross Youth Centre, Killarney (10+)

**Sat 8th April, 10.30am** MU All-Ireland Council, Christchurch Cathedral Music Room

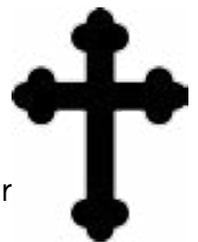
**Fri 21st – Sun 23rd April** UDYC Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend, Birr Outdoor Education Centre (2nd level upwards)

**Sun 21st May, 12 noon** MU Pilgrim's Way Festival Service, St Patrick's Church, Kenmare

**Fri 2nd – Mon 5th June** Diocesan Confirmation Weekend, Esker Youth Village, Athenry

## Death of The Rt Revd Samuel Poyntz

The Newslink team joins with the rest of the United Dioceses in expressing sympathy to the family of the Bishop and his wife Jennifer on the death of her father Rt Revd Samuel Poyntz.



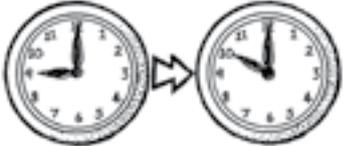
# Mothering Sunday – and Mother Church

From medieval times the Fourth Sunday in Lent – March 26th this year – was called 'Mid-Lent' or 'Refreshment Sunday', when the rigors of Lent were relaxed more than was normal for a feast day. It is called Mothering Sunday as a reference to the Epistle reading for the Day (Galatians 4:21-31). The Lenten Epistles follow from each other with teaching about our life as Christians and how we are to follow Christ. On Midlent Sunday the Epistle talks of bondage and freedom; the bondage of the Law and the Old Covenant as compared to the freedom in Christ, "the promised one", and the New Covenant. Verse 26 reads "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." We gain our freedom from Christ and, as it was seen before the Reformation, the Church. Thus Mothering Sunday is about the freedom that we gain through the promise of Jesus Christ delivered through our Mother the Church.

In former times people were encouraged to go to their 'Mother Church' (their home church or their home Cathedral) to worship and give thanks. Young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed a rare holiday on which to visit their families. They often brought gifts (or accumulated pay) home to their mothers and family. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed and more resembles the secular American Mothers' Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day. But let us not forget its origins in honouring our mother church.

**Don't forget** –  
clocks go forward 1  
hour for summertime  
on March 26th!





# Newslink

Newslink is the diocesan magazine for the United Diocese of Limerick, Killaloe Et Ardferd, which also includes the historic dioceses of Aghadoe, Clonfert, Emlly, 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.

## Editor

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

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**All material must reach the Editor by Friday 17th March 2017 before 6.00pm, by email only, unless otherwise agreed.**

Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

## NEWSLINK ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2017

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## NEWSLINK ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2017

(UNCHANGED from 2016, full page is A4 portrait, half page A5 landscape etc)

	Rate per annum (Euro) (payable in advance)		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

# Prayer Corner

## Partners in Prayer - March 2017

### Each Sunday in March

Church of Ireland: The Diocese of Derry & Raphoe and Bishop Kenneth Good.

Companion Dioceses: The five Dioceses of the Protestant Church of Anhalt, Germany.

### 5th March, 1st Sunday in Lent, Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Marathwada, North India and Rt Revd Madhukar Kasab, Bishop of Marathwada.

Diocese: For those committing themselves to Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge with a short act of prayer and Bible reading every weekday during Lent.

### 12th March, 2nd Sunday in Lent, Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Maseno South, Kenya and Rt Revd Francis Abiero, Bishop of Maseno South & the Diocese of Maseno West, Kenya and Rt Revd Joseph Wasonga, Bishop of Maseno West.

Diocese: For those participating in Lenten courses and Bible studies across the diocese, that the Holy Spirit may inform their discussions.

### 17th March, St Patrick, White

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Meath & Kildare and Rt Revd Pat Storey, Bishop of Meath & Kildare.

Diocese: That the true light and knowledge of God's Word may be spread throughout our island home, and that walking in that light we may come at last to the light of everlasting life.

### 19th March, 3rd Sunday in Lent, Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Mbale, Uganda and Rt Revd Patrick Gidudu, Bishop of Mbale.

Diocese: For Easter Vestries to be held in our parishes over coming weeks, that their business may be efficiently and faithfully conducted and parish resources properly husbanded.

### 26th March, 4th Sunday in Lent (Mothering Sunday), Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Mexico in La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico and Rt Revd Carlos Touche-Porter, Bishop of Mexico.

Diocese: For the leaders and girls of the Girls Friendly Society in our Dioceses, that the GFS Diocesan Service & Prize Day on Saturday 1st April may be grace-filled.

### 2nd April, 5th Sunday in Lent, Violet

Church of Ireland: The Diocese of Down & Dromore and Bishop Harold Miller.

Companion Dioceses: The five Dioceses of the Protestant Church of Anhalt, Germany.

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Mityana, Uganda and Rt Revd Stephen Kaziimba, Bishop of Mityana.

Diocese: For those undertaking a Lenten fast or other discipline, that God may strengthen their resolve.

## Dean Sandra Resignation

Dean Sandra Pragnell, Dean of Limerick, has formally resigned from her position as Dean on health grounds. In accepting her resignation, I wish to acknowledge my appreciation for all she has done for Limerick City Parish and for St Mary's Cathedral during her relatively short few years in Limerick. Despite her health issues in recent years she struggled to maintain her ministry among us, and now I assure her of our prayers and good wishes for her in the next chapter of her life in Inverness, Scotland.

*Rt. Revd. Dr. Kenneth Kearon, Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe*

## A Prayer of the Episcopal Church

God of all power,  
Ruler of the Universe,  
you are worthy of glory and praise.

*Glory to you for ever and ever.*

At your command  
all things came to be:

the vast expanse of the interstellar space,  
galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses,  
and this fragile earth, our island home.

*By your will they were created and have their being.*

From the primal elements  
you brought forth the human race,  
and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill.  
You made us the rulers of creation.

But we turned against you,  
and betrayed your trust;  
and we turned against one another.

*Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.*

Again and again, you called us to return.

Through prophets and sages  
You revealed your righteous Law.

And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son,  
born of a woman,  
to fulfil your Law,  
to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

*By his blood, he reconciled us.*

*By his wounds, we are healed.*

– Eucharistic Prayer C, The Book of Common Prayer (TEC, 1977).



## Lunchtime Concerts at St Mary's

1.15pm in St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

### Wednesday 8th March

Peter Barley (organ)

Music by J.S. Bach and Franck

### Wednesday 15th March

Andrew Sheeran (violin), Peter Barley (piano)

Recital by a young multi-prize-winning violin student and friends

### Wednesday 29th March

Shannon Golf Club Choir

### Wednesday 5th April

Helen Houlihan (soprano), Peter Sebestyen (cello)

Music by Spohr and Brahms

### Wednesday 12th April

Andrew Sheeran (violin), Peter Barley (piano)

Emma English (soprano) and colleagues from LSOM

*Free admission - retiring collection in aid of  
the Companions of St Mary's Cathedral Music*

# Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge

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

## AN ORDER FOR DAILY PRAYER

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

Merciful Lord, grant to your faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Psalm 95.1-5

O come let us sing out to the Lord;  
 Let us shout in triumph to the rock of our salvation.  
 Let us come before his face with thanksgiving  
 And cry out to him joyfully in psalms.  
 For the Lord is a great God  
 And a great king above all gods.  
 In his hand are the depths of the earth  
 And the peaks of the mountains are his also.  
 The sea is his and he made it,  
 His hands moulded dry land.

### A Bible Reading (see Daily Readings)

Pause for Reflection on the reading.

### Canticle (Te Deum Part 2)

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

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

### Collect of the Day (See Collects)

### The Lord's Prayer

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



## Week 3 (Collect)

Almighty God  
 you show to those who are in error the light of your truth  
 that they may return to the way of righteousness:  
 Grant to all those who are admitted  
 into the fellowship of Christ's religion,  
 that they may reject those things  
 that are contrary to their profession,  
 and follow all such things  
 as are agreeable to the same;  
 through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Readings:

Monday 13th March.    John 4: 27 - 42  
 Tuesday 14th March.    John 4: 43 - 54  
 Wednesday 15th March. John 5: 1 - 18  
 Thursday 16th March.    John 5: 1 - 18  
 Friday 17th (St Patrick's Day). Acts 16: 6 - 10  
 Saturday 18th March.    John 7: 1 - 13

## Week 4 (Collect)

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

### Readings:

Monday 20th March.    John 7: 14 - 36  
 Tuesday 21st March.    John 7: 37 - 52  
 Wednesday 22nd March John 8: 12 - 20  
 Thursday 23rd March.    John 8: 21 - 32  
 Friday 24th March.        John 8: 33 - 47  
 Saturday 25th March.    Luke 1: 26 - 38

## Week 5 (Collect)

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

### Readings:

Monday 27th March.    John 6: 1 - 15  
 Tuesday 28th March.    John 6: 16 - 27  
 Wednesday 29th March. John 6: 27 - 40  
 Thursday 30th March    John 6: 41 - 51  
 Friday 31st March.        John 6: 52 - 59  
 Saturday 1st April.        John 6: 60 - 71

(More Collects and Readings in next month's Newslink)

# A View from the Pew - I am bewildered

## by Salters Sterling



Sitting quietly in S. Brendan's, Birr, on a Sunday morning the view is of the great East Window installed in memory of Mary, Countess of Rosse, wife of the Astronomer Earl, by the Fourth Earl and his brothers some 125 years ago. It is a series of panels representing Prophets, Apostles, Saints and Angels. They are Pillars of Faith, Exemplars of Godly living, Men and Women who, over many generations were the Companions of Christ, the hoped for Messiah,

the experienced Lord. They are a great comfort and consolations in these days.

I come to worship increasingly bewildered by the world I live in. Bewildered by a nation seeking to leave a consortium of nations through which a peace, albeit on occasion an uneasy and incomplete peace, has been allowed to survive in a Europe which had previously known two World Wars in the space of 30 years. The immediate cause a desire to keep refugees and economic migrants out, and that with a seemingly forgotten history of colony and empire. I ask myself how do I view this as an expression of a Christian-influenced culture. I am bewildered.

I am bewildered too as I listen to events unfold in the United States. An Officer of the Law is sacked for telling the truth. A Judge is castigated for applying the Law. An Officer of State resigns because he has told lies. The Head of State pillories those agencies of news who seek to establish what the facts are and conflicts of interests are practiced as if they are 'perks' of Office. And all the time blame is attributed to some one or some where else. All that I have been

taught of what it means to be an adult citizen seems to be set at naught. I am bewildered.

I am bewildered too as I consider the conditions in our Island home. How is it that we cannot plan for the annually recurring illness that seems to catch our hospitals napping as if it had never happened before particularly when it is the old, the frail, the infirm who are the trolley dwellers? Am I to believe that it is the heightened election-rush of adrenalin that can excuse the inexcusable put-down of the Irish Language by someone who pretends to leadership and kneels at the same Table of the same Lord as I/we do? And my bewilderment increases when I try to take on board the manifest truth that lying would appear to have become the modus operandi, nay, vivendi of crucial sectors of our Public Service while all error is attributed to a systems or an administrative error. Do I need to write McCabe, Taylor and others to spell that out? You, too, must be bewildered, having to pinch yourself to convince yourself that you are awake and not in some Alice-in-Wonderland.

And so it is to the challenge of the Church that I turn for comfort and even consolation as we approach Lent. Turning in full recognition that we too are imperfect people but recognising that we have a touchstone of authority that service by service brings us back to God's Reality. Those moments in our worship when, the writings being read it is announced 'This is the Word of the Lord' and we can respond in generations of confirmation 'Thanks be to God' knowing that it was from those same writings that Jesus publicly proclaimed the reality and certainty of his own ministry having experienced baptism and temptation. Bishop Kenneth invites us to keep this Lent by a daily reading of the Bible. As we do that let us not forget to tell ourselves 'This is the Word of the 'Lord' and learn to live in that reality rather than in any of the others that are on offer. 'Thanks be to God'. And I gaze on the East Window knowing that Easter will surely come.

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## Armchair Christmas Quiz - Results & Answers

*Rev Denis Sandes writes:*

Many thanks to all who supported our Annual Armchair Christmas Quiz. The quiz was in aid of the Refugee Crisis, and the Haiti Hurricane appeal, via the Bishop's Appeal and Christian Aid. These are both very worthwhile Charities, and all of the money raised in this way goes to where it is needed. We had a huge number of entries this year, thanks to circulating it through several Diocesan magazines, the Methodist Midland Circuit and several Church of Ireland parishes. We made just over €1400 thanks to the generosity of many, many people.

**This year's winners:**

- 1st Adah O'Donovan, Bantry, Co. Cork
- 2nd June Roe, Bray, Co. Wicklow
- 3rd Des Bain, Dublin
- 4th Paul Hemmingway, Tagoa, Co. Wexford
- 5th Joan Baker, Askeaton, Co. Limerick

**Had a good shot:**

Anne Bowen, Dublin

Sarah Mooney, Ardcroney, Co. Tipperary

Joyce Barrett, Donard, Co. Wicklow

**Armchair Christmas Quiz Answers**

- 1) Traditional at Christmas: TURKEY
- 2) Extra Stone, exclaimed: MOROCCO
- 3) 1st letter in a hurry! RUSSIA
- 4) Needs food: HUNGARY
- 5) Lots of Bugs! GERMANY
- 6) Veggie from the North? SWEDEN
- 7) Land of MacBeth: SCOTLAND
- 8) This land helps fish swim: FINLAND
- 9) Land of Dykes: HOLLAND
- 10) Write one to pay this republic! CZECH
- 11) Is Father able? CANADA
- 12) Could these 2 make a match of it? SUDAN
- 13) Land of Mummies: EGYPT
- 14) Loony Cookers Motor: MADAGASCAR
- 15) Could be a fowl! GUINEA
- 16) I in a hurry! IRAN
- 17) Cross country: IRELAND
- 18) Land of the upper leg! THAILAND
- 19) Sister ship to Lusitania; MAURITANIA
- 20) Sounds hot, in food! CHILE
- 21) Keeps the wheels turning: GREECE
- 22) Sounds like mad oarsmen! ROMANIA
- 23) Where the nuts come from! BRAZIL
- 24) Old fashioned gents sun hat: PANAMA
- 25) All together for the realm: UNITED KINGDOM

# Diocesan Organisations

## Girls Friendly Society

### CLOUGHJORDAN BRANCH

The Diocesan Christmas Craft Day was held in St. Kieran's Hall, Cloughjordan on Saturday, 26th November and the Christmas party was held on 7th December

We have been busy working on our crafts for our competitions since then. The Mini-Market is proving very popular.. Proceeds will go to Mission Money and World Project.

### NENAGH BRANCH

Branch Enrolment Service took place in St. Mary's Church on Sunday, 19th February. The theme was taken from the Bible Study Syllabus 'Whatever Gift you have received to serve others'

Rev Rod Smyth lead the service of Morning Prayer and GFS took an active part in the service. Jessica Murphy read the story of Dorcas, April & Heather Hayes read the story of Hannah who bore a son called Samuel. Prayers were read by Erika Murphy, Danielle O'Brien and Mary Gill. Collection was taken up by Keeva Russell, Sarah Jane Clarke & Alice Hayes – assisted by Emma Gordon, April Hayes and Grace Langley. It was a truly lovely service. Thanks to the girls for taking part in the service and to Rev Rod Smyth for organising the service, Rosemary Smyth for leading the girls in singing and Audrey Clarke Gordon & Rose Langley for preparing the girls. Well done to everyone involved.



*Nenagh girls after the Branch Enrolment Service on 19th February*

### ROSCREA BRANCH

Girls enjoyed Swimming at Roscrea Leisure Centre and gave the event a 'thumbs up'. All girls are well on the way to achieving their badges.

On a sad note, the Branch sympathies with Alison Roe and her family on the loss of Alison's father, Patrick Kelly.

Upcoming Branch Meetings: 3rd March Corbally Hall 7.00 -8.30

10th March Corbally Hall 7.00-9.00

24th March St Cronans National School 7.00-8.30

### BIRR BRANCH

Older girls are working on their crafts, making beautiful fabric bowls and magazine reed animal silhouette pictures, their creativity is amazing. The younger girls are completing their bible study module. All this work is interspersed with games and fun and fellowship. Pancake making was on the agenda for our meeting on Shrove Tuesday and the girls enjoyed them with Nutella and sprinkles.



*Birr Enrolment 2017*

Our leader Betty Delahunt continues to recuperate after her recent operation and Diane Dagg is also recovering after an operation. Everyone in the Diocese wishes them both well in their recovery.

The entire Diocese extends deepest sympathy to Birr leader, Yvonne Shaw and her family on the recent loss of her beloved little grandson Tommy. Tommy was also a cousin of some of our members and we extend our sympathy to those girls at this very sad time also.

### LEADERS NIGHT OUT

Leaders from the Diocese gathered for a well-earned get together on Saturday, 28th January in the Thatch Cottage, Ballycommon. It was a wonderful evening of chat, good food and lots of laughter. Thanks to Nenagh leaders for organising this year's event.

### UP COMING EVENTS

#### 50th Anniversary Banner Craft Meeting

Some Leaders in the branch have come together to create a celebration banner for the 50th Anniversary. The Banner will form part of the Diocesan Service in Borrisokane on 1st April.

#### Craft Judging

Diocesan Craft Judging will take place 18th March in the Methodist Hall, Cloughjordan. All Ireland crafts will be judged in Dublin on the 18th April

#### Diocesan Service & Prize day 2017

The Annual Diocesan Service & Prize day will be on Saturday, 1st April 2017 at 2.30pm in Borrisokane Church. This will be a very special occasion as we celebrates 50 years since GFS was restarted in the Diocese. In 1967 the opening service was in held in Borrisokane Church so we return there for the Diocesan Service & Prize Day which will also be a celebration of the 50th Anniversary. We look forward to welcoming members past and present to renew old friendships and celebrate together. We look forward to a very uplifting day of celebration when we will look back on the accomplishments of GFS in the Dioceses but also look forward into the future.

#### Diocesan Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 27th April in Cloughjordan.

Camp Meeting will take place on 11th May in the Rectory, Birr at 8pm. Camp has been confirmed to take place 23-25 June in Bandon.

#### GFS 140 Year Celebrations

This year GFS celebrates 140 years in Ireland. On the 21st May 2017 there will be a Celebration Service in Christchurch Bray, Co Wicklow.

## Boys' Brigade

### TRALEE BOYS' BRIGADE

The Boys' Brigade have had a fun filled time so far this session. At Christmas we put on a Nativity Play and songs evening for our parents and families and even Santa dropped in to see us. In January we went to Siamsa Tire to see the pantomime Rapunzel. We had a pizza evening were the boy's and girls made and ate their own pizza. We held a Beatle Drive and caused a little bit of stir when the leader added the score up incorrectly. We made Valentine pictures for our mums and dads. We will also be taking part in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade and are looking forward to our enrolment service on March 9th.

We look forward to more fun and games for the rest of the session

Collette

'COOKING SOLO' BY JILL HAYES – LIMERICK CITY BRANCH MEETING ON 13TH FEB. 2017

Nineteen members and friends gathered in Richmond Terrace for a most interesting and informative demonstration by Jill Hayes entitled 'Cooking Solo' or 'Cooking for One'. Jill stressed the importance of eating well when living alone and gave lots of tips and advice about nutrition, providing an excellent advice and recipe sheet. She prepared a number of delicious looking dishes using chicken, pork and salmon. Cloakroom tickets had been given out as folk arrived for the meeting and at the end of the evening there was a draw when lucky winners chose from the selection to bring home a meal.

We are very grateful to Jill for a most enjoyable evening and also to our Hon. Secretary, Bev, who acted as a very professional 'commis chef'.

In March we look forward to attending the Women's World Day of Prayer services which will be hosted in Villiers Square on Thursday 2nd March at 10.30am by members of Thursday Club and on Friday 3rd at 7.30pm by members of the Presbyterian/Methodist congregation in Christchurch. We will join with members from Askeaton and Adare branches for the Lady Day service in Askeaton on Monday 27th March.



*Jill Hayes "Cooking Solo" demonstrator*

## AN EVENING OF MINDFULNESS

A great crowd got together on 15th February from Adare, Kilcornan and Limerick Branches to listen to Ita Hannon who gave a wonderful talk on the effectiveness of Mindfulness and Meditation. Ita is a retired Counsellor from the HSE and has spent many years working in the area of Meditation.



*Ita Hannon, Phoebe Abbott, Jessie Griffin*

Ita guided us all through some lovely relaxation exercises before showing us the techniques of meditation which we then practiced

for some time. She pointed out the value of relaxation, meditation and time for ourselves, particularly these days in our very busy lives. She gave the analogy of "Monkeys in our Heads" telling us to do this, that and the other without a break!

Adare Branch Leader and Diocesan Marketing Co-Ordinator, Jessie Griffin had a stall packed full of MU cards and books for sale while we enjoyed a fabulous supper, a cup of tea and a chat.

## United Diocesan Youth Council

### FUNDRAISING CAKE SALE & COFFEE MORNING

The will be first of our fundraising ventures for 2017 and it will take place in Adare Methodist Hall from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm on Saturday 1st April. Your support and help for this event would be appreciated.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of UDYC will take place on Saturday 1st April 2017 in Adare Methodist Hall with refreshments from 2.30 pm and meeting commencing at 3.00 pm. We encourage everyone from throughout United Diocese to attend.

### SOUTH WEST ALIVE JUNIOR WEEKEND 2017

Let the adventure begin! Our South West Alive Junior Weekend 2017 will take place at the splendid facilities of the Muckcross Youth Centre near Killarney from Friday 7th April– Sunday 9th April 2017 (start of Easter Holidays) for what promises to be an amazing weekend of fun, faith & fellowship. So if you are 10 plus years of age and want a weekend of adventure book today to avoid disappointment!!

During the weekend the following fabulous activities will also be on offer: Exciting Times of Worship, Icebreaker Games, Full day of water & land outdoor activities at Star Outdoors Kenmare ([www.staroutdoors.ie](http://www.staroutdoors.ie)) to include kayaking, water trampoline & slide, banana boat, archery, mini golf, obstacle course and team games, swimming at Aquadome Tralee, Disco, Charades, Good Food, And much more FUN, FAITH and FELLOWSHIP than one could ever imagine.....

The weekend will cost €100 per person or €90 each if more than one from same family either this weekend or Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend. The fee will include all transport, activities, food and accommodation. Return Transport from/to Roscrea, Moneygall, Nenagh, Limerick, Adare & Newcastlewest. Final Date for receipt of bookings is Friday 31st March 2017.

### SPRING MADNESS OUTDOOR ADVENTURE WEEKEND 2017

Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend 2017 will be an action packed weekend taking place at Birr Outdoor Education Centre ([www.birroec.ie](http://www.birroec.ie)) at end of Easter school holidays from Friday 21st April – Sunday 23th April 2017 for all those attending Secondary School.

We plan to have many exciting activities over the weekend including Varied & Lively Times of Worship with teaching, Icebreaker Games, Water & Land Outdoor Activities (Canoeing on Lough Derg from Portumna, Rock Climbing & Abseiling in Slieve Bloom Mountains, Gorge Walking at Cadamstown, Zip Wire at Centre in Birr, Table Quiz, Disco, lots of good food and a little bit of sleep!!! Thus if you want an adventure weekend book today for Spring Madness Adventure Weekend 2017!!! The weekend will cost €100 per person or €90 each if more than one from same family attending either this weekend or South West Alive Junior Weekend. The fee will include all transport, activities, food and accommodation. Return transport will be available from/to event serving Limerick, Nenagh, Moneygall & Roscrea. Final Date for receipt of bookings is Thursday 13th April 2017.

For more information on any of our events or activities, please contact Edward (087) 2907553 or Oscar on (086) 2476327, Email: [udyc@limerick.anglican.org](mailto:udyc@limerick.anglican.org) or our UDYC Facebook page.

Until next month,  
Sophia  
Mobile: 087 1339996

# Diocesan Board of Mission

## MISSION EVENING

At the 2nd Mission Evening of 2017, on Wednesday 8th February in Cloughjordan Parish Centre, John Reid from Shinrone parish gave a presentation on Overseas Humanitarian Aid Work & Christianity - a personal perspective from an aid worker. John studied agriculture at Gurteen college, worked on farms in Australia and New Zealand, travelled in Africa and then went back to college at UCD for a Master's degree. Since then he has worked for Concern in Afghanistan, Liberia, North Korea, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia and Lebanon.

The meeting was very well attended from across the local community and John's presentation was very well received. See page 17 for a report with photos.

## NEXT MISSION EVENING

Our next Mission Evening will be in Teach an Solas (Tralee Parish Centre), on Wed 5th April at 8 pm. The speaker will be Archdeacon Simon Lumby, from Killarney on 'Spiritual Tourism'.

# SCHOOL NEWS

## St. Nicholas' National School, Adare

Sewing classes are up and running as an after school activity and chess club takes place after school on Thursdays. This year we have twenty-six pupils participating, some with a few years' experience while others are beginners.

Three teams entered the local Credit Union Schools' Quiz at the end of January and well done to all who competed. Congratulations to one of our under 13 teams who were victorious on the night and will now participate in the Chapter final on March 5th. Congratulations to David Canning, Ingrid Cussen, Olivia Flood and Aedin Would.

Our annual Prize Day took place on February 17th and we were delighted to welcome Rev Ruth Watt to the school to present prizes to all pupils. Afterwards 6th class pupils hosted a coffee afternoon in aid of the Toilet Twinning Project and Our Lady's Hospital, Crumlin. Thanks to everyone who made it a wonderful afternoon, the senior pupils who baked all the goodies and 6th class pupils who served tea and coffee to all the adults.



*Coffee afternoon in St. Nicholas' N.S.*

The school was closed on February 23rd and 24th for mid-term break.

Our Green Schools' Committee under the guidance of Ms Anglim are putting the finishing touches to the application for our sixth Green Flag. We are revisiting the theme of litter and waste while also looking at Global Citizenship. This theme enables schools to discover how work on Green-Schools has positively influenced our global community. The committee plans to have an Action Day in school on March 10th.

## Kiltallagh National School, Castlemaine

There was much excitement when Joe Noonan- Grandad of two of our pupils, arrived to visit us here in Kiltallagh School. The pupils in the senior room have been reading some of Joe's poems from his recently published book of poetry entitled-Mirrored Face. Joe very generously donated this wonderful compilation to all the senior children and staff of the school. Each week a pupil gets to choose and recite their favourite poem.



*Poetry Reading*

The children in the junior and senior room penned their own poems and recited them for Joe. Following a lovely afternoon, Joe took out his guitar and sang his newly composed song 'A Summer's Day'.



*Joe Noonan Playing*



*We made these in class!*

We are really grateful to Joe for making the trip from Clare- especially to be with us. We are already looking forward to a return visit.

Here are samples of some of the lovely poetry work completed by the children of Kiltallagh following our wonderful poetry workshop with grandparent-Joe Noonan



Joe Noonan

#### Ag Dul Ar Scoil

1. Tá mé ag dul ar scoil inniu  
Cá bhfuil mo bhróga dubh?  
Tá mo gheansaí gorm agam  
Cabhraigh mamaí le do thoil.
2. Tá do bhróga sa seomra suite  
Suigh síos agus bí ag ithe  
Ach mamaí níl aon briste orm  
Agus cá bhfuil mo carbhat gorm?
3. Téir suas, cuir ort do léine  
Tá do carbhat faoi do bhriste géine  
Brostaigh Sarah-Lynn le do thoil  
Tá sé in am dul ar scoil.

#### Pancóga

Isteach sa bhabhla  
Crith an plúr  
Ubh amháin agus bainne úr  
Cócáil i friochtán te  
Déan ceann amháin  
Más maith leat -deich!!

#### Peace -by David Scally

Peace is a word- binds us together,  
Holding us strong for ever and ever  
Peace is a dove-a sign of love.  
Peace is above all else in the world  
Yet there is still so much to be unfurled.  
Peace without it-we would be nothing.

#### Snow-By Richard Boyle

Snow, Snow, everywhere.  
School is closed but we don't care!  
I opened the curtains and looked around  
To see a white blanket of snow on the ground...  
I ran outside with such delight  
To see this wonderful Winters sight  
I ran and jumped, the day was great  
No breakfast, lunch or dinner ate.  
But it all came to an end so fast  
The fun and games didn't last!  
I slipped on ice and broke my knee  
And before I knew it  
I was in A and E!

## Oxmantown National School, Birr

Oxmantown National School would also like to congratulate Ms. Elaine Lynch and Eoin on the birth of their son Jack, Mrs. Nuala Browne is taking Ms. Lynch's class while she is on her maternity leave.

*Isabel Alexander wrote:*

#### 8Ú FEABHRA 2017 FREE WRITING

When I heard my Mum calling me at 5:45am, I was exhausted, I crawled out of my bed and got dressed into my uniform. We got a lift to Tullamore where we met our teacher, who took us up to DCU for the Mini Scientist Grand Final. I was very nervous looking at all the great projects as we made our way to our table. I was extremely worried when the judges were going around but it was still very exciting. I was very proud of my team, they were excellent talking all about "Water Evaporation" and the effects of the Polar Ice Caps melting. When lunch time came about five or six judges adjudicated us and Kelly was interviewed by RTE Drive Time Show! After we finished eating we watched 'Science of Bubbles' where a lady was making very large bubbles out of Fairy liquid and sugar. After the show ended it was time for awards ceremony. We each got a rosette and a certificate. "Badger: Victim or Villain" had won. After we had packed up our project we went on the long ride home, sad that we did not win but delighted we got this far.



Mini scientist

## Rathkeale No. 2 National School

Bishop Kenneth has appointed Rev Canon Patrick Comerford to the position of chairperson of the Board of Management and we all look forward to working together. The children all enjoyed our recent assembly when Rev Patrick was with us and we all look forward to many more visits.

We send our best wishes to Declan in 5th class who has entered his Scratch project on Biodiversity into the National Scratch Competition. Scratch is a coding program which can be used to create games, tell stories etc. Pupils have been experimenting with Scratch over the past year or so and this is our first entry into the competition. Codecraft, coding workshops, using Scratch are being held in the school on Thursday afternoons. These workshops are being run by Bigwave Media Training. Further information on the workshops and future possible dates can be found by contacting Liam or Suzanne Hurrell on 087 9384569 or 087 9384557.

Our plans to develop a wildflower garden got off to a good start recently. We had a delivery of topsoil which needed to be wheelbarrowed to our garden. Many thanks to the parents who came along and helped out. Luckily the weather was in our favour and

many hands made light work. Once the weather warms up a little we will sow the seeds. We've also purchased some apple trees which will hopefully grow successfully for us.



*Working Hard*

Our annual Open Hour for new pupils will be held on Wednesday 8th March from 3pm-4pm. Anyone thinking of enrolling their child for September 2017 or later is invited to come along, meet the staff and see over the school.

We've recently purchased a new set of goalposts for our playing field. These will be a great addition for playtime as well as PE lessons. Our swimming lessons in Askeaton Pool are almost complete for this year and we congratulate all the pupils on the progress they are making. The pupils took part in Operation Transformation's 10@10 on 10th February by seeing how many laps of the playing field they could run, jog or walk in ten minutes.



*Operation Transformation 10@10>*

## Villiers School

### MUN - MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Our students' participation in model United Nations continues to impress. A group of twenty students from TY and form 5 travel to Russia from the 24th March - 1st April. They visit St.Petersburg and Moscow and debate on human rights issues such as freedom of religious expression, resolving cultural and logistical obstacles to contraception and the social and economic impacts of improvements in women's rights.

The second conference takes place in Prague from the 5th - 9th April. This group comprises of nineteen students from TY and form



5. We wish them the best of luck with their preparation, debating skills and thank Ms.Gowing, Ms.Woods and Deirdre O'Sullivan for their continued hard work and organisation.

### SKI AND SNOWBOARDING TRIP

This year's trip is to Pinzolo in Italy from Sunday 19th February to Saturday 25th February - mid-term. A total of eighty two persons are travelling which comprise of students from form 1 to form 6 and staff. Headed by Mr.Sutton and his able lieutenants, we look forward to the reports and photos of both the skiing and snowboarding.

### JUNK KOUTURE COMPETITION SUCCESS

Congratulation to both our TY and form 5 students under the guidance of Ms.Mahon whose commitment and hard work has led to four designer dresses being shortlisted to represent the school in the Southern Regional finals in UL Concert Hall on Friday March 10th. Best of luck to them all.

### 'OUR TOWN' TY DRAMA

Congratulations to one and all on the recent TY production of 'Our Town' which was performed in the Lime Tree theatre, Mary Immaculate College on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd February. A massive experience for everyone and many thanks to all the students, staff, parents, family and friends who came to support. Well done again to everyone involved in this professional and enjoyable production.

## News from the Villiers Sanctuary

The stress of the Mock exams is over and mid-term is upon us. A well-earned rest and a chance to recuperate and reflect is always welcomed. As ever, life in the Sanctuary is busy but always extremely rewarding. The Christian Union is busy making plans for Lent. Once again their theme is to take on rather than give up. The message that is fundamental here in the Sanctuary is to love God and love your neighbour so the CU want to take on being more loving and kind by doing random acts of kindness. The Prayer group has grown and has very quickly become established as a very important part of the week for those involved. The group meets every Thursday after school and gather to pray, reflect and give thanks to God. It is a truly wonderful space and an incredible blessing to be a part of. It is open to everyone so feel free to drop in!

Some of the members of the prayer group went along to the Augustinian Church in Limerick to attend a Taize service and found it to a very spiritual experience. So much so that they want to introduce some Taize into their weekly worship. Thank you to Father Sean for making us so welcome.

One of the areas that I have been looking at in the Sanctuary recently is that of Brokenness. It's natural to feel angry and disappointed when things do not go as we want, or when something breaks or lets us down. Sometimes, we can become angry and disappointed in ourselves if we don't manage to achieve the things we set out to do. In fact, we may find ourselves wishing that we could turn back time and do things differently. But what if we accepted, embraced and even valued brokenness? What if we sought to see the good in situations that did not go exactly to plan? What if we decided to accept that not everything, including ourselves, needs to be perfect? When things go wrong, or something important breaks, there is an opportunity to accept and learn from it. It can become part of our experience and the journey of our lives. There is of



Hazel, Jessica and Gearoid in the Augustinian church for the Taize service.

course another way to respond when things go wrong or we feel broken. For people of many faiths, when they experience problems or get things wrong, they turn to God in prayer. Psalm 147.3 tells us that God is close to those who feel broken. So the message I would like to leave you with is that if you are struggling or feel 'broken hearted', take a breath and pray for the times when you feel anger, frustration and disappointment when things break.

*God, we ask you to help us to respond positively by accepting and learning from the situation. Grant us the willingness to seek help from family, friends and you when we feel let-down and disappointed. Help us with this today, we pray.*

Blessings and Peace  
Chaplain Jackie McNair



"To think we grumbled when the Church used unintelligible archaic language!"



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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: 061-374 779

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The start of the new year and the cycle and rhythm of the ordinary things of life and parish life. The Sunday mornings with the people gathering to give God thanks and place before God their hopes and fears and then to move off into the week trusting in a loving God. This is the green liturgical season called Ordinary Time. So much of our life can be ordinary and that is how it should be. Someone once said that God must love ordinary people because he made so many of them. So not much this month extra-ordinary happened which is a good thing. Next month we enter a new reflective season in the Church's calendar: we move from green to red to violet. The changing colours and seasons reminds us that nothing is stagnant and that change happens constantly even when it seems so ordinary.

Tuamgraney Church is of historical significance in the village of Tuamgraney and indeed this island and it is wonderful that we have been invited by the Tuamgraney Development Association to explore how the heritage and significance of Tuamgraney can be highlighted and how we can find ways to have people stop in the village and not just drive past it on their way elsewhere.

We had our committee meeting in Clonlara and Freddie Bourke who has written several books on the history of Clonlara, including 'Kiltinanlea Parish Church 1782-1992', has offered to give a history lecture in the Church and Sunday 26th March at 4.00pm.

At St Flannan's Cathedral in Killaloe we are exploring ways to have it as a place for quiet days and a place of pilgrimage. This has been a matter raised by the commission we had to look at our diocese and in the report call 'Forward Together'. Many people have said there needs to be a place for quiet days, retreats and talks on faith. It is the Bishop's request that we look at St Flannan's to be such a place within the joint dioceses. So it is the hope that such days can be offered in the future for clergy, readers and for those interested (who call themselves ordinary) in developing a sense of spirituality. It may be something that the new Guild of Lay Readers may make use of in the future.

There may be ways we can link our Churches in the Union of Parishes for pilgrimage or mindful (meditative and reflective) walks as we are wonderfully located along the Shannon River and Lough Derg. There has even been brief discussions about looking at how the water and sailing can be explored - such as a sail along the Shannon and somehow linking that with St Brendan the Navigator. I would be glad to hear from anyone interested in a pilgrimage by water on the Shannon with a view of getting a small group together to organise something.

So all of this is to take the ordinary and find the holy in it. It is no magical formula but how Jesus went about things. No more so than in the Eucharist when such ordinary elements of a Middle Eastern meal when bread and wine was taken and was made holy. So may we find and put holy into what appears to be ordinary and with the help of God and those not afraid of exploring something new and different, just maybe the ordinary becomes extra-ordinary.



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# Diocesan Readers & new Canon Precentor

Choral Evensong in St Marys Cathedral, Limerick on Sunday 19th February 2017 marked three joyful events in the life of the United Dioceses of Limerick & Killaloe.

Firstly, Bishop Kenneth launched the new Guild of Lay Readers, chaired by Audrey Clarke Gordon of Nenagh Union of Parishes, in a ceremony in which existing diocesan readers recommitted themselves to the work for which they were commissioned.

Secondly, Bishop Kenneth commissioned three diocesan readers for work in Limerick & Killaloe: Mrs Norma-Jean Carney (Birr Group of Parishes) and Jerome Phair (Clonfert Group of Parishes) were newly commissioned after successfully completing the Certificate in Christian Studies programme run in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory; and Dr Steven Ellis, already a diocesan reader in the Diocese of Tuam, Killala & Achonry, was also commissioned for Limerick & Killaloe, where he often serves.

And thirdly, Rev Patrick Comerford, Priest-in-Charge of Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin, was installed as Canon Precentor of the joint Chapter of St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, St Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe and St Brendan's Cathedral, Clonfert.

Diocesan reader Jackie McNair, Chaplain at Villiers School, led the service beautifully.

The guest preacher, Rt Rev Patrick Rooke, Bishop of Tuam, Killala & Achonry, reflected eloquently on the importance both of the ministry and witness of lay readers, and of the educational role that Canon Patrick Comerford will shortly take up. He touched on the turbulent times we live in. In a turbulent world he urged readers in their ministries to be "wise friends", a source of insight and discernment not dispensed from a distant centre, but close both to parish clergy and to the people they serve.

The choir of St Mary's Cathedral, under the direction of Peter Barley, did full justice to Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Harwood in A flat and the anthem Expectans expectavi by Charles Wood – fine singing does so much to bring worship to life.

The refrain of the final hymn (456 Lord, you give the great commission) perfectly captured the prayerful mood of the service:

*With the Spirit's gifts empower us  
for the work of ministry.*



The newly launched Guild of Lay Readers for the Diocese of Limerick & Killaloe



(l-r) Canon Precentor Patrick Comerford, Bishop Kenneth Kearon and Dean of Killaloe & Clonfert Garry Paulsen



Newly commissioned diocesan readers (l-r) Jerome Phair, Norma-Jean Carney and Dr Steven Ellis, with warden of readers Ven Wayne Carney and Bishop Kenneth Kearon

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# Farewell Service for Dean Sandra Pragnell

A United Choral Eucharist brought together the whole Limerick City Parish on Sunday 29th January to say farewell to Dean Sandra Pragnell, a poignant occasion for us all. Dean Sandra has not been well for many months, and has now formally resigned as Dean of Limerick and retired from full-time ministry.

The lessons were read by Diocesan Reader, David McBurnie, (Abington Church), and Sonia Robbins, Dean Sandra's sister. Fr Loughlin Brennan from Murroe Parish read the Gospel. Prayers were led by Lucy Kavanagh, Diocesan President of the Mothers' Union (St Michael's Church). Whilst Canon Marie presided, it was lovely to have Dean Sandra celebrate the Eucharist, with Diocesan Reader, Jackie McNair and the Curate, Rev'd Edna Wakely assisting with the chalices. We were also joined by Rev'd Vicki Lynch, Minister of Christ Church United Presbyterian and Methodist congregations. Rev'd Richard Moore from Dundalk Parish preached and spoke of the many projects Dean Sandra had achieved when she was Rector there. He acknowledged and reminded us all of her deep spirituality and pastoral care for her parishioners.

We were able to celebrate some of the projects Dean Sandra had enabled whilst in Limerick - she dedicated the work done to date in the restoration of St Mark's Chapel, and then dedicated the new oak stair and re-sitting of the pulpit. This latter project had been enabled by utilizing part of the bequest to the Cathedral by the late Canon Eric Despard, and it was good to have his sister-in-law, Mrs Violet Despard, and her son, Philip, present. This gift was commemorated with a new bronze plaque placed on the side of the pulpit.

Presentations were made to Dean Sandra at the end of the service, from the parish, Villiers School and St Michael's National School. After the presentations, the choir and congregation together sang a verse and chorus of 'God be with you till we meet again' - our

blessing of Sandra as she moves to Scotland to be with her family. The choir and clergy then processed out to the new Columbarium which was dedicated by Dean Sandra, and the choir sang 'Thou knowest, Lord' by Purcell. Then it was back into the Cathedral for wonderful refreshments prepared by a dedicated parish team - many thanks to everyone who contributed.

We wish Dean Sandra every blessing as she begins a new phase of her life with her family in Scotland. "Till we meet again, till we meet... till we meet at Jesus' feet... God be with you till we meet again." Now we ask for your prayers as the Limerick City Parish begins a period of reflection and consideration before engaging in the process of inviting a new Rector and Dean to come amongst us.

Editor: The Newslink team joins in wishing Dean Sandra every blessing for the future.



*Children from St Michael's National School presenting gifts to Dean Sandra*



*Dean Sandra accepting a gift of a turned wooden bowl*



*Villiers School presented Dean Sandra with a painting of the School*

# Humanitarian Aid Work & Christianity – a personal perspective from an aid worker

*The following is a summary of the presentation given by John Reid to the Mission Evening on 8th February at the Cloughjordan Parish Centre.*

John Reid, originally from Shinrone Parish, studied agriculture at Gurteen college, worked on farms in Australia and New Zealand, travelled in Africa and then went back to college at UCD for a Master's degree. Since then he has worked for Concern in Afghanistan, Liberia, North Korea, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia and Lebanon.

John was inspired from an early age by missionaries who visited the National School from the Leprosy Mission and CMS. He emphasized the importance of this in schools today to encourage the next generation. He explained how his own Christian faith was his primary motive for getting involved in humanitarian work and quoted a number of key scriptures indicating how we should help the poor and vulnerable. These included Matthew 25: 42-43, Galatians 6:9-10 and James 2:14.

He then showed photos from each country he worked in and explained some key issues involved when implementing sustainable humanitarian programmes. These included: Empowerment of women and capacity building; community participation in all stages including needs identification; tackling the root causes of poverty; reducing dependency; advocating for the most vulnerable; building sustainable infrastructure and looking at the wider context. Photos included training of farmers to improve food production, building markets to sell the produce, improving roads to access these markets and food processing etc.

Other key interventions included: building schools for children; setting up farmer field schools; improved rice production; potable water supply, latrines; reforestation; natural resource management

and zero tillage/Conservation Agriculture (CA). CA gave very high yield increases to poor farmers in Malawi and Zambia.

In North Korea work included: tackling soil erosion; vegetable production in large winterised greenhouses; food processing including maize noodles; goat milk processing; nutrition training, especially for malnourished young children; small scale farm mechanisation and installing solar power at hospitals to supply electricity and hot water.

John worked on the Ebola crisis in West Africa in 2014 and showed photos of medical facilities and staff in protective clothing and also of life continuing at maternity clinics and the harsh reality of large scale grave digging for the victims of Ebola.

More recent work in Lebanon last year involved working with Syrian refugees and also in women's empowerment and reconciliation between different communities within previously war-torn Tripoli in Northern Lebanon.

John showed photos of the churches he was able to attend in some of these countries including, surprisingly, one in North Korea. This enabled him to maintain his faith despite very challenging circumstances and working in an often very secular environment. God is indeed faithful.

He pointed out the mainly under-recognised but vital work carried out by missionaries, priests and nuns who go out for long periods, learn the culture and language, live among the people be it slums or rural areas, and get the Gospel message across by example. They are a great example of how to demonstrate God's love in action to make a real impact on the lives of some of the most vulnerable and poorest people in the world.



*A full church in Sierra Leone*



*Very good crops grown under conservation agriculture in Malawi*



*Processing maize noodles in North Korea*



*Providing water to Syrian refugees in Lebanon*

# New Parish Resources section on Church of Ireland website

## WHAT'S NEW?

The Church of Ireland website now includes an area specially dedicated to sharing useful information with parishes. It is called Parish Resources and just as its name suggests, it has been designed with parishes in mind. Get there by clicking [www.ireland.anglican.org/parish-resources](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/parish-resources)

## MORE DETAIL

You'll see that the resources are categorised by topic, such as 'Select Vestry', 'Parish Finances', 'People & Community', for example. They are usefully arranged so that anyone can easily access the material which is most relevant to them, whether they are a newly appointed parish treasurer, youth worker, select vestry sub-committee member, or whatever role they play in parish life. Examples of specific resources include the Parish Handbook, sample accounts, Dignity in Church Life policies, discipleship resources, forms, guidelines and many more.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This addition to the website is an important part of the Church's longer term strategy. Our aim is that those who give faithfully of their energy, time and skills in service to the Church will find support and relevant information to help them in their vital roles.

## HOW WILL IT WORK?

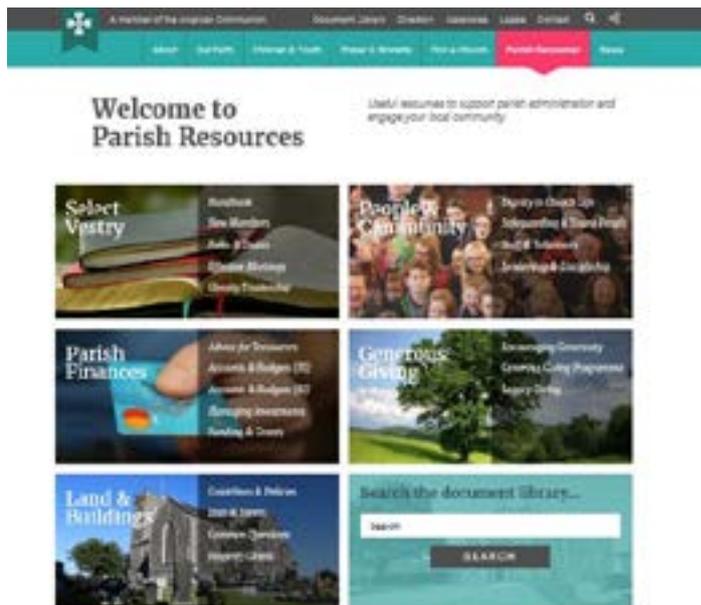
Parish Resources is a 'living' project; it will be added to and amended, ensuring the content continues to grow and remains useful. The types of resources available will very much depend on their purpose. All documents may be shared and printed. Church members are encouraged to make use of them in their own parishes; this project's success will rely on the resources being used.

## FUTURE PLANS

The content on Parish Resources will continue to be added to as more resources become available. Please help us by using the online contact

form to share your feedback and ideas with the team working behind the scenes. Going forward, we urge every reader to consider how their own parish or diocese might benefit from using the materials, and indeed, how they might contribute as the content grows.

Our hope and prayer is that the Parish Resources platform will serve to harness information, share experience and best practice, and foster the understanding that we are all part of one island-wide Church. The RCB is grateful for the kind generosity shown by Allchurches Trust in support of this project.



The new Parish Resources section on the Church of Ireland website

# Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Loughrea

Report by Claire Besnyoe

At the kind invitation of the Mother Prioress and sisters, we gathered on 23 January at Mount Carmel Chapel, Loughrea for the 5th annual service of prayer for Christian unity.

The service was memorably and nobly led by Fr Willie Moran, Prior of the Carmelite Abbey, together with Fr Ray Sweeney, and the invited preacher was our own Salters Sterling.

The service was compiled in Germany for Churches Together in Britain & Ireland on the theme 'Crossing Barriers'. A symbolic wall was built brick by brick in front of the altar. Twelve intercessors drawn from among the sisters and the wider community each presented a prayer of penitence for the many barriers we have sadly created in our society today. Later in the service the same bricks used to build the wall of separation were dismantled to form a cross in front of the altar.

In his address Salters Sterling drew on the set scripture texts of 2 Corinthians 5:14-20 and the story of the 'Prodigal Son' in Luke's Gospel 15:11-32. He reflected that 2,000 years on we are still a divided Church but still the beneficiaries of a Bountiful Father, needing to remind ourselves of the areas in which we can most certainly be called to account if our love is lacking - our neighbours, the disadvantaged, the suffering. He closed with inspiring words, bringing us into the nearer presence of the Rabbi Joshua of Nazareth, who is the Living Lord, and unto Him be all the Might, Majesty, Dominion and Power, Glory and Wonder and Worship, this day and for evermore.

By the lighting of hand-held candles we were exhorted to bring Christ's light into the dark places of our world. Following the blessing we enjoyed tea and a splendid spread of good things in the sisters' parlour.

In the words of one of the sisters: "We hope and believe that we may have helped in some small way to further the great cause of Christian Unity".



Salters Sterling preaching at the Loughrea service of prayer for Christian unity



The bricks from the wall of separation transformed into the cross

## Birr Group of Parishes

*Birr, Lorrha, Lockeen, and Dorrha*

Rector: The Venerable R. Wayne Carney

Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert

The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly

Tel: 057 912 0021 Mob: 087 786 5234

Email: [mapleire@gmail.com](mailto:mapleire@gmail.com)

Parish Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BirrGroupOfParishes](http://www.facebook.com/BirrGroupOfParishes)

### PRAYERS

We keep Betty Delahunt and Diane Dagg in our prayers, and offer our sincere condolences to Bishop Kenneth and his wife, Jennifer, on the death of Jennifer's father, Bishop Samuel Poyntz.

### COMMISSIONING

On Sunday, 19th February, in St Mary's Cathedral in Limerick, Norma-Jean Carney from Birr and Jerome Phair from Banagher were commissioned as Diocesan Readers. Many thanks to all who came and supported them; there are pictures of the service elsewhere in Newslink.

### BIRR CHURCHES TOGETHER

Our ecumenical endeavour will have three special meetings during Lent, when we will have presentations on the similarities and differences among Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Church of Ireland belief and practice. The first of these will be on Baptism, and will be on Tuesday, 21st March; the second, on the Eucharist, will be on Tuesday, 28th March; and the third, on Ministry, will be on Tuesday, 4th April. All will be from 8:00 to 9:00 pm; the location and other details will be announced. All are welcome. We are also planning joint services with the Methodist congregation on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday; details will follow.

### LENT 2017

In addition to our three ecumenical Lenten evenings towards the latter part of Lent, we will have other Lenten gatherings, details of which will be finalised and announced soon. We commend Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge, details of which can be found on page 6.

### MOTHERS' UNION

The Mothers' Union Closing Service will be held at the Rectory on Wednesday, 29th March at 8:00 pm.

### CONFIRMATION

Bishop Kenneth has advised us that the Confirmation Service will be held in Birr on Sunday, 18th June at 11:30 am. Any young people of at least 12 years old who want to confirm their Baptismal vows and make a sincere commitment to follow Jesus should contact the Archdeacon. Time and place for Confirmation classes will be announced at a later date. It is hoped that candidates would also be prepared to attend the Diocesan Confirmation Weekend, to be held on the 2nd to the 5th of June.

### FAMILY EUCHARIST AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our monthly Family Eucharist continues on the second Sunday of the month, and we are delighted that numbers are increasing. Our former practice of using a Service of the Word at the Family Service only allowed us to involve a few older children in reading lessons, but celebrating the Eucharist means that children and teenagers of all ages can take part and learn how to be involved in the worship of the Church, instead of just being spectators. Our Sunday School continues on the third Sunday of the month.

## Roscrea Group of Parishes

*Roscrea, Bourney, Corbally and Kyle*

Rector: Canon Jane Galbraith

St. Cronan's Rectory, Rosemount, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, E53X466

Tel: 0505 21725 Mob: 087 382 5336

Email: [galbraithjane@gmail.com](mailto:galbraithjane@gmail.com)

CONGRATULATIONS to Clive and Mary Davis on the safe arrival of baby daughter Rebecca and a sister for James.

WELCOME BACK to Roscrea and to Villa Maria Nursing Home to Ruby Dann. It is great news to hear Ruby is back in the parish environs once more, enabling lots more visiting.

### ROSCREA CHURCHES TOGETHER 'FAMILY FUN DAY'

Around 70 people of all ages, took part in some or all parts of the day. We all got a bit of a taste of church 'Messy style' in connection with Christian Unity Week. Revd. Shannon led our worship assisted by members of all four churches in Roscrea. The afternoon ended for many people bringing home having crafted, a genuine reed-made, St Brigid's Cross. A great afternoon begging for another one.

ANNUAL SUNDAY LUNCH A very big thank you to Heather and Lesley Evans who arranged this popular event again this year in Racket Hall. It is great to sit down together over food....preparing for Heather's Quiz which never fails to aid the digestion. (Hint for next year: count all the windows, doors and especially steps and all immovable parts of all churches...it might help?)

HEALER PRAYER MEETINGS TIME CHANGE. The time of the service has changed. The next service will take place at the new time of 2.00pm. in St.Cronan's Church. All are welcome. For the curiously inclined readers. Healer Prayer services are the time when those who prayerfully support, through their prayers during the month, those who have asked for prayer. Once a month, at the healer prayer services, we pray for all the names on the list. We surround the prayers with a short act of worship with hymns. All are welcome. Names can be included by contacting Margaret Connor or for a particular month, by leaving a name on the side altar where all the list is laid. Thanks are due to Margaret who keeps in touch with up to forty people on her list and to her small army of people who regularly keep their care before the Lord.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER glittered under the title 'World Day of Prayer', like in the rest of the world! But in Ireland, due to popular demand it has reverted to the title we all know and some love. The children in St.Cronan's National School are helping this year to make a representation of the flag of the Philippines. St.Cronan's look forward to hosting the ecumenical gathering this year.

BISHOP KENNETH has arranged to visit Roscrea Group of Parishes and wishes to visit the churches he hasn't yet seen. We welcome

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our bishop for a first visit to Christ Church Corbally for Mothers' Day and in St. Burchin's the same day March 26th. (Must make sure to have some sweets ready for the bishop! Newslink Jan'17) That leaves St. Molua's Kyle for an introductory visit, to such a notable and tiny building, housing the faithful there.

ST. CRONAN'S NATIONAL SCHOOL enrolment is now open for Sept. 2017. A happy place with a warm welcome awaits all new pupils. Please contact the school for more information, [cron.ias@eircom.net](mailto:cron.ias@eircom.net) 0505-21636.

LENTEN SERVICES will follow the format popular in former years. Wednesday nights at 8.00p.m. during March and also the first Wednesday of April we meet in the Methodist Church, The Mall, for a service of worship and framed around topical issues. In sequence the topics are; Homelessness in rural Ireland; The Joy of Aging; Addictions; Suicide; Cyber-bullying. The talks will feature an invited who will be gently 'quizzed' afterwards by Adrian Hewson. Tea and coffee to follow. A warm welcome to one or all. Retiring Collection to defray expenses.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY Holy Communion in Irish with English translation: Friday, March 17th. St. Cronan's at 11.00am. This service will replace the normal Thursday Holy Communion for that week.

## Nenagh Union of Parishes

*Nenagh, Templederry, Ballymackey and Killodiernan*

Rector: Rev Rod Smyth

The Rectory, Church Rd, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

Tel: 067 32598, Mob: 087 970 6479

Email: [rsmyth6582@btinternet.com](mailto:rsmyth6582@btinternet.com)

To mark the week of prayer for Christian Unity the Rector of the Nenagh Union was invited to preach at the 6.15pm Vigil Mass at St Mary's of the Rosary, Nenagh, the church, 'just over the wall,' from St Mary's Church of Ireland. A large congregation took part in this ecumenical act of worship. The sermon reflected on the well-known story of the meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well as it is recorded in the gospel according to St John, suggesting that this encounter was a model for all of our ecumenical encounters with each other. What some describe as an encounter with 'the other.' At the end of the service, as Father Des Hillary PP and Rev'd. Rod Smyth processed to the back of the church, the large congregation stood and applauded. The evening was rounded off with a cup of tea and a chat with parishioners.

On Sunday morning, 29th January, a special united service took place in St Mary's. A Eucharist of Wholeness and Healing. Readings, intercessions and sermon reflected on the role of the ministry of healing in our worship. The ministry of the laying on of hands and anointing with oil was explained, and then, at the end of the service, there was an opportunity, for those who so wished, to come forward to the altar rails for this ministry. Such was the response that it soon became clear that the need and desire for such ministry in the Union was self-evident. It is intended that, moving forward, there will be a service of wholeness and healing held as a united service in the Union when there is a fifth Sunday in the month in the future.

On Sunday 19th February, a large congregation joined together from the Union to take part in the annual GFS enrolment service. The service took as its theme a verse from the first letter of Peter. 'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.' Girls from the GFS read the lessons, sang an arrangement of 'This little light of mine,' and led the congregation in intercessions. The Address, given by the Rector, took 'devotion' as its theme, and

was based on the story of Dorcas from the Acts of the Apostles. Towards the end of the service eleven girls were enrolled, and after the service the congregation enjoyed a cup of tea, fellowship and a sticky bun or several!

The Union learned with sadness of the death at Christmas time of the father of parishioner William Jones. The sympathy of everyone in the Union is extended to William. Also, parishioners learned in early February of the death of Tommie Shaw, grandson of Yvonne Shaw, retired former principal of St Mary's National School and great nephew of Hilary Lewis, Rector's church warden of Templederry Parish Church. Condolences are extended to the family circle at this very sad time.

On a much brighter and happier note we congratulate Debbie Powell on the birth of her first grandson, Alex, and also to John and Myrtle Gloster on the birth of their first grandson, Jack.

## Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group of Parishes

*Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.*

Rector: Rev Terry Mitchell

Modreeny Rectory, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary

Tel: 0505 42183

Mob: 087 203 9333

Email: [terrym438@gmail.com](mailto:terrym438@gmail.com)

A Combined Service of Worship with the Methodist Church was held on the 29th of January at St Kieran's, Cloughjordan. Thank you to Rev Shannon DeLaureal and to the Methodist congregations for supporting the service. We will be holding another combined service, this time at the Methodist Church in Borrisokane, on the 30th April.

A very successful Mission Evening was held at the Cloughjordan Parish Hall on the 8th of February. It was well attended and Mr John Reid spoke on his experiences as an overseas humanitarian aid worker. His talk reminded us again of our responsibility to others, in particular the poor and vulnerable. See page 17.

Congratulations to David and Aisling Goulding upon the occasion of the baptism of Charlie on the 19th February. It was a lovely opportunity for all of us at St Kieran's, Cloughjordan to share in this service with them.



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*Charlie with his Mum and Dad and big sister Anna*

Confirmation Classes will be starting on the 20th February and we look forward to sharing these classes with the candidates as they prepare themselves for the joint Confirmation Service at St Kieran's on the 14th May.

GFS will be holding a Diocesan Service on Borrisokane Church on Saturday the 1st of April at 2.30pm. The first enrolment service was held in the Church and the GFS will be celebrating 50 years in the Diocese. Tea will be served in the Hall after the service.

As the Confirmation Classes begin we think of Jesus as teacher. His teaching is both challenging and inspiring, as he sets out the principles by which we are to live our lives, summarised in the commandment to love the Lord our God and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves.

PHEME PERKINS (1990) writes how ordinary people heard Jesus' words as the word of God addressed to them, in a way that they could both understand and respond. He used references from the Law and other images from Hebrew Scripture in ways that would have been known to his audience. Other images used also reflected the daily lives of people (Jesus as teacher, p38).

The teaching of the Sermon on the Mount has been a case in point, as over the last few weeks, we have considered the Christian character, how we are to live in response to the Law and our confidence in Christ. As we move on to Lent maybe consider both prayerful and sacrificially how to take the teaching of Jesus and make them a reality in our lives.

## **Shinrone Group of Parishes**

*Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinnitty and Dunkerrin*

Rector: Canon Michael Johnston (On sick leave)

Parish Website: [shinrone.blogspot.ie](http://shinrone.blogspot.ie)

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd. Canon Ruth Gill

Kilgolan House, Kilcormac, Birr, Co. Offaly

Phone: 05791 35341; email: [ruth\\_gill40@outlook.ie](mailto:ruth_gill40@outlook.ie)

### **MOTHERS' UNION**

The next meeting for the members will be on Thursday, 9th March at 8 p.m. at Bramber Studio, Shinrone for "Accessory Design" with Hazel Greene. The Mothers' Union is much more than a group of women meeting for a cup of tea and chat! Locally, all-Ireland and internationally, the MU supports communities both prayerfully and with practical assistance, especially where a disaster has occurred

(war, famine or disease). Obviously this makes financial demands and our Branch have a quiz doing the rounds in order to help meet these demands. Do please buy one. At the last meeting in Aghancon, Gladys Drought provided the members with some tasty ideas for supper – many thanks Gladys.

### **DIOCESAN BOARD OF MISSION**

John Reid, a worker with Concern, gave a very interesting talk in CloughJordan on the 8th February. He proved that an aid worker needs to be able to think outside the box! We wish him God's blessing on his work. See page 17.

### **LENT**

Ash Wednesday will be over by the time these notes appear. Lent is a time for reflection and renewal and Bishop Kenneth has provided a short service for personal use. Maybe we're not quite as familiar with the Bible as we like to think and just when we want some words of help and guidance, it can be daunting to try and find a suitable passage to meet a particular need. There is a list of readings for each day during Lent which hopefully will remind us that being a follower of Christ is built on our relationship with him.

### **PASTORAL**

This has been a long winter health wise. Quite a few people have been ill with some needing to stay in hospital. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and with those who care for them.

Sydney Whyte has moved to Birr Community Nursing Unit and we wish him all the best in his new home – not that it's that new as he has attended the Day Care Centre for many years.

### **BAPTISM**

Edward Joseph (Eddie) Shiels, infant son of Joy Whitten and Joe, was baptised in Aghancon on the 22nd January. His godparents are Valerie Nolan, Owen McBryde and Derek Deacon. He is a grandson

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[www.jjryanundertakers.com](http://www.jjryanundertakers.com)

of Betty and the late Ned Whitten. It was a lovely occasion and Eddie and his family are wished every blessing in their home in Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford.



*Edward Joseph (Eddie) with his parents Joy Whitten and Joe Sheils*

#### SOUTH OFFALY PLOUGHING ASSOCIATION

The Association held their ploughing championships on Sunday 19th February. Fr. Richard Matthews PP Kilcormac & Mountbolus, with Canon Ruth, gave an ecumenical blessing at the start of proceedings. Unfortunately, both of us had to leave immediately but it was good to meet Fr. Matthews as he has recently arrived in Kilcormac. It's something positive to see the interest in the land continues and that the connection between the earth, which grows our food and the Creator is acknowledged.

### 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](http://www.churchofirelandclare.com)

"The star for which the world is waiting, without yet being able to give it a name, or rightly appreciate its true transcendence, or even recognise the most spiritual and divine of its rays is, necessarily, Christ himself, in whom we hope. To desire the Parousia (the Second Coming) all we have to do is let the very heart of the earth, as we Christianize it, beat within us." *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin from Le Milieu*

As the light of Epiphany star was being taken down in St Columba's for another year, not far from Ennis in the heart of the Burren, an event at Tubber Community Hall served to make history and leave a wonderful reference point for pilgrimage and spiritual tourism.

Importantly, the life and work of the figure being celebrated could bring us back to the substance of the Teilhard reflection and - thanks to Brian Mooney - to genuine modern-day attempts to connect spiritually with nature and find connection which transfigures our lives.

Brian is a former theological student and teacher, environmentalist, pioneering entrepreneur in the Burren, responsible for that captivating little oasis of the Burren Perfumery, plus the community-based Kilfenora Interpretative Centre, and the seed ideas for the eventual separately, privately developed Ailwee Caves. He is due our thanks for restoring a rich vision of landscape which we may all inherit as Celts, Christians -and pilgrims of every hue.

Brian has in recent years as leader of the Clare Pilgrim Way spoken of his vision for a Spirituality for our new age at Harvest Thanksgiving in St Columba's Church.



*Brian and Noreen at the tribute night in the Burren with daughter Corla and friends.*

It was fitting that Burren Beo, a landscape charity dedicated to connecting us to our places and our role in caring for them, organised the tribute to this foundational landscape person and his equally creative and artistic wife Noreen. His genius as a poet and founder of the famous Tree Legged Poets Group also featured. He was always linking the literature of our landscape with influences from Norse and Mediterranean sources and has hosted international poets gatherings in and around Kilfenora of the High Crosses.

He has also led in the Burren's identification with the suffering adults and children of Chernobyl and Belarus, landscapes desecrated and polluted by nuclear fallout in the Seventies.

The gathering in Tubber was a warm and affirmative one and while Brian's debilitating illness limited his ability to speak, he did manage to convey that passion for the landscape as a revelatory gift from the creator in a question and answer session.

His remaining impulse is to see his creation of the Clare Pilgrim Way make a strong if modest lead in spiritual walking and tourism in and around the Shannon River system and the Burren.

Said Brian: "The story of the development of Christianity among the Celtic tribes of our very own landscape is nothing less than transformative. We must allow our children to hear and see how our saints and scholars found their inspiration in the God and Christ of nature and made Europe a warmer place."

## Clonfert Diocese

### Aughrim & Creagh Unions of Parishes

*Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Ardahan, Clontuskert and Woodlawn*

Rector: Rev. John Godfrey

The Rectory, Aughrim, Co. Galway.

Tel: 090 967 3735 Mob: 087 900 8085

Email: [reverendjohngodfrey@gmail.com](mailto:reverendjohngodfrey@gmail.com)

Parish website: [www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org](http://www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org)

Ardahan Parish mourns the loss of its oldest member, Kitty Sides, who died on the night of her 95th birthday. Following prayers offered in the family home, her funeral service, led by the rector, was held in Newlands Cross crematorium on February 13th. Our deepest sympathies are with her children Edmund, Andrew and Catherine and their families.

Aughrim Parish mourns the death of its former parish secretary, Cecil Cooke, aged 88. We are deeply indebted to Cecil for a lifetime of worship amongst us and for his service to the parish and wider community. Archdeacon Wayne Carney led a removal service for Cecil on February 15th in St John's Church Ballinasloe. The rector was joined by Bishop John Kirby, Father Gerard Geraghty, Father Bernie Costello and Father Christy McCormack in leading the Funeral Eucharist there on February 16th. The burial followed in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim. Our sincere condolences are with his children John, Ivor, Valerie and all the family.



*Galway Cathedral*

At the invitation of the Redemptorists in Esker, the rector preached at a series of six services in Galway Cathedral on February 15th, from breakfast to bedtime, as part of a nine-day solemn novena there. Over the course of each day of the novena approximately 10,000 people worship in the cathedral, many of whom are not regular church attenders. As such, it is a unique opportunity for witnessing to God's love and mercy amongst people who are seeking to be renewed in faith and hope, and to feel God's healing touch in their lives. Within that context, the symbolic act of inviting a guest preacher from the Church of Ireland is a significant gesture, one which gave substance to the prayer offered at the altar in each of those services:

Attend with favour to the prayers of your people, we ask, O Lord, and grant that the hearts of believers may be united in your praise and in repentance together, so that with division amongst Christians overcome, we may hasten with joy to your eternal Kingdom in the perfect communion of the Church.

On Wednesday 1st March we will mark Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim at 11am, and an ecumenical healing service in St John's Church Ballinasloe at 3pm. A Lenten Bible study group, 'Praying into Lent,' will run on Tuesdays at 8pm in the rectory coach house, Aughrim, from March 7th to April 4th. We will celebrate St Patrick's Day with a special service of Holy Communion in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim at 11am.

Following the encouraging response to the Family Service format used in our united 5th Sunday services, we will be launching a monthly Family Service on 2nd Sundays at 11.30am in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim. Starting on Sunday 12th March, these services will include a children's talk instead of a sermon and include family-friendly music and readings. This initiative is on a test basis and will be reviewed in the summer. In order to facilitate this, Holy Communion services in Aughrim will move to 3rd Sundays.



*Portuncula Hospital Children's Remembrance Service*

## **Clonfert Group of Parishes**

*Clonfert, Banagher, Eyrecourt, and Portumna*  
Vacant

Priest in Charge: Very Rev. Patrick L. Towers  
Tel: (090) 9684547. Mob: (086) 8140649  
Email: towers.patrick@gmail.com

### DIOCESAN READERS

We congratulate Jerome Phair on his commissioning by the Bishop as a Diocesan Reader. Jerome has studied hard to pass the required exams. This has involved setting aside a lot of study time and regular trips to the study centres. We are very grateful for his willingness to assist in the Diocese's ministry. In addition Steven Ellis who is a Diocesan Reader for the Diocese of Tuam will be licensed for service in this Diocese as well. Along with all others within the Guild of Readers and those at the Commissioning offering themselves as Diocesan Lay Readers we give great thanks. See page 15.

### CONFIRMATION

Confirmation this year. Parish young people who attend Oxmantown School will take classes with children from Birr Parish and the Confirmation will probably be held in Birr Church.

### SERVICES FOR MARCH.

Ash Wednesday March 1st: in Banagher at 11am (Lenten Programme on news sheet)

Thursday March 2nd: World Day of Prayer at 8pm in Clonfert RC Church

Sunday March 5th Eyrecourt 10.30am

Sunday March 12th Portumna 10.30. Banagher 12noon

Thursday March 16: St Patrick's Day Eucharist in Eliza Lodge

Sunday March 19th Eyrecourt 10.30. Banagher 12noon

Sunday March 26th: Mothering Sunday: PORTUMNA at 11am (United Service) with Baptism

### RECTORY

The refurbishing of the Rectory is a couple of paving stones close to completion. A fine building has arisen!

### SHROVE TUESDAY

Wasn't that the best of fun! Jacinta was crowned the Mardi Gras Queen...delicious King Cake too and congrats to Amelia winning the Pancake tossing Race.

# Limerick Diocese

## Limerick City Parish

*St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's and Abington Churches*

Dean: Vacant

Priest-in-charge: Rev Edna Wakely

50 Ballinvoher, Fr Russell Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick

Tel: 061 302 038, Mob: 086 357 4917

Email: ednawakely@hotmail.com

### BEREAVEMENTS

26 January – Bernie Long – our deepest sympathy to her husband Ronnie, sons, Alan & Barry, daughter Karen, son-in-law Peter, daughters-in-law Ann and Sarah, grandchildren together with the extended family and friends. The funeral service took place in St. Michael's Church on the 28th of January.

28 January – Peggy Carey – peacefully in the Milford Care Centre.

Peggy was a deeply spiritual person, hugely supported by her robust faith. Therein lay the secret of her strength, but Peggy's was not an ostentatious spirituality. It was of the "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength, and love your neighbour as yourself," variety of spirituality.

She practiced justice, and loved kindness, and walked humbly with her God. This manifested itself in works of charity, thoughtfulness and deep human kindness to all whom she encountered, for most of all – Peggy loved and cared for people. Even in her last weeks, her eyes would light up and her smile would appear, when she saw family or friends approaching.

Carey by name and caring by nature, Peggy certainly lived up to her name, going out of her way to befriend anyone who crossed her path, treating all with the utmost respect and courtesy. She was one of the most unselfish people – a quiet, behind the scenes person, doing thoughtful, yet discreet acts of random kindness every day, making a profound difference in people's lives. Only God knows how very many people Peggy helped in her quiet, discreet and generous way.

It has been a great privilege to have known Peggy, not just for her secretarial ability, or her encyclopaedic knowledge, or her formidable memory, but for her friendship, her unstinting support and encouragement. She had an indomitable spirit, and a truly inspirational faith and courage. Peggy was, above all things, a rare and unique human being – a one-off. It's not for nothing that she had such immense numbers of friends.

Our deepest sympathy to her sister Betty McGlone, dear friends Ruth, Rita, Beverley and Allan, nephews, nieces, their families and a wide circle of friends. She will be greatly missed.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

### THEY WHO SING, PRAY TWICE

On Tuesday 24th of January over twelve choirs performed in St. Michael's Church for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. There was a great turnout for this event and refreshments were enjoyed by all. On Wednesday 25th there was a good turnout of LCP parishioners who attended the service in the Augustinian Church in O'Connell Street to end the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

FAREWELL TO DEAN SANDRA – See page 16

### LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

The popular Wednesday lunchtime concerts resume in the cathedral on March 8th. These concerts take place most Wednesdays at 1.15pm this spring. Admission is free, and a varied programme is in place. Concerts are generally over shortly before 2pm, so that those who need to get back to work can do...or if the desk is not pressing then maybe grab a bite to eat locally. Please see the advert on page 5 for further details of the series.

### ORGAN RECITAL BY FORMER CATHEDRAL ORGANIST

Regular readers of Newslink from both parish and diocese might be interested to know that Trevor Selby will be giving a special organ concert on Saturday 25th March at 5pm in the Sacred Heart Church, the Crescent (formerly the Jesuits). This is part of 'Sacred Music Week' at the church, which runs from 23rd to 27th March inclusive. Trevor Selby is well known in the Limerick area, having been Organist of St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick and then St. Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe. Do support this free concert if you are able to. A collection will be taken to help defray expenses, and proceeds will be shared between the church and the Limerick Pipe Organ Festival, who are assisting with the promotion of this concert. This week long event is taking place on the occasion of the visit of the Sister Adorers to Limerick.

### WHIST DRIVES

Next whist Drive in St. Michael's – Sat 4th March (Raffle) and Villiers Square Sat 25th March – all at 7.30pm and Admission € to include supper.

### MOTHERING SUNDAY, 26TH MARCH

This will be a united service in St. Michael's Church with Holy Communion at 10.30am.

### CONCERT IN ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

Edel O'Brien and a string Quartet will be playing in St. Michael's Church on Friday 31st of March at 8pm – Tickets €15 to include refreshments. Proceeds in aid of St. Michael's Church Organ Fund and Down Syndrome.

### GENERAL SYNOD

For the first time ever General Synod is to be held in Limerick from Thursday 4th to Saturday 6th of May.

40 THOMAS ST  
LIMERICK

TEL: 061 - 414967  
FAX: 061 - 415365

*Thompson Undertakers*  
*Limerick*

## Adare and Kilmallock Group of Parishes

*Adare, Croom, Kilmallock & Kilpeacon*

Rector: Canon Liz Beasley

The Rectory, Adare, Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 396227 Mob: 087-7199750

Email: revlizadare@gmail.com

It has been a reasonably quiet month in our parishes, here in the lull between the seasons of Christmas and Lent, during the winter months, and the beginning of calving and lambing season. There have been various surgeries and illnesses also. We pray that all who have been ill might recuperate quickly and that they be strengthened by the healing power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Adare/Croom/Kilpeacon Vestry devoted an evening in January to discussing the diocesan review Forward Together. It was an interesting and fruitful evening. Of the twelve areas in the review, we found ourselves focusing the most on parish life, faith development, and worship. A number of ideas were expressed, which together we will work on implementing.

### LENT

We look forward most immediately to the season of Lent. Rev. Liz is encouraging everyone to take up Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge to the Diocese. It involves saying a short prayer service and Bible reading each day during Lent.

In addition, twelve people are signed up to take the Lenten Bible study in our parishes, which will be a class called "Discovering the Psalms." It is a seven-week class, complete with a guide for daily reading and learning. We will begin meeting on Ash Wednesday, 1 March, following the 7.00pm service in the Adare church.

### EASTER VESTRY

We will attempt something a little different this year for our Easter Vestry meeting. On the Second Sunday of Easter (23rd April, the Sunday after Easter Sunday), we will have one joint service in Adare at 11.00am. This will be followed by a joint Easter Vestry meeting, even though normally we would have two (Adare/Croom/Kilpeacon and Kilmallock). We will do this for several reasons: to have the chance for all of us to be together in worship, to enable more people to come to Easter Vestry than might show up on a weekday evening, and to elect together our Parish Nominators, as this is the year we must do this.

We are attempting to arrange for a luncheon afterwards, so that we can then all enjoy a meal together! All members are encouraged to come to Adare for worship on 23rd April at 11.00am and stay for the Easter Vestry meeting, and we hope then lunch.

### SINGING

The Singing Group continues to meet every two weeks. At each meeting we practice the hymns for the upcoming Sunday, and then we start learning some new songs from both the old and the new hymnals. We have learned to sing some old favourites in a different way. For example, we are singing #78 in the red hymnal, "This is the day that the Lord has made," as a "call-and-response." The group divides in two, with the second group echoing the line from the first group. At our joint service on 23rd April, we'll be leading the congregation in singing this and perhaps some others.

All in all, we have found that getting together and singing is a great way not only to learn some hymns, but also to lift our spirits! Anyone is welcome to attend, the first and third Thursdays at the Rectory, at 8.00pm.

## Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes

*Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kilcornan & Kilnaughtin*

Priest-in-Charge: Rev Canon Patrick Comerford

The Rectory, Askeaton, Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 398647, Mob: 087 663 5116

Email: revpatrickcomerford@gmail.com

### SUNDAY SERVICES:

5 March: 9.45, Askeaton, HC; 11.15, Kilnaughtin, HC.

12 March: 9.45, Castletown, HC; 11.15, Rathkeale, MP.

19 March: 9.45, Askeaton; 11.15, Kilnaughtin

26 March: 9.45, Castletown, MP; 11.15, Rathkeale, HC.

### CONGRATULATIONS:

Congratulations to Brian and June Fitzell, Askeaton, on the birth of baby Edith on Christmas Eve, a sister for Lucy and Gemma. Also, congratulations to the grandparents, Alan and Margaret Fitzell (Tarbert).

### INSTALLATION OF PRECENTOR, GUILD OF LAY READERS

Thank you to all who supported Patrick in their prayers or in their presence on 19 March when he was installed in Saint Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, as Canon Precentor in the Joint Chapter of the Diocesan Cathedrals, Saint Mary (Limerick), Saint Flannan (Killaloe) and Saint Brendan (Clonfert). The preacher was the Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, the Right Revd Patrick Rooke, and the new Diocesan Guild of Readers was launched at the same time.

### ASH WEDNESDAY:

A traditional Ash Wednesday service takes place on 1 March at 8 p.m. in Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton.

### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, FRIDAY 3 MARCH, 8 P.M.:

This rotates annually between Saint Mary's, Cappagh RC, Ballingrairie Methodist Church, Holy Trinity Rathkeale and Rathkeale RC. This year it is in Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton, on Friday 3 March at 8 p.m. and is being organised by Ann Drew and Ena Downes.

### MONDAYS IN LENT: BISHOP KENNETH'S LENT CHALLENGE:

On Monday evenings in Lent, beginning on Monday 6 March, at 8 p.m. in the Rectory, Askeaton, you are invited to follow Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge. Copies of Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge are available in the churches and in Newslink. We are also looking at the BACI 2017 Lent Study, which aims to shine Biblical Wisdom on the Migrant Crisis.

### LENTEN RETREAT, RATHKEALE:

Continuing on from the successful event involving Father Gerry Reynolds and the Revd Ken Newell organised by Bishop Phonsie Cullinan in 2015, a Lenten retreat is being organised in Rathkeale with the Revd Ruth Patterson and a colleague from Restoration Ministries. The theme is pilgrimage, recognising that we are people, called to pilgrimage, especially to that inner journey of the love relationship between God and ourselves.

There will be two talks in the morning after 9.30 a.m. Mass in the Catholic Church on Saturday 4 March, followed by lunch in the hotel at 1 p.m. A facilitated workshop on reconciliation follows in the Community Centre in the afternoon, finishing at 4 p.m. The retreat is subsidised by the Rathkeale Pre-social Cohesion Project. The cost of €10 includes a bistro lunch in Rathkeale House Hotel. Please pre-register with David Breen at 087 273 9663.

### RATHKEALE NATIONAL SCHOOL NUMBER 2:

The school board meets at 5 p.m. on Monday 6 March. There is an 'Open Hour' in the school on Wednesday 8 March 2017, 3pm to 4pm. Come along, have a cup of tea, meet the staff and view the school. All welcome.

## SAINT PATRICK'S DAY, 17 MARCH:

A United Service is planned, time and venue to be announced.

## ASKEATON AND RATHKEALE VESTRIES:

The proposed date of Monday 20 March 2017 needs to be rescheduled.

A new date is to be announced.

## MOTHERS' UNION DIOCESAN SERVICE:

This year, the Mothers' Union Diocesan Service is being hosted in Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton, at 8 p.m. on Monday 27 March. All are welcome.

## HOLY WEEK:

There will be a united service in one church each evening during Holy Week (Monday 10 April to Good Friday 14 April). Details and times for the celebration of the Easter Eucharist in each church in next month's Newslink.

# Ardfert Diocese

## Tralee & Dingle Unions of Parishes

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

Vacant

Email: [tralee@ireland.anglican.org](mailto:tralee@ireland.anglican.org)

Priest-in-Charge: Rev Phyllis Jones,  
The Rectory, Camp, Co. Kerry.

Tel: 066 713 0767 Mob: 085 855 8594

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

Date	Ballys'dy 9.45 am	Tralee 10.45 am	Ballymac 12 noon	Kilgobbin 10.00 am	Dingle 12 noon
5th March	HC	HC	MP	MP	MP
12th March	MP	MP	MP	HC	HC
St. Patrick 17th March		HC			
19th March	MP	HC	HC	MP	MP
Mothering Sunday 26th March	No Service	MP	MP	HC	HC

**MID-WEEK SERVICES:** The services continue every Wednesday at 11.00am in St. John's followed by coffee and fellowship.

**CONFIRMATION:** The confirmation will be held in Ballymacelligott Church on Sunday 7th May, at 2.30pm. All are warmly invited to come and support the candidates on this special day.

**HEALER PRAYER GROUP:** The next prayer meeting will be on Tuesday 7th March at 8.00pm in the Parish Centre. Please write the names of those in need of prayer in the Prayer Books, which are provided at the back of each church. All are welcome to join us for the short service and refreshments.

**ST. JOHN'S, TRALEE** – are planning a 'Gift Day' for Lent, when people are invited to give up something for Lent and to give what has been saved towards the on-going costs of repairs and expenses of the church. Gifts can be handed to the Churchwardens or sent by post to The Treasurer, Phyllis Mason, 42 Highfield Grove, Caherslee, Tralee.

**LENT:** This year everyone is being encouraged to accept Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge and to devote a short time each day to

read a passage of scripture, prayer and reflection. This may be alone or together with a friend. Copies of the Order for Daily Prayer, weekly Collect and Scripture readings will be available at the back of each church.

**BOYS BRIGADE:** The Boys' Brigade has had a fun-filled season so far – read Collete's report on page 8.

**LINKS GROUP:** We have invited Sylvia Thompson to join us for our meeting on Feb 27th to lead us in reflection, as preparation for Lent. Sylvia is well known for her 'thought for the day' on Radio Kerry and has previously been a popular guest of the Links Ladies.

**PRAYER:** Lord, let us be a channel of your blessing to others. We do not know how you will use our prayers, but we trust that we may play our part in your healing and redeeming work in the world. Amen.



*Handing over St. James, Dingle and Kilgobbin Carol service collections for Kerry Hospice and The Bishop's Appeal for Yemen*

## Killarney and Aghadoe Union of Parishes

*Killarney, Aghadoe and Muckross*

Rector Ven Simon J. Lumby, Archdeacon of Limerick

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

Tel: 064 66 31832 Mob: 086-8703997

Email: [killarney@ardfert.anglican.org](mailto:killarney@ardfert.anglican.org)

### 2017: A YEAR OF PROMISE OR FEAR?

So, we've passed the annual calendar change, but has the world become a safer or more dangerous place? We've recently witnessed a less-than-subtle shift from what's right and decent to what's popular and the support for the former is declining whilst it appears it is about to be overwhelmed by the latter. The Donald Trump election and subsequent world-changing decisions from that former bastion of democracy, the prospect of a hard Brexit and the apparent rise of the extreme left with France's potential President Marine Le Pen should have every one of us on our guard. In the Second Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians he tells us "There is one thing that we are proud of, namely our conscientious conviction that we have always behaved towards everyone, and especially towards you, with that unalloyed holiness that comes from God, relying not on human reasoning but on the grace of God". Has the world changed so much that Christian countries now doubt the grace of God – let's hope not, but let's not get too comfortable in our own little island bubble while humanity decries those millions of displaced refugees who are seeking the succour which we should be in control of.

### LENTEN BIBLE STUDY COURSE:

With the foregoing in mind it's very appropriate that Venerable Simon has organised a very interesting Lenten Bible Study course titled Migrant Refugee – God's Viewpoint? Beginning in early March this initiative – which takes place every Friday commencing at 8pm – is an ecumenical attempt to find out who we are, where we are and where we're going as a society and hopefully it will be well attended by parishioners.

#### ST MARY'S WELCOMES JOANNA BAUER:

Last year we received a visit from a family from Germany. Afterwards a young woman approached Simon to see if she could do her theology ministry university placement with us. Simon said yes and Joanna Bauer arrived on Sunday 26 February. We should and did give her a warm welcome. Her duties will include learning how a faith community operates and runs itself as a minority religion in isolation from mainland Europe. She will accompany Simon on some of his pastoral visits and will assist in some of the services. Joanna will preach on her last Sunday at the end of March. Hopefully, she will discover what it is like for us to be a member of the Church of Ireland in Killarney. While she is here Joanna will finish her university assignments and write up her placement report. She will see the way we engage with the wider community and the work we do welcoming and facilitating both casual local visitor and tourist. She will assist Lynda at Sunday School and be amongst us for the weekly tea and coffee post-service. In other words she'll get to know us and our ways and learn from us all the needs and hopes of such a tightknit group as ours. Please take time to welcome and talk to Joanna.

#### DIOCESAN WELCOME:

Those of us who have followed Rev. Patrick Comerford's musings and blogs over the years are delighted to hear of his installation as Priest-in-Charge of Rathkeale and Kilnaughtin. Patrick needs no introduction to those of us who question our faith from time-to-time and he will certainly enhance the diocese's understanding of our responsibilities to live by the Word. Hopefully, when he's settled in, we'll be welcoming Patrick in person with an invitation to preach in St Mary's?

#### AND STILL: THE ORDINARY THINGS MUST BE DONE!

Though last year's phenomenal efforts to replace the railings are completed with the appropriate gongs collected, there is little time to rest on our laurels (no pun intended with the following)! The front of the church is beginning to look a little decrepit because of lack of maintenance to the flower and shrub beds, gravel borders and walking surfaces. This is easily corrected without any expenditure – other than plain sweat – and Mike O'Sullivan would be thrilled to hear from anybody willing to spend a half day rectifying this before the Lenten season (087 6862832).

## Kilcolman Union of Parishes

*Kilcolman, Kiltallagh and Glenbeigh*

Vacant

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

**Kilderry, Milltown, Co. Kerry**

**Mob: 087 052 9107**

**Email: [stephens.j@temmler.eu](mailto:stephens.j@temmler.eu) or [stiofain.s@gmail.com](mailto:stiofain.s@gmail.com)**

**Web: [kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org](http://kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org)**

#### SERVICES

Kiltallagh 9.45 am except the first Sunday at 7pm Holy Communion

HC 1st & 3rd

MP 2nd & 4th

Kilorglin 11.00 pm

HC 2st & 4 rd

MP 1st & 3 rd

#### CONFIRMATION:

Confirmation classes are continuing every Monday afternoon morning in St Michael's Church at 4.30pm . The candidates will be involved in the Mother's Day service in Killorglin on the 26th of March.

Our candidates are: Elba Clendennen, Gavin Boyle and Robert Brooks.

#### CONGRATULATIONS:

To Eric and Moria Wharton of Beaufort on the birth of their daughter. Best wishes to you and all the family at this happy time.

#### ASH WEDNESDAY.

The Ash Wednesday service will be held in Kiltallagh Church at 12.30 on the First of March and it will be led by the pupils of Kiltallagh National School. This will be the only service in the parish on that day.

#### LENTEN WALK.

This will involve an ecumenical walk between the two secondary schools in Killorglin on Friday the 24th March. It is organised by Declan Crowley from St James Church in Killorglin. Declan is a very passionate about Justice and peace issues, More details in the next set of notes.

## 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)**

As the New Year turns to Spring, our churches made a new commitment to the Christian life of inclusion of all humankind – 'There is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for all are one in Jesus Christ'. In particular, we seek to ensure that our young people are aware of God's gift of life and freedom in sending His Son for us all – we might infer the phrase 'no longer big or small, young or old' in the sentence from scripture above.

In the light of this, a new initiative – the 'Sunday Shed' – was launched at the end of January. A Sunday School with a difference, it seeks to provide an element of worship and teaching specifically geared to the needs of parishioners of Junior School age. The need for this has grown since many of our Praise n' Play friends have now graduated – and we can't just expect them to suddenly sit quietly through a service designed to meet the needs of 'grown-ups'(!). Your prayers will be very much welcomed as we start this new project.

People regularly ask about Praise 'n Play – so it may be of interest to include part of a piece recently written by one of our P&P 'hero' leaders.

#### EXERCISE, CHOIR PRACTICE AND LOVE PERSONIFIED

– ALL ROLLED INTO ONE

With a few exceptions, every Friday morning throughout the year there is a notation P&P in my diary. Many years ago, when I lived in South Africa this would have meant Pick & Pay, a large supermarket but the current P&P is much more than alimentary sustenance – much much more in that it signifies a coming together of people. It's called Praise 'n Play – P&P for short.

The idea had its origins in the UK supported by The Salvation Army and the Mothers' Union but wherever it operates, its aim is the same – to encourage parents/carers to include themselves and their child/children as part of the family of God, even in an informal way. A group meeting such as P&P provides a safe and happy environment for children to play, learn and interact. And perhaps as importantly, it is a welcoming place for all parents and carers to make friends and feel supported. Young children become restless in a conventional church service and understandably so. Give them a place to play, dance, sing and take part in activities and you have a whole new ball game.

Praise & Play began in a small way in October 2010 but has grown and continues to grow – like the mustard seed! Its first premises at the back of St. Patrick's soon became too small and the present venue at The Gateway Methodist Church is ideal. There's space and warmth and the means for refreshments. Believe me, when you've spent 30 minutes in a non-stop singing and dancing session, it's wonderful to have a cup of tea and a biscuit and, if you're lucky, a homemade cake or sandwich!

The Praise & Play gathering fills a physical need to combat loneliness, be with other people, occupy an hour or so, make new friends but

above all it satisfies the spiritual need in all of us that, sometimes unknowingly, is ever present. I can honestly say, on behalf of all the helpers, if you start the session feeling low or sorry for yourself, you certainly don't finish that way. It is a truly uplifting experience that has enhanced my life. It's not just the music or the singing or meeting old and new friends – it is being a small part of the Whole led by the Holy Spirit with Jesus ever present.

It is Encouragement. Shy Mums meet other Mums. Dads come too and grandparents. Newborn babies grow and then join in. Children stamp their feet to the music, run around and let off steam and there's lots of noise with tambourines, rattles, drums, the piano and, of course, you-know-who's guitar! But there is also a peaceful time of short prayer, birthday greetings and very importantly the excitement before The Story which generates the activity for the children to make something to take home. Seldom are there children's tears or tantrums and generally there is such a feeling of love and happiness. I wouldn't miss it for the world!

Written by one of the team.

## Methodist News

### Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit

Minister: Rev Ruth Watt

Methodist Manse, Rathkeale Road, Adare, Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 396 236 Email: watt\_ruth@yahoo.ie

Lent, which begins on March the 1st this year, is a time to repent, fast and prepare for the celebration of Easter. In the Methodist Church we in Ireland have fallen out of the practice of fasting as a call to obedience in Christ. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 6, "When you fast...However for many of us this has become a suggestion. Yet Paul writes, "Everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil 3:8). Do we really believe this? Are all of our material possessions, all of our eating habits, all of our social media, all of our habits, all of our pastimes, are all of these worthless in comparison to knowing Jesus? Fasting, or abstinence from some of the things that are important to us can help remind us that they are nothing in comparison to our relationship with God.

And fasting itself does not have to be seen as a negative thing. Recently at an Inspire meeting on Fasting Phil Meadows spoke of fasting saying, "Fasting or abstinence is not about being deprived, it's about being filled." While when fasting or abstaining we are denying ourselves, the purpose of it is so that in emptying ourselves of things that take our focus from God we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

My challenge to myself this lent is to deny myself some things that have been gaining too much importance in my life recently so that I can draw closer to God, so that the Holy Spirit in me can have more opportunity to great and wonderful things in and through my life, and so that through me others may know more of the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Join with me this Lent in being filled with that which is important, and emptied of that which draws us away from God.

#### SERVICES FOR MARCH:

5th	Rev. Ruth Watt	Holy Communion
12th	Rev. Ruth Watt	
Sat 18th	Rev. Ruth Watt	Saturday evening @ 8:00p.m. in Adare
19th	Rev. Ruth Watt	@ 11a.m. in Ballingrane
26th	Rev. Ruth Watt	

Unless otherwise stated services are in Adare @ 10:15am and in Ballingrane @ 11:45am

## 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



The digger emerges

Some of you may have noticed serious disruption in CB1. A couple of years ago we hoped that we had eradicated dry rot from the gallery; but no! I'm sure the words 'dry rot' strike fear into the hearts of anyone who has any responsibility for a building. Anyway we had to take radical action. All the lovely flooring had to be pulled out and ditched and a mini digger brought in to dig down another foot or so. I certainly had no idea that the spores can live in the ground and have to be physically removed to make sure that they don't take hold again. The walls have to be stripped too.



Pictures from our community art exhibition

We were determined though that the work begun in CB1 was going to continue, so we moved the coffee dock into the back of the church and the gallery into the corridor – or ambulatory as we now call it! It's working very well. The first exhibition there was one by our own community art group. This very diverse and creative group has been meeting for a while now on Tuesday afternoons under the guidance of tutor Paul Quane. This was their first exhibition and as good fortune would have it as Abdul and Jack were hanging some of the paintings, Tiffy Allen from Places of Sanctuary Ireland was just leaving a meeting in CB2 and was able to see a great example of just the sort of collaborative work that she and her colleagues are advocating for and supporting.

Places of Sanctuary Ireland is a network of groups in cities, towns and local communities whose primary aim is to create a culture of welcome and safety for refugees, asylum-seekers and other immigrants, many of whom are seeking sanctuary from war and persecution. It creates opportunities for Irish people to meet newcomers to the country, to hear their stories and to help them find a new home here. The art group, along with other groups and initiatives, provides a great space for people to enjoy each other's company and in this case to make lovely art in a non judgemental environment.

Please do come and visit us in our temporary space. We have more exhibitions to come.

We have just been joined by a new choir too. James Blake (some might recognise the name from The Brad Pitt Light Orchestra) is leading a group of enthusiastic singers connected by homelessness in this new venture and we have high hopes of a concert later in the year.

#### LIMERICK

Sunday Service 11.30am

Holy Communion 1st Sunday

Family Service 3rd Sunday

Sunday School/Youth Group 1st, 2nd & 4th Sundays

'Last Thursday' informal worship – last Thursday

each month 8pm – UL Contemplative Centre

Prayer before Sunday Service 11am Upper Room

Youth Group Monday 7.30pm

Music Group Friday evening 7.30pm

Bible Study group Wednesday 7pm Meeting Room

SHANNON & KILKEE

Contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details

# Killarney, Kenmare & Millstreet Methodist Churches

[part of the Cork South & Kerry Circuit]

Minister: Rev Karen Spence  
10 Flesk Grove, Killarney, Co Kerry  
Tel: 064 6631613  
Email: karen.spence@irishmethodist.org  
Website: www.irishmethodist.org/kerry

Lay Pastoral Assistant: Suzie Gallagher  
Kenmare Lay Pastoral Team: Ed and Jean Ritchie  
Tel: 064 6620580

The Lighthouse MILLSTREET  
Sunday service 6.30pm  
Bible Study Tuesday 7.30pm  
Drop in Thursday 9.30am – 12.30pm

KILLARNEY  
Sunday services 9am and 11am  
Prayer meetings Tuesday and Thursday 8am – 9am  
Soul Food Bible Study Friday 11am followed by Drop-in lunch 12pm  
Parent and Toddler (term time) Tuesday 10am  
Kids Ministry Club monthly as arranged on Saturdays

The Gateway KENMARE  
Sunday Service 11am (preceded by tea/coffee)  
Prayer Meeting Wednesday 9.15am  
Bible study Wednesday 10am  
Drop in for coffee Wednesday 11am  
Contact Rev Karen Spence for further information.

In Kenmare plans are in place for Christians Together to share a Bible Study during Lent. This group will meet on Wednesday mornings in the Gateway, Kenmare 10am – 12pm. This year it is hoped to use 'God's heart for Migrants' by Dr David Shepherd as the study material. In Killarney and Millstreet during Lent the Bible Studies will focus on Romans 12.

There will be a family fun day in Killarney on St Patrick's day which will include bouncy castles, face painting, refreshments, a drumming circle and a space to pray.

In Millstreet refreshments will be served outside the Lighthouse as the St Patrick's day parade passes through the town.

## North Tipperary Methodist Circuit

Minister: Rev Shannon DeLaureal  
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Tel: 0505 21670 Mobile: 085 1920 808  
Email: Shannon.delaureal@irishmethodist.org

### SUNDAY SERVICES:

10:00am – Borrisokane  
11:30am – Cloughjordan on 1st & 2nd Sunday's  
10:15am – Cloughjordan on 3rd, 4th, & 5th Sunday's  
11:45am – Roscrea  
7:00pm – Shinrone

Over the past several weeks, our church has been involved in two different special gatherings which have brought together folks to worship and learn more about Christ and his mission. On Saturday 28th January, we participated in an Ecumenical Family Fun Day Event to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This event was sponsored by Roscrea Churches Together, which included the Catholic, Church of Ireland, Methodist and Christian Oasis Churches in Roscrea. Abbey Hall was the venue and we welcomed somewhere between 80-100 people of all ages to an afternoon filled with St. Brigid cross-making, group activities based on Christian unity, tea and biscuits, and worship and praise. For those who preferred having a nice chat over tea, there was a table to gather around and discuss what the ideal church would be. At times there was more chaos than structure, but it was a joy-filled chaos. The planning committee was delighted by the

turn-out and feedback so we hope to organise similar events in the future. A big THANK YOU to all who attended and helped make this a wonderful event.

The second special gathering was Global Vision, which was a Midlands and Southern District event in the Methodist Church in Ireland (MCI). It was held in Roscrea Methodist on Sunday 12th February. Our guest speakers were Ms. Rhoda Baxter from Frontiers Ireland, Dr. Fergus O'Ferrall, the Lay Leader of the MCI, and the Rev. Dr. Laurence Graham, President-Designate of the MCI. Ms. Baxter spoke about Frontiers Ireland's mission to Muslims where they strive to present the Gospel of Christ gently and sensitively to Muslim people. Dr. O'Ferrall spoke of his recent trip to South Africa where he joined with a group of Irish Methodists to learn how the Methodist Church becomes an active presence in their communities. The Rev. Dr. Graham spoke of his recent trip to Haiti where he had been invited to attend their bicentenary celebrations of the Methodist Church in Haiti.



Rev Shannon with Guest speakers: Dr Fergus O'Ferrall, Rev Dr Laurence Graham, Ms Rhoda Baxter, and Rev Sahr Yambasu.

All the speakers were very engaging and those who attended learned more about God's mission in these various ministries. Folks from across our district attended the evening event. Some travelled from as far as Waterford to attend and be a part of the service. Rev. Sahr Yambasu, serving Waterford Methodist, led the lively service. Even though the weather was wintry, folks enjoyed a hot cup of tea and tray bakes along with nice chats before heading home. Thank you, N. Tipperary Circuit, for your hospitality and generosity! The evening was uplifting and enriching. It is gatherings like this that help us remember that the Church is more than the N. Tipperary Circuit. The Church is global! What a privilege it is to be able to come together with folks from different backgrounds and traditions to worship our Lord and to have our minds broadened by what God's doing in this great big world.

With Christ's love,  
~ Rev. Shannon

### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICES:

Friday 3rd March in Cloughjordan Methodist at 8:15pm and also in St. Cronan's Col in Roscrea at 8:15pm.

ST. CRONAN'S BOYS' BRIGADE – Our Company will meet next on Fridays 10th and 24th March in Roscrea Methodist Church Hall from 7–8:15pm.

MWI – Cloughjordan/Borrisokane – World Day of Prayer Service will be held on Friday 3 March in Cloughjordan Methodist at 8:15pm. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 21st March at 7:30pm (note time change) in Cloughjordan for Prayer through Art with Peg Caverley.

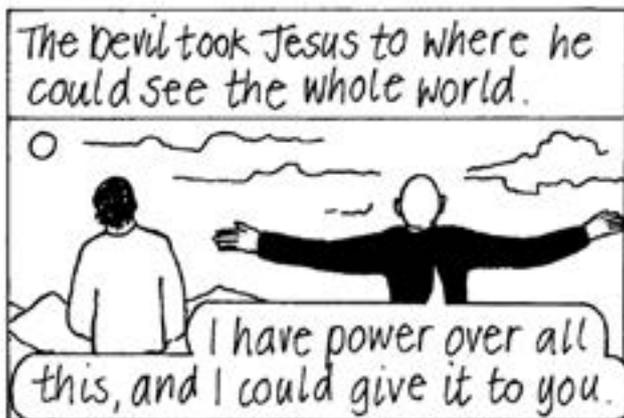
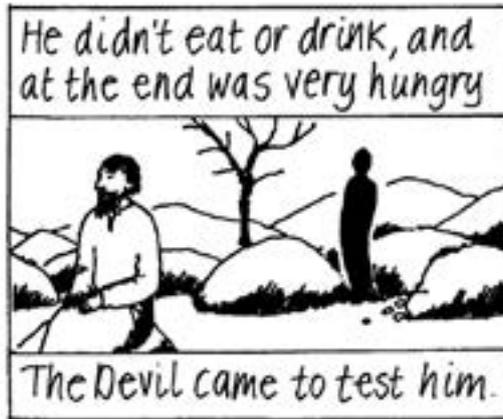
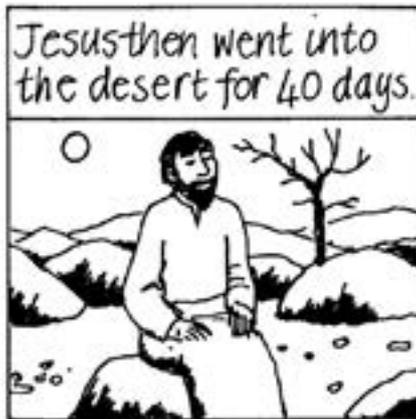
MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES are beginning soon! Beginning on Wed. 8th March at 8pm in Roscrea Methodist, we will host 5 ecumenical services which address social issues that are prevalent in our communities. The topics will include: homelessness in rural areas, concerns of the elderly, suicide, addictions, and cyber-bullying in the teenage years. A tea reception will follow in the Hall. All are welcome. Save these dates in your diary: Wednesdays 8th March, 15th March, 22nd March, 29th March, and 5th April.

# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Jn1:29-34, Mt3:13-17, Lk3:21-4:13, Mk1:9-12

People came to John to be baptised - washed in the river Jordan - to say sorry for what they had done wrong. Then Jesus came...



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