

The Newsletter

January 2013



Gerry Bird Merit Award

Clonenagh parishioner Nigel Condell (left) with Eoin Bird and Orla O'Dea at the recent presentation of the Gerry Bird Merit Award. The Award was created in honour of the late agricultural consultant Gerry Bird, and provides sponsorship for two agriculture students from UCD to help them during their practical training.

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

Annatrim, Borris-in-Ossory, Lacca, Mountrath, Roskelton, Seir Kieran.

Rector's Letter

There was one New Year's Day when we lived in Dublin when we went down to Brittas Bay for a walk. Walking along the beach in the stillness of an Irish winter afternoon, it seemed that summer days could not be so far away: no breath of wind disturbed the silence and tiny waves rippled onto the beach. Turning for the car park, there was the realisation that summer would come, but only after the wind and rain of the spring. Standing at the edge of the Irish Sea in the teeth of a March gale would be a different proposition.

As another harsh budget begins to bite and the days ahead are uncertain, there is the feel of standing on that beach on a quiet New Year's Day knowing that, one day, summer days would eventually come, but also knowing that there are stormy times ahead.

While we know that better times will return; we have no idea how long the difficult times will last. When we are facing the troubles ourselves, the assurance that things will eventually improve is

not much comfort. It is no help to know that the economy will grow in 2013, when we need money to pay bills by next Friday.

2013 in Ireland is hardly as bad as the 1930s, but there is a need for hope and perhaps the sort of faith that King George VI expressed on Christmas Day 1939. Speaking during the first Christmas of World War II, he quoted the poet Minnie Louise Haskins,

"I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'

And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be better than light, and safer than a known way.'"

We don't know how long the troubled times will last, but we trust that hand will be with us.



Church of Ireland News

‘Model the courtesy of God.’

The service of Enthronement for the new Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland and Metropolitan, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, took place at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Armagh on Saturday 15 December 2012. The address was given by the new Archbishop after his enthronement.

In his address, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke called on Christians to model ‘the courtesy of God’. He said: ‘We live in a culture within which anger rather than courtesy is the most prevalent behavioural pattern ... True courtesy is the converse of spiteful anger. And courtesy is not simply good manners but ... means generously going further than we actually have to go, in our service of another individual.’

The new Archbishop continued by stating, ‘The God we worship is a God of beauty and of truth, and our language and our actions are to mirror this. If, as St Augustine tells us, the weak are to be cared for, the faint-hearted comforted, the uneducated taught, the sluggish awakened and the good encouraged; if the agitators are to be rebuked, the conceited put in their place, the quarrelsome held back, and evil people to be endured, and all of them to be loved, it can only be when we hold – before our eyes and in our hearts – the image of Jesus

Christ who calls us to be his co-workers together in his service, and in serving his world. And it can also only be, when we have learnt to model – in all that we say and do – the courtesy of God.’

Church of Ireland Statement on Abortion

The Church of Ireland welcomes the fact that the Government of the Republic of Ireland has taken the decision to bring clarity to bear on the issue of abortion under certain circumstances. This is a matter of almost indescribable complexity – both human and medical. We fully recognize that any decision which, in respect of a woman’s health, results in a termination is a terribly weighty one. Our hope would also be that appropriate clarity will facilitate those who are practitioners in the field, namely nurses, doctors and others, as well as parents.

The Church of Ireland has recently re-stated in public that it stands with the notion of ‘real and substantial risk’ to the life of the mother in making decisions on terminations of pregnancies. Our statement flows from the Report of the Lambeth Conference 1958 which uses the similar phrase: ‘strict and undeniable...

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Parish Notes

A New Year with God: We mark the beginning of the New Year with covenant services (a tradition from the Methodist Church), in which we commit ourselves to the Lord for the coming year. This year there will be a covenant service in each of the five churches open on Sunday, 6th January. We hope people will begin the year as they mean to continue and will be present to make their own covenant with God

Third Sunday: Our Third Sunday service at Lacca Church on 18th November took place on a cold and wet afternoon when to sit at the fireside and watch the television would have been more inviting, yet more than forty people came along to the 4 pm service - a great tribute to people's commitment. Our Third Sunday service in January is on Sunday, 20th January at 4pm

Thank you: We give thanks to God that he has brought us to the beginning of another New Year and we are grateful to those who led our Sunday worship during 2012, particular thanks to those who lead services month by month, John Bailey, Mabel Peavoy, Charlie Wallace and Maureen Lanigan.

Thanks for prayers: The Rector would like to thank all who remembered him in their prayers during his recent visit to Rwanda and Burundi. Rwanda improves year on year, but Burundi remains a dangerous place.

Plough Sunday Farmers' service: We hold our third annual Plough Sunday service in Mountrath Church at 7 pm on Sunday 13th January, continuing the old tradition of the Sunday after the Epiphany being observed as a day on which there were prayers for the farming year. (Plough Sunday took its name from Plough Monday, the day when people traditionally returned to work after the Epiphany). Father Pat Hennessy will be our speaker and all farmers (and others), whatever their parish or denomination, are invited.

Rector away: The Rector is away from Saturday, 5th January until Saturday, 12th January. Contact telephone numbers for

pastoral calls will be available on the Rectory telephone.

Midweek series: A four week series of midweek services at Borris-in-Ossory begins on Wednesday, 16th January and continues on 23rd January, 30th January and 6th February, after which we begin our Lent journey around our six churches. A short series allows us the opportunity of a particular focus and we shall look at the Letters to the Churches in the Book of Revelation.

Mission Hall: The Diocesan Board of Education has approved a grant of €20,000 towards the purchase of the Mission Hall as a General Purpose room for Clonenagh National School. The School is able to contribute €5,000 from its own resources and Clonenagh Select Vestry are prepared to consider a €5,000 loan. When one looks at the level of commitment of Roman Catholic parishes towards their National Schools, the commitment in our own parishes is very lukewarm.

Holy Baptism: On Sunday, 25th November at Saint Peter's Church, Mountrath, Joshua, son of Henry and Sarah-Jane Kavanagh of Derrymore, Mountrath.

Congratulations to Niall & Bridget Bennett on the birth of their son Alan, who was born on the 20th of October, a little brother to Daniel.

Congratulations to Nigel Condell on having been awarded the Gerry Bird Merit Award from University College Dublin as part of his studies in Agriculture Science.

Mothers' Union & Young Wives will hold their first meeting of 2013 on January 28th at 8 pm in the Parochial Hall, Mountrath, and the speaker will be the Diocesan Chaplain, Canon Ian Poulton. The topic of his talk will be his visit to Rwanda and Burundi. ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND. Mrs Kathleen Bennett, Mrs Annie Clegg and Mrs Jean Treacy will be in charge of the supper on the night.

The members of the Mothers' Union would like to wish everyone Season's greetings and a Peaceful New Year, and remember all those who are bereaved, sick in hospital or at home, in their prayers over the festive time.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the annual **Irish Poppy Appeal** in November. A total of €245,937 was collected nationwide, all of which will be used in the Republic of Ireland

Sustentation: Thanks to all who have paid their Sustentation, and a gentle reminder to anyone who hasn't! Please get it to Florence Peavoy as soon as possible.

Thank you to everyone who supported the **Pre-Christmas Market** and made it a success, also to the helpers for looking after the stall; without you it would not be possible. €1141 has been raised to date.

Leprosy Mission boxes collection for 2012 was €94.96. Thanks to everybody who made a donation and it is much appreciated. We wish everybody a happy Christmas and a happy New Year.

Amos Nsengiyumva, whom you will all be familiar with by now, came to Ireland under the 'Bishop's Appeal' and in the care of CMS. He is studying in Gurteen College at present, and in the New Year goes to Theological College in Dublin. Last Sunday in Annatrim he sang a hymn which he composed himself as his personal testimony.

This is the English translation of his hymn:

SUFFERING WILL COME TO AN END

Suffering and pain will come to an end,
Wars will cease

Earthly people do not try to make me waste
my time

I have fully decided to serve my Saviour.

For He has already prepared for me a
sanctuary free from sadness and sorrow...

That is the reason why I am preparing
myself

So that one day I will live with my lovely
Saviour forever.

Chorus

*You brethren, be strong,
even though your situation is so difficult
When the battle is at its peak,
know in your heart It will shortly come to an
end.*

I will not surrender, even if I die,
When my body will have become dust,
I shall see my Lord, with my own eyes I will
behold Him.

I long to be with my Lord, my heart desires
Him above all.

Beloved brothers and sisters, encourage
one another

With the beautiful words of the Scriptures;
Fortify those with sorrowful hearts

Fortify those in misery and discouraged by
today's circumstances

So that no one will be left behind when
The Lord Jesus returns for His people.

~ Amos Nsengiyumva

Church of Ireland News

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...medical necessity,' as follows: 'In the strongest terms, Christians reject the practice of induced abortion or infanticide, which involves the killing of a life already conceived (as well as a violation of the personality of the mother) save at the dictate of strict and undeniable medical necessity.'

In our opinion the measure of the legislation will be in how the assessment of 'real and substantial risk' is handled, not least in the context of suicide. We look forward to contributing our perspective during the period of consultation. We further feel that authoritative guidance on this subject is urgently needed.

~Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin

Bishop of Down and Dromore condemns Loyalist Threats

The Rt Revd Harold Miller, Bishop of Down & Dromore, said, 'It is deeply disturbing to learn of a death threat against the elected Member of Parliament for East Belfast, Naomi Long, and of attacks against other elected representatives, in the wake of reaction to the recent vote on the flying of the Union Flag at Belfast City Hall. There can be no moral justification for such a threat or acts of violence in the name of "protest", however strongly held one's views are on any symbols of identity or allegiance. To resort to intimidation and attack is an affront to the high values of democratic freedom within the United Kingdom and to its flag and offers nothing to our society in Northern Ireland.

'My prayer is that across our communities we will reject what is wrong and all work constructively for the building up of the common good.'

Parish Diary

23rd Wednesday....Closing date for February 2013 Newsletter items!
28th Monday.....M.U.& Y.W. meeting, Parochial Hall (Page 5)

Items for the February 2013 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY January 23rd AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, January 27th.

PLEASE make your item as ready for publication as possible, and most importantly, please ensure that you spell names correctly.

Ideally, items should be submitted by e-mail to- newsletter@clonenagh.com

Otherwise to- Ivor Clegg, Cloncourse, Mountrath, Co. Laois. 057-8621277/087-2522162

This Newsletter and many older editions can be downloaded directly from

www.clonenagh.com

Smiles

Morning Tea

A vicar in a small country church was looking forward to an important visit from his bishop, which would involve the bishop staying overnight at the vicarage after the service. His young son became very excited, as he had never spoken to a bishop before.

The vicar decided that his young son should be allowed to knock the bishop's door in the morning, and bring him in his morning tea. His father gave him instructions: "First, knock on the door of the bishop's room and then say loud and clear: "It's the boy, my Lord, it's time to get up."

The young son was very excited and rehearsed his lines, repeating them over and over. Finally the bishop came and spent the night. Next morning day came and the young lad went to the door and knocked. He cried loudly: "It's the Lord, my boy, and your time is up!"

Hunting flies

A woman walked into the kitchen to find her husband stalking around with a folded newspaper. "What are you doing?" she asked.

"Hunting flies," he muttered.

"Oh! Kill any?"

"Yes, three males and two females," he replied.

Intrigued, the woman asked: 'How can you tell them apart?'

Her husband responded: "Easy. Three were on my tin of beer, and two were on the phone."

Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

An old, tired-looking dog wandered into my garden one day. I could tell from his collar and well-fed tummy that he had a home and was well taken care of. Calmly, he came over to me, and then followed me into my house. Slowly he walked down the hall, into the sitting room, curled up on the hearthrug, and fell asleep.

An hour or so later he went to the door, and I let him out. The next day he was back, greeted me in my garden, walked by me into the house, and again slept for an hour or so in the sitting room.

This daily visit with a nap continued off and on for several weeks. Curious, I finally pinned a note to his collar: "I would like to find out who the owner of this wonderful sweet dog is, and ask if you are aware that almost every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap."

The next day he arrived for his nap, with a different note pinned to his collar: "He lives in a home with six children, two under the age of three - he's trying to catch up on his sleep . . . Can I come with him tomorrow?"

Services & Readings

December 2012

Christmas Eve 24th	<i>Isaiah 9: 2-7</i> <i>Psalms 96</i> <i>Titus 2: 11-14</i> <i>Luke 2: 1-14, 15-20</i>	Seir Kieran 7.00pm Holy Communion	Borris-in-Ossory 8.15pm Holy Communion	Lacca 9.30pm Holy Communion
Christmas Day 25th	<i>Isaiah 62: 6-12</i> <i>Psalms 97</i> <i>Titus 3: 4-7</i> <i>Luke 2:1-7, 8-20</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 10.30am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion
Fifth Sunday 30th	<i>1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26</i> <i>Psalms 148</i> <i>Colossians 3: 12-17</i> <i>Luke 2: 41-52</i>	Mountrath 11.00am Holy Baptism & Holy Communion		

January 2013

First Sunday 6th	<i>Isaiah 60: 1-6</i> <i>Psalms 72: 1-7, 10-14</i> <i>Ephesians 3: 1-12</i> <i>Matthew 2: 1-12</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Covenant Service	Seir Kieran 9.30am Covenant Service	Lacca 10.30am Covenant Service	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Covenant Service	Mountrath 11.30am Covenant Service & Holy Communion
Second Sunday 13th	<i>Isaiah 43: 1-7</i> <i>Psalms 29</i> <i>Acts 8: 14-17</i> <i>Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 7.00pm Plough Sunday Farmers' Service
Third Sunday 20th	<i>Isaiah 62:1-5</i> <i>Psalms 36: 5-10</i> <i>1 Corinthians 12: 1-11</i> <i>John 2: 1-11</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 4.00pm Holy Communion
Fourth Sunday 27th	<i>Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10</i> <i>Psalms 19</i> <i>1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a</i> <i>Luke 4: 14-21</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer		Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion

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