

The Newsletter

March 2013



80th Birthday Celebration

Betty Harvey helps Mervyn cut his birthday cake following the St. Brigid's day service on Friday 1st February in St Peter Church, Mountrath.

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

The forty days in the wilderness were a time when Jesus was challenged by the devil to make choices, to decide which way his ministry would go, to decide what his priorities were. The season of Lent, when we think about Jesus making choices, is a time when we make choices ourselves. Sometimes, our choices are about small things, giving up sweets or biscuits, sometimes they are about much more serious things.

Having had chest pains in January, I had a series of appointments with doctors and various tests and scans. On 20th February, I had an appointment with a cardiologist. He said the slight blockages in my arteries were enough to cause irritation, but that I was not going to die. However, he also said, I must slow down and do less. His suggestions included finishing work at 4 pm each day and reducing the number of services, neither of which I am going to do.

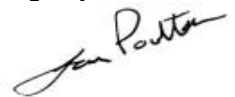
Going through all the things that took up my time, I decided that the parish work must be at the core of what I do and that other things were dispensable. As part of cutting back, I have withdrawn

from a study course that was going to take me to England for two days three times a year; have resigned from the Bishops' Appeal (which sometimes took up a lot of time); and have declined to be involved in other groups and committees. I had planned to visit Rwanda and Burundi again in November, but at the moment that looks unlikely.

In the parish, my focus will continue to be upon worship and pastoral work, particularly continuing to visit the unwell, those in hospital, and those who don't get out. But, as I'm taking tablets that leave me feeling tired, it may mean some of the extra things may not be possible.

The pains may have come as a Godsend – a warning about a situation that might have grown worse if nothing had been done, and a reminder to think about the things that matter. I am grateful for your prayers and ask for your patience if I'm slow at times.

Do think about Jesus this Lent and think about what he is asking of you.



Parish Diary

February 25th.....Mothers' Union & Young Wives Meeting (page 5)
1st Friday.....G.F.S. meeting, Parochial Hall (7:15pm)
15th Friday.....G.F.S. meeting, Parochial Hall (7:15pm)
20th Wednesday...Closing date for April 2013 Newsletter items!

Church of Ireland News

Bilingual Services Book Launched by Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise

A new Bilingual Services book will allow the Irish and English languages to stand side by side in harmony and enrichment, according to Bishop Michael Burrows. The Bishop, who is patron of Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise, said it offered a parallel text which would enable those leading worship to slide from one language into the other and people would realise that they had more Irish than they previously thought. The book features Irish and English language versions of Holy Communion and other frequently used services. It was compiled by Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise and is aimed at facilitating bilingual worship.

Each parish in Cashel and Ossory diocese is to receive half a dozen free copies of the new prayer in the hope that its availability will stimulate its use.

Laois Rector is elected Bishop of Meath and Kildare

On 28th January, the Episcopal Electoral College for Meath and Kildare elected The Venerable Leslie Stevenson, Archdeacon of Meath and Kildare, as the new Bishop of Meath and Kildare. Archdeacon Stevenson succeeds the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, who became Archbishop of Armagh. Archdeacon Stevenson, 53, is the Rector of Portarlinton and has been Archdeacon of Meath and Kildare since 2009. He was educated at the University of Ulster, the Church of Ireland Theological College and at the Irish School of Ecumenics, and was ordained deacon in 1983 and priest in 1984. Archdeacon Stevenson served his curacy in St Mark's,

Dundela, Belfast before becoming Rector of Kilmore and Inch in Co Down in 1987 and Rector of Donaghadee in 1992, where he served until he moved to Portarlinton in 1999. The bishop-elect has served and continues to serve on a number of Diocesan and Church committees and bodies, including the Representative Church Body and the Commission on Ministry.

New bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh

On 4th February, the Episcopal Electoral College for Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh elected the Revd Ferran Glenfield, Rector of Hillsborough Parish (Down), as the new Bishop of the United Dioceses. He succeeds the Right Revd Ken Clarke, who is now Director of SAMS Ireland. Mr Glenfield is a graduate of Queen's University Belfast. He taught before training for the ordained ministry and completed theological studies in Trinity College Dublin and the University of Oxford. Ordained deacon in 1991 for the Douglas Union of Parishes, he continued to serve in the Diocese of Cork as the Rector of Rathcooney Union of Parishes. In 1996 he moved to Dublin Diocese to become the Rector of Kill o'the Grange Parish in Blackrock where he served for sixteen years before moving to Hillsborough in 2012. In addition to parish experience, he has been involved in theological education most notably through the Irish College of Preachers and the Church of Ireland Theological Institute. He is married to Jean, who is Head of the Preparatory Department in Wesley College, Dublin and they have three children.

Parish Notes

World Day of Prayer: The World Day of Prayer service takes place in Saint Peter's Church in Mountrath at 8 pm on Friday, 1st March. The service this year has been prepared by Christian women in France. Everyone is welcome at the service.

Saint Ciaran's Day: On Tuesday, 5th March, the Saint Ciaran's day pilgrimage by our Catholic neighbours in Clareen begins after the ten o'clock Mass, visiting the holy well and Saint Ciaran's tree before coming down to our church for prayers at the monastic site. While it might not be part of the spiritual tradition to which most of us belong, we are very welcome to join the walk. At 8 o'clock that evening, we shall be having our own Saint Ciaran's Day service at which Bishop Michael will be the preacher. The service will be part of the Lent series in our six churches, and it would be encouraging to see all six churches represented at the service.

Mothers' Union in Africa Talk: The Rector has been travelling far and wide speaking on the work of Mothers' Union in Rwanda and Burundi and on Thursday, 7th March will be speaking at Aghancon at the invitation of the local branch. Everyone is welcome to come along (at a recent meeting at Kiltegan in Co Wicklow, there was even one man brave enough to come to the meeting).

Lent Services: Our Lent series returns to its usual Wednesday evening slot on 13th March when we shall be in Roskelton; and on 20th March, when we shall be in Lacca. We have been using the Lent Course provided by Churches

Together in Britain and Ireland. The theme this year is 'This is our story: Journeys of Faith'. Do try to be with us each week. If anyone would like to look at the course, it is available on the internet at: www.ctbi.org.uk/622

Saint Patrick's Day: Brian Donahue, a Christian leader from Virginia in the United States whose roots are in Clareen and who is interested in Celtic monasticism, is bringing a group from the United States to Laois and Offaly for ten days in March. One of the things Brian is interested in doing is having a service in Clareen at sunset on Saturday, 16th March, to mark the beginning of Saint Patrick's Day. On Saint Patrick's Day itself, we shall be using the 4 o'clock service in Lacca as an opportunity to remember the Celtic roots of our church.

Holy Week Services: Our services begin on Palm Sunday, 24th March and run through until Good Friday, 29th March. This Holy Week we follow Saint Luke's telling of the story of Jesus from the entry into Jerusalem until the glorious moment on that first Easter morning. Our services will be as follows:

Palm Sunday 7 pm Seir Kieran
Monday 8 pm Roskelton
Tuesday 8 pm Annatrim
Wednesday 8 pm Borris in Ossory
Maundy Thursday 8 pm Mountrath

Good Friday: Our services on Good Friday begin at 10 am with the Stations of the Cross from The Hollow to Roskelton. At 2 pm we keep the Last Hour in Mountrath, a service of bible

reading, hymns and quietness. On Good Friday at 8pm we gather in Lacca for a dramatised reading of the Passion story with all the old favourite hymns, 'The Old Rugged Cross', 'Nearer, my God, to thee', etc.

Easter Eve: Our celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ begins at Annatrim on Saturday, 30th March, Easter Eve at 7.00 when as the sun sets we gather for the Easter Vigil and the First Communion of Easter Day. As part of our service we shall decorate a cross with flowers, acknowledging the new life for us that came through Jesus' death on the cross.

Easter Day: Easter morning begins early with the dawn service at Seir Kieran, the founding place of Ossory diocese and the most ancient Christian site in Cashel and Ossory. Our service starts at 7.00 when we shall light the Easter Fire on the monastic site where Saint Ciaran, a contemporary of Saint Patrick, lit the Easter fire sixteen centuries ago. The services continue at 8.15 am with Holy Communion at Borris in Ossory and then Holy Communion at 9.30 at Roskelton, 10.30 at Lacca and 11.30 at Mountrath.

Baptisms: Through the sacrament of holy baptism, we welcomed into the fellowship of Christ's Church, Alan Bennett at Saint Peter's Church, Mountrath on Sunday, 27th January, and Luke Wharton at Seir Kieran on Sunday, 10th February.

Parish changes: We remember Fr John Lalor, Parish Priest of Camross, in our prayers as he assumes the additional burden of Seir Kieran parish, from which Fr Eamonn O'Gorman, who was a good friend and neighbour to our community, has been moved to become Parish Priest of Conahy in Co Kilkenny. In our own diocese, we remember the Revd Ian Cruickshank of Kilcooley Parish, who has been appointed Rector of Ballygawley in Co Tyrone.

Bonny Baby Spring Fair in Mountrath Mart in aid of **11i.e** Suicide Prevention helpline (www.1life.ie), 27th April.

Mothers' Union & Young Wives February Meeting: At the meeting on Monday, 25th February we shall welcome Mrs Eileen Senior. Eileen will be speaking on craft ideas.

Items for the April 2013 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY March 20th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, March 24th.

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

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Table Tennis News

Jestin Lucan good in Dublin while Mountrath and Emo excel in Laois county finals

Current All-Ireland Table Tennis champions Mountrath started out the defence of their U13 Girls Community Games title by meeting Emo in the County final over the weekend. Jessie Hayes, Leanne Delaney, Tiegan and Sarah O'Connor all took on the challenge of Emo's Gillian Keenan, Zoe Keegan, Emma Lawlor, Chloe Langford and Niamh Crowley. It was always going to be difficult for the village as Mountrath's players have been hitting high notes at national events all season and while a very spirited performance was displayed by Michael Slevin's team they found Mountrath vastly superior on the night.

Meanwhile, Emo Boys were collecting gold following their victory over last seasons winners Ballyroan in the U13 final, and so march on with Mountrath to Round Two where their opposi-

tion will be from Offaly or Westmeath.

Dublin hosted the most recent Irish Challenger series over the weekend. 92 junior players from the Leinster area congregated in Lucan Co Dublin in a twofold event that is an introduction for young players to experiment at higher level and also for advanced players to gain competition time. After many rounds it came down to semi finals and finals over four divisions where the Premier div was the pinnacle of the event. Here it was a Laois Kildare final with Mountrath's Scott Jestin taking on Oisin O'Rourke of Maynooth in a hard hitting contest. Jestin executed his potential early to command this encounter and took the first set 11-6. O'Rourke turned the tables with a 10-12, but thereafter Jestin turned up the heat with persistent pressure to take the remaining sets 11-7, 11-6, and so take overall event winner. Amylou Hayes kept in close contention throughout the day to take overall 3rd.



Mountrath U13 winners: Sarah O'Connor, Leanne Delaney, Monica Percy (RTE Operation Transformation leader), Jessie Hayes and Tiegan O'Connor.



Mountrath club players Tiegan O'Connor 2nd U10, Katie Hayes Winner U14, Jimmy Hayes club coach, Scott Jestin 3rd U14, and Jessie Hayes 2nd U14 at a recent table tennis event in Clontarf Dublin.

Mountrath have great day in the city

Dazzling displays by many young players from Mountrath Table Tennis Club were in force as eight players collected a host of silverware during this elite Leinster event in Dublin recently. Tadhg Downey U12 and Katie Hayes U14 captured gold in their respective events. Downey faced into a category which included recent All-Ireland winner and clubmate Dylan Grace along with Moldovian wonder kid Isaac Ghenadie. On meeting Grace in the semi-finals he encountered his greatest challenge to date and it took a demanding 5 sets to separate these two wizards before he won by the narrowest of margins. This took him on to meet Ghenadie in a final in which the Mountrath player from Ballon in Carlow produced a magical performance to cut through his counterpart with a 3-0 win.

Grace, who hails from Crosspatrick in Kilkenny collected an excellent bronze.

Katie Hayes returned to winning ways recently by winning the UCD Chal-

lenger in Dublin and followed it up by capturing gold at this U14 Girls event, followed closely in 2nd place by her sister Jessie who was also in striking form in U12 where she also collected silver with Leanne Delaney taking bronze following a powerful run in the event.

Delaney also had success recently at the UCD event in winning Div 2.

Tiegan O'Connor continues to progress at great pace where she excels at U10 and again went all the way to the final where she came up against Club Donics Mai Egan. While O'Connor continues to close the gap on her counterpart from Kildare she had to settle for a score line of 1-3 before time ran out.

Scott Jestin produced another excellent performance and pulled off a host of sensational results to make it a very close finish between himself, Conor Galagher (2nd), and eventual winner Donie Mullaliy at U14. So, with bronze he rounded off a fantastic weekend for the midland club who continue to produce many fine young table tennis players who compete at all levels within the game and around the country.

Services & Readings

March 2013

First Sunday 3rd	<i>Isaiah 55: 1-9</i> <i>Psalm 63: 1-9</i> <i>1 Corinthians 10: 1-13</i> <i>Luke 13: 1-9</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Morning Prayer	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Holy Communion	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion
Second Sunday 10th	<i>Joshua 5: 9-12</i> <i>Psalm 32</i> <i>2 Corinthians 5: 16-21</i> <i>Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion		Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer
Third Sunday St. Patrick's day 17th	<i>Deuteronomy 32: 1-9</i> <i>Psalm 145: 1-13</i> <i>2 Corinthians 4: 1-12</i> <i>John 4: 31-38</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 St. Patrick's Day Service
Fourth Sunday Palm Sunday 24th	<i>Isaiah 50: 4-9a</i> <i>Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29</i> <i>Philippians 2: 5-11</i> <i>Luke 19: 28-40</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer		Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	

Holy Week

Monday (25th)	Roskelton 8.00pm Compline					
Tuesday 26th	Annatrim 8.00pm Late Evening Office					
Wednesday (27th)	Borris-in-Ossory 8.00pm Evening Prayer					
Maundy Thursday (28th)	Mountrath 8.00pm Holy Communion					
Good Friday (29th)	The Hollow to Roskelton 10.00am Walking with the Cross	Mountrath 2.00pm The Last Hour		Lacca 8.00pm Service of the Word		
Easter Eve (30th)	Annatrim 7.00pm Easter Vigil and First Communion of Easter Day					
Fifth Sunday Easter Day (31st)	<i>Acts 10: 34-43</i> <i>Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24</i> <i>1 Corinthians 15: 19-26</i> <i>Luke 24: 1-12</i>	Seir Kieran 7.00am Lighting of the Easter Fire	Borris-in-Ossory 8.15am Holy Communion	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Lacca 10.30am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion