

The Newsletter

April 2013



Saint Patrick's Eve

Joyce Wharton and Margaret Grant at the lighting of the fire on Bell Hill
on the Eve of Saint Patrick's Day

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

'Old age is not a problem', said the poster at the roadside, 'loneliness is'.

'When will the winter end?' I thought, one day last week when driving to Portlaoise. The words reminded me of the words of a lady who had been a member of a parish in the North where I spent seven years as Rector.

'When the winter ends', the lady had said that the last time I had seen her. Living in sheltered accommodation, she was reclusive. Her main interest in life was her son, whose occasional appearance were the moments for which she lived. 'He'll come to see me', she said, 'when the winter ends'. There had been a momentary temptation to point out that he lived in Belfast, less than thirty miles away, and that, although it was January, the weather was mild and dry, but what was the point in causing her unnecessary upset?

'I was going to come when the winter ended', he said when I met him. His car was parked outside her house; the undertaker had just left.

The police had phoned me that morning, they believed something had happened to her and they would like a clergyman present when they forced the door. The woman's body was lying on the hearth rug, the paper she was

twisting as fire lighters still in her hands. The heart attack that had taken her must have been sudden and massive.

The funeral had been respectably attended, the son's presence brought friends from Belfast uninhibited by the thought that it was still winter. What went through his mind as he sat in the front row with the coffin a few feet away? Maybe he believed his own story, that driving from Belfast in winter months was hazardous - despite the fact that our area had an abundance of people who drove to and from the city for their daily work. I never saw or heard from him again. A furniture van came and removed her few pieces of furniture and it was soon as though she had never existed.

The weather, work, things that have to be done. We can all make excuses for not doing the things we should; not visiting people we should see, but I hope there is no-one in our community left like that lady in the North. Whatever about the weather, or the economy, or all the other problems, it costs nothing to knock someone's door and ask them how they are.

Let's be a community where no-one is lonely.



Rector:

*Canon Ian Poulton,
Clonagh Rectory,
Portlaoise Road,
Mountrath.
Phone: 057-8732146*

Diocesan Reader:

*Mabel Peavoy,
Shannon Road,
Mountrath.
Phone: 057-8732331*

Parish Archivist:

*Vicky Knowles,
Clonin School,
Mountrath.
Phone: 057-8732846*

Church of Ireland News

Good wishes to Pope Francis

On behalf of the Church of Ireland, Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh, sent good wishes to new pope following his election on 13th March.

“In company with millions of men and women throughout the world of different Christian traditions to his own, I assure the new Pope of our prayers as he begins his new ministry. An Argentinian of European parentage, he brings together in his own person the cultures, hopes and spiritual needs of the first world and of the developing world, so much to be valued amidst the complexities and apprehensions of our globalised earth. He has been a champion of the needs of the poor and dispossessed, and, in the simplicity of his own lifestyle, he has sought to reflect the life of the much-loved saint whose name he now carries in the future, Saint Francis.

As the Church of Ireland’s Archbishop of Armagh I extend also to Cardinal Seán Brady, to Jesuit friends throughout the island and to all the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, our best wishes, with the hopes and prayers of many fellow-Christians, as Pope Francis now embarks on the ministry to which he has been called.”

Churches Have To Get Used To A Secular Society – Bishop Of Cork

Addressing the congregation at the annual Civic Service in Saint Fin Barre’s Cathedral, Cork, the Right Reverend

Paul Colton, said that Saint Patrick’s Day – a festival which is at one and the same time a national day and a religious event – ‘confronts us all annually with questions about the place of religion in our society.’

Bishop Colton said: I cannot help but feeling – especially as I witness, and am personally engaged, in Church-State dialogue, in the field of education especially, in the care of the elderly, and in the voluntary charitable sector; and as we all take part in on-going vigorous debate about all sorts of issues, including the proposed abortion legislation, marriage equality rights, and the affording of protection to Lesbian and Gay people in a religious workplace, to name some examples – I cannot help but feeling that we have some major Church-State growing-up and disentangling to do.

The State has the challenge of accommodating, in a secular way, in its legislation, within the Rule of Law, outlooks which take account of the new diversity, religious and non-religious. Religious groups, churches, particularly churches that have been used to exerting major influence (including, in spite of its size, the Church of Ireland) have to get used to what it means to be religious, and to work out our faith, in a secular society.

A secular State does not mean that there is no place for religion or dialogue with a religious viewpoint. Separation of Church and State does not mean that religious people have nothing to say or should say nothing.

Parish Notes

Holy Week and Easter: This newsletter is coming out on Palm Sunday so is an opportunity to remind everyone of our Holy Week and Easter services.

Holy Week

This Holy Week we reflect on the places in Saint Luke's telling of the story of Jesus from the entry into Jerusalem until the glorious Easter morning.

This evening at 7 pm Seir Kieran

The Road, Luke 19:36

Monday 8 pm Roskelton

The Temple Courts, Luke 20:1

Tuesday 8 pm Annatrim

The Mount of Olives, Luke 21:37

Wednesday 8 pm Borris in Ossory

The Upper Room, Luke 22:12

Maundy Thursday 8 pm Mountrath

A Tomb, Luke 23:53

Good Friday

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.

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 at 7.00am.

The services continue at 8.15 with Holy

Communion at Borris in Ossory, Holy Communion at 9.30 at Roskelton, 10.30 at Lacca, and 11.30 at Mountrath.

The Annunciation: 25th March this year fell during Holy Week, meaning Lady Day, the Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary, moves to the first Monday after Easter Week, Monday, 8th April. Our Mothers' Union Lady Day Holy Communion service takes place in Mountrath Church on Monday, 8th April at 8 pm.

Mission Hall: Clonenagh National School is now within touching distance of acquiring the former mission hall building for conversion into a general purpose room for the school - somewhere that can be used for PE, drama and other activities. The trustees of the mission hall have dropped the asking price to €32,000. The Diocesan Board of Education have approved a grant of €20,000, the school board of management can raise €5,000 from funds, and we received a very generous anonymous donation of €2,000. Our shortfall now is just €5,000. If there are former pupils or current parents who would like to make a contribution, every amount would be very welcome. If you are not in a position to make a cash donation, but would like to help, don't worry. Once we have acquired the hall, we shall need lots of voluntary helpers to work on the building.

Classroom painting: The new classroom, the extension to the right of the school building as you stand at the front gate, is now complete. The school budget does not run to paying for it to be painted so we need some volunteers during the Easter holidays to come and help paint it. If you can help, please contact the chair of our school board of management, Mrs Sylvia Stotesbury at 087 7425865 for further details.

Easter vestry meetings: The early Easter means that our Easter General Vestry meetings have come around much more quickly than usual. The provisional dates for Easter meetings are 9th April for Offerlane, 10th April for Clonenagh and 11th April for Borris-in-Ossory- Seir Kieran

Summer series: Bishop Michael will be at Saint Mark's Church, Borris-in-Ossory to celebrate Holy Communion on the eve of Saint Mark's Day, Wednesday, 24th April. Bishop Michael's reflections on the church will mark the beginning of a summer series in which we will go through an A-Z of the church, starting with angels on 1st May, baptism on 8th May, and on through the alphabet

Confirmation: We have only one candidate for whom an interest in confirmation has been expressed, so the usual classes will not be taking place. Our next confirmation service will be in Mountrath church in June 2014

Lent services: Thank you to everyone who supported the series of Lent services this year - we averaged an attendance of 35 people each evening over the five services, something that was very encouraging.

John 3:16 Video: The Lent service in Roskelton this year was memorable for us using a cup and saucer in the absence of silver (something probably much closer to the Last Supper!) and for a very moving video shown to us by Mervyn Tomb from the Faith Mission. The video was about a father's sacrifice of his only son to save a train filled with people and a number of people asked whether the story was true. According to stories on the Internet, in 1929 a man called John Griffith in the United States had to make such a dreadful decision.

Thank you to Mervyn: Mervyn Tomb has been busy in our parish in recent weeks,

taking assemblies in Clonenagh National School and speaking at the school's Easter service, Mervyn is also planning a holiday Bible club in Mountrath from 1th to 19th July in the Parochial Hall. Pupils at Clonenagh NS will have received a flyer about the dates and fuller details will be available next term.

American visitors: We were delighted to welcome Brian Donohue and his family and other members of the Evangelical Free Church in Virginia in the United States to Clareen for the days around Saint Patrick's Day. As well as activities with the local Catholic community, the group visited the monastic site at Clareen on the Saturday and then enjoyed the hospitality of the Grant family to watch the Ireland-Italy rugby match before being very well fed by Margaret Grant and Joyce Wharton at Margaret's kitchen table. On the Saturday evening, the visitors were joined by a few dozen local people for a short service on Bell Hill, lighting a fire on the hill top to remember Saint Patrick lighting the Easter fire at Tara. We hope the group's visit will be the beginning of something new in the life of the Seir Kieran community.

Car park wall: People passing through Mountrath will have noticed that the church hall car park wall is undergoing repair. The FAS workers had intended repairing the cracked plaster, but upon removing it discovered not the stone wall they had expected, but something made from sand and rubble without mortar holding it together. As a consequence, repairs have had to take place on the weakest parts before it can be re-plastered.

Rector away: The Rector is going to visit family in England and in the North between Monday, 22nd April and Monday, 29th April. He had originally planned to attend the consecration of the new bishop of Meath and Kildare, which had been set for 28th April, but that event has been postponed until Wednesday 1st May.

Rogationtide: Rogation Sunday this year falls on Sunday, 5th May. We hope by the time that day is reached, our prayers for a fine spring will have been answered. As in the past two years, we shall have open air services to ask God's blessing on the crops.

Special synod: The special diocesan synod on Saturday, 25th May could have major repercussions for parishes which show larger populations in their diocesan returns. The proposed scheme of union with Ferns diocese includes a plan that parishes be assessed on the basis of €18,000 for each incumbency plus a per capita charge calculated on the basis of every parishioner, without regard for age, church attendance or ability to pay. As it stands, a new family of two adults and three children joining the church would add around €500 a year to the annual assessment. This would be a major disincentive to trying to build up a congregation.

The Clonenagh Parish Barbecue Fun Day will take place in the Rectory Grounds on Sunday June 16th. More details nearer to the day.

On Tuesday 12th March, the **Parent & Toddler Group** held a bring & buy sale / coffee morning in aid of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland. We raised €165.00.

The **Bonnie Baby Spring Fair** will be held this year on Saturday April 27th at Mountrath Mart in Aid of One Life Suicide Prevention Helpline (www.onelife.ie) and Turn The Tide Of Suicide. Judging commences at 10am. Entry forms available from David Wharton, 087-2991379 or from Mountrath Mart. Last year's event raised over €4,000 for the charity. Once again many thanks to all those who helped to make that day such a success.

A **Garden Fete** will be held in the home of Dorothy and Denis Delaney, Rossadown, Mountrath, on Easter Monday 1st April, 2-5pm, to raise funds for the Irish Wheelchair Association. Their grand-daughter Sinead Keon is involved in the association. A fun filled day for all the family, more information available at 057-8735951



On Wednesday 20th March **St Fintan's Boys School** held an Easter Egg Hunt. The boys school invited Tots & Co playschool and **Mountrath Parent & Toddler Group**. The children met in the school hall for party treats & to colour pictures, then went outside for a parachute game & look for the eggs. They all had great fun.

Smiles

Pastoral care

The young clergyman was walking through the village when he met one of his elderly parishioners. 'How's your cold?' he asked.

"Very obstinate," came the bleak reply.

"I'm sorry." The clergyman decided to try again. "Well, how is your arthritis?"

"Very obstinate," came the reply.

"Oh dear, I am sorry," soothed the clergyman. He tried a third time: "And how is your wife?"

"About the same."

Church Magazine Bloomers

You know what they meant, but what they said was . . .

Iring Benson and Jessie Carter were married on 24 October in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
* * *

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
* * *

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hospitality.
* * *

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday
* * *

The Rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing: Break Forth Into Joy.
* * *

The senior choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to see the organist after the service.
* * *

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
* * *

Don't let worry kill you - let the Church help.

Parish Diary

1st Saturday.....Garden Fete in aid of Irish Wheelchair Association (*page 6*)

24th Wednesday...Closing date for May 2013 Newsletter items!

27th Saturday.....Bonnie Baby Spring Fair, Mountrath Mart (*page 6*)

Items for the May 2013 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY April 24th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, April 28th.

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

Services & Readings

Holy Week (last week of March)						
Monday (25th)	Roskelton 8.00pm Compline					
Tuesday 26th)	Annatrim 8.00pm Late Evening Office					
Wednes- day (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

April 2013						
First Sunday 7th	<i>Acts 5: 27-32</i> <i>Psalm 118: 14-29</i> <i>Revelation 1: 4-8</i> <i>John 20: 19-31</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 14th	<i>Acts 9: 1-6</i> <i>Psalm 30</i> <i>Revelation 5: 11-14</i> <i>John 21: 1-19</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Third Sunday 21st	<i>Acts 9: 36-43</i> <i>Psalm 23</i> <i>Revelation 7: 9-17</i> <i>John 10: 22-30</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in- Ossory 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer
Fourth Sunday 28th	<i>Acts 11: 1-18</i> <i>Psalm 148</i> <i>Revelation 21: 1-6</i> <i>John 13: 31-35</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	