

The Newsletter

March 2014

Rector:

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Stanley Lalor, originally from Clonenagh Group of Parishes, recently graduated PhD in the subject area of fertiliser use in Agriculture from Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

On the first Sunday in February, one of the electrical fuses in Roskelton church blew, leaving us without power. It was a bright morning, so the lack of electric lighting was not a problem, but it did mean that there was no power for the keyboard. This proved to be no obstacle to the singing of the hymns as Mabel Peavoy and the ladies of the choir led the congregation in some great singing. Perhaps we sang better because we knew we had to make up for the loss of the keyboard, perhaps we sang better because, with no music being played, others would have noticed if we had not been singing, whatever the reason, nineteen of us filled Roskelton church with sound. It might not have been perfect musically, but it was great spiritually.

Augustine of Hippo, an early Christian writer, realized that singing brought an extra dimension to worship; it added something that was otherwise not there. Augustine wrote, "For he who sings praise, does not only praise, but also praises joyfully; he who sings praise, not only sings, but also loves Him whom he is singing about". Singing is at the heart of worship in the Bible, look at the psalms and the way in which they encourage us to praise God. Both the Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint Mark tell

us about Jesus and his friends singing at the most crucial of moments, at the end of the Last Supper, we are told, " when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." In the letter to the Ephesians, Saint Paul talks of the need for Christians to "sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts".

With singing being at the heart of Scripture and very much at the heart of Church of Ireland worship, our Lent series this year is not going to be a series of studies, as we have done in previous years, but is going to be singing through Lent. Each Wednesday evening we shall look at the Gospel reading for the week and look at a hymn that reflects the teaching found in the reading, but the point of the services will not be in the saying of words, but in the singing of them, for it is in the singing that they become real in our hearts.

Do find time to join us this Lent as we praise joyfully and love the one about whom we sing.



Church of Ireland News

Act to stop Climate Change

Responding to a decision by the Church of England, the Revd Andrew Orr, Rector of Tullow, Co Carlow and Chairman of Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI) called on churches in Ireland take action on climate change

"Eco-Congregation Ireland is delighted that the Church of England General Synod has overwhelmingly passed a motion calling on the Church to take action on climate change. This includes the setting up of a special environmental panel to oversee the Church's response in areas such as administration, parish life and investments. "We would ask that all the churches in Ireland would follow the lead of the Church of England and begin a similar process that would see every faith community engage constructively with their call to care for God's Creation, especially around the damage to the planet caused by climate change."

Bishops' Appeal News

Early in the New Year several vital projects received funding from the Bishops' Appeal.

A project in Zambia supported through the Us, (formerly USPG), received EURO 16,749 to address the issue of Gender Based Violence. The Church in Zambia is responding to information that 47% of girls are sexually abused by the age of 15, by developing a holistic project to educate and protect these girls and to raise awareness in the wider community.

A project in Mali coordinated by Christian Aid received EURO 10,000 to implement a renewable energy project which will see more remote villages receive electricity for the first time.

In Argentina, a SAMS supported project received £7,800 Bishops' Appeal funding for the further development of its Farmers' Garden. Here, people grow new crops and learn how to grow a variety of foods to ensure balanced nutrition.

In Ghana, a project focusing on providing women's vocational training received £11,441 through Feed the Minds to help women with little or no schooling receive practical education that allows them opportunities for business or employment.

In Uganda, Fields of Life received £10,000 for a teacher training programme. Oftentimes, when children finally attend school because their parents have access to uniforms or fees, the quality of the education received is low because the teachers have little or no training.

In Myanmar, where thousands of displaced people have set up makeshift homes along the border of Myanmar and Thailand, funding has been released for emergency food relief as shortages become more and more regular and people struggle to feed their families. As little as EURO 21 can feed three families for a month. Bishops' Appeal released EURO 10,000.

Parish Notes

Ash Wednesday: Our observance of the season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 5th March with Holy Communion at 10.30 am in Mountrath

Saint Ciaran's Day: Our patronal festival at Seir Kieran also falls on Ash Wednesday this year and we shall celebrate Holy Communion at 8 pm. As we remember Ciaran, we will remember the place of penitence and discipline in the life of the early Irish Church and reflect on the words of the ancient Irish hymn "It were my soul's desire".

Lent 2014: Our Lent services take place at 8 pm on each Wednesday evening of Lent. "Singing through Lent" is the theme of our Lent series this year. Each week we shall look at the spiritual teaching of one of the hymns connected with the Gospel reading for the Sunday.

At Annatrim on 12th March, the reading is Matthew 4:1-11 and the hymn is "Forty days and forty nights".

At Borris-in-Ossory on 19th March, the reading is John 3:1-17 and the hymn is "Man of sorrows".

At Roskelton on 26th March, the reading is John 4:5-42 and the hymn is "I heard the voice of Jesus say".

At Lacca on 2nd April, the reading is John 9:1-41 and the hymn is "Amazing grace."

The series concludes in Mountrath on 9th April, when the reading will be John 11:1-45 and the hymn will be "Thine be the glory"

Bible Club: Our Bible Club meets on Thursday, 13th and 27th March. After welcoming a dozen or so children each evening in the meetings before Christmas, it was encouraging that the attendance has now grown to over twenty at each meeting of the club. We are very grateful to Mervyn Tomb of the Faith Mission in Durrow for the boundless energy and enthusiasm with which he leads the club.

Confirmation classes: Confirmation is on Sunday 29th, June and our preparation began during February. Our classes are on 13th and 27th March, to coincide with the Bible Club, so that parents do not have to drive twice into the town.

Third Sunday Service: We had 55 at our Third Sunday service in Lacca in January and 47 in February. Our Third Sunday service in March will be on Sunday, 16th March at 4 pm when we will be celebrating Saint Patrick and the great Christian heritage with which we have been blessed. This will be the last of the current series.

Saint Patrick's Day: Holy Communion for Saint Patrick's Day will be on Monday, 17th March at 10.30 am in Mountrath.

The Annunciation: There will be Holy Communion in Mountrath on Tuesday, 25th March at 8 pm to remember the Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Mothering Sunday: Sunday, 30th March is Mothering Sunday, and is a fifth Sunday of the month. There will be Holy Communion in Mountrath at 9 am and at Annatrim at 11 am we shall be having a Mothering Sunday service with the involvement of members of our Bible Club

Western Front Visit 2015: A couple of people have made inquiries about visiting Flanders and the Somme. The trip in July of this year is for a small group of six people and is fully booked, but Ian Poulton is considering taking a larger group in 2015, probably in June when it is quieter (and cheaper!). If you would like your name added to a provisional list, please contact him.

Good wishes: We extend our good wishes to clergy who are moving, to the Revd Olive Donohoe as she prepares for the move from Stradbally to Athy Parish, and especial good wishes to the Venerable John Murray as he retires from parish ministry at the end of the month.

Moving to Rathdowney in 1977, John and Irene have been good and faithful servants of the Lord, both in the parish and in the diocese, for four decades and we wish them long, blessed and happy

years in their new home.

We extend good wishes also to David and Marjorie Bennett of the Faith Mission as they move from their work here in the Midlands to begin work in a new sphere of ministry in the North.

The Faith Mission are holding a special series of talks in Mountmellick Methodist Church. These talks will be on Psalm 103 "Great Reasons to Bless the Lord". Monday 10 – Friday 14 March at 7.30pm, Sunday 16 March at 7.00pm. All are welcome. Contact Mervyn Tomb, 0860575462 for more information.

Mountrath Mothers' Union will meet on Monday 24th February at 8pm in the Parochial Hall, Mountrath. The meeting will open with prayer. Mrs Muriel Fairbrother (Chiropodist) is the guest speaker, and she will speak on the topic of foot care . All Welcome.

Clonenagh Parish Fundraising Committee are planning a **golf classic** on Friday, 27th June at Mountrath Golf Club. It is five years since the last golf classic and funds are going to be needed to carry out substantial repairs to the windows of Mountrath Church, which are in a very poor condition. Fuller details will be available next month.

South Offaly Ploughing branch annual ploughing match has been re-scheduled for Sunday 16th of March

in Grange, Clareen, Birr. Ploughing commencing at 12 noon. Great attractions on the day for all the family including horse & vintage ploughing.

Clonenagh National School: Enrolments for September 2014 take place now. Please contact the school on 057-8732516 or email: school@clonenagh.com and an Application Form will be sent to you. Closing date for receipt of Application Forms is Friday 28th February, 2014.

Streams in the Desert: On the 7th of March, people around the world will gather to worship together following the same order of service as prepared by the Christian women of Egypt.

In Mountrath, the service will take place in St. Fintan's Church at 8.00pm.

Earlier on the same day, a Children's Service will be held in St. Peter's Church at 10.30am.

More information and locations for other services may be found at www.wdopi.org.



Amy Lalor and the Rector in Annatrim Church with Marty and Copy, the mice from Clonenagh National School.

Smiles

The Rector was worrying about how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. So he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was ill and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play.

"Here's a copy of the service," the rector said impatiently. "But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

Finally the moment came, and the minister announced solemnly: "Brothers and sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need €10,000 more. Any of you who can pledge €100 or more, please stand up."

At that moment, the substitute organist played 'Amhrán na bhFiann'. And that is how the substitute became the regular organist.

In a country home that seldom had guests, the young son was eager to help his mother after his father appeared with two dinner guests from the office.

When the dinner was nearly over, the boy went to the kitchen and proudly carried in the first piece of apple pie, giving it to his father, who passed it to a guest. The boy came in with a second piece of pie and again watched his father give it to a guest. This was too much for the boy, who said, "It's no use, Dad. The pieces are all the same size."

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The judge read the charges, and then asked, "Are you the defendant in this case?"

"No sir, your honour, sir," replied Bob, "I've got a solicitor to do the defendin'. I'm the guy what done it."

Items for the April 2014 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY March 19th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, March 23rd .

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

March 2014

First Sunday 2nd	<i>Exodus 24: 12-18</i> <i>Psalms 2</i> <i>2 Peter 1: 16-21</i> <i>Matthew 17: 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 9th	<i>Genesis 2: 15-17, 3: 1-7</i> <i>Psalms 32</i> <i>Romans 5: 12-19</i> <i>Matthew 4: 1-11</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Third Sunday 16th	<i>Genesis 12: 1-4a</i> <i>Psalms 121</i> <i>Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17</i> <i>John 3: 1-17</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 Evening Prayer
Fourth Sunday 23rd	<i>Exodus 17: 1-7</i> <i>Psalms 95</i> <i>Romans 5: 1-11</i> <i>John 4: 5-42</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	
Fifth Sunday 30th	<i>1 Samuel 16: 1-13</i> <i>Psalms 23</i> <i>Ephesians 5: 8-14</i> <i>John 9: 1-41</i>	Mountrath 9.00am Holy Communion			Annatrim 10.30am Group Service	

Parish Diary

- February 28th.....Closing date for Clonenagh N.S. enrolment (*page 6*)
 7th Friday.....World Day of Prayer (*page 6*)
 13th Thursday.....Bible Club (*page 4*)
19th Wednesday.....Closing date for April 2014 Newsletter items!
 24th Monday.....Mothers' Union Meeting (*page 5*)
 27th Thursday.....Bible Club (*page 4*)