

The Newsletter

April 2014

Rector:

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*The Rector and Fr Seamus McEvoy, parish priest of Seir Kieran,
at the South Offaly Ploughing Match at Clareen on 16th March*

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

In her book "Testament of Friendship", the writer Vera Brittain describes a frosty spring morning in England, a morning that was like many mornings here.

"On one of the coldest mornings of that spring, after she had learnt from a London specialist that she might not have more than two years to live, she went for a walk past Clare Leighton's cottage to a farm further up the hill. She felt tired and dejected; her mind, still vigorously alive in her slow, impaired body, rebelled bitterly against her fate. Why, she wondered, should she, at thirty-three, not yet in the fullness of her developing powers, be singled out for this cruel unforeseen blow? She knew, for the constant demands of her friends had made it clear to her, that her life was infinitely valuable to others. She thought of all the half-dead people who 'put in time', as though time were not the greatest gift in the universe, while she, who could use it so superbly, was soon to be deprived of it for ever; and she felt that her mind could hardly contain the rising anguish of that realization.

Just then she found herself standing by a trough outside a farmyard; the water in it was frozen and a number of young lambs were struggling beside it vainly trying to drink. She broke the ice for them with her stick, and as she did so she heard voice within her saying: "Having nothing, yet possessing all things". It was so distinct that she looked round, startled, but she was alone with the lambs on the top of the hill. Suddenly in a flash, the grief, the bitterness, the sense of frustration disappeared; all desire to possess power and glory for

herself vanished away, and never came back".

What's that all about? A woman faced with a terminal illness who goes for a walk and hears a voice which says to her "having nothing, yet possessing all things", words from 2 Corinthians Chapter 6 Verse 10, what do they mean?

"Having nothing", the voice need not remind her. She knows that she has nothing. Her friends, her achievements, her possessions, all of them will be lost when she dies. She knows that she will have nothing.

"Yet possessing all things", that is what she has forgotten. In death, she will have nothing, but through Christ, she has all things, because beyond death she has life itself, and, as she knows, life is everything.

The story of that young woman's spring morning walk and the voice she hears is what Easter is about. Suddenly she realises that she needn't be afraid of death; suddenly she realises she has all things, because she realises at that moment that she has everlasting life.

In a moment on a hilltop the woman's life was changed. Twenty centuries ago, early on the first day of the week, in a garden in Jerusalem, the whole world was changed in a moment, we may have nothing, but in Christ we possess all things.

Happy Easter!



Church of Ireland News

Welcoming strangers

On 15th March, the Church of Ireland's most diverse (and lively!) choirs, the Discovery Gospel Choir celebrated its tenth anniversary. Formed in 2004, it is based at the Dublin city centre church of St George and St Thomas.

Marking the anniversary, the "Irish Times", recalled, "Already by 2005 it was attracting unusual levels of attention. In May of that year one of its most distinguished fans, the Nobel prize winning South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, attended an exuberant Discovery Service at St George and St Thomas's which involved an overflow mixed-race congregation of about 400. Afterwards, he told this newspaper of his delight in being at "such a glorious, glorious service" with its "fantastic choir". On the multi-racial theme he described creation as "an explosion of diversity" and advised those present to "go out into this beautiful Emerald Isle

and tell them the rainbow is a rainbow only because of its colours . . . tell them God thinks in technicolour and that his creation is an extravaganza".

Ten years on, and Church of Ireland members need still to work on how we integrate into our communities those who are different.

News from Amos

Lent and harvest collections from Clonenagh Parishes last year went to support the training farm at Mbayaya in Rwanda where Amos Nsengiyumva is teaching to Rwandan farmers livestock rearing skills developed during his time in Ireland. Amos is being ordained by the bishop of Shyogwe on Sunday, 30th March. Photographs sent by Amos include pictures of a pineapple growing project; cattle being raised for educating farmers and distributing calves; and goats used for breeding kids that will be distributed to poor families.



Mbayaya pineapple growing project

Parish Notes

Lent 2014: Our Lent services have been taking place at 8 pm on each Wednesday evening of Lent. "Singing through Lent" has been the theme of our Lent series this year. Each week we have been looking at the spiritual teaching of one of the hymns connected with the Gospel reading for the Sunday. Our remaining Lent services are at Lacca on 2nd April, when the reading is John 9:1-41 and the hymn is "Amazing grace" and 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 for the final time before its summer break on Thursday, 10th April. It has been very encouraging to see attendances at the club grow to twenty-five and more over recent weeks. We hope to have a Holiday Bible Club in Mountrath again in July. Details will be circulated to Thursday Club members and through Clonenagh National School.

Confirmation Group: We have nine young people from our parishes preparing for confirmation in Mountrath on Sunday, 29th June.

Holy Week Services: Our services begin on Palm Sunday, 13th April and run through until Good Friday, 18th April. This Holy Week our theme is "sensing the story", we look at how the events of those momen-

tous events in Jerusalem were experienced through the five senses of those who were there. Our services will be as follows:

Palm Sunday 7pm
Seir Kieran - Touch
Monday 8pm
Roskelton - Smell
Tuesday 8pm
Annatrim - Taste
Wednesday 8pm
Borris in Ossory - Hearing
Maundy Thursday 8pm
Mountrath - Sight

Good Friday: Good Friday: Our services on Good Friday begin at 10 am with the Stations of the Cross from Roskelton to The Hollow. 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 dramatized 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, 19th April, Easter Eve at 8.30 pm 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. Our Easter Eve services continue at 10 pm at Seir Kieran, the founding place of Ossory

diocese and the most ancient Christian site in our dioceses. 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.

Easter Day: Our Easter morning Holy Communion services will be at 8.15 am at Borris-in-Ossory and then at 9.30 at Roskelton, 10.30 at Lacca and 11.30 at Mountrath.

World Day of Prayer: Thank you to Mabel Peavoy for organizing the World Day of Prayer services in Mountrath. Students from Clonenagh National School produced some very fine artwork for the occasion and we were pleased to welcome some of our parents to our school's celebration of the day.

Seir Kieran: Fr Seamus McEvoy took up duties as parish priest in Seir Kieran on 1st March. Fr Seamus will be well-known to people in the Borris-in-Ossory area and we remember him in our prayers as he takes up his new duties.

Condolences: Our condolences to the Stanley Family of Springhill, Borris-in-Ossory following the death of George, just seven weeks after the death of his brother Bob.

Camross: It was good to see Fr John Lalor resuming parish duties after his very serious illness and weeks away from the parish. Fr John

has been a great leader in the development of the parish and he was welcomed back by Councillor Michael Lalor on the occasion the Camross Senior Citizens' Dinner.

Congratulations: Hearty congratulations to the Revd Andrew Orr, Rector of Tullow, on his appointment as archdeacon in succession to the Venerable John Murray who retired at the end of March.

Well done: Congratulations to all those who were successful at the 18th Annual South Offaly Ploughing Match held at Clareen on Sunday, 16th March. We wish Laura Grant and John McBryde from Seir Kieran Parish success as the season progresses.

Good luck: Good luck to Pat Cooper of Shanderry who is standing as an independent candidate in the Borris-in-Ossory/Mountmellick electoral area in the forthcoming county council elections.

November Census: Full results of the November Census will be published in the coming weeks. It has been very encouraging to hear that our diocese has one of the best levels of church attendance in the Church of Ireland and that, within the diocese, Clonenagh Group of Parishes has some of the largest attendances.

Clonenagh Parish Fundraising Bonny Baby Calf Spring Fair will be held at Mountrath Mart on April 26th in aid of One Life suicide prevention Helpline. Entry forms available from Davy Wharton (087 2991379). Thanks to all who helped over the last two years. Come and enjoy this family day out.

Committee meeting on Tuesday April 8th at 8.30pm in the Parochial Hall.



Cattle & goats at the training farm at Mbayaya

Parish Diary

8th Tuesday.....Parish Fundraising Committee meeting (*page 6*)

10th Thursday.....Bible Club (*page 4*)

23rd Wednesday.....Closing date for May 2014 Newsletter items!

26th Saturday.....Bonny Baby Calf Spring Fair (*page 6*)

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

Did I read that sign right?

These came from Vancouver

TOILET OUT OF ORDER. PLEASE
USE FLOOR BELOW

In a Laundromat:
AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES:
PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR
CLOTHES WHEN THE LIGHT GOES
OUT

In a department store:
BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS

In an office:
WOULD THE PERSON WHO TOOK
THE STEP LADDER YESTERDAY
PLEASE BRING IT BACK OR FUR-
THER STEPS WILL BE TAKEN

In an office:
AFTER TEA BREAK STAFF SHOULD
EMPTY THE TEAPOT AND STAND
UPSIDE DOWN ON THE DRAINING
BOARD

Outside a secondhand shop:
WE EXCHANGE ANYTHING - BICY-
CLES, WASHING MACHINES, ETC.
WHY NOT BRING YOUR WIFE
ALONG AND GET A WONDERFUL
BARGAIN?

Notice in health food shop window:
CLOSED DUE TO ILLNESS

Spotted in a safari park: (I sure hope
so):
ELEPHANTS PLEASE STAY IN YOUR
CAR

Seen during a conference:
FOR ANYONE WHO HAS CHILDREN
AND DOESN'T KNOW IT, THERE IS A
DAY CARE ON THE 1ST FLOOR.

Notice in a farmer's field:
THE FARMER ALLOWS WALKERS
TO CROSS THE FIELD FOR FREE,
BUT THE BULL CHARGES.

Message on a leaflet:
IF YOU CANNOT READ, THIS LEAF-
LET WILL TELL YOU HOW TO GET
LESSONS.

On a repair shop door:
WE CAN REPAIR ANYTHING.
(PLEASE KNOCK HARD ON THE
DOOR - THE BELL DOESN'T WORK)

* * *

A woman was working in her garden
with her strimmer, when she acci-
dentally cut off the tail of her cat. She
ran screaming into the house for help.
Her husband grabbed the car-keys.
"Get the cat, and the tail, and we'll take
them to Wal-Mart. NOW" he said ur-
gently.

His wife was incredulous. "How could
that possibly help?" she asked.

"Well," he replied, "they're the world's
largest retailer."

Services & Readings

April 2014

First Sunday 6th	<i>Ezekiel: 37: 1-14</i> <i>Psalm 130</i> <i>Romans 8: 6-11</i> <i>John 11: 1-45</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
Palm Sunday 13th	<i>Isaiah 50: 4-9a</i> <i>Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29</i> <i>Philippians 2: 5-11</i> <i>Matthew 21: 1-11</i>	Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer		Seir Kieran 7.00pm Evening Prayer
Monday in Holy Week 14th		Roskelton 8.00pm Compline				
Tuesday in Holy Week 15th		Annatrim 8.00pm Late Evening Office				
Wednesday in Holy Week 16th		Borris-in-Ossory 8.00pm Evening Prayer				
Maundy Thursday 17th		Mountrath 8.00pm Holy Communion				
Good Friday 18th		Roskelton 10.00am Walking with the Cross	Mountrath 2.00pm The Last Hour	Lacca 8.00pm Readings and Hymns for Good Friday		
Easter Eve 19th		Annatrim 8.30pm Easter Vigil and First Communion of Easter Day		Seir Kieran 10.00pm Lighting of the Easter Fire and Holy Communion		
Easter Day 20th	<i>Acts 10: 34-43</i> <i>Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24</i> <i>Colossians 3: 1-4</i> <i>John 20: 1-18</i>	Borris-in-Ossory 8.15am Holy Communion	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Lacca 10.30am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	
Fourth Sunday 27th	<i>Acts 2: 14a, 22-32</i> <i>Psalm 16</i> <i>1 Peter 1: 3-9</i> <i>John 20: 19-31</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	