

The Newsletter

May 2014

Rector:

Canon Ian Poulton,
Clonenagh 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



May flowers from around the world

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

I have a red notice board in my study. I have had it since I was a curate in Newtownards, Co Down in the late 1980s. Sometimes things get pinned to it and get forgotten about, remaining for years after they have ceased to be of any relevance. Beside the Irish Farmers' Association calendar for 2014, there is a cutting from a magazine that has been pinned to the notice board for so long that the paper is yellowed and the drawing pin holes are numerous.

The cutting was tucked into a book a friend once brought when visiting us; he had cut it from a journal, obviously thinking it important enough to pass on to someone else. It must be more than twenty-five years old, for the book from which the quote comes was published in 1988. Very conscious that I am not very good in making the best use of my time, I read the words of the cutting.

“Nothing need be lost. There are many holy moments in our daily lives. And one way we can capture and retain their significance is to gather them into a sign: a handclasp, a note, a tear, a word of affirmation, a blessing. Nothing need be lost. We learn to sacramentalize our walks, our work, our encounters, our routines. The seasons become rhythmic messages, places become hallowed, and events open up their secrets. There is more mystery and more meaning in the ordinary. Prayer becomes something natural

and spontaneous, and bears the unique marks of our own imagery and our own style of communication”

~Joan Puls, OSF, *A Spirituality of Compassion*, (Twenty-third Publications/Columba Press) p. 108

Sister Joan is saying that there is something special to be found in every day, and if there is something special is to be found, then we ought to treasure each and every day; make the most of every moment; take all the opportunities that come our way; so that nothing is lost. If we expect to encounter God, then we will want to do things which show us using our time wisely and well

I pondered her words. I have wasted so much time (and still do!) doing nothing worthwhile, watching pointless programmes on television; reading things that don't even interest me; wasting time on Facebook. How much more could I have done if I had taken Sister Joan's advice to sacramentalize the days, if I had lived each day as in the sight of God and in the expectation of meeting God?

Had I heeded Sister Joan's words for the past twenty-five years, they might have been very different. If I heeded Sister Joan's words, the future should be one without wasted time.



Church of Ireland News

The Church of Ireland has commended to its members the "Call from Christians in Europe". The Rt Revd John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher, Chairman of the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue, says it is important to alert church members to the importance of casting their vote in the forthcoming elections to the European Parliament.

"The MEPs to be elected in May will have considerable influence on the framing of EU laws and budgets over the next five years. A constant criticism of the EU is that there is insufficient contact between the Union and its citizens, and the election of MEPs to an increasingly important Parliament is one way in which Church members can express their views.

"Our Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue commends the "Call from Christians in Europe" to your attention. It says: 'In May 2014 elections for the European Parliament will take place. Representatives from the 28 Member States of the European Union will be elected to decide the policies of the EU for the next five years. Due to changes in EU law, the next European Parlia-

ment will have stronger legislative powers than before. As a result, the opportunity for voters to influence EU policy has never been greater. This election is an opportunity to voice our visions and aspirations for the future. We aspire towards:

A European Union based on the combination of a social market economy and high levels of social standards and protection
A European Union of values which upholds and cherishes diversity, caring for its most vulnerable people
A European Union that welcomes migrants and refugees
A European Union which always stands up for and protects Human Rights
A European Union that cares for God's creation, effectively addressing climate change and implementing effective environmental policies
A European Union that works on the eradication of poverty in a globalised world

We hope that you will use your vote in the EP election to elect a Parliament that will share our visions. Your vote matters. Use it to create a fairer Europe that promotes peace and justice for all.

Parish Notes

From the Registers

Holy Baptism: Through the sacrament of Holy Baptism on Easter Eve, 19th April 2014 at Seir Kieran Church, we welcomed into the fellowship of Christ's Church, Thomas Alan Shaw of Clareen.

Funerals: Wednesday, 16th April 2014 at Annatrim Church, Valerie Cooper of Coolrain Village. Growing up on a farm at Kells in Co Meath, Coolrain became home to Valerie after her marriage to Sloane, their home in the village becoming the place most dear to her heart during the long months of her illnesses. A devoted wife and mother, the first concern in Valerie's life was always her family. Gifted with extraordinary courage and resilience, Valerie twice persevered when even the doctors believed there was no further cause for hope and summoned family members to her bedside. During the dark moments, it never seemed possible that Valerie would ever sit again at home at the fireside, but there was an irrepressible spirit that sustained her. Above the fireplace in Coolrain, Valerie had a print of Dutch artist Gabriel Metsu's painting, "Man Writing a Letter", the themes of Metsu's work - family and home, a delight in both the commonplace and the beautiful, a sense of God's presence in ordinary life, reflected the things that were important to Valerie; love and beauty, and hope and faith, were the things that made one far richer than possible with any material things.

Following Valerie's funeral service, the burial took place in the ad-

joining churchyard. Donations at the funeral were for the Friends of Portlaoise Hospital.

Thursday, 17th April 2014 at Roskelton Church, James Pratt of Dealgrove, Shanahoe. Growing up on the family farm at Shanahoe, James was educated at Portora School in Co Fermagh before returning to Co Laois. A warm family man and a good friend to those who knew him, James loved conversation and laughter; he loved memories and the retelling of stories. Home for James was a place of love and security, a place to feel safe. After his family, the great passion in James' life was collecting things. Attending countless car boot sales and auctions, James had an eye for anything interesting, different, well-crafted, beautifully made. Should someone be looking for something unlikely, it would likely be found somewhere in one of James' sheds. Among his acquisitions, James had a century old copy of a "Sear's" catalogue, the mail order catalogue through which people in rural parts of North America could order everything they needed. Like "Sear's", James was practical, resourceful and of constant variety. Giving the address at the funeral service, Mr Edwin Pratt, son of James' cousin Sam, recalled moments he believed captured a sense of James' life and personality.

Following James' funeral service, the burial took place in the adjoining churchyard. Donations at the funeral were for Saint Matthew's Church, Roskelton.

After the bustle of activity during April, the month of May seems very quiet in comparison.

Welcome back, Maureen: For three years, Mrs Maureen Lanigan from Kilkenny led the worship in Annatrim Church on the fourth Sunday of each month, never failing to arrive, even in the severe weather at the end of 2010. Maureen developed leukaemia last autumn and was very ill, but faith and determination have won through and Maureen is rejoining us for the fourth Sunday service.

General Synod: The General Synod of the Church of Ireland meets at Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin from Thursday, 8th May until Saturday, 10th May. Hopefully, the synod has moved on from its preoccupation with matters of sexuality and will engage with some of the many other issues confronting the church. One of the motions to come before synod concerns the development of ordained local ministry, something that might revitalise the life of scattered rural church communities. Our parishes have four members of General Synod, Mr Joe Peavoy from Clonenagh, Mrs Jean Treacy from Offerlane, Mr Ivan Jestin from Borris-in-Ossory and the Rector.

Saint Matthias' Day: There will be Holy Communion for Saint Matthias' Day in Mountrath Church at 8 pm on Wednesday, 14th May.

GFS Service: The annual diocesan service of the Girls' Friendly Society takes place at Saint Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny on Sunday, 18th May.

We express our thanks to the leaders of our local branch for all of their work during the past year.

Rector away: The Rector is going to England to visit his family from Monday 19th May until Monday, 26th May. In his absence the Revd Ian Coulter will be officiating at Seir Kieran and Mountrath. Calls will be taken by Canon Patrick Harvey.

Ascension Day: The Ascension will be marked by Holy Communion in Mountrath Church on Thursday, 29th May at 8 pm

Mountrath church windows: The windows of Mountrath church are in a poor state, the wooden window frames, which replaced the steel framed, diamond paned windows in the 1960s, are now rotten and extensive work will be necessary. The church is a protected structure and nothing can be considered until the county council have indicated what is permissible, but it seems likely that a six figure sum may be necessary. We shall need to look at quick and efficient ways of raising the money; in the current economic climate repeated fundraising efforts would soon result in donor fatigue.

Golf Classic: After a six year break, Clonenagh Parish is holding a golf classic at Mountrath Golf Club on Friday, 27th June.

Bible Club and Holiday Club: The Thursday Bible Club held its last meeting before the summer on 10th April. The Club developed well from its beginnings last September and we

are very grateful to Mervyn Tomb from the Faith Mission for his tireless enthusiasm in running the Club. Mervyn and a team will be again running a Bible summer camp in Mountrath during July - if you are interested, look out for flyers about it.

Lacca Church: Lacca has grown well over the past months, the four o'clock service on the third Sunday of each month having an average attendance of over fifty. We need now to prayerfully ask how we might build on such a foundation. Many of those who have joined us for worship have come from backgrounds more evangelical than the traditional Church of Ireland and we need to ask whether, alongside the traditional Church of Ireland services, which take place twice a month, on the first and third Sundays, we might offer worship on the other two Sundays that would be closer to the style of worship of the evangelical churches. If we were able to successfully combine the two traditions over the course of the month, we would make Lacca a church for both the parish and for the wider community and we might be more successful at holding on to our younger people, who tend to drift away from traditional services and only reappear when they have children themselves. It is a matter for prayer and for a seeking after what the Holy Spirit may be saying to our parishes.

Summer series: We shall have our fifth annual summer sermon series at Borris-in-Ossory Church on Wednes-

day evenings in June, July and August. Our theme this year is going to be "re-learning our catechism". Most of us have forgotten the things we were taught when we were young and all of us need a refresher course from time to time.

Clonenagh Parish Fundraising Committee are planning a **golf classic** on Friday 27th June at Mountrath Golf Club in aid of substantial repairs to the windows of Mountrath Church which are in a very poor condition.

Your support would be much appreciated, more details next month.

Mothers Union & Young Wives will hold the final meeting for the season on Monday 28th April at 8pm in the Parochial Hall, Mountrath. The theme is flowers and Imelda from Floral Vision Mountrath will be the speaker and do a demonstration. Please support, and all are welcome.

Area Council meeting on Tuesday 29th in Leskinfere Hall, Gorey at 2.30pm

Ossory Area Meeting on Wednesday 30th in Presbyterian Hall Kilkenny at 8pm. The speaker is Carol Adams on Educating Children in Uganda. All Welcome.

Diocesan Festival service on Sunday 7th September in St Michael & All Angels' Church, Abbeyleix at 4pm. This is a Family Service.

Smiles

Lift

Applied Law

The film at the cinema was over and one flea said to the other: "Should we walk home, or take the dog?"

Got it already

"I cannot understand you," said the young man to his unmarried aunt. "You seem so happy and contented. I've always thought that unmarried women are lonely and miserable and just longing for the presence of a man about the place."

"Well," his aunt responded, smiling, "I've got a fireplace that smokes, a parrot that swears, a cat that stays out half the night with no explanation, and a dog that leaves muddy footprints all over the house. What more do I want?"

The same yesterday . . .

Why did Moses wander in the desert for forty years?

Because even back then men wouldn't ask for directions.

Telly trouble

A woman summoned a TV repairman to fix her set. After spreading his tools out, the serviceman inquired: "What seems to be the trouble?"

The woman replied, "The programmes are terrible."

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "honour thy father and thy mother," she asked "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

One little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."

Closed!

An inscription over a church door in Cheshire: 'This is the house of God. This is the gate of heaven'.

On a notice underneath: This door is locked in winter months.

Life

The things that come to those that wait may be the things left by those who got there first.

Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.

Always read stuff that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.

If you lend someone €20, and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.

Birds of a feather flock together - and mess on your car.

Services & Readings

May 2014

First Sunday 4th	Acts 2: 14a, 36-41 Psalm 116: 1-3, 10-17 1 Peter 1: 17-23 Luke 24: 13-35	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 11th	Acts 2: 42-47 Psalm 23 1 Peter 2: 19-25 John 10: 1-10	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion		Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer
Third Sunday 18th	Acts 7: 55-60 Psalm 31: 1-5, 15-16 1 Peter 2: 2-10 John 14: 1-14	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 25th	Acts 16: 9-15 Psalm 67 Revelation 21: 10, 22 - 22: 5 John 14: 23-29	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	

Parish Diary

April 28th.....Mountrath Mothers' Union meeting (*page 6*)
 April 29th.....Mothers' Union Area Council meeting (*page 6*)
 April 30th.....Mothers' Union Ossory Area meeting (*page 6*)
 18th Sunday.....G.F.S Annual Diocesan Service (*page 5*)
21st Wednesday.....Closing date for June 2014 Newsletter items!
 June 27th.....Clonagh Parish Golf Classic (*pages 5 & 6*)

Items for the June 2014 Newsletter need to be with the editor by **WEDNESDAY May 21st AT THE LATEST**, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, May 25th .

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@clonagh.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.clonagh.com