

# The Newsletter

June 2014

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## Flowers and Ladybirds

Sure signs that summer is on the way!

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### Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

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# Rector's Letter

It is twenty-five years this month since I first became rector of a parish, a group of three small churches on the east coast of Co Down. The combined population of the three parishes was just 250 people, about 90 families – sixty families smaller than the 150 families we have in the Clonenagh Group of parishes. It was a place for learning – and for making many mistakes. It was a place to learn that there is no-one who is infallible, whether people are church members or they are clergy, they are all likely to make mistakes. In the twenty-five years since, there have been many more mistakes.

One of the most encouraging verses from the Bible for someone who gets things wrong as frequently as I do comes from Saint Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. Saint Paul worries about what he calls a "thorn in my flesh"; whatever it was, he felt that it was a great weakness and three times he asks God to take it away from him. The answer he receives from God is, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." God is saying to Paul that human weakness makes people depend on him, that sometimes there is a need to accept weakness and to get on with the work God has given to you.

The idea that God can use weakness and can work through people who make mistakes has been a hopeful thought in recent times. Feeling tired from taking medication for blood pressure and cholesterol, I had to look at the things that were using up my energy. I have found that driving miles to attend meetings of the diocesan council and the diocesan finance committee, half of which take place in Co Wexford, leaves me completely exhausted. Reluctantly, I have resigned from both the council and the committee in order to conserve energy for the more important business of parish work, energy for the things where I can make a difference. Twelve meetings a year may not sound much, but when six of them are a two hour drive away and each of them lasts three hours, it is like having an extra week to spare each year.

Of course, having more time to spare does not mean that mistakes won't still be made, but at least getting things wrong won't be such a tiring experience.

God bless.



# Church of Ireland News

## Archbishop's General Synod Speech

The Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Richard Clarke, focused on 'Freely you have received, freely give' (Matthew Chapter 10 v.8) in his General Synod speech. Speaking of the 'Church as an organism that is characterised by its giving nature; its people who are characterised by being giving people'. Archbishop Clarke also stressed that 'All life is a gift of God; it is never a commodity'. He said: '...one of the aspects of modern culture I most fear is that we have turned all human life into a commodity. The very beginnings of life and the end of life on earth are gift, never to be treated as anything less.'

The Archbishop asked questions about society's priorities – in relation to poverty and foodbanks and in funding for hospice provision – and also encouraged people to consider fostering children in need and urged church members to consider being blood donors

and to sign up for organ transplant at death, 'as an opportunity for giving to others', and as promoted by the Flesh and Blood – 'FAB' – campaign. The Archbishop went on to ask: 'I would make an appeal to a wider audience and ask those who have been entrusted with political leadership to tell us what they wish to offer, to give, to the future, to our children and grandchildren. It surely cannot simply be "more of the same" that we wish to offer to future generations?'

## Interchangeability with Methodists

The General Synod of the Church of Ireland passed historic legislation to provide for interchangeability in ministries between the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland, the two Churches being in a Covenant relationship. The passing of the legislation was warmly welcomed by the Revd Dr Heather Morris, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

# Parish Notes

**Baptism:** On Sunday, 5th May at Mountrath Church, we welcomed Kevin Fraser Birney into the fellowship of Christ's Church through the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

**Pilgrimage:** Seir Kieran parishioners will be familiar with Brian Donohue who has been a regular visitor to the parish in recent years and who brought a group from the United States to visit Seir Kieran on Saint Patrick's Day last year, finding in the stories of the early Irish monks inspiration for their own ministry among the shanty towns along the Mexican border with the United States. Brian is returning to Ireland this year with his family and other church members and, on Sunday 1st June, there will be a day pilgrimage. The American visitors will be attending the Church of Ireland service in Seir Kieran and will be joined in Clareen at two o'clock by the Rector and by Father Eamonn O'Gorman. The plan is to make a pilgrimage from Seir Kieran, through Aghaboe, to Kilkenny (possibly calling at one of the other monastic sites) and concluding the

day with worship in Saint Canice's Cathedral. Parishioners, and anyone else interested, will be very welcome to join us for the day.

**Summer series:** On Wednesday, 4th June we begin our fifth annual summer series in Borris-in-Ossory. This year we have a twelve week series on 'Re-learning our faith'. The series will be based on the catechism many church members will have learned in their younger days and will ask what it is we believe today. Services will be at 8 pm on Wednesdays, 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th June; 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th July; and 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th August. Everyone is welcome

**Saint John the Baptist:** There will be Holy Communion for Saint John the Baptist's Day, Tuesday, 24th June in Mountrath Church at 8 pm

**School End of Year:** Clonenagh National School holds its end of year service in Mountrath Church at 7 pm on Thursday, 26th June at 7 pm. This past year has been a very

painful one in the life of our school community and it would be good to see support from the wider parish as the school marks the close of the year.

**Golf Classic:** Clonenagh Parish holds its golf classic at Mountrath Golf Club on Friday, 27th June - proceeds are for the replacement of the windows in Mountrath Church. Until we have the approval of the county council planning officer regarding what work might be undertaken, we shall not know the likely cost of the work, but know it will be substantial. Entry to the classic is €100 for a team of four players

**Confirmation:** Our confirmation service takes place in Mountrath Church on Sunday, 29th June at 11 am, when the bishop will confirm nine candidates from the parishes. 29th June is a fifth Sunday of the month, so the confirmation is a group service; there will be no other services that day.

**Western Front:** The Rector is taking a group to the Western Front, visiting Flanders and the Somme, from 30th June until 3rd July. There have been inquiries from within the parish,

and from further afield, about joining a group next year. The plan would be to go in early June, when the area is less crowded (and the hotels are cheaper). Those wishing to join the group should contact the Rector by September (bookings of hotels must be made months ahead); asking in the spring about a trip in the summer is too late!

**Holiday Bible Club:** Our second Summer Holiday Bible Club takes place in Mountrath Parochial Hall from Monday, 14th until Friday, 18th July, 10.30am—1.00pm. The club is for children at National School and this year the theme is "On Your Marks". Using a sporting theme we will be looking at important events in the life of Jesus, using songs, quizzes, Bible Stories, fun activities and crafts. Mervyn Tomb of The Faith Mission and his summer team from Canada will be leading the club each day, along with local helpers, who have undergone appropriate Garda checks. The cost for the week is €20 per child. If your child would like to attend and the cost presents a problem, please talk to the Rector.

**Summer Camps:** A number of young people from the parish enjoyed attending the Faith Mission's summer camps in Durrow last Summer.

The residential camps are running again this year.

The Discovery Camp for those from 8-10 years runs from Monday, 21st July to Friday 25th July and costs €75; the Adventure Camp for those aged 11—13 is from Monday, 28th July until Friday, 1st August and costs €85; and the Teens Camp runs from Monday, 4th August until Friday, 8th August. Full details are available from Mervyn at 057 874 0770.

As with the holiday Bible club, if there are parishioners whose children would like to attend and the cost presents a problem, please talk to the Rector.

**Clonenagh Parish Fundraising Committee** have organised a Golf Classic in the Golf Club Mountrath on Friday 27th June.

To make this event a success we would be grateful if parishioners would make up teams of Golfers (or Non-Golfers!)

We also need contributions towards sponsorship of a hole, and finally, prizes for the raffle which will be held on Friday night after the main prizegiving.

If you wish to enter a team please contact Mabel Peavoy at 057 87 32331.

**Clonenagh National School** holds its summer fete on Sunday, 15th June, 2-5pm.

**Items for the July 2014 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY June 18th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, June 22nd.**

**PLEASE** make your item as ready for publication as possible, and most important, please ensure that you spell names correctly.

**Ideally, items should be submitted by e-mail** to- [newsletter@clonenagh.com](mailto: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](http://www.clonenagh.com)

# Smiles

## Genuine notes left for milkmen

## Schooldays

Dear milkman: I've just had a baby, please leave another one.

Cancel one pint after the day after today.

Please don't leave any more milk. All they do is drink it.

Please close the gate behind you because the birds keep pecking the tops off the milk.

Please cancel the milk. I have nothing coming into the house except two sons on the dole.

Please do not leave milk at no.14 as he is dead until further notice.

My daughter says she wants a milkshake. Do you do this before you deliver, or do I have to shake it at my end?

Please send me a form for cheap milk, as I have a baby more than two months old and did not know about it until a neighbour told me.

Sorry not to have paid your bill before, but my wife had a baby and I've been carrying it around in my pocket for weeks.

Please leave no milk today. When I say today I mean tomorrow, as I wrote this note yesterday.

A teacher was observing her class of children while they were drawing. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied "I'm drawing God".

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like". Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied "They will in a minute".

The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group photograph. "Just think how nice it will be to look at when you are all grown up and say, "There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer", or "That's Michael, He's a doctor" A small voice from the back of the room rang out, "And there's the teacher, she's dead".

A 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? From the back, one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill".

# Services & Readings

## June 2014

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| <b>First Sunday</b><br><b>1<sup>st</sup></b>   | <i>Acts 1:6-14</i><br><i>Psalms 68:1-10, 32-35</i><br><i>1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11</i><br><i>John 17: 1-11</i>       | <b>Roskelton</b><br>9.30am<br>Morning Prayer   | <b>Seir Kieran</b><br>9.30am<br>Morning Prayer | <b>Lacca</b><br>10.30am<br>Holy Communion | <b>Borris-in-Ossory</b><br>11.00am<br>Morning Prayer | <b>Mountrath</b><br>11.30am<br>Holy Communion |
| <b>Second Sunday</b><br><b>8<sup>th</sup></b>  | <i>Acts 2: 1-21</i><br><i>Psalms 104: 26-36</i><br><i>1 Corinthians 12: 3b-13</i><br><i>John 20: 19-23</i>         | <b>Seir Kieran</b><br>9.30am<br>Holy Communion | <b>Annatrim</b><br>11.00am<br>Holy Communion   |   | <b>Mountrath</b><br>11.30am<br>Morning Prayer        |   |
| <b>Third Sunday</b><br><b>15<sup>th</sup></b>  | <i>Isaiah 40: 12 - 17, 27- 31</i><br><i>Psalms 8</i><br><i>2 Corinthians 13: 11-13</i><br><i>Matthew 28: 16-20</i> | <b>Roskelton</b><br>9.30am<br>Holy Communion   | <b>Seir Kieran</b><br>9.30am<br>Morning Prayer | <b>Lacca</b><br>10.30am<br>Morning Prayer | <b>Borris-in-Ossory</b><br>11.00am<br>Holy Communion | <b>Mountrath</b><br>11.30am<br>Morning Prayer |
| <b>Fourth Sunday</b><br><b>22<sup>nd</sup></b> | <i>Genesis 21: 8-21</i><br><i>Psalms 86: 1-10, 16-17</i><br><i>Romans 6: 1b-11</i><br><i>Matthew 10: 24-39</i>     | <b>Seir Kieran</b><br>9.30am<br>Morning Prayer | <b>Annatrim</b><br>11.00am<br>Morning Prayer   |   | <b>Mountrath</b><br>11.30am<br>Holy Communion        |   |
| <b>Fifth Sunday</b><br><b>29<sup>th</sup></b>  | <i>Genesis 22: 1-14</i><br><i>Psalms 13</i><br><i>Romans 6: 12-23</i><br><i>Matthew 10: 40-42</i>                  | <b>Mountrath</b><br>11.00am<br>Holy Communion  |  |   |  |   |

# Parish Diary

- May 28.....G.F.S. Prizegiving, Parochial Hall, Mountrath  
 May 29.....Fundraising Committee meeting  
 15th Sunday.....Clonenagh N.S. Summer Fete (*page 6*)  
**18th Wednesday....Closing date for July 2014 Newsletter items!**  
 27th Friday.....Clonenagh Parish Golf Classic (*pages 5 & 6*)