

The Newsletter

September 2014

Rector:

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Celebrating Sarah Cooper's 92nd birthday

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

Fires are common things in the Bible - Abraham and Moses and Elijah and Daniel could have told stories of fires. The risen Lord Jesus lights a fire to cook fish for his friends' breakfast. Fires were part of their everyday life, and when they looked into the flames, they would have remembered their forebears doing likewise. For century upon century, fires have been part of our culture. In childhood years, I would stare into the flames in the fireplace and imagine tales of long ago.

My grandmother lived frugally, but once the end of August came and the evenings darkened and the first autumnal chill began to be sensed in the night air, she would light the fire. The farmhouse was a place filled with memories and no evening would pass without the recalling of someone whose demise was long past. The logs would have been cut mostly from fallen trees, their size and shape would vary, and so would the rate at which they burned. Some were seasoned and would quickly ignite, others still retained sap and would hiss and spark and necessitate the fireguard if they were not to damage the hearth rug. Staring at the fire, there seemed moments of timelessness, as if one could stop the passing of the days and seize a moment.

Look for fires now, and they are becoming scarce. Even those of us burning logs or coal or turf prefer stoves and ranges to the inefficiency of the open fire, but, in the progress, an ancient element of human experience is being lost. No longer will future generations of young people sit at firesides and feel a community with the people of the past. Did the people who lived in Bible times stare into the fire and wonder what future flames would see? No longer will we share an experience with those heroes of Bible days.



Church of Ireland News

Helping To Die Or Helping To Live?

By Archbishop Richard Clarke

It may be tempting to imagine that the current debate in the Westminster parliament on the vexed question of “assisted dying” (or euthanasia as it used to be known) is a matter that will not transfer to Ireland in the foreseeable future. This would be unwise in the extreme. The discussion is already well underway here. It is crucial that none of us should not be so naïve as to imagine that this is someone else’s debate.

We must be ready to take the arguments on assisted dying seriously, and we should certainly never be quick to propound simple answers that will sound merely heartless in the face of human suffering. We ought to make sense not simply to ourselves, but to others who do not share our certainties. We need also to understand an important moral distinction between pointless and painful medical intervention on those who are undeniably reaching the end of their lives, and active clinical assistance to end life. Medical non-intervention in some circumstances simply allows nature to take its merciful course, and it is difficult to argue with moral force against this. Direct intervention to end life is another matter.

For the Christian believer, life on earth is a gift of God – a wholly unearned gift from start to finish – and the conclusion of earthly life is not the end of our life with God.

Much depends on how we understand the significance of earthly life. If life is simply a personal commodity (and our culture does sadly encourage us to think of everything as a commodity that can be evaluated in terms of its usefulness to us) then life is disposable, entirely at the will of the individual “possessor”. This is clearly not the Christian perspective. Human life,

properly understood, is about our relationships, relationship with God and relationship with others on earth. We belong to God and to one another.

One danger accompanying any movement towards assisted dying is an insidious pressure it would bring to many people, and at the most vulnerable time of their life, when they are about to leave this earth. There are few people who do not hate the thought of being “a burden” on those they love, and they might indeed believe that asking to die would be an act of generosity to those around. Given also the costs of care for the terminally ill (which often falls on a family), unselfish people might well believe that they owe it to their families not to waste the money that they had hoped to leave for loved ones, on their continued care. This is where human relationships, and the certainty of human love and support that accompany those relationships, are so crucial for those who are facing the end of earthly life. It is therefore particularly sad that the hospice movement, where people are wonderfully encouraged to live life as fully as is practicable to the last, should be virtually starved of public money and should hence have to devote so much energy and effort simply to survive financially.

Above all, let no-one ever take a casual or unfeeling attitude to those who are suffering in terminal illness, over however long or short a period. Being helpless and utterly dependent on others at the close of an earthly life is a sad burden for all involved. Within my own life, I do have some experience of this in the death of my own wife from cancer, but this does not permit me to pontificate. I do however believe that if we can bring ourselves to believe that all life is a gift of God, then the end of an earthly life can truly be more about helping others to live than helping them to die.

Parish Notes

From the registers

Holy Baptism

2nd August 2014 at Annatrim Church, Eleanor Croke of Coolrain

Confirmation

29th June 2014 at Mountrath Church, Ben Allen, Cillian Birney, Andrea Caldbeck, Sarah Clegg, Hailey Hayes, Jessie Hayes, Lynda Knowles and Nicola Roe of Clonenagh Group of Parishes and Holly Moynan of Rathdowney Parish

Marriages

25th July 2014 at Lacca Church, Melissa Honner of Rushall and Brian Burnell of Abbeyleix

3rd August 2014 at Lacca Church, Jennifer Gillson of Borris-in-Ossory and Ian Williams of Gowran, Co Kilkenny

We also extend good wishes to Roy Treacy of Loran who was married to Averil Atkinson in Durrow church on 19th July 2014.

Funerals

4th June 2014 at Roskelton Church, **Harold Allen** of Doon, Kilbricken. Harold's sudden death came as a shock to everyone who knew him.

Growing up and living on the home farm, Harold was a man with a deep love for the land and the people around him.

Leading an outdoor life, he enjoyed his daily work and, always a

cheerful person remembered for his smile and cheery greetings, he enjoyed the conversations with those whom he would meet at the markets where he sold the plants and flowers he had grown.

Harold learned the secret of being contented in all that he did; his horticultural work taught him the beauty and the variety of nature and the reality for our lives of the passing seasons of each year, and his love of music and dancing brought him the company of dear friends.

Slim, healthy, happily working outside in all weathers, Harold would have seemed very unlikely to die so suddenly, long before his time; the suddenness of his death making his parting all the more painful for those who loved him.

Following the funeral service at Saint Matthew's Church, Harold's mortal remains were buried in the family grave in Roskelton churchyard.

On 16th August 2014, the Allen family suffered a second bereavement when their sister **Audrey Harrington** died in Cork after a period of illness.

Audrey's funeral service took place in Castletownbere on 19th August. We remember the family in prayers at this sad time.

Major Cecil Harding of Tulach Nore, Pike of Rushall died in England on 16th August 2014 after a short illness.

His funeral service will take place in England and there will be a memorial service in Annatrim at a date to be announced.

Clonenagh National School:

As yet another school year concluded on behalf of all the staff of Clonenagh N.S. I wish our outgoing sixth class continued success growth and happiness in their education. I also wish to extend a warm welcome to all new pupils commencing in Clonenagh N.S. this September. A special note of gratitude to our Parent Association and Board of Management for their support and commitment to Clonenagh N.S throughout the past academic year.

As one is aware last year was a particularly difficult year with the loss of our colleague and friend Ms Finola D'Arcy and although loss is a part of life and one's journey, the untimely death of Ms D'Arcy undoubtedly cast a shadow on this school year. One cannot begin to comprehend the strength needed and wholeheartedly given by staff to navigate this challenging period individually and as leaders of all pupils in our charge.

As the close of the 2013/2014 academic year marked my tenth year in Clonenagh N.S. I wish to express my gratitude to all the staff members of Clonenagh N.S who have supported me daily in my role as principal of Clonenagh N.S; for your genuine support, goodwill, commitment and friendship over the years, Thank you.

~M Stone

Principal Clonenagh N.S

Mountrath Harvest Barbecue: The weather forecast was for heavy rain and low temperatures, not the sort of day when anyone would have wanted to sit in the Rectory garden, so instead there will be a harvest barbecue at the Parochial Hall on Sunday, 28th September at 4 pm, straight after the harvest thanksgiving service which will be at 3 pm. We hope to have a children's entertainer doing a show for younger people in the

upper room of the hall. If you bought a ticket for the 24th August, it can be used for the harvest barbecue - if you are unable to join us that day, please ask for a refund. We look forward to a large crowd - at three o'clock and at four o'clock

Group Service: Sunday, 31st August is a fifth Sunday of the month. There will be Holy Communion in Mountrath at 9 am and a family service in Borris-in-Ossory at 10.30 am (please note the time, half an hour earlier than usual). A group service is not a Sunday off: what sort of faith do we have if only attend worship in our own church? Attendances at the group services have been improving and will hopefully continue to do so.

Rector away: The Rector is away from the evening of 31st August until 20th September. Contact numbers for emergencies will be on the Rectory telephone. The services the Rector usually takes will be taken by Archdeacon Murray on 7th September and by the Revd Ian Coulter on 14th September.

Mothers' Union Festival Service: The annual festival service takes place in Abbeyleix church on Sunday, 7th September - a change from the usual date in May. It is hoped that there will be a full attendance at the service by members of Clonenagh branch.

Harvest services: Our Harvest Festival season begins in Borris-in-Ossory church on Sunday, 21st September at 7 pm and continues the following Sunday with the harvest services at Mountrath at 3 pm and at Seir Kieran at 7 pm. The harvest festival season continues in October with Lacca at 4 pm on Sunday, 5th October, Annatrim at 11 am on Sunday, 12th October and Roskelton at 7 pm on Sunday, 19th October

Ploughing Championships: The National Ploughing Championships take place at Ratheniska again this year, 23rd-25th September. As has been the case in recent years, the Church of Ireland will be again have a presence and parishioners are encouraged to visit the Church's tent during their time at the event.

Mountrath Church Windows: Thank you to everyone who supported the golf classic in June which raised over €5,000 towards our planned restoration of the church windows. As the church is a protected structure, before we make any application, Laois County Council require that a conservation architect be engaged to oversee the project.

Lacca Family Service: Following on from the Thursday Bible Club, held between last September and Easter, and our holiday Bible Club, held in July, we are having a family service in Lacca Church at 10.30 am on the fourth Sunday of each month. Mervyn Tomb will be leading the services, which will follow the pattern of the holiday club service in July, and the first will be on Sunday, 28th September.

Clonenagh Parish Fundraising Committee would like to thank everybody who supported the **Golf Classic** by way of raffle prizes, sponsoring a hole, entering a team and making this event a great success.

To the Elizabeth who bought the prizes, Mabel for keeping track of time sheet and everyone who helped out on the day, thank you.



***The Holiday Bible Club
which took place in Mountrath from 14th-18th July***

Smiles

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?"

"Because white is the colour of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment, then said "So why is the groom wearing black?"

* * *

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Bible class. As she ran she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!"

While she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late...But please don't shove me either!"

* * *

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mammy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

* * *

Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100."

The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon. And it takes two people to collect all the money!"

A Sunday school teacher asked the children just before she dismissed them to go to church, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"

Annie replied, "Because people are sleeping."

* * *

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon.

"How do you know what to say?" he asked.

"Why, God tells me."

"Oh, then why do you keep crossing things out?"

* * *

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

Without missing a beat one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."

* * *

A little boy was given a €5 to put in the collection plate. When the offering came around, he wouldn't put it in. But after the end of the service, when he went to shake the rector's hand, he pulled out the €5 note and gave it to the rector. The rector asked him, "Why are you giving me this money? Why didn't you put it in the offering plate?"

And the boy answered, "Because my mammy told me you're the poorest rector we've ever had!"

Services & Readings

August 2014

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| Fifth Sunday 31st | <i>Exodus 3: 1-15 Psalm 115 Romans 12: 9-21 Matthew 16: 21-28</i> | Mountrath 9.00am Holy Communion | Borris-in-Ossory 10.30am Group Service |
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September 2014

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| First Sunday 7th | <i>Exodus 12: 1-14 Psalm 149 Romans 13: 8-14 Matthew 18: 15-20</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>Exodus 14: 19-31 Psalm 114 Romans 14: 1-12 Matthew 18: 21-35</i> | Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion | Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion | | Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer | |
| Third Sunday 21st | <i>Exodus 16: 2-15 Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45 Philippians 1: 21-30 Matthew 20: 1-16</i> | Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion | Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer | Lacca 10.30am Morning Prayer | Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion | Borris-in-Ossory 7.00pm Harvest Communion |
| Fourth Sunday 28th | <i>Exodus 17: 1-7 Psalm 78: 1-4, 12-16 Philippians 2: 1-13 Matthew 21: 23-32</i> | Lacca 10.30am Family Service | Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer | Mountrath 3.00pm Harvest festival | Seir Kieran 7.00pm Harvest festival | |

Parish Diary

September

24th Wednesday....Closing date for October 2014 Newsletter items!
28th Sunday.....Parish Barbecue (page 5)

Items for the October 2014 Newsletter need to be with the editor by **WEDNESDAY September 24th AT THE LATEST**, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the 4th Sunday, September 28th.

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

Otherwise to- Ivor Clegg, Cloncourse, Mountrath, Co. Laois. 057-8621277/087-2522162

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www.clonenagh.com