

The Newsletter

February 2016

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Joyce Lalor of Knocknagad driving one of the seventy-nine tractors that participated in the tractor run in the wind and rain on 28th December

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, days of prayer and thinking. Following his example, we try to keep Lent each year as a time of thinking about our faith, but how do we think?

In the Church of Ireland, we have followed the Anglican way and we have seen our faith as being shaped by three strands: Scripture, Tradition and Reason. Scripture is believed by Anglicans to contain all that we need to believe. Article 6 of our Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion says, "Holy Scriptures containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

When we attend church meetings, when we hear of arguments in churches, how often do we ask ourselves what does the Bible say about this? How often do we look at what churches say or do and ask ourselves, does the Bible require this?

Tradition is part of the faith of every church, to a greater or lesser extent. The New Testament came out of the early church and the early church decided what would be included in the New Testament. Most churches,

of whatever tradition, accept Christian doctrine as set out in the Creeds, because the Creeds have been shaped by the same experiences as shaped Scripture. Anglicans accept the authority of tradition, but that tradition must always be measured against what the Bible says.

Scripture and tradition are interwoven with a third strand, that of human reason. As the centuries have passed, the days of the New Testament and the early church have become more and more distant, we live now in a world very different from those times and we have to interpret what our faith says about the questions facing us today. It is not an easy task and Christians may disagree deeply about the Christian response to issues. We pray at such times that the Holy Spirit will guide our reason; we need reason as the third strand in what shapes our faith in order to understand the meaning of Scripture and tradition for our own time.

If our faith as members of the Church of Ireland should be shaped by Scripture, Tradition and Reason, then Lent might be a time of looking at our own beliefs, examining our own thinking and testing them against the faith of the church.



Church of Ireland News

Death of Herbie Sharman

Herbie Sharman, the Diocesan Communications Officer of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory and editor of the diocesan magazine died on Monday, 11th January. There had been a sudden deterioration in his health. Bishop Michael Burrows issued a statement acknowledging Herbie Sharman's contribution to the life of the diocese. "Amid health challenges through the years, his service to the diocese has been remarkable and his positivity at all times inspirational. We will all miss him very much given the manner in which he has been part of the rhythm of our lives and a friend of so many." Herbie Sharman's funeral took place in Saint Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny on Friday, 15th January.

Joe Schmidt speaks at Church of Ireland Theological Institute

On 20th January, the rugby coach and former teacher spoke on the subject of leadership. He had the packed audience entranced as he shared his wisdom and generously gave his time to answer numerous questions from the audience.

Outlining the qualities of good leadership, Joe Schmidt said that leadership is a lifelong learning process. "You don't suddenly learn how to lead or identify leaders," he stated. "In the time that I've been involved I've been incredibly lucky. People say I've led teams to trophies. But the reality is that teams have led themselves. If the leadership comes from the team then all they need is guidance."

A key element of leadership is investing in people, he said. He explained that earlier in the day he had named a 35-man squad but they had also spent a lot of time listing the qualities of the other professional players and identifying their strong points and what they needed to work on in order to keep their faith in playing international rugby.

"The more investment in the team, the stronger the leadership is within the team and the easier it is to lead because the team will inevitably adopt some of the traits you portray. It's very much 'do as I do'. You can't say one thing and then do another," he explained stating that this was equally true of his career in education.

Joe said he had never set himself a goal of getting anywhere, explaining that it is not a matter of going anywhere but of working hard and investing in the people you have. "If they see you using them as a springboard to get somewhere, you won't go anywhere," he said.

In answer to a question on how he communicates his vision to the team, Joe said it is the players who have the vision and he works on identifying their strengths and how they can be worked into the game. He also said that when they are looking for players, they seek to get the right person and then build on the player – obviously given that the person can play rugby.

Parish Notes

Funerals

Saint Stephen's Day, 26th December 2015, at Roskelton Church – **Lorna Allen** of Cromogue.

The sudden death of Lorna came as a shock to all who knew her.

With her mother coming from Mountrath, Lorna grew up in Borrisokane where her mother was a National Teacher.

Educated at King's Hospital School in Dublin from which time Lorna retained many friends, Lorna's marriage to Cecil brought her back to her mother's home community, where Lorna and Cecil became a very devoted couple.

Lorna's warm personality and generous kindness extended towards all whom she met, Lorna was always willing to do whatever she might to help others. Lorna had a great love for Cecil's nephews and nieces, who spent many hours with her in her years at Cromogue.

Lorna had struggled with her health in recent years, but never let the health problems to hinder her enthusiasm for life, still going to the shops, still attending whist drives, still spending time with the family whom she loved so much.

Even in the hours before being stopped by her final illness, Lorna was still living a full and active life and her presence will be missed by those to whom she showed the greatest kindness.

After the funeral service in Roskelton, Lorna was laid to rest in a family grave at Borrisokane, beside her grandmother, with whom she had spent many hours during her childhood.

A retiring collection at the funeral was for the Irish Guide Dog Association.

20th January 2016, at Borris-in-Ossory Church – **George Roe** of Skeirke.

A native of Castle Fleming, George moved to Skeirke at the age of fourteen when his father bought the farm there.

Educated at King's Hospital School, George returned to Skeirke where he was to take over the farm.

While delighted at the success of his siblings who had travelled far and wide, George found great happiness with his own family in his own community.

A youthful sense of humour, which never left him, and a deep Christian faith, made George someone for whom a smile was never far away.

Devoted to his wife Ann, whose early death brought him heartbreak, and never more happy than when surrounded by his children and grandchildren, George's home was always a place where there was a warm welcome to whoever called.

George's declining health in recent years was something he accepted with a gentle good grace, when all else was failing, he still kept smiling, grateful to his carers and his family members who enabled him to stay in his own home.

A man of profound faith, George would be present at whichever church where there was worship taking place, though, for him, there was no place like his own church.

After the funeral service at Saint Mark's Church, the place he had so much loved and where he had contributed so much to the worship, George was buried beside his beloved Ann at Skeirke graveyard.

Donations in lieu of flowers were for the Laois Hospice Foundation.

Mothers' Union: The Mothers' Union branch meets at the home of Jean Treacy on Monday, 25th January at 8 pm when Silé Peavoy will talk on coping with stress.

On Monday, 22nd February, the Rector will speak about his visit in December to the work funded by the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal and contributions from our own parishes

Group service: Sunday 31st January is a fifth Sunday of the month. The services will be Holy Communion in Mountrath at 9 am and a group service at Lacca at 10.30 am. There were over fifty people at the last group service, which was in Borris-in-Ossory in November, an improvement on recent attendances at such services. Let's have a good number at Lacca on 31st.

Holy Communion for the Presentation of Christ: When Jesus was forty days old, he was taken by Mary and Joseph to be presented at the Temple where he was taken in his arms by Simeon who sang the words we have in our Prayer Book as the Nunc Dimittis. The presentation marks the end of the Christmas season, if you look at the list of readings near the front of the Prayer Book you will see it is the last day on which the colour to be used in church is white. There will be Holy Communion to mark the Presentation in Mountrath church on Tuesday, 2nd February at 8pm.

Memorial service: There will be a memorial service for Canon George Flynn at Saint John the Evangelist Church, Ballinasloe at 12 Noon on Saturday, 6th February. Everyone is welcome at the service.

Ash Wednesday and Lent: Easter is early this year, Sunday, 27th March, so Lent begins on Wednesday, 10th February. We will have our usual sequence of Lent services, going around each of the six churches in our group. Our theme this year will be, "Some of those he met along the way" and we will look at Saint Luke's description of encounters Jesus had in the course of his ministry. Our services and themes are as follows:

Ash Wednesday, 10th February at Mountrath: Satan

Wednesday, 17th February at An-natrim: Simon Peter

Wednesday, 24th February at Borris in Ossory: Jairus

Wednesday, 2nd March at Lacca: Martha and Mary

Wednesday, 9th March at Roskelton: Zacchaeus

Wednesday, 16th March at Seir Kieran: Pilate and Herod

It is always encouraging to see such a good level of attendance at our Lent services, attendances which are far larger than those one might find in most Dublin churches.

Thursday Bible Club: The Bible Club meets in the Parochial Hall in Mountrath on Thursdays, 11th and 25th February.

Fellowship Group: Despite the snow and ice, there were still seven of us at the fellowship group meeting on Thursday, 14th January. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, 11th February at 8 pm.

Four O'Clock Service: Our four o'clock service in Lacca during February will be on Sunday, 21st February.

Saint Ciaran's Day: Our service this year will be in Seir Kieran church on the eve of Saint Ciaran's Day, Friday 4th March at 8 pm. Everyone is welcome at the service which is an acknowledgement of the deep Celtic Christian roots of our church.

Confirmation 2016: The confirmation service in our parish this year will be in Mountrath church on Sunday, 22nd May at 4 pm. The original date planned was the morning of Sunday, 29th May, but the GFS service was taking place in Kilkenny that afternoon and a number of our confirmation candidates are also GFS members. As candidates will be coming from more than one school, classes will take place on weeknight evenings in the Parochial Hall on dates to be fixed.

Church of Ireland Flood Appeal: There was a retiring collection at our services on Sundays, 17th and 24th January for the appeal made by the Church of Ireland on behalf of those who have suffered as a result of flooding in many parts of the country.

Revision of register of vestry members: The register of the members of the general vestry, those who are entitled to vote at the annual Easter vestry meeting, is open for revision during February.

Clonenagh National School enrolments for September 2016 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 26th February.

Plough Sunday Thanks: Thank you to all who contributed to a very successful Plough Sunday service. €326 was collected for the Embrace Farm bereavement support group.

(This is an abbreviated edition of a report in the Irish Independent on Tuesday 12th January 2016)

'VICAR OF BAGHDAD' WARNS OF CHRISTIAN GENOCIDE

ISIL militants' ongoing campaign against Christians in parts of Iraq and Syria constitutes a genocide, according to the former 'Vicar of Baghdad' Rev Canon Andrew White as he appealed to the West (including Dublin) to do more to help this persecuted minority.

Speaking to the Irish Independent, the Church of England vicar – who was forced out of his Baghdad parish, St George's in November 2014 as ISIL militants edged closer to the Iraqi capital – said "Christians are the forgotten minority."

"We had this terrible onslaught by Islamic jihadism. I lost 1,760 members of my congregation." Some of these were decapitated by the militants for refusing to renounce their faith, including one family of five young children. He warned that Iraq and Syria are being ethnically cleansed of their Christian communities.

Up to 2 years ago, the city of Ninevah 'was all Christian; now there isn't one Christian left. They were massacred and their businesses were destroyed, the Vicar said. This was documented as a 3 part TV series called 'The Vicar of Baghdad'.

The 52 year old described the situation as "horrendous".



Emily Dunne (nee Lalor) at her recent graduation in Limerick, where she received an Honours, Masters Degree in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Items for the March 2016 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY February 24th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the fourth Sunday, February 28th.

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

January			
Fifth Sunday 31st	Ezekiel 43: 27 - 44: 4 Psalm 48 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Luke 2: 22-40	Mountrath 9.00am Holy Communion	Lacca 10.30am Group Service

February						
First Sunday 7th	Exodus 34: 29-35 Psalm 99 2 Corinthians 3: 12-4: 2 Luke 9: 28-36, 37-43	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 Family Communion
Second Sunday 14th	Deuteronomy 26: 1-11 Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16 Romans 10: 8b-13 Luke 4: 1-13	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 11.00am Family Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Third Sunday 21st	Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18 Psalm 27 Philippians 3: 17-4: 1 Luke 13: 31-35	Roskelton 9.30am Family Communion	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Family Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 4.00pm Evening Prayer
Fourth Sunday 28th	Isaiah 55: 1-9 Psalm 63: 1-9 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13 Luke 13: 1-9	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Family Service	Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion

Parish Diary

January

25th Monday.....Mothers' Union meeting (*page 5*)

February

2nd Tuesday.....Communion Service (*page 5*)

6th Saturday.....Canon George Flynn Memorial Service (*page 5*)

11th Thursday.....Thursday Bible Club (*page 5*)

11th Thursday.....Fellowship Group (*page 5*)

20th Wednesday....Closing date for March Newsletter

22nd Monday.....Mothers' Union meeting (*page 5*)

26th Friday.....Closing date for Clonenagh N.S. enrolment (*page 6*)

March

4th Friday.....Saint Ciaran's Day Service (*page 6*)