

The Newsletter

March 2017

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March is upon us and the spring is here. Frosty mornings in Roskelton, like that of 5th February, were few in the winter that is past. We pray for good weather in the coming weeks.

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

Rector's Letter

Every week I read the Leinster Express and every week there seem more tales of crime: thefts, break-ins and robberies; threats, assaults and violence. The stories leave us all with a feeling of fear, we spend more time locking every window and door; we spend more and more money on alarm systems and security cameras. It wasn't always like this. It was not so long ago that doors could be left open, cars could be left unlocked; things could be left in yards without any fear of them being touched.

I don't believe the world has to be like this, I don't believe that our future has to be one of ever higher walls and fences, of electric gates and intercoms, of CCTV cameras at every junction, and constant text alerts. Perhaps the season of Lent is a time when we can start to make our own small efforts to change things.

The Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke tell the story of Jesus spending forty days in the wilderness. The first temptation he faces is to use his power to turn the stones into bread, it is a temptation to be concerned with himself, a temptation to look after his own needs, and not to care about all the other things God asked of him.

The temptation to put ourselves first, to use whatever we have for ourselves, and not to be concerned about others, is very strong. We live in times when we are becoming more and more separated - televisions meant neighbours no longer called with

neighbours in the way they once did, now computers, tablets and smartphones are dividing family members into groups of individuals sitting in the same room. More and more, we live our own lives, inside our own world.

When we become individuals, and not a community, then people become anonymous; then we don't recognize people and we don't take notice of what is happening around us in the way that we used to do. Not so long ago, we might have known everyone in our neighbourhood, we might have known every car that passed along a road, now our world has changed and we pass strangers more often than friends. Crime can thrive when people can become anonymous, when they know there is no-one who will recognize them, no-one who will wonder why they are in a particular yard or driveway.

This Lent, we can think about that first temptation, the temptation to be concerned with ourselves and to forget about our neighbour. We can decide to look around us and note all that is going on. We can decide not to just let things pass, but to hand on to the Gardai any information we have. We can decide that if no-one is anonymous, then no-one can get away with things, and none of us should have to live in fear.



Church of Ireland News

Eco-Conference

Parishioners and clergy from across the Cashel, Ferns and Ossory Diocese came to Kilkenny College on Saturday, 18th February, to learn ways of improving their church properties at the 'Inside & Out' conference.

Ruth Buggie from the Sustainable Energy Agency of Ireland (SEAI) travelled from Dundalk to explain how grants from a fund of €30 million can be accessed by parishes under the Sustainable Energy Communities Network. Communities in the South East have been slow to draw down this money, so SEAI would welcome more applications from Cashel, Ferns and Ossory under this programme. Projects could involve insulation works and help with roof replacement, or replacing oil heating with a geothermal or other renewable energy system.

Dr Úna Fitzpatrick from the National Biodiversity Data Centre in Waterford told the large attendance, many with a farming background, how the value to our food sector of pollination is €53 million in this state alone per annum. 80% of this 'free' pollination service depends on the 98 remaining species of native bees living in Ireland. However, since the 1980s, half of these bees species have been in decline. To survive, a bee needs to visit a variety of 6000 flowers a day, during spring, summer and autumn.

Drawing together the outdoor and indoor concerns of all present, Alison Harvey from the Heritage Council reminded parishes of the potential for churches to

be the focus of many towns and rural communities. Fáilte Ireland research is showing how there is a growing interest in tourists visiting churches.

Retirements in Cashel, Ferns and Ossory

Two clergy retirements have been announced in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory. The Reverend Martin Hilliard, rector of Kells Union of Parishes with Inistioge, will retire on Easter Day and the Reverend Canon Roger Harmsworth, rector of Killane Union of Parishes, will retire on July 1st.

World Day of Prayer

Women's World Day of Prayer takes place on Friday March 3 2017. This is a worldwide Ecumenical organisation whose purpose is to promote prayer and understanding amongst women. The theme for this year, chosen by the women of the Philippines, is 'Am I being unfair to you'.

Filipino Christian women of all denominations have come together to compile the 2017 service which reflects the many problems which have plagued this nation through time. It has suffered greatly over the years from disasters, injustices, poverty and forced migration. Yet the peoples trust and faith in God and His justice has not faltered. This strength of faith is reflected throughout the liturgy. It is a lesson for our Western society to bear in mind.

On Friday March 3, a wave of prayer will begin at the break of dawn on the International Date Line and conclude at sunset on the date line 24 hours later.

Parish Notes

Funeral – on Saturday, 28th January 2017 at Saint Matthew's Church, Roskelton, Brian Jackson of Kilbricken. A gentle man liked by all who knew him, Brian spent his life among the people and in the place that he loved. Growing up on the family farm at Kilbricken, Brian attended Clonenagh National School where he was known for his quiet friendliness. After schooldays were over, Brian worked on the home farm, then on other local farms, before finishing his working days in Telford's of Mountrath. Happy in good company, Brian formed firm friendships that lasted throughout his life. Quiet and undemonstrative, Brian was known for his honesty and his integrity and for the gentle smile with which he met every moment, good or bad. Brian enjoyed evenings out and holidays with friends and will be much missed by those who knew him best. Brian bore his final illness with dignity and calmness, grateful for the exemplary care he received from the coronary care and intensive care units of Portlaoise Hospital. Unafraid, even when very ill, Brian found great comfort in being surrounded by the love and care of family members. Brian had a gentle faith and confidence expressed in the firm grip of his hand. Having fought a hard fight against his illness, Brian went gently on his way. After his funeral service, Brian's mortal remains were interred in the family grave in Roskelton churchyard, where the snowdrops declared that after death there is always life. Donations in lieu of flowers were for the work of Laois Hospice.

We extend our **deepest sympathy** to the Shaw family of Seir Kieran on the death of Tommy Kelly Shaw in Birr on Tuesday, 14th February. Just six years old, Tommy fought a valiant two and a half year battle against cancer, never letting his illness spoil his enjoyment of life. Saint Brendan's Church in Birr overflowed with the hundreds of people who gathered for

the funeral Mass as Father David, the priest who officiated, recalled the bravery and faith of Tommy and his family. We will continue to remember them in our prayers.

Lent 2017: Our observance of the season of Lent began on Wednesday, 1st March at 8 pm with our Ash Wednesday Service in Saint Peter's Church, Mountrath. We are following our usual pattern and have a service of Holy Communion with hymns and a sermon in each of our churches over Wednesday evenings. Our thoughts are inspired by the work of Canon Geoff Bayliss, from the Church of England Diocese of Oxford, on the language we use in church and how difficult many people find many of the words we use. There are words regularly used in prayers, hymns and sermons that might mean very little for many of those listening, so during Lent we are looking at six words that are often used which we might find it difficult to explain. We began with Temptation and will then look at Discipleship, Redemption, Grace, Salvation, and Eternity. After Mountrath on 1st March, our services will be Annatrim on 8th March, Borris-in-Ossory on 15th March, Roskelton on 22nd March, Lacca on 29th March and Seir Kieran on 5th April.

Confirmation Group: Our confirmation preparation began in February and continues each Thursday evening during March, 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th. Our confirmation service is on Sunday, 30th April at 3.30 pm in Roskelton Church.

4th Seed Youth Group: The Durrow Centre group for young people aged 11-13 continues on the first Saturday of the month meeting from 7.30 until 9.30 pm. The group will meet on 4th March, 8th April, 6th May and 3rd June. Contact Mervyn, 057 874 0770 for further details.

Saint Ciaran's Day: We remember Saint Ciaran of Saighir, one of the first evangelists in Ireland, with our service at Seir Kieran Church on Sunday, 5th March at 7 pm. Bishop Michael will preside at the Holy Communion and our preacher will be the Revd Mairt Hanley, who will talk about the importance of our Celtic heritage.

Fellowship service: Our monthly fellowship meeting takes place at Lacca on Thursday, 9th March at 8pm. We usually finish around 9.15 pm and it's not really so scary!

Saint Patrick's Day: We remember our patron saint on Friday, 17th March with Holy Communion in Saint Peter's Church, Mountrath at 10.30 am. We sing three hymns and have a short sermon. Everyone is welcome.

Four o'clock service: Lacca holds its monthly four o'clock service, with tea and buns afterwards in the hall, on Sunday, 19th March at 4 pm.

Forgetfulness: Sunday, 29th January was a fifth Sunday of the month. The Rector took the nine o'clock Holy Communion service in Mountrath before driving to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, where he believed he was canon-in-residence. He was three months early, but is grateful to for the Holy Spirit's creation of an opportunity for the service in Lacca to be done in a different way. Thanks to Ann Goodson, Barbara Stanley, James Bennett and Mervyn Tomb who led the worship.

Twenty **Mothers' Union** members gathered at the home of Jean Treacy on 23rd January when they were very pleased to welcome Irene Murray as speaker. On Monday, 27th February, the speaker will be Anne Gee and the branch will meet at the Rectory at 8 pm (the Rector sends his apologies, he is at

a dinner in Dublin at 7.30 pm that evening). We are using the Rectory as the meeting room is more accessible to members than the upstairs room in the parochial hall.

Women's World Day of Prayer Service takes place next Friday, March 3rd, at 8pm in St. Peter's Church. The theme for this year, chosen by the women of the Philippines, is 'Am I being unfair to you'. All are welcome
A Children's Service will be held at 10:30am on Wednesday 8th March, also in St. Peter's Church.

Annatrim church needs volunteers for the church flower rota. Please contact Sandra Condell if you can help.

Lacca Ladies Dinner Friday March 31st 8pm in the Golf Club Mountrath. €25 per person, all are welcome. Please give your name to Moira 057 8756023 by 18th March.

Clonenagh Parish Fundraising Committee meeting on March 1st (Ash Wednesday) in the Parochial Hall at 9pm.

Clonenagh Parish Golf Classic will take place on Friday May 19th in Mountrath Golf Club. Entries are now open for teams and sponsorships. More details next month.

Open Day in Wilson Hospital School will be held on Saturday, March 4th 2.30pm-4.30pm. This is for prospective students and all are welcome to attend. Contact: 044-9371282
Website: www.whs.ie

Clonenagh National School enrolments for September 2017; closing date for receipt of application forms is Monday 27th February.

Smiles

Listeners to Marty Whelan's programme on RTE Lyric FM each weekday morning will know about Marty's fondness for bad jokes. On 21st February, he remembered the late Frank Carson. Here are ten from Frank Carson's many hundreds of one-liners:

A man walks into a pet shop and says: "Give me a wasp." The shopkeeper replies: "We don't sell wasps." He says: "There's one in the window."

Paddy is woken in the middle of the night by a phone call. The caller says "Is that Dublin 22 33 22?" Paddy says "No it's Dublin 223 322!" the caller apologises for waking him in the middle of the night, Paddy says "Oh it's all right I had to get up to answer the phone anyhow!"

I rang British Telecom. I said, "I want to report a nuisance caller." He said: "Not you again."

"A guy goes into B&Q and says 'I'd like some nails please.' 'How long would you like them?' 'I want to keep them.'"

"I was stopping in a nice hotel in Bolton. I said to the woman, 'there's a fly swimming in my soup'. She said 'there's too much soup, it should be paddling.'

"I don't think my wife likes me very much. When I had a heart attack she wrote for an ambulance."

A soldier arrives late on parade and the officer says, "Private Carson I didn't see you in camouflage class today! Thank you very much sir."

"My wife said to me: 'If you won the lottery, would you still love me?' I said: 'Of course I would. I'd miss you, but I'd still love you.'

As the mother-in-law tucked into dinner at our place, she noticed the dog at her feet wagging his tail. "Oh bless, is he pleased to see me?" she giggled. "No love, don't mind him!" I said. "It's just you're eating off his plate."

I'm staying in a lovely hotel, dressing robe behind the door, lovely fluffy sheets – took me a half an hour to get my suitcase closed.

Items for the April 2017 Newsletter need to be with the editor by WEDNESDAY March 22nd AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the Fourth Sunday, March 26th.

PLEASE make your item as ready for publication as possible, and most importantly, please ensure that names are spelled 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



safeTALK

suicide alertness for everyone



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Some Statistics Relating To Suicide

The World Health Organisation estimates that over 800,000 people die by suicide each year – that is one person **every 40 seconds**.

Up to 25 times as many again make a suicide attempt.

The number of lives lost each year to suicide exceeds the number of deaths due to homicide and war combined.

Globally suicide rates are highest for people 70 years and over.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death in the 15-29 years age group in 2012 worldwide.

It is estimated that during 2012 for each adult who died of suicide there were over 20 others who made suicide attempts.

So, can we as individuals make a difference in the suicide statistics? The answer is yes, we can.

Social connectedness reduces the risk of suicide, so being there for someone who has become disconnected can be a life-saving act. Connecting them with formal and informal supports may also help to prevent suicide.

Together with the support of the Parents Association of Clonenagh National School, I have organised the delivery of a “safeTALK” suicide alertness programme to be held in the Parochial Hall, Mountrath on Tuesday the 14th March at 7pm. This is a three and a half hour pro-

gramme that prepares participants to identify and engage with persons who may be having thoughts of suicide. Participants also learn how to provide practical help by using the steps of TALK (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keepsafe) and gain information on the supports and resources available locally, regionally and nationally.

It will be a very informal occasion with plenty of opportunity to ask questions and talk over a cup of tea in the break period and it will be suitable for anyone who wants to prevent suicide.

The sad truth is that most people will personally know someone who has died by suicide. These people will have been from all sectors of society, young or old, male or female, employed or unemployed, wealthy or poor, etc. Suicide figures are increasing. A little education and awareness may just provide you with the skills to save a loved one's life, a son or daughter, a mum or dad, a grandparent or a grandchild. You can make that difference. Start here.

Participant numbers are limited on the night so application to attend is necessary. To register your place please contact Emily Dunne on 086-0295866 or by email to emilydunne@live.ie

*Emily Dunne
Counselling & Psychotherapy
Dip, B.A, B.A (Hons), M.A, A.P.C.P.*

Services & Readings

March						
First Sunday 5th	<i>Genesis 2: 15-17, 31-7 Psalm 32 Romans 5: 12-19 Matthew 4: 1-11</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Holy Communion	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion	Seir Kieran 7.00pm St. Ciaran's Day Service
Second Sunday 12th	<i>Genesis 12: 1-4a Psalm 121 Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17 John 3: 1-17</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Third Sunday 19th	<i>Exodus 17: 1-7 Psalm 95 Romans 5: 1-11 John 4: 5-42</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 4.00pm Service of the Word
Fourth Sunday 26th	<i>1 Samuel 16: 1-13 Psalm 23 Ephesians 5: 8-14 John 9: 1-41</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Family Service		Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion

Parish Diary

- February**
- 27th Monday.....Mothers' Union Meeting (*page 5*)
 - 27th Monday.....Closing date for Clonenagh National School Enrolment Applications (*page 5*)
- March**
- 1st Wednesday.....Ash Wednesday Service (*page 4*)
 - 1st Wednesday.....Fundraising Committee Meeting (*page 5*)
 - 2nd Thursday.....Confirmation Group (*page 4*)
 - 3rd Friday.....Women's World day Of Prayer Service (*page 5*)
 - 4th Saturday.....4th Seed Youth Group (*page 4*)
 - 4th Saturday.....Wilson's Hospital School Open Day (*page 5*)
 - 5th Sunday.....St. Ciaran's Day Service (*page 5*)
 - 8th Wednesday.....Women's World day Of Prayer Children's Service (*page 5*)
 - 8th Wednesday.....Lent Service (*page 4*)
 - 9th Thursday.....Confirmation Group (*page 4*)
 - 14th Tuesday.....**safeTALK** meeting (*page 7*)
 - 15th Wednesday.....Lent Service (*page 4*)
 - 16th Thursday.....Confirmation Group (*page 4*)
 - 17th Friday.....St. Patrick's Day Service (*page 5*)
 - 19th Sunday.....Four O'Clock Service (*page 5*)
 - 22nd Wednesday.....Lent Service (*page 4*)
 - 22nd Wednesday....Closing date for April 2017 Newsletter**
 - 23rd Thursday.....Confirmation Group (*page 4*)
 - 29th Wednesday.....Lent Service (*page 4*)
 - 30th Thursday.....Confirmation Group (*page 4*)
 - 31st Friday.....Lacca Ladies Dinner (*page 5*)
- April**
- 5th Wednesday.....Lent Service (*page 4*)
 - 8th Saturday.....4th Seed Youth Group (*page 4*)
 - 30th Sunday.....Confirmation Service (*page 4*)