

The Newsletter

December 2019

Rector:

*Rev'd Victor Fitzpatrick,
Clonenagh Rectory,
Portlaoise Road,
Mountrath.*

Phone: 057-8732146 /086-3974035

Diocesan Reader:

*Mabel Peavoy,
Shannon Road,
Mountrath.*

Phone:057-8732331

Parish office: clonenagh@ossory.anglican.org



Camross Active Retirement Group held an American Tea Party in Lacca Hall in aid of Lacca Roof Restoration Fund.

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

The Rector Writes

Start A New Christmas Tradition

Beginning on 1 December, why not encourage your children to read St Luke's Gospel one chapter a night. There are twenty-four chapters in St Luke's Gospel which means that by Christmas Eve your son or daughter will have read the entire account of Christ's life and mission, beginning with his joyful birth in the City of David, Bethlehem, right up to his sorrowful yet ultimately triumphant death on the Cross. It will give your child a wonderful start to Christmas morning, and enable them to appreciate whom we celebrate and why. You might even enjoy reading along with them yourselves. Start a whole new family Christmas tradition!

~Rev. Victor

Parish Notes

Rector's New Year Training Course in Cork

The Rector will be participating in a Team Leadership Course in Cork beginning in early 2020. More details to follow.

Communion Assistance Rail

Our thanks to St Peter's, Mountrath, Churchwarden Emily who has overseen the installation of a new assistance rail in the church's Sanctuary area beside the pulpit. The new hand rail blends in very well with the existing pulpit and communion rails, and the new hand rail is there to provide assistance to anyone using the steps into the Sanctuary areas and who needs an additional bit of support. The hand rail is particularly helpful for those in need of assistance going to, or coming from, receiving Holy Communion.

The Irish Cancer Society Volunteer Drivers Appeal

The Irish Cancer Society is looking for volunteers to drive patients to and from their chemotherapy treatments in all public hospitals nationwide. They are

struggling to get referred patients to hospitals as demand for the service grows on a monthly basis so the Society has launched a national volunteer driver recruitment. Volunteers will need their own car but all expenses are paid. If you have 2 free days a month (Monday – Friday) and an active email address we would love to hear from you. Please call Laura on 01 231 0594, or email transport@irishcancer.ie or go to www.cancer.ie for more information.

Girls Friendly Society

We look forward to seeing everyone again and welcoming some new members. Girls age 4 years and over have the opportunity to participate in crafts, games, bible study and badge work. All welcome. If anyone requires further information give Jennifer a call on 086 818 5644. 7.15-8.45pm in the Parochial Hall.

Mothers' Union November meeting

November's meeting on Monday 4 November at 8pm in the Parochial Hall was a wonderful evening with Robert Thompson visiting and delivering a talk on the work of Guide Dogs for the Blind, and

sharing his personal experience of being visually impaired. He was truly an inspiration to the gathered audience, who were genuinely humbled by his tremendously positive outlook on life, and that he continues to use his many architectural gifts and talents so freely, despite having lived with very significant sight loss for many years. He accumulated a wealth of experience and knowledge on visual impairment and its impact. In his book: *Insights into an Un sighted World*, Robert explores and explains many of the life challenges facing visually impaired people and offers practical guidance on how sighted people can most helpfully react and assist in a range of everyday situations. Robert shared a fascinating, revealing and deeply personal account of the process of losing his sight, the associated depression and gradual acceptance and adjustments to living in an unsighted world. The engaging mixture of personal experience and invaluable advice make his book essential reading not just for family or friends supporting those with sight loss but also for the broader population, so that we can all approach visually impaired people with sensitivity and awareness. Thanks to Robert for giving of his time to come and speak on the night, and to Jean for organising the event.

Lacca Church Sunday School

Taking place on the first Sunday of every month, our Sunday School in Lacca is for all children in the parish. We encourage all children as it will be a great fun way for children to learn their bible through stories, games and crafts.

Lacca Church Roof Restoration Fund American Tea Party

Sincere thanks to Gladys and all her team of hostesses who organised the delightful American Tea Party in Lacca Hall. Over 80 people attended and were

treated to a sumptuous feast of goodies galore, and also enjoyed some musical entertainment throughout the afternoon. The Camross Community Active Retired Group presented a cheque for €1,500 which was extremely gratefully received. Once again a very sincere thanks to all who have responded with such generosity of spirit in assisting with the fund raising efforts for the Lacca Church Roof Restoration Fund. At time of writing these notes work has commenced on the restoration works and by the time you read this they will have been — God willing — completed. God bless you all!

Pastoral Visit of Bishop Michael to Clonenagh

Bishop Michael will visit Clonenagh Group of Parishes on Sunday 5 January 2020, and will celebrate Holy Communion in St Peter's Church, Mountrath, at 11am. This will be a united service for the entire Group and it's wonderful that Bishop Michael will be celebrating our first service of New Year 2020. All welcome.

Society of Catholic Priests visit to Clonenagh

The Society of Catholic Priests (SCP) is a growing society of women and men serving as priests, deacons, and consecrated religious throughout the worldwide Anglican Communion which draws its membership from Anglicans who consider themselves a part of the Anglo-Catholic tradition of Anglicanism. Founded by Church of England clergy in 1994, the Society's Chapter Rector for the Irish Province of Dublin is Norman Gamble, Rector of Malahide in north county Dublin. The Provincial Episcopal Visitor is our very own Bishop Michael Burrows. The Society's visit to Clonenagh on 21 January is an important occasion for the parish, and will take the form of a celebration of Holy Communion in St Peter's

Church with representatives of the Church in Wales, followed by a reception in the Rectory.

Pilgrim journey for St Ciarán’s Day, March 2020

The Rector of Baltinglass and Vicar of Cumann Breandán Naofa, Máirt Hanley, is planning a “vehicular pilgrimage” to mark St Ciarán’s Day on Thursday 5 March 2020. Cumann Breandán Naofa, or the Community of Brendan the Navigator, is a community within the Church of Ireland which seeks to promote pilgrimage, contemplative prayer, and retreat. The St Ciarán’s Day pilgrimage will begin at Aghaboe and make its way on to Roscrea, and conclude with a special service led by the Rector at Seir Kieran. As walking this journey would not be feasible, the pilgrimage will be a vehicular one. All are welcome to come along and further details will follow. As this event is still in the early stages of planning it is of course subject to change.

Thursday Bible Club

Thursday Bible Club for children of school age is held on alternate Thursdays at the Parochial Hall in Mountrath,

running from 6.30pm—7.45pm, until Christmas (5 & 19 December). This year we have a junior worker whom we welcome to the team, Reuben Lyons, who has just completed two years of Bible College training in Edinburgh. Reuben will be assisting Mervyn with the Thursday Bible Club this year. Admission is free and as always there are bible stories, games, crafts, quizzes, prizes, action songs and lots, lots more.

Leprosy Mission boxes should be returned to Olga Telford by December 10th so that the money can reach the charity before Christmas.

Senior Citizens annual church gate collection will take place on Sunday December 1st. Please support.

Mountrath and Ballyfin Mothers’ Union Christmas dinner in Golf Club Mountrath on Friday December 13th. Arrive at 7pm for dining at 7.30pm.

All are welcome. Please let Emily, Jean or Mabel know by December 9th.

Parish Diary

December

- 1st Sunday.....Lacca Sunday School (*page 3*)
- 1st Sunday.....Senior Citizens church gate collection (*page 3*)
- 5th Thursday.....Thursday Bible Club (*page 4*)
- 6th Friday.....Closing date for Diocesan Magazine Notes**
- 10th Tuesday.....Closing date for Leprosy Mission boxes (*page 4*)
- 13th Friday.....Mothers’ Union Christmas dinner (*page 4*)
- 18th Wednesday.....Closing date for January 2020 Newsletter**
- 19th Thursday.....Thursday Bible Club (*page 4*)

January 2020

- 5th Sunday.....Pastoral Visit of Bishop Michael Burrows (*page 3*)

Items for the January 2020 Newsletter need to be with the editor by **WEDNESDAY December 18th AT THE LATEST**, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the Fourth Sunday, December 22nd. **PLEASE** make your item as ready for publication as possible, and 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

The Station

Tucked away in our subconscious is an idyllic vision. We see ourselves on a long trip that spans the continent. We are traveling by train. Out the windows we drink in the passing scene of cars on nearby highways, of children waving at a crossing, of cattle grazing on a distant hillside, of smoke pouring from a power plant, of row upon row of corn and wheat, of flatlands and valleys, of mountains and rolling hillsides, of city skylines and village halls. But uppermost in our minds is the final destination. On a certain day, at a certain hour we will pull into the station. Bands will be playing and flags waving. Once we get there so many wonderful dreams will come true, and the pieces of our lives will fit together like a completed jigsaw puzzle. How restlessly we pace the aisles, damning the minutes for loitering – waiting, waiting, waiting for the station.

“When we reach the station, that will be it!” we cry. “When I’m 18.” “When I buy a new 450SL Mercedes Benz!” “When I put the last kid through college.” “When I have paid off the mortgage!” “When I get a promotion.”

“When I reach the age of retirement, I shall live happily ever after!”

Sooner or later we must realize there is no station, no one place to arrive at once and for all. The true joy of life is the trip. The station is only a dream. It constantly outdistances us.

“Relish the moment” is a good motto, especially when coupled with Psalm 118:24: “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” It isn’t the burdens of today that drive men mad. It is the regrets over yesterday and the fear of tomorrow. Regret and fear are twin thieves who rob us of today.

So, stop pacing the aisles and counting the miles. Instead, climb more mountains, eat more ice cream, go barefoot more often, swim more rivers, watch more sunsets, laugh more, cry less. Life must be lived as we go along. The station will come soon enough.

- Robert J. Hastings

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

Word Ladder

LANGUAGE

PLANNING

Change just 1 letter on each line to go from the top word to the bottom word. Do not change the order of the letters. You must have a common English word at each step.

DOVE



_____ profound affection

_____ traditional knowledge

_____ to tempt

_____ to wait secretly

LARK

Solution at the bottom of page 7

Clonenagh Parish Visit to the Synagogue in Terenure

On Saturday 9 November 30 parishioners from the Clonenagh Group of Parishes visited the Dublin Hebrew Congregation in Terenure, Co. Dublin. The DHC is an Orthodox community and Ireland's largest Jewish congregation. The visit was organised by our rector, Rev. Victor Fitzpatrick, in conjunction with Rabbi Zalman Lent of DHC. Four young parishioners were on the visit: Jason, a Transition Year student; Naomi who was Confirmed recently and in her First Year of secondary school; Miriam who is looking forward to being Confirmed in 2021, and her younger brother Andrew. This article is a compilation of their thoughts on the visit.

Approximately 30 parishioners led by Rev. Victor set off on Saturday 9 November full of anticipation at the prospect of visiting the Synagogue in Terenure to experience a service similar to what Jesus would have attended. Rev. Victor first mentioned bringing a group to visit a Synagogue in August and we were very interested in going along. In order to avoid clashing with several important Jewish festivals and other events taking place, Rev. Victor and Rabbi Lent settled on the first Saturday in November. Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath Day, The Shabbat.

It was a new experience for almost everyone attending, because most of us had never been to a Synagogue, and many of us had not had a chance to meet with a Jewish person before. The Dublin Hebrew Congregation is an Orthodox Synagogue, which meant that the people attending the services there had to obey some strict rules, like not taking photographs in order to respect The Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. While all Jews observe the Sabbath, Orthodox Jews take The Shabbat very seriously indeed.

On arrival there was a security check. The Synagogue is almost hidden from view behind a very large hedge and a security barrier. This gave us a stark introduction to the harsh reality of life for Ireland's Jewish community. What must it be like to go to your place of worship, fearful that some people may want to harm you simply because you have a different religion? We really hope that the young children we met will one day walk freely to their Synagogue the same way that we can walk to our Church without any fear. After the security check we were greeted inside in the community hall by the secretary, Nora, who gave us a description of what we would experience when we entered the Synagogue as we all enjoyed tea and coffee.

The building we attended dated back to the 1950s although it looked very modern. Jason and the rest of the men went to a room downstairs and the women along with us children were directed to a gallery overlooking the main room of the Synagogue. We noticed that the women from the congregation were dressed very well and many of them were wearing hats. Although the women didn't have to cover their heads, the men had to wear "skull caps" which were small round cloth caps and just covered the tops of their heads. As we looked down from above we could see all the men from our group and the Jewish men, who wore a tallitot (a shawl) with knotted "tsitzit" attached to its four corners. Lesley, a member of the DHC community, acted as a guide and sat with the men from our group and quietly explained to them what was happening throughout the service.

The seats downstairs reminded us of the Senate chamber of Seanad Éireann in Dublin. They were a vibrant blue colour, in a U shape all around a raised platform at the centre of the room where the readings were chanted from. All around us the sun shone through beautiful stained glass windows which depicted the Temple in Jerusalem and other scenes associated with the Jewish faith. There were two menorah (large candelabra filled with lights) at each side of the room. The Rabbi sat on a platform at the top of the room facing the raised platform at the centre, much like the Rector does when leading services. The Rabbi is considered the teacher, or educator, and the Cantor — who leads worship — can

be any member of the congregation over the age of 13 who can read from the Torah. At one stage a young boy, who had greeted us with his mum when we'd arrived, chanted. It was a very joyful moment for the congregation and he made his way around all the men downstairs, including the men from our group, and shook all their hands.

The Cantor led the Hebrew chanting of the Torah reading. He was dressed in robes and wore a large black hat. Five men assisted with this chanting of the reading from the centre of the room. It's considered an honour to help with this and when completed the men shook each other's hands. According to Jewish law, when a boy is 13 years old he becomes accountable for his actions and becomes a "bar mitzvah". A girl becomes a "bat mitzvah" at the age of 12 according to Orthodox Jews. A book with the reading in it was given to members of the congregation. We read it from right to left, even the English translation went from right to left.

It was fascinating looking down at how the members of the Congregation participated in the service. One big difference we noticed was that the men often got up and moved around, and chatted quietly to one another. This is quite usual and isn't considered rude or distracting. For the congregation it is enough to know that prayers and praises are being offered by the Cantor and the men on the raised platform, so it is okay to move around while the prayers are being chanted. Most of the men sat, like the ladies, following the service with their prayer books. We were thrilled to see some younger boys and girls coming and going and being warmly greeted by their dads. Every so often one of the men would call out something in Hebrew. Nora explained to us that it is important for the Cantor to get the Hebrew words correct and sometimes he can make a mistake. The men present call out if they think that he's mispronounced something. This was very different from our own services, but we got used to it very quickly.

The Torah itself is a scroll with Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy handwritten on it. This we were told has over 300,000 letters and can take up to three years to write. It's written on parchment and the writing cannot be touched as the oil on a person's hands will affect the writing. This is what the Cantor and the other men chant from. The Torah itself is stored in a mantle with a crown on top and is kept in the Ark of the Covenant at the very front of the room. The Rabbi gave an address based on the Torah reading which this particular day was about the Story of Abraham. The congregation work their way through the entire Torah over the course of one year. This Rabbi's address was the only part of the service that was done in English, but we had been able to pick out some Hebrew words like "Amen" during the service. The Rabbi warmly welcomed our group, and another group of Jewish ladies who were visiting for The Shabbat. The Rabbi told a very inspiring story about a Jewish doctor in England who was helping with finding homes for Jewish orphans after the Second World War. He gave the children Jewish names (as is their tradition) and he picked two unusual names for a little boy. One of the names was inspired by Hanukkah, a Jewish festival, and the other was Samson. Later on the little boy was housed by a couple whose grandparents had the exact same names as the doctor had given the young orphan boy. An incredible coincidence and a lovely sign of God's providence.

After the service the parishioners were brought to a smaller prayer room where daily services are conducted. The ladies let us look at the Torah and see where it is stored. As it was The Shabbat, they were unable to accept the token of appreciation that Rev. Victor presented on behalf of the group and it had to be left in a press for the Rabbi to collect another day.

Overall, this two hour service was a great experience and gave us a realisation of the type of service which Jesus attended. It was really wonderful to pray with our Jewish friends.

Services & Readings

December 2019

Sunday 1st <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 2: 1-5</i> <i>Psalm 122</i> <i>Romans 13: 11-14</i> <i>Matthew 24: 36-44</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Holy Communion	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 8th <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 11: 1-10</i> <i>Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19</i> <i>Romans 15: 4-13</i> <i>Matthew 3: 1-12</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion		Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Sunday 15th <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 35: 1-10</i> <i>Canticle: Magnificat</i> <i>James 5: 7-10</i> <i>Matthew 11: 2-11</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Carol Service	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Carol Service	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 4.00pm Carol Service & Mulled Wine Reception
Saturday/Sunday 21st/22nd <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 7: 10-16</i> <i>Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19</i> <i>Romans 1: 1-7</i> <i>Matthew 1: 18-25</i>	Seir Kieran Saturday 7.00pm Carol Service	Lacca Sunday 10.30am Family Service	Annatrim Sunday 11.00am Carol Service		Mountrath Sunday 3.00pm Carol Service
Tuesday 24th <i>Christmas Eve</i>	<i>Isaiah 9: 2-7</i> <i>Psalm 96</i> <i>Titus 2: 11-14</i> <i>Luke 2: 1-14, 15-20</i>	Seir Kieran 6.00pm Holy Communion		Borris-in-Ossory 8.00pm Holy Communion		Lacca 9.30pm Holy Communion
Wednesday 25th <i>Christmas Day</i>	<i>Isaiah 9: 2-7</i> <i>Psalm 96</i> <i>Titus 2: 11-14</i> <i>Luke 2: 1-14, 15-20</i>	Roskelton 9.00am Holy Communion				
	<i>Isaiah 62: 6-12</i> <i>Psalm 97</i> <i>Titus 3: 4-7</i> <i>Luke 2: 1-7, 8-20</i>	Annatrim 10.15am Holy Communion				
	<i>Isaiah 52: 7-10</i> <i>Psalm 98</i> <i>Hebrews 1: 1-4, [5-12]</i> <i>John 1: 1-14, [15-18]</i>	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion				
Sunday 29th <i>1st Sunday of Christmas</i>	<i>Isaiah 63: 7-9</i> <i>Psalm 148</i> <i>Hebrews 2: 10-18</i> <i>Matthew 2: 13-23</i>	Mountrath 9.00am Holy Communion		Lacca 11.00am Service of the Word		

Carol Services & Christmas Eve/Day Services 2019

Sunday 15 th :	Carol Service, Roskelton , 9.30am Carol Service, Borris-in-Ossory , 11.00am Carol Service, Lacca , 4.00pm (led by Mervyn Tomb; followed by Mulled Wine Reception)
Saturday 21 st :	Carol Service, Seir Kieran , 7.00pm
Sunday 22 nd :	Carol Service, Annatrim , 11.00am Carol Service, Mountrath , 3.00pm
Tuesday 24 th : Christmas Eve	Holy Communion, Seir Kieran , 6.00pm Holy Communion, Borris-in-Ossory , 8.00pm Holy Communion, Lacca , 9.30pm
Wednesday 25 th : Christmas Day	Holy Communion, Roskelton , 9.00am Holy Communion, Annatrim , 10.15am Holy Communion, Mountrath , 11.30am