

The Newsletter

April 2020

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A Prayer In The Time Of The Coronavirus

Almighty and All-loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we pray to you through Christ the Healer
for those who suffer from the Coronavirus Covid-19
in Ireland and across the world.

We pray too for all who reach out to those who mourn the loss of each
and every person who has died as a result of contracting the disease.

Give wisdom to policymakers,
skill to healthcare professionals and researchers,
comfort to everyone in distress
and a sense of calm to us all in these days of uncertainty and distress.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord
who showed compassion to the outcast,
acceptance to the rejected
and love to those to whom no love was shown.

Amen.

*~Archbishop Michael Jackson
Dublin & Glendalough*

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

The Rector Writes

As Christians we know that whenever we look a time of trial in the face, we do so confidently knowing that God is with us in good times as well as bad times.

Christians in many parts of our world begin their day quite literally, like the Psalmist, preparing to walk in The Valley of Death: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4 ESV).

In this our moment of great fear and anxiety, Jesus reaches out to his faithful people offering his hands in support and guidance.

Our churches may be closed, but our hearts and minds are not, and true to the words of The Boys' Brigade motto, we remain sure and steadfast in prayer, confident that Christ will carry us through.

In this spirit we should promote the common good by keeping an eye out for each other and to safeguard the weakest and most vulnerable in our families, parish, and community.

Presently our top priority must be the elderly, the sick, and those with underlying medical conditions.

Painful and unprecedented though it is, suspending church services in the Diocese and minimising physical contact for a period of time is a God-centred attempt to protect the weak and susceptible.

We remain hopeful that this terrible pandemic may soon be brought under control.

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are safe." (Proverbs 18:10 NKJV).

~Rev. Victor

Bishop's Pastoral Letter in unprecedented times

Dear Friends of CFO

It is stating the obvious that we are living through extraordinary days, unprecedented in all our lifetimes. It is clearly a time for much prayer, and for working out in our own situations the paradoxical truth that we best look after each other by meticulously practicing the concept of social distancing. Indeed living out that very concept has become a real civic duty for us all. Yet this must never obscure our determination, often in imaginative and novel ways, to demonstrate practical care for those who may feel particularly vulnerable or lonely in this situation.

The unprecedented suspension of normal public worship is a huge deprivation in terms of seeking weekly nourishment for our faith, and doing so in the visible presence of others. Fellowship and hospitality are concepts at the heart of Christian experience, and our present privations in these areas are becoming a true Lenten wilderness experience, where under God we are thrown back on our own inner spiritual resources. Losing the very sociability of normal worship is very painful for us. We can but hope that the liturgical phrase often used in this season - 'in the wilderness we find your strength' may be true for us as never before.

Some may wonder about my decision, painfully made, to suspend all normal public worship for the present. The Government after all mentioned cancelling indoor gatherings of over 100 people, and our congregations tend to be rather smaller in

most places. BUT, and here I received some wise counsel from others, it is perhaps wise in present circumstances to regard the tolerance of gatherings of up to a hundred persons as being for exceptional and specific purposes (notably funerals) as opposed to for regular weekly services. Furthermore, maintaining 'normal' worship would put undue pressure on older and more vulnerable people who are the backbone of many congregations, and indeed many of those who actually and kindly lead our services would have to be seen as in the vulnerable category as well. All around us our Roman Catholic friends are cancelling public masses, and it would seem to me strange for us to be trying to go on normally simply because we are smaller. Having said all this, matters are in a constant state of flux and all guidelines from me and other bishops will be frequently reviewed as this situation becomes ever more demanding .

So how do we maintain our life of prayer and spiritual solidarity in the midst of it all - especially at a time when prayer is so vital For the anxious and suffering, for healthcare workers and medical researchers, for those who must make difficult decisions in public health and in government. I offer but a few suggestions

- it is hoped that, particularly on Sundays but on other days too, church buildings would be very visibly 'open' to be used as places of prayer and peace. Subject to good practice surrounding social distancing and hygiene, resources for prayer might be provided, whether on paper or on screens, reflective music played, etc. And buildings which welcome people in this way should if possible be heated.

- People should be encouraged to use the worship opportunities provided by national and local broadcasters. On Sunday March 15 for example RTE televise at 1110 a pre recorded bilingual Church of Ireland Eucharist suitable for St Patrick's tide

- Many parish clergy will use social media as a means of sharing short acts of worship, reflection and prayer amongst parishioners. This is to be encouraged and our Diocesan Communications Officer Margaret Hawkins is striving to form an overview of initiatives in this area

- From next weekend and for as long as this situation continues, I intend to offer personally via YouTube and our own diocesan online platforms a short time of reflection and prayer for each Sunday that may be of some modest value around the diocese

- Parishioners who seek individual ministry of care and prayer must never hesitate to contact their local clergy. In the midst of prevailing circumstances, appropriate ways will always be found to help people realise that they are being prayed for and cared for, that they are never on their own and that definite pastoral need will never be left unaddressed.

No doubt further reflections and ideas will be offered as the situation unfolds. Meanwhile we can but strive to mull over those familiar words which are at the heart of our faith - 'in nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus'. (Philipians 4. 6,7)

~Michael CFO

March 15, 2020

<http://cashel.anglican.org/bishops-pastoral-letter-in-unprecedented-times/>

Parish Notes

Baby Joy!

Congratulations to **Hazel Wallace & Mark Quigley** on the birth of a bouncing baby girl recently. Our warmest wishes to her proud parents and to grandparents Roy & Vicky.

Baptism Joy!

We welcome in holy baptism baby **James**, who was baptised in Annatrim Church recently. James is the second child of **Jenny & Scott Cooper**. We pray God's blessing upon baby James, his proud parents, and his sponsors as he begins his journey in faith.

Ecumenical Pilgrim Walk

Seir Kieran was delighted to welcome a large gathering of pilgrims on St Ciarán's Day (5th March). The Ecumenical Pilgrim Walk is an annual event, with walkers gathering after 11 o'clock mass at the Roman Catholic church in Clareen before making their way to St Ciarán's Holy Well and stopping to pray at St Ciarán's Holy Tree. The pilgrim walk concluded with a visit to Seir Kieran church, the highlight for many is making a circuit of the church three times in an anti-clockwise direction.

Many of the local pilgrims perform three visits to the well, three visits to the tree and three visits to the monastic site during St Ciarán's week – that is the days before and after 5th March every year.

This year's visit was particularly special as the pilgrim walk was led by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ossory, Dr. Dermot Farrell, accompanied by parish priest, Fr Seamus. This was Bishop Dermot's first visit to Seir Kieran and he was delighted to see and pray at this ancient historic site.

Following a decade of the rosary, Bishop Dermot and Rev. Victor held a

joint ecumenical blessing of the pilgrims. Sincere thanks are extended to William, Evelyn, Joyce, Jane and Pamela who provided refreshments for the pilgrims and extended the wonderful Seir Kieran hospitality to all our visitors.

St. Ciarán Convoy

A second pilgrimage was welcomed to Seir Kieran, this time on Sunday 8th March when members of Cumann Breandán Naofa visited the holy site following a Vehicular Pilgrimage – dubbed the "St Ciarán Convoy" – led by the Rector of Baltinglass, Rev. Máirt Hanley.

The convoy began at the ancient Aghaboe Abbey where Rev. Victor led the pilgrims in reflections focussing on past and present, before journeying on to St Cronan's Church in Roscrea where the pilgrims were warmly welcomed by Rev. Jane Galbraith and given a talk on St Cronan by Adrian Hewson, diocesan reader and local historian.

After light refreshments the convoy made its way to Seir Kieran where Bishop Michael celebrated holy communion for the pilgrims and a large number of visitors from the local community, as well as our own parishioners.

Once more thanks are extended to William, Evelyn, Joyce, Yvonne and Jane for providing refreshments and a very warm welcome to all the visitors.

Debating Competition Success

Congratulations to **Miriam Senior** (a Mountrath parishioner) and her team from St Paul's N.S., Mountmellick on winning the Laois Education Centre's Inter-Schools' Debating Competition. This is Miriam's third year in a row to be on the winning team in this competition. Laois Education Centre has now asked the team to represent them at National level. Good luck to Miriam and the team.

Girls Friendly Society

We look forward to seeing everyone again and welcoming some new members when the present Coronavirus pandemic is, please God, contained.

If anyone requires further information give Jennifer a call on 086 818 5644.

Lacca Church Sunday School

Our Sunday School in Lacca is unfortunately suspended until further notice

Fellowship Meeting

The monthly Fellowship Meetings in Lacca are also suspended until further notice.

Thursday Bible Club

Thursday Bible Club which meets in St. Peter's Hall in Mountrath is now on recess until September. Our sincere thanks to Mervyn & Rachel Tomb who have given so much of their time and talents to organising the bible club, bible stories, games, crafts, action songs, quizzes, and prizes, plus lots more. They look forward to recommencing later this year. For more information please contact Mervyn or Rachel on (086) 057 5462.

Golf Classic 2020

Our annual fundraiser, the highly popular and enjoyable Golf Classic will, God willing, take place this year on Friday 15th May, so please note the date in your diaries!

If you are interested in entering a team or sponsoring a hole please contact Mrs Mabel Peavoy on 058 8732331. More details next month.

Gideon Service

Sunday 31st May is a fifth Sunday of the month, and there will be a United Service

of the Word in Lacca Church at 11am. The service will be led by Sam Harper with colleagues of his from The Gideons. The Gideons International is an association that works with many Christian churches. Its members come from many denominations, live all over the world, and share a desire to see the lost come to Christ. Gideon bibles placed in hotel rooms are a familiar sight to many, as indeed is its work on university campuses around the world through the distribution of the New Testament with Psalms. There will be a retiring collection in aid of the Gideons after the service. All welcome!

Holy Week

Evening Prayer for Holy Week will take place on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (6th, 7th & 8th April) at 8pm in St Matthew's Church, Roskelton (Monday), Annatrim Church (Tuesday) and St Mark's Church, Borris-in-Ossory (Wednesday). On Maundy Thursday night there will be a celebration of Holy Communion of The Lord's Supper in St Peter's Church, Mountrath at 8pm. See the full Service Diary on the back page.

Easter General Vestries

Offerlane: Tuesday 21st April, Annatrim Church

Borris-in-Ossory & Seir Kieran: Thursday 23rd April, Seir Kieran

Clononagh: Tuesday 28th April, Parochial Hall Mountrath

All meetings at 8.00pm. Please do try to attend if you are able. It is important that you remember to send apologies to the relevant Honorary Secretary if you can't be there.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

All of these dates and times are **PROVISIONAL** and are liable to change or cancellation. The Parish will make every effort to communicate any changes as quickly and as broadly as possible, but PLEASE consult with the Rector, the Church Wardens, or any member of the Select Vestry or event organisers before attempting to attend any Parish event.

Clonenagh National School News

On Friday, the 6th of March, 5th and 6th Class of Clonenagh NS ran a very successful Cafe in the Parochial Hall. Under the expert eye of their Cafe manager, Ciara Peavoy, they served up tea, coffee and beautifully baked treats.

The Clonenagh Cafe was well supported by the parents, pupils, parish and also by the town. The theme of the cafe was "autism awareness".

The pupils had organised a special corner where people could "chill out" and escape the hustle and bustle of it all.

All proceeds will go towards purchasing a bicycle rack for the school and will also be donated to the Irish Society for Autism.

Not only did the children's fundraising efforts exceed their expectations, they also got a "taste" of what it was like to run a business.



On Thursday, 5th of March, the pupils of Clonenagh NS attended a World Day of Prayer service.

It was led by the pupils of 2nd, 3rd and 4th class.

This year's country of focus was Zimbabwe.

Through readings, dramas, prayers and songs, we all learned a lot and really enjoyed ourselves!

Well done to Miss Galbraith and her pupils.



Photographs kindly provided by Clonenagh National School



The Diocesan resource for news and information regarding the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis, including a listing of online Services throughout the Diocese, can be found at:

<http://cashel.anglican.org/category/covid-19/>



The HSE provides extensive health information and advice resources at:

www.hse.ie

Parish Diary

April

6th Monday.....Closing date for Diocesan Magazine Notes

21st Tuesday.....Offerlane Easter General Vestry (*page 5*)

23rd Thursday.....Borris-in-Ossory & Seir Kieran Easter General Vestry (*page 5*)

28th Tuesday.....Clonenagh Easter General Vestry (*page 5*)

22nd Wednesday.....Closing date for May 2020 Newsletter

Items for the May 2020 Newsletter need to be with the editor by **WEDNESDAY April 22nd AT THE LATEST**, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the **Fourth Sunday, April 26th**.

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

NOTICE regarding photographs submitted for publication in the newsletter:

In compliance with the current **Parish Communication Policy**, the Editor will in future note the name of the contributor/owner of the photo, and will take it in good faith that they have secured permission to publish from all readily identifiable persons in the image, particularly those to be named in the caption.

Services & Readings

March						
Sunday 29th <small>5th Sunday in Lent</small>	Ezekiel 37: 1-14 Psalm 130 Romans 8: 6-11 John 11: 1-45	Mountrath 9.00am Holy Communion		Lacca 11.00am Holy Communion		
Tuesday 31st	<i>Evening Prayer with a Lenten Reflection</i>	Seir Kieran 8.00pm				
April						
Sunday 5th <small>6th Sunday in Lent Palm Sunday</small>	Isaiah 50: 4-9a Psalm 31: 9-16 Philippians 2: 5-11 Matthew 26: 14 - 27: 66	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 with Liturgy of the Palms
Monday 6th		Roskelton 8.00pm Evening Prayer				
Tuesday 7th		Annatrim 8.00pm Evening Prayer				
Wednesday 8th		Borris-in-Ossory 8.00pm Evening Prayer				
Thursday 9th	<i>Maundy Thursday</i>	Mountrath 8.00pm Holy Communion				
Friday 10th	<i>Good Friday</i>	Roskelton to The Hollow 10.00am Ecumenical Pilgrim Walk		Mountrath 3.00pm Ante-Communion	Lacca 8.00pm Hymns & Readings	
Saturday/ Sunday 11th/12th <small>1st Sunday of Easter Easter Sunday</small>	Jeremiah 31: 1-6 Easter Anthems Acts 10: 34-43 Matthew 28: 1-10	Seir Kieran Saturday 6.00pm Holy Communion		Annatrim Saturday 8.00pm Easter Vigil Holy Communion		
		Borris-in-Ossory Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion 1	Roskelton Sunday 9.00am Holy Communion 1	Lacca Sunday 10.30am Holy Communion 1	Mountrath Sunday 11.30am Holy Communion 1	
Sunday 19th <small>2nd Sunday of Easter</small>	Acts 2: 14a, 22-32 Psalm 16 1 Peter 1: 3-9 John 20: 19-31	Roskelton 9.30am Morning Prayer	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
Saturday/ Sunday 25th/26th <small>3rd Sunday of Easter</small>	Acts 2: 14a, 36-41 Psalm 116: 1-3, 10-17 1 Peter 1: 17-23 Luke 24: 13-35	Seir Kieran Saturday 7.00pm Holy Communion	Lacca Sunday 10.30am Family Service	Annatrim Sunday 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath Sunday 11.30am Holy Communion	

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