

The Newsletter

January 2022

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Maura Harte & Craig Telford on their wedding day

(Photo kindly provided by Rev'd Victor)

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

The New Year Three R's

For followers of Jesus, New Year's has no unique significance. There's no central biblical narrative informing our celebrations. But this doesn't mean Christians shouldn't pause and reflect on the turning of the calendar. Moses asked of the Lord, "Teach us to number our days, so we may get a heart of wisdom" (Ps. 90:12). Time—seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years—is a gift to us from a good God. To wisely follow him, then, is to redeem our time (Eph. 5:16).

Setting goals for a new year are an important sign that we're intentional about glorifying God in our callings—work and business, home and church, private and public witness. When we work and plan, even in seemingly insignificant endeavours, we're fulfilling the cultural mandate (Gen. 1:28).

But before we write out our goals, we should begin in the heart. The temptation for Christians is to make our plans and add a dollop of Jesus on top, rather than allowing him to form in us the desires and motivations to do his work. So whether or not we're making concrete goals or more abstract ones, whether we're writing down resolutions or foregoing them altogether, here are four important steps we can take, as we peer into 2022, to draw closer to Christ.

Our worship of God for his faithfulness and majesty, evidenced by the changing of seasons, should then lead us to repentance. His goodness breaks us in fresh ways as our sin is exposed by the light of his glory. But this isn't a morbidly introspective, navel-gazing exercise. To repent is to rejoice. We claim the promise of 1 John 1:9 because we know our forgiveness has already been purchased at the cross. Beginning the new year with repentance is to draw closer to Jesus, to appropriate the fresh grace that is ours in him. This is why confession always brings relief and joy. It is the gateway to greater intimacy with God.

New Year's should also be a time of renewing old commitments, like marriage, family, and church. Our most vital work is what we do within the walls of our homes—loving our spouses and raising our children in an atmosphere of godliness and grace. We live out the gospel best when we live it out in the daily rhythms of repentance and forgiveness with loved ones. We should also renew ourselves to our church. The local church is the locus of God's mission in the world, where we gather in community to declare Christ's kingship each week, and where we work out our salvation in fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12) with brothers and sisters in Christ.

Finally, New Year's should be a time to rest. First, we rest in the reality of our identity in Christ. We may have failed to meet our heady goals in 2021, but Jesus still loves us despite our failures. The gospel tells us that he loves us in the midst of these. Second, we should plan to physically rest. We don't often do this on New Year's. We plan to work and hustle. But do we schedule time to reflect and acknowledge our need for sleep and leisure? Rest isn't a sign of laziness or weakness; it's a sign of spiritual strength and confidence that when we close our eyes, our lives are in the grip of a sovereign God. To sleep is to say that we're not God and that the world can go on without us.

So as we make our plans for 2022, let's remember that even in our failures, we serve the One who remembers our frame and knows we are dust (Ps. 103:14). We make plans, but we hold them lightly. We entrust our future, not to Google Calendar, but to the King who holds the world in his hands.

~Daniel Darling

Items for the February 2022 Newsletter need to be with the editor by Wednesday January 19th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the Fourth Sunday, January 23rd.

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

To receive the Newsletter by post, please forward stamped addressed envelopes to this address.

This Newsletter and many older editions can be downloaded directly from www.clonenagh.com

The Rector Writes

End-Of-Year Thank You!

Audrey Hepburn said: "As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others." It's a very appropriate description of the very many parishioners who each year, quietly and conscientiously, often unseen, do so much to keep our parish going and our churches and cemeteries in such good order. And so a well deserved thanks to our churchwardens, glebewardens, vestrypersons, synodspersons, secretaries, treasurers, nominators, helpers, assistants, Mothers' Union, Sunday Club leaders, GFS, SGT panel, organists, readers, musicians, Tús workers, gardeners, Seir Kieran eco lawnmowers, cleaners, singers, clock maintainer, tea ladies (and gents!), bakers, church decorators, fundraisers and driver! May I single out John, Mervyn, Gillian, Emma, Mabel and James, without whose help it would not be possible to have such a variety and number of Sunday services in the parish, and a special word of appreciation to Mervyn for his wonderfully creative and spiritually uplifting online services during the lockdown; Ivor for his sterling work with the Newsletter and service sheets; and a final thanks too to Noelle Kearney who gave of her time and energy during lockdown to painting and maintenance at St. Matthew's Church, Roskelton. Thank-you one and all!

~Rev'd Victor

Requiescant In Pace

We extend our most sincere condolences to:

The pupils and staff of Clonenagh National School on the death on December 2nd of their much-loved Secretary of many years, **Shirley Bennett (née Talbot)**, late of Knockaroo, Borris-in-Ossory. Sadly missed by her husband Neil, daughter Karyn & her fiancé Eamon, her mother Pam, her brother Robin, and all her friends in the Clonenagh Group of Parishes.

Sue Powis (Coolrain) on the death on December 6th of her husband **David John Powis**, late of London. Deeply regretted by Sue and his daughters Jane, Maxine, Katherine and Charlotte, their Children and grandchildren. Survived by his sister Susan Lannas.

William Treacy (Annatrim) on the death of his sister **Gladys Sixsmith (née Treacy)**, late of Loran, Pike of Rushall, Co. Laois, on December 12th. Peacefully in the loving care of the Matron and Staff at the Ashley Lodge Nursing Home, Kildare. Sadly missed by her loving family, and a large circle of friends.

Margaret McKay on the death of her dear father, **Thomas John McClean**, late of Rossmore, Errill, on December 14th peacefully in the wonderful care of Patterson's Nursing Home, Roscrea. Also sadly missed by his loving wife Gladys, son William, son-in-law Tommy, daughter-in-law Johanna, grandchildren, great grandson, relatives, neighbours and friends.

Gordon Cooper (Annatrim) on the death of his dear mother, **Violet Cooper (née Lalor)**, late of Coolrain in her 95th year. Violet died peacefully on December 19th, in the care of Lisheen Nursing Home, Rathcoole.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Parish Notes

Wedding Joy

We send our very best wishes to Maura Harte & Craig Telford and remember them in our prayers, who were married in St Brigid's Church, Portumna, Co. Galway, on Friday 10th December, followed by a reception in Ashley Park House, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. We pray God's blessing on the new couple and we wish them every happiness together!

Fellowship Service

The fellowship service in Lacca Church takes place on the second Thursday of the month at 8pm. All welcome!

Lacca Church Sunday School

The Sunday School in Lacca will return at the 10.30am first Sunday of the month celebration of Holy Communion in February. All school age children are welcome!

Thursday Bible Club

Will hopefully return after Christmas on Thursdays from 6.30-7.45pm for all those attending National School. A registration and consent form is available from Mervyn. As restrictions continue to ease, we will be able to do crafts, games, quizzes, Bible stories, Bible verses, singing, as well as prizes. For more information contact Mervyn at 086 057 5462.

Confirmation 2022

We have five young Candidates for Confirmation in Lacca Church on Saturday 26th March in the early afternoon. Classes will commence in January and run for 10 Wednesdays in Lacca Church Hall. The dates for your diaries are: January 12th, 19th, 26th, February 2nd, 9th, 16th and March 2nd, 9th, 16th and ends March 23rd. All classes at 7pm.

Spink Comhaltas News

Our best wishes to Lacca parishioners James & Robert Harvey, who gave a music recital in Abbeyleix Library on Saturday 18th December. The brothers brought their audience on a musical tour of Laois, finishing their performance in Abbeyleix with a set of Reels — The Abbeyleix Reel / Rosenalis Reel / Reel of Scaffoe. (With thanks to Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media Laois County Council Laois Arts Laois Libraries).

Home Communion

Our Home Communion for January 2022 will take place on the second Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (and the third Wednesday), of the month. Please do contact the Rector if you or a loved one would like to be added to the list.

Leprosy Mission

A total of €201.05 was raised this year. On behalf of the mission, many thanks to everyone who supported the collection. ~Olga

Services & Readings

January						
Sunday 2nd <i>The Second Sunday of Christmas</i>	Jeremiah 31: 7-14 Psalm 147: 13-21 Ephesians 1: 3-14 John 1: 1-18	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 9th <i>The First Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	Isaiah 43: 1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8: 14-17 Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion		Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Sunday 16th <i>The Second Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	Isaiah 62: 1-5 Psalm 36: 5-10 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11 John 2: 1-11	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 22nd/23rd <i>The Third Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a Luke 4: 14-30	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
Sunday 30th <i>The Fourth Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	Jeremiah 1: 4-10 Psalm 48 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13 Luke 4: 21-30	Mountrath Sunday 11.00am Holy Communion				

Parish Diary

January

- 2nd Sunday.....Lacca Sunday School (page 3)
- 6th Thursday.....Bible Club (page 4)
- 6th Thursday.....Closing date for Diocesan Magazine Notes**
- 13th Thursday.....Lacca Fellowship Service (page 3)
- 19th Wednesday.....Closing date for February 2022 Newsletter**
- 20th Thursday.....Bible Club (page 4)