

The Newsletter

January 2023

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***Bishop Adrian and Rev'd Victor with Willie Clegg and Marina Clegg
dedicate the Bicentennial Holly Tree at Roskelton***

(Photo kindly provided by Arthur harvey)

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

The Rector Writes

A New Year Reflection

The wise man of Ecclesiastes said, "Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'" (Eccl. 12:1). In January, the year is young and the opportunities seem fresh. So many productivity gurus preach a gospel of self-empowerment, but as gospel people, we know the fragility of human life. We know every breath is a miracle, a gift given to us by our Creator. I love the words of hymnwriter Thomas Obediah Chisholm (1866-1960):

*Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.*

In a tumultuous world, creation itself reminds of God's great faithfulness. Every new season is a testimony, a signpost, to grace. So, the proper response to the past year, whether good or bad, is not "I made it through" or "Look what I achieved." It is "Thank you, Lord." New Year's should also be a time of renewing old commitments, like marriage, family, and church. Before we begin grand plans to lose weight or develop a new skill - good creational goals - let's begin by renewing the core commitments we already have.

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 must reject the lie that says success requires abandoning family commitments.

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). Commitments to marriage, family, and church don't always look or feel significant. But faithfulness in these core things over a long period is a radical, countercultural life. They form the habits of a disciple and show the world what it looks like to be a Christian.

Happy New Year!

*(Drawn from a talk by Daniel Darling)
~Rev'd Victor*

Requiescant In Pace

As this Newsletter goes to press, we hear the sad news of the death of **Mary McKay**. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her relatives and friends. May this Christmas season not be too painful for them and we pray that Mary may rest in peace, and rise in glory.

Parish Notes

Bicentennial of St. Matthew's Church, Roskelton,

On Sunday 18th December St. Matthew's Church, Roskelton, celebrated two hundred years since its construction. It was with incredible joy that we were able to give thanks to God for two centuries of Christian worship, ministry, tradition and praise at the church, and we give thanks to God for all of those who have gone before us and kept the church open from generation to generation through some very difficult periods in history. With this in mind, the Parishioners of Roskelton marked the occasion with a combined Carol Service and Commemoration of the Bicentennial. The Right Rev. Adrian M. Wilkinson, Bishop of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory preached at the

service and blessed a delightful holly tree which will provide a home and source of sustenance for future generations of wildlife to come, and its branches will provide decoration to countless displays in the church for many, many years to come. We extend our thanks to William Clegg for his historical talk which he delivered as part of the service, and to the members of the Organising Committee who put so much hard work into arranging everything so well, that the whole service flowed seamlessly. Our thanks too to Churchwardens Phyllis and Ivor; to Noelle for all her kind time and energy which she gives to St. Matthew's and to everyone who provided refreshments and helped arrange everything on the day. Here's to another two hundred years!

Thank You!

A word of thanks to everyone who gave of their time and talents to decorate our six churches so beautifully for our Advent Carols, Christmas Carol Services and Christmas Services. The past couple of years have been a difficult, worrisome and trying time for so many of us living under the shadow of Covid. The beautiful singing, the lovely music and the wonderful decorations all combined to lift our spirits as we prepared to celebrate Christ's birth. Thankfully we are now able to look forward to another new year and we hope and pray that 2023 will dawn a peaceful and joy-filled year, and that God willing it will bring us good health, happiness and prosperity.

Birthdays Celebrations

Willie Clegg celebrated his **90th birthday** recently, towards the end of November. Many congratulations, and we look forward to many more in the future!

Gladys Danne has great pleasure in inviting the community to join her in celebrating her **90th Birthday** on Sunday 19th February at 4pm in Lacca Church. Festivities commence with a special hymn-packed Service of the Word, followed by a reception in Lacca Parish Hall. Everyone is most welcome to attend.

Please, no presents, but donations to Lacca Church would be greatly appreciated.

Mothers' Union

22 members and spouses all enjoyed a beautiful meal and social evening in the Midland Park Hotel on 7th December.

Generous donations of clothes, toiletries and toys have been delivered to the Amber House Women's Refuge in Kilkenny where they are much appreciated, especially at this time.

We wish all our members and families a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Home Communions

For January our Home Communions take place during the second, third and fourth weeks of the month. Please do contact the Rector if you or a loved one would like to be added to the list or would simply just like a visit and a chat.

Fellowship Service

The Fellowship Service takes place in Lacca Church on the second Thursday of every month at 8pm. All welcome.



Camross Active Retirement had their Christmas dinner on 11th December. The cake was cut by Gladys Danne and John Brady, and a great day was had by all.
(Photo kindly provided by Valerie Handcock)

Thursday Bible Club

Thursday Bible Club will meet after Christmas in the Parochial Hall on Thursday 5 January at 6.30pm. It will continue on: 19 January, 2 February, 16 February, 2 March, 16 March. 30 March. Thanks to all who have supported the club in 2022. ~*Mervyn Tomb*

Girls' Friendly Society

GFS continues in Mountrath Parochial Hall. If anyone is willing to help or has any queries about GFS please contact Jennifer on 086 818 5644 (after 7 pm).

Leprosy Mission

A total of €145.76 was raised this year. On behalf of the mission, many thanks to everyone who supported the collection.

~*Olga Telford*

"Thanks" from Roskelton Churchwardens

We would like to most sincerely thank everyone who so willingly helped with the decoration of St. Matthew's and who generously provided & assisted with the refreshments for the Bicentennial Carol Service. Your generosity and enthusiasm are much appreciated.

~*Phyllis Foot & Ivor Clegg (Churchwardens)*

Clonenagh National School News

Clonenagh National School **Annual Tractor Run** returns on Wednesday 28th December 2022, following a two-year break. The Tractor Run will take place along with the **Family Fun Run/Walk** and the **Monster Auction** in Coolrain Village.

Registration for the Family Fun Run/Walk is at 11am in Sheeran's Pub, Coolrain, and the Run will start at 11.30am. Registration for the Tractor Run will be at 1pm and the tractors will set off at 2pm.

The event will finish with the Monster Auction in Sheeran's Pub at 8:30pm, and there will be music and refreshments in Sheeran's Pub throughout the day.

Clonenagh National School is participating in the **Tesco Community Fund** until Sunday 26th February. If you're shopping in Tesco don't forget to collect a blue token when you checkout and pop it into the Clonenagh National School donation box located by the exit.

Services & Readings

January						
Sunday 1st <i>The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus</i>	<i>Numbers 6: 22-27 Psalm 8 Galatians 4: 4-7 Luke 2: 15-21</i>	Mountrath 11.00am Holy Communion				
Sunday 8th <i>The First Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	<i>Isaiah 42: 1-9 Psalm 29 Acts 10: 34-43 Matthew 3: 13-17</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion	Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer		
Sunday 15th <i>The Second Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	<i>Isaiah 49: 1-7 Psalm 40: 1-12 1 Corinthians 1: 1-9 John 1: 29-42</i>	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 21st/22nd <i>The Third Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	<i>Isaiah 9: 1-4 Psalm 27: 1, 4-12 1 Corinthians 1: 10-18 Matthew 4: 12-23</i>	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 29th <i>The Fourth Sunday after The Epiphany</i>	<i>Micah 6: 1-8 Psalm 15 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31 Matthew 5: 1-12</i>	Mountrath 9.00am Holy Communion			Lacca 11.00am Holy Communion	

Parish Diary

January

- 5th Thursday.....Bible Club
- 6th Friday.....Closing date for Diocesan Magazine Notes**
- 12th Thursday.....Lacca Fellowship Service
- 18th Wednesday.....Closing date for February 2023 Newsletter**
- 19th Thursday.....Bible Club

Items for the February 2023 Newsletter need to be with the editor by Wednesday January 18th AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the Fourth Sunday, January 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

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