

The Newsletter

October 2026

Priest in Charge:

Rev'd Richard Seymour-Whiteley

Phone: 085-7564706

Diocesan Reader:

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Mountrath.

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*The **European Crab Apple** (*Malus sylvestris*) trees are laden with fruit*

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

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

The Rector Writes

Safeguarding Awareness:

Safeguarding is about our parishes doing all in our power to ensure the health and welfare of all young and vulnerable people in our care.

Annual health and safety, and annual activity risk assessments have to be carried out; fire drills - which parishioners will recently have experienced; the fire extinguishers have to be checked annually; anti-bullying and safety statements have to be passed annually by the Select Vestries; first aid kits in all church premises checked that all contents are within code, and separate accident and emergency books are required for all church premises.

All church 'staff', ie. clergy and volunteers for GFS have to be police vetted, and receive Safeguarding Training every three years. Clonenagh has four Safeguarding Panel members whose responsibility is to ensure all Safeguarding procedures are put in place, and they exist for any parish member to express concerns should they think that any young or vulnerable people might be the subject of abuse.

Your Panel Members are: Rev'd Richard Whiteley, Anne Goodson, Caroline Clegg and Grace Wharton. Thank you to Margaret Grant who has just stood down from the Panel after a number of years. All these measures - and more - are required by law and national regulations.

~Rev'd Richard Seymour-Whiteley

Parish Notes

Harvest Thanksgiving Services

September-October 2026

Sunday 27th - Annatrim 11am

Saturday 3rd - Seir Kieran 8pm

Sunday 4th - Borris-in-Ossory 11am

Sunday 4th - Mountrath 7.30pm

Sunday 18th - Lacca 4pm

Baby Joy

Many warm congratulations to **James and Sinead Harvey** on the birth of a baby girl, **Grace Emily**. A sister for Ella and grand-daughter to Melvin and Moira Harvey.

Fellowship Service

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

Confirmation Classes will begin Friday 25th September. Please keep our Confirmands in your prayers as they prepare for the next phase of their journey in their Christian faith. You are all very welcome to the **Confirmation Service** on Sunday 25th October in St. Peter's Church, Mountrath.

~Rev'd Janet

The **Lacca Harvest Thanksgiving Service** on Sunday 18th October at 4pm in Lacca Church will be led by the Rev'd William Bennett, and followed by refreshments in the Hall. All are welcome.

Hospital Visits

Just a reminder to everyone, if you or a loved one are in Portlaoise Hospital and would like a visit from the Chaplain, Rev'd Janet Finlay, please let her know. Since the introduction of GDPR the only way she will know is if you contact her on 087-7598384.

~Rev'd Janet



Mothers' Union

Monday 28th September ~ Our opening service of Holy Communion will be held in St. Peter's Church, Mountrath at 8pm followed by a cup of tea in the hall.



GFS News

Girls Friendly Society recommenced on Friday 25th September in the Parochial Hall, 7.15-8.45pm. Further information can be obtained from Branch Leaders or Jennifer at 086-8185644.



Rathdowney Union of Parishes

present the Timahoe Male Voice Choir and the Ballacolla Ukulele Band in St. Andrew's Church, Rathdowney, on Friday 16th October at 8.00pm. Sub. €20 from Olive at 087-903122, or on the door on the night.



Camross Lunch Club

Thursday 1st October, 12:30-3:30pm. Book your place! Invite a friend, we are back! Hope that some of you will join us on Thursday 1st October. Nice meal, great company and some fun. Contact Johanna at 086-6012153 or camrosscommunity@gmail.com for details.

Requiescant In Pace



Please remember in your prayers:

Hazel Peavoy (Mountrath), on the death of her father **George Williams**, late of Kilbline, Bennettsbridge, who died on Saturday 27th June and following a Funeral Service in St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, was laid to rest in Kilfane Churchyard on Tuesday 30th.

The **Students & Staff of Clonenagh National School** on the death of their SNA and colleague **Evelyn Whiteford (née Coyle)**, late of Violet Hill, Johnstown, who died on Wednesday 22nd July and following a Funeral Service in St. Mary's Church, Johnstown, was laid to rest in the adjoining Cemetery on Saturday 25th.

...and on the death of Evelyn's daughter and their former teacher and colleague **Sarah Freda Benn (née Whiteford), 'Miss Whiteford'**, late of Ballygurteen House, Roscrea, who died on Tuesday 15th September and following a Funeral Service in St. Burchin's Church, Ballyhenry, Clonakenny, Roscrea, was laid to rest in the adjoining Cemetery on Friday 18th.

Shiree Birney (Mountrath), on the death of her mother **Caroline Victoria Fraser (née Lazenby)**, late of Coolgrove, Stradbally, who died on Sunday 13th September and following a Funeral Service in Athy Presbyterian Church, was laid to rest in St. Michael's Old Cemetery, Athy, on Wednesday 16th.

Barbara Stanley (Lacca), on the death of her husband **Ken Stanley**, late of Meelick, Portlaoise, who died on Saturday 19th September and following a Funeral Service in Portlaoise Methodist Church, was laid to rest in the Friends Burial Ground, Rosenallis, on Tuesday 22nd.

Rev'd Richard Seymour-Whiteley, on the recent death of his father.

Clonenagh National School News

It has been a very sad time for the school

Over the past number of months, our school community has experienced a time of great sadness, and we would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the wider community for your kindness, your thoughts, your prayers and the many messages of support we have received. They have meant more to us than you may realise.

As many of you will know, our much-loved Special Needs Assistant, **Evelyn Whiteford**, passed away during the summer. Evelyn was a very special part of Clonenagh NS and is greatly missed by us all. She brought such kindness, warmth and grace to our school. Even on the most difficult of days, having Evelyn in a classroom somehow made things feel that little bit easier. She was always there for others, and most especially for the children, whom she absolutely adored. She loved hearing all their news, how their weekend had gone, what they had done during the holidays and all the little stories that mattered so much to them.

Evelyn was endlessly thoughtful. She supported every school fundraiser and initiative, and even during her illness she continued to think of others, sending in contributions for school events or money for us to buy a tin of biscuits for the staff room. That was simply Evelyn, always thinking of someone else. She will always remain a very special part of our school, and we will never forget her.

More recently, we were deeply saddened by the passing of Evelyn's daughter, **Sarah Benn**, known to many of our past pupils as Miss Whiteford. Sarah first taught with us many years ago, working with our younger classes. At that time, unfortunately, there was no permanent position available for her and she moved on to Sandy Lane NS. However, leaving Clonenagh never meant leaving the friendships she had made here. Sarah remained a wonderful friend of our school and continued to support us in so many quiet ways: keeping in touch, taking an interest in how everyone was getting on, supporting school events and even attending Christmas shows.

We were therefore absolutely delighted to welcome Sarah back to us in the summer of 2024, when she finally received her long awaited permanent position with us. Clonenagh was a school she always held very close to her heart, and having her return to us meant so much. Sadly, not long after returning, Sarah became ill, and her recent passing has brought another enormous sadness to our school community.

We continue to hold Sarah and Evelyn's family in our thoughts and prayers. Both women gave so much to Clonenagh NS, and their kindness, warmth and presence will remain part of our school for many years to come.

To everyone in the parish and the wider community who has reached out to us, sent messages, offered prayers or simply let us know that you were thinking of us, thank you. Your kindness and support have been deeply appreciated during a very difficult time.



CREATIVE
CLUSTERS

We Need Your Help – Creative Clusters at Clonenagh NS

Hello from everyone at Clonenagh National School!

We are looking for a little help from our wider parish community as we begin a very exciting project in our school.

We are delighted to be part of Creative Clusters, a wonderful initiative which helps schools to develop creative practice, often with the support of artists and other creative practitioners. This year, we want to do something particularly special, to capture and celebrate the history of Clonenagh National School through the memories of the people who know it best.

Our hope is to bring together current pupils and staff, past pupils, former staff members and members of our parish community to talk about what Clonenagh was like in years gone by. We would especially love to hear from grandparents and, if we were lucky enough, even great-grandparents who attended the school, but you certainly do not need to have children or grandchildren currently attending Clonenagh to take part.

We have been fortunate to receive significant funding for this project, which means that we will be able to work with an experienced professional videographer to create a very special video documenting the story of our school. We see it almost as a digital time capsule, something that our children can learn from today and that future generations of pupils will be able to treasure.

As part of their History curriculum, our pupils learn about schools in the past and compare them with school life today. Recently, our Third and Fourth Class pupils interviewed me about my own time as a pupil here. They were amazed by some of the changes! I can still remember the excitement when the very first computer arrived while I was a pupil in the senior room. It was a huge event. Today, of course, technology is simply part of everyday school life. Now, as we look ahead to developments such as modern foreign languages becoming part of primary education, it seems like the perfect time to stop and reflect on just how much our school has changed.

This is where you come in!

We would love to hear your stories and memories. What was your classroom like? What games did you play? What subjects did you learn? What were the teachers like? What did you bring for lunch? What were school concerts, sports days or Christmas celebrations like?

Perhaps you have an old school photograph, report, book or other little piece of Clonenagh history that you would be willing to share with us. You might be happy to sit for a short interview! Every contribution, big or small, would be very special.

It would be wonderful to capture as many inter-generational connections as possible : children alongside parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, great-aunts, great-uncles, past pupils and former staff. Imagine a child looking back on this project in years to come and being able to say, "My granny helped us make that," or "My grandad told us what school was like when he was a child."

If you would like to be involved, please do get in touch. You are very welcome to call into the school for a chat, telephone us on 057 873 2516, or contact us by email: clonenaghns@gmail.com or melissa.burnell@clonenaghns.com

We will also be holding our School Harvest Thanksgiving on Thursday, 1st October at 10.00 a.m. in the church, and you would be very welcome to come along and speak to us there.

We are so fortunate to be a school at the heart of a parish community. We believe that connection does not end when a pupil finishes 6th class. The people who have passed through Clonenagh are part of its story, and we would love your help in preserving that story for the children of today and for generations still to come.

Thank you, as always, for the wonderful support you give our school. We are incredibly excited about this project and would be absolutely delighted to hear from you. :)

Items for the November 2026 Newsletter need to be with the editor by Wednesday October 21st AT THE LATEST, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for the Fourth Sunday, October 25th.

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–

clonenagh.newsletter@gmail.com

Otherwise to- Ivor Clegg, Cloncourse, Mountrath, Co. Laois. 087-2522162

Services & Readings

October

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Saturday 3rd		Seir Kieran 8.00pm Harvest Thanksgiving			
Sunday 4th <i>The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity</i>	<i>Exodus 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20</i> <i>Psalms 19</i> <i>Philippians 3: 4b-14</i> <i>Matthew 21: 33-46</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Harvest Thanksgiving	Mountrath 7.30pm Harvest Thanksgiving
Sunday 11th <i>The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity</i>	<i>Exodus 32: 1-14</i> <i>Psalms 106: 1-6, 19-23</i> <i>Philippians 4: 1-9</i> <i>Matthew 22: 1-14</i>	Annatrim 11.00am Morning Prayer		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	
Sunday 18th <i>The Twentieth Sunday after Trinity</i>	<i>Exodus 33: 12-23</i> <i>Psalms 99</i> <i>1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10</i> <i>Matthew 22: 15-22</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 25th <i>The Fifth Sunday before Advent</i>	<i>Deuteronomy 34: 1-12</i> <i>Psalms 90: 1-6, 13-17</i> <i>1 Thessalonians 2: 1-8</i> <i>Matthew 22: 34-46</i>	Mountrath 11.30am Confirmation Service with The Right Reverend Adrian Wilkinson			
<u>PLEASE NOTE:</u>					
These venues and times are subject to change, or even cancellation, at short notice!					
Up-to-date information can be found on the Parish WhatsApp group or by contacting a Church Warden.					

Parish Diary

October

1st Thursday.....Camross Community Lunch Club

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

8th Thursday.....Lacca Fellowship Service

16th Friday.....Rathdowney Union Concert

21st Wednesday.....Closing date for November 2026 Newsletter