



tidings

DIOCESE OF TUAM, KILLALA AND ACHONRY

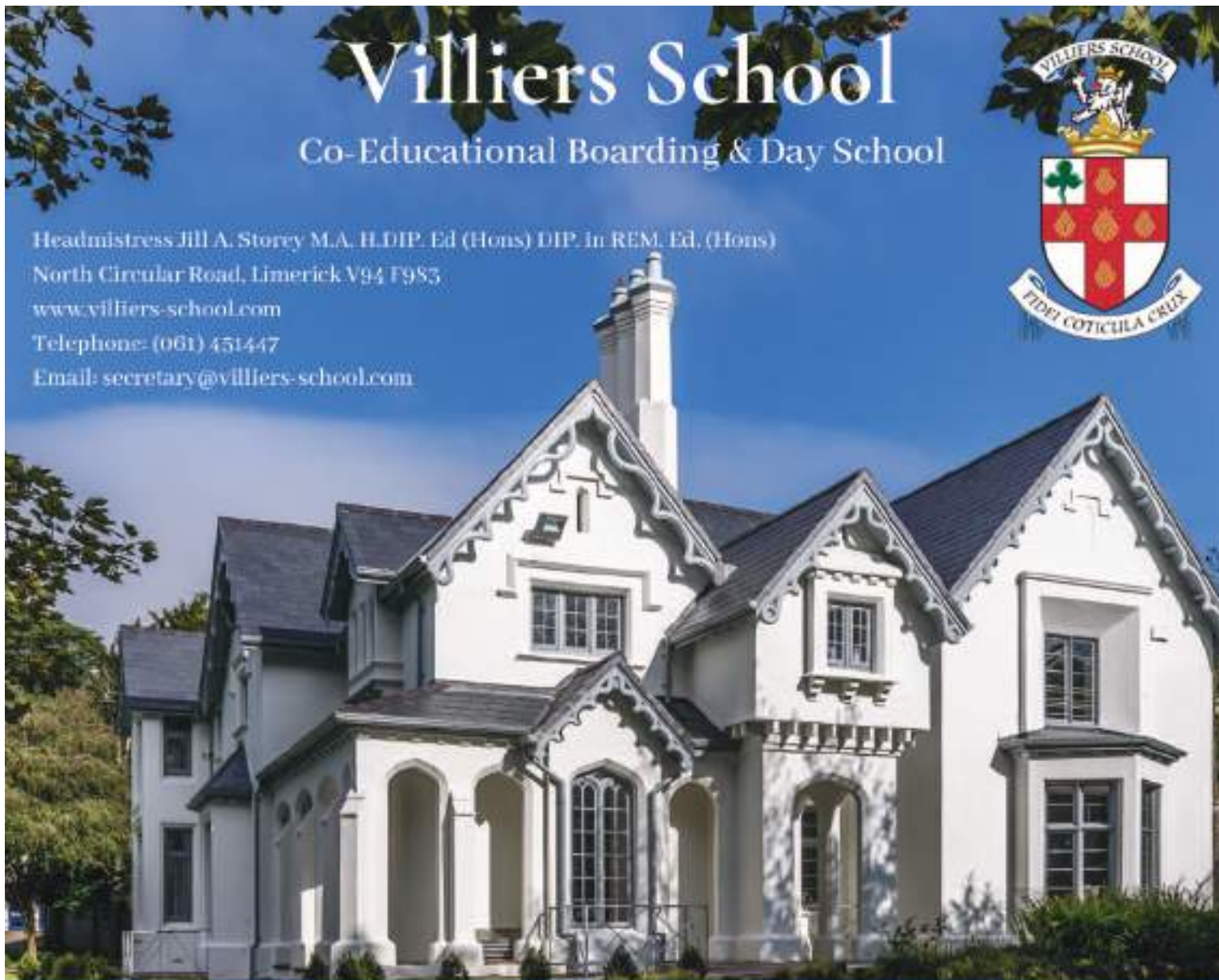


SUMMER ISSUE 2024

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tidings

SUMMER ISSUE 2024

The magazine of the Church of Ireland Diocese of Tuam, Killala and Achonry. Our front cover displays a stunning image of Skreen Parish Church, Co Sligo under the Aurora Borealis, May 2024 - Photo Credit:- Abigail Halpin www.tlk.ie

COPY DEADLINE

All submissions for the Harvest Issue of Tidings, including advertisements, must be in by **Wednesday 4th September, 2024**

VIEWS EXPRESSED

Views expressed in Tidings are those of the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Editor or the magazine committee.

DIOCESAN MAGAZINE

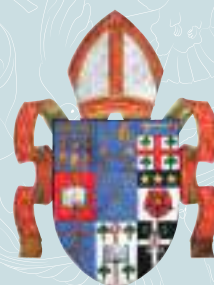
All advertising enquiries should be made to the diocesan administrator, Mrs. Heather Pope, secretary@tka.ie

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THE BISHOP WRITES

Dear Friends

I want to use my space in this issue of the magazine to put on record my personal thoughts regarding an issue which was - painfully - debated at the recent General Synod. Given the importance of the matter, these words are also being made available to clergy in the diocese for reference and quotation if desired.

It has long been the position of Anglicanism and of the Church of Ireland that baptism should not be refused or unduly postponed.... indeed the undue delaying of baptism was regarded as reprehensible conduct on the part of clergy, whose duty it was 'to seek out the unbaptised'. We can of course have theological arguments concerning the scriptural basis for infant baptism (in my view unambiguous) or concerning the appropriateness of baptising 'indiscriminately' where perhaps there is no evidence of any Christian commitment on the part of the sponsors. That said, it has always been the view of the Church of Ireland that - while the demands of baptism should be carefully explained - at the end of the day it should not be withheld. The role of the clergy is not to set up obstacles to the wondrous sacramental grace of God.

But the debate at the General Synod was not about the kind of conscientious issues I have just mentioned - rather it was about whether the marital status of parents, and in particular mothers, was relevant to the administration or withholding of infant baptism. I have to confess it had never entered my mind that this was an issue - I assumed the position of the church to be clear, and in all my years as a bishop I have never knowingly encountered a priest who withheld baptism on these grounds. But apparently such things are happening in certain parts of the church, and so some lay synod members put down a motion at the synod affirming that the grace of baptism should not be withheld

on the grounds of marital status alone. The motion was clear in articulating respect for the sanctity of marriage, but recognised that we live in a society where, in fact, little short of half of births happen outside wedlock. This may happen in the context of everything from crisis pregnancy to long term committed, but unmarried, partnerships ... and I would be a fool if I ignored the latter reality which exists in so many of our families and does not imply that couples are somehow devoid of a moral compass.

Synod motions are of little legal consequence ... they do not (thankfully) change the rules or canons of the church. But they take the pulse of a particular moment, and the optics of their acceptance or rejection are not insignificant... indeed they are potentially very damaging. And so it was that on Friday 10 May in Armagh we heard a long and candid debate about baptismal practice. There were many powerful speeches ... one that sticks in my memory came from a lay woman from this diocese who courageously revealed that she had been born out of wedlock in the shadowy world of 1950s Ireland, and that the administration of baptism to her in those very circumstances had in retrospect laid the graced foundation for a life of active discipleship. Others spoke of how baptism displays, whatever the circumstances, the infinite value and dignity of children in the eyes of God. The lay voice in the debate was particularly clear and positive. However (as the synod procedures permit) a vote by Orders was sought. The laity by a huge majority affirmed the principle of baptising regardless of marital status ... the clergy by admittedly a very small majority took the opposite view. And so the motion fell.

In all my years of bishoping, I have rarely if ever been so troubled by an event at the General Synod... and the voices of upset and anger that have reached me have been many. One of the reasons for this

undoubtedly is that the treatment of single mothers in Ireland was for years the symbol of all that was rotten and dishonest in our society. Just as society itself becomes more compassionate, the optics (not least as conveyed by the media) seem to be that the Church of Ireland wants to take a step back to a harsher world whose supposed righteousness was, to many, nauseating. We appear to many to be policing the grace and generosity of God and setting up false limits of our own.

I want to put on record that in my view May 10 was a sad day in the annals of the Church of Ireland. Perhaps the whole thing was a debate we did not need to have in the first place, but the damage has been done. It is all very well talking about Pioneering and ‘going to the edge’ in ministry : now the General Synod is perceived to have given a kick in the teeth to those who for decades symbolised the neglected edge of Irish society, namely single mothers. We may argue that this was not the intention of the debate, but we cannot deny the reality of its consequences. I feel deeply ashamed.

I can but restate the unchanged canonical position. We will continue to baptise, as we have always done, those who request it. We will prepare people carefully, but making self - righteous moral judgments is another matter. If circumstances arise (I find it hard to envisage this happening in this diocese) where baptism is withheld solely on account of the marital status of parents and an appeal is made to the bishop, I think you can readily discern from this letter what my position will be.

I would remind you too as I near a conclusion of what happens when a child is very sick, perhaps in a neo- natal unit, and baptism is requested. In such circumstances no questions are asked, the priority of grace prevails and baptism is immediately administered. For those of us who have baptised in such circumstances it is the most moving statement about the value of the vulnerable life before us. Thankfully most baptisms of infants do not happen in such circumstances, but emergency baptism is a reminder of how, when the proverbial chips are down, we do not ask questions that get in the way of grace.

My final memory is this, and I have mentioned it to many colleagues recently. Over thirty years ago when I was a university chaplain, I was asked by a couple who were part of the college community to solemnise their marriage and baptise their baby at the same service. Being young and inexperienced I sought the counsel of a wise priest. I’ll never forget his advice; I wish he could have been there to speak at the recent synod. ‘It’s good’ (he said) ‘ that they are getting married and of course do the two things at the same service. But do the baptism first, lest anyone think that access to God’s grace requires a ticket’.

Again, I express my sadness at having to write all of this and acknowledge the deep distress caused to many by what happened at the General Synod.

Michael Tuam Limerick and Killaloe

TIDINGS – NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

We are delighted to present the Summer 2024 edition of Tidings. We are most grateful to all our advertisers.

Tidings is distributed free within the Tuam, Killala and Achonry area, however should you wish to consider making a contribution towards the production costs, as our advertising only partially covers these, that would be greatly appreciated

If you are making a donation, please send a cheque to the Diocesan Administrator, Mrs. Heather Pope, 11 Ros Ard, Cappagh Road, Galway - payable to the United Dioceses of Tuam, Killala and Achonry Dioc Council No 1 a/c and write Tidings on the rear of the cheque. Or, alternatively via online banking using the bank account details below, with Tidings in the

notification section depending on how your bank does this. Thank you for your support.

wishing everyone a wonderful Summer 2024.
Canon Andrea & Heather

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

June 12th	7.30pm, Diocesan Council at McWilliam Park Hotel Claremorris
June 16th	5pm, Installation to the Chapter, Saint Mary's Cathedral, Tuam
June 8th	UDYC AGM Synod Hall Tuam, 3pm with light refreshments from 2.30pm, All Welcome
June 28th-02 Jul	UDYC Summer Madness, Portlengone Monastery Estate, Portlengone, Ballymena, Co. Antrim 14 plus years
July 21-26	UDYC Senior Summer Camp, Gurteen Agricultural College, Ballingarry, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary 13 plus (completed 1st year in Secondary School)
Aug 11- 16	UDYC Junior Summer Camp, Lissadell Youth Centre, Lissadell, Co. Sligo 10 plus years
Aug 28th	6pm, Diocesan Glebes & Property Committee. On Zoom
Aug 29th	6pm, Diocesan Finance committee. On Zoom
Sept 11th	7.30pm Diocesan Council, McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris
Sept 20-22	UDYC Taking A Leading Role- Part 2 Django's Hostel, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary. 16 plus years (participants from part 1)
Oct 04- 06	UDYC Senior Autumn Adventure Weekend. Muckross Youth Centre, Muckross, Killarney, Co. Kerry. 13 plus years (in Secondary School)
Oct 19th	10am-4.30pm, TLK Joint Diocesan Synod. Hotel Woodstock, Ennis
Oct 25-27th	United Diocesan Confirmation Follow Up Weekend. Birr Outdoor Education Centre, Roscrea Road, Birr, Co. Offaly. 2023 & 2024 Confirmation Candidates

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MOTHERS UNION REPORT



TLK Diocesan Mothers Union Gathering at Ballinasloe Christian Fellowship 25th May, 2024

World Elder Abuse Day

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day occurs on 15th June each year and is recognised as a United Nations Day by the General Assembly. The World Health Organisation estimates that almost 141 million people globally suffer from elder abuse. Elder abuse and neglect are one of the most underrepresented and underreported violations of human rights so it can be assumed that the real figure is much higher.

What is Elder Abuse?

The WHO defines “elder abuse” or “abuse of older people” as a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring within any relationship in which there is expectation of trust that causes harm or distress to an older person.



Statistically, one in six people, over the age of 60, in Ireland are victims of abuse. (WHO)

This is a truly damning indictment of how our society views and values older people. Sadly, the abuse of older people is not a new issue, but one that has now reached a critical threshold that can no longer be ignored, nor tolerated.

Examples of elder abuse include:

- Neglect and acts of omission
- Scams
- Domestic abuse
- Fraud
- Coercive control
- Financial abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

If you are or you know a person who is affected by this issue you can contact the HSE Information Line on 1800 700 700, Monday to Saturday, 8am to 8pm. The HSE booklet, Open Your Eyes: Protect yourself from Elder abuse developed primarily for older people to assist them to plan safely for their future contains information that family members, friends, neighbours, carers and the general public may find useful. Download at 2024 HSE protect yourself from Elder Abuse.pdf. Further information can be found at All you need to know about Elder Abuse | Age Action

We can create and influence policy that changes lives and ways of thinking by bringing this to the attention of politicians on the doorstep. Check in with an elder person today.... Be aware of Elder Abuse.....

A Prayer for an end to Elder Abuse:

On this special weekend of prayer and action for elder justice, we pray for the courage and wisdom, humility and grace, to act with justice. We ask to become more aware. We pray for the strength to hear those whose voices are silenced. We pray for the courage to speak out against abuse of older adults.

We pray for the moral conviction to call elder abuse a sin.

Prompt us not to look away, remind us not to forget, provoke us to action Until every older adult is respected, Until every older adult receives the loving care they deserve,

May we work to end elder abuse, May we work to end all forms of abuse, May abuse find no place in our families or communities, May abuse find no place in our hearts, For there is no excuse for abuse.

(Source: Adapted from Jon Humphries)

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GENERAL SYNOD 2024

This year the Church of Ireland General Synod was held in the Armagh City Hotel in Armagh. This was the first meeting of the General Synod to take place in the city since 2018 and met in person on 10th and 11th of May and continued with online meetings on the evenings of Tuesday 14th May and Thursday 16th May. Opening the synod the Church of Ireland's Primate of All Ireland, Archbishop John McDowell, spoke on how members of the Church can live out a life of reconciliation.

"We do not live in a world that has the appearance of being reconciled and at peace in any sense," he remarked. "There are many parts of the globe, as we sit here today, where people experience life as a perpetual night; a black darkness even at the midday." Reconciliation requires love, in the sense of "our goodwill and benevolence towards our neighbours" and being "what binds people together against hatred and dishonesty."

Speaking on the issue of migration, Archbishop McDowell asserted that Ireland is not 'full'. "Ireland, North and South, has been right to welcome migrants and asylum seekers. In one sense, such incomers made Ireland catholic – as in universal and diverse – in a way we hadn't been before," he stated. "Perhaps not enough thought was given to how to integrate those newcomers and their needs into society, and what that means for social and physical infrastructure. That oversight does not excuse us from our responsibility to seek justice for our neighbour. Political failures cannot disapply the law of love. If the well-being of our neighbour (wherever they may have come from) is becoming more precarious, then we are called through the law of love to work even harder for justice."



DCO Stephen Fletcher interviews Revd Arsene

The business of the first day then commenced with a number of Bills and Motions being presented to Synod. These were mainly of an administrative nature to do with electing members of committees and changes to pension arrangements, together with slight



Bishop Michael Burrows takes the Chair's seat at General Synod.jpg



Dr Rita Kelly and the Revd Canon Andrea Wills



Rev Dr Leonard Madden and Mr Edward Hardy at General Synod

amendments to the Book of Common Prayer to allow the Second Sunday of November to be recognised as Remembrance Sunday.

There were also Bills covering administrative matters, such as amending the constitution to clarify who can stand for members of Diocesan Synod and aligning the retirement ages of Archdeacons and Clergy were presented to Synod. Bill No 4 was to recognise and authorise the licensing of clergy or laity as Pioneer Ministers and the establishment of a Pioneer Ministry at diocesan and parochial level. Bill No 7 was to change the terminology relating to how bills are processed under Standing Orders and suggested changes to Standing orders to make the process easier to understand and thus encourage greater participation of members. These Bills were all subsequently passed.

There was also a motion, proposed by lay General Member, Prof Patricia Barker of Dublin and Glendalough diocese, which called for infants to be baptised "irrespective of the marital status of the parents". However, before her proposal was heard at General Synod a petition was presented in advance by seven clergy which meant that, instead of the motion being put to a general vote, it would be "by orders", with laity and clergy voting separately and requiring a majority of each for it to be passed.



Dr Catherine Emerson, Mrs Grainne Walsh, Mrs Olive Maher and Revd Carole Reynolds at General Synod

In the General Synod vote, 69 clergy were in favour with 72 against, while of lay delegates 144 were in favour with 83 against. Due to clergy rejection, the motion fell. Speaking after the vote in a sermon at St Mary's Cathedral Limerick Bishop Michael said, "The optics of such an event are appalling and shameful and we have sent out a message to the world in an Ireland which should know, God knows, enough about the awful treatment of single mothers in the past," said Bishop Burrows. It is important that to point out that, as Bishop Michael has pointed out, the Canonical position of the church on the matter of baptism is completely unchanged.

You can read Bishop Michaels response to the defeat of this motion elsewhere in this magazine. The proposer of the motion, Prof Patricia thought it would be "a wonderful question" to ask relevant clergy what they would do if confronted with Mary, the unmarried mother of Jesus whose father was not even her betrothed, Joseph.

On the second day there was a report from the

Liturgical Advisory Committee who stated that extensive work had been carried out on prayers for use by the 18–35 year old age group over the last two years which had been done in consultation with third level chaplains and much material had been drafted. The also reported that the full set of revised Collects for years A, B and C had now been collated into one publication and was now available to buy.

The committee also reported that both the pew and full music edition of the Church Hymnal had been reprinted. The melody edition was not being reprinted as there was no demand for this. The rising costs of reprinting short print runs means that in the future the committee may face the question of a complete revision of the hymnals and the production of a sixth edition as a more cost-effective route than reprinting the current book.

Archbishop John McDowell closed the Synod on the evening of Thursday 16th and observed that ending a Synod online was very different to ending an in-person Synod. He thanked the many people behind the scenes who had supported the work of synod administratively and technically and thanked the staff of the Synod Department for all their work on what he described as a seven- or eight-day Synod between the in person and online meetings. Canon Gillian Wharton thanked Archbishop McDowell for his chairing of Synod and Bishop Burrows for navigating the many Bills. Archbishop McDowell concluded with the Collect for Pentecost.

As ever, apart from the important formal business, the General Synod is an opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues who might have only previously been seen online. Also, it is a chance for members to visit stands of charities supported by the church as well as the many organisations working within the Church of Ireland and find out more about their work. **Stephen Fletcher May 2024**





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New staff member for Church of Ireland Youth Department

NEW STAFF MEMBER FOR CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT

The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) is pleased to announce the appointment of a new member of staff, Mr Luke Hawkins.

that seeks to equip, engage and empower youth ministry at all levels."

Luke will serve as the CIYD Youth Ministry Development Officer (Southern Region). A former teacher, Luke has most recently been serving in Meath and Kildare Diocese as Diocesan Youth Officer and Chaplain at Wilson's Hospital School, Mullingar. His role, amongst other things, is to support existing and new youth ministries in the Dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh; Meath and Kildare; Dublin and Glendalough; Cashel, Ferns and Ossory; Cork, Cloyne and Ross; and Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe.

For more information about the work of the Church of Ireland Youth Department is available at www.ciyd.org and through its social media channels.



Speaking of the new appointment, CIYD's President, Bishop Pat Storey, said: "Luke will bring experience and enthusiasm to this key role. We look forward to him settling in and developing new initiatives and opportunities for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom together. We very much hope that dioceses across the Church will know that CIYD is a resource



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BALLINA CHURCHES TOGETHER

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Ballina Churches Together – In Appreciation

By the time you read this article, the Ballina Churches Together project will have drawn to its end. There is much to celebrate and be thankful for. The past six years has been an amazing journey for me ... filled with happy memories of people and places. I have enjoyed living in the town of Ballina and discovered so many beautiful places along this part of the Wild Atlantic Way. I met many wonderful people on the journey and made friends for life!

I wish to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Bishop Patrick Rooke, Bishop John Fleming, Bishop Michael Burrows and Church Army for the past eight years of partnership together. Thank you for your vision and leadership in steering this pioneering project.

Over the past six years, the project was not without its challenges and difficulties, but it really was the 'stuff' of miracles! Here was a project in a small town on the northwest coast of Mayo ... and in the providence of God ... the finances kept coming! In short - it was miraculous. To God be the glory.

When I came to Ballina six years ago, we had the Big Blue Bus and a team of volunteers. Saturday and Sunday evening were spent in Tesco's car park. On those nights many teenagers from various housing estates were on the streets of Ballina. They had



nowhere to hang-out, so they came to the bus for a little bit of warmth and hot chocolate. Today, when I meet those young adults ... they remember with fondness the 'Big Blue Bus days' and the craic we had. Others who frequented the bus were men and women who lived alone in isolation - struggling with loneliness, mental-health issues and addictions. They came for the chat, copious cups of tea and the joyful singalongs. We also took the bus to Mill View and Greenhills estates for Children's Clubs. Here the children climbed on board to enjoy singing, bible storytelling, games, arts and crafts.



During this time, we were invited by Joanne Cullen to run an Alpha Course at St. Mary's Convent School, for adults. This proved to be a very insightful experience. The group included people from various church denominations, who gathered each week for prayer, singing, a shared meal, the Alpha video series, followed by discussions on the various topics. The wonderful thing was – that everyone had a voice ... free to share their thoughts and opinions. Friendships were made and faith was explored.

Then came the Covid era ... Lock downs, social distancing and even more isolation in society. A time for quick pivots and the ability to respond and adapt to an ever-changing situation in society. Ministry during this season included –



pastoral care to the elderly, phone calls and care packages for carers and families. We also gave gift bags to the children of Mill View and Greenhills estates along with other children from families in the Irish Traveller community. At Christmas time 2021, we decided to purchase forty copies of the Jesus Storybook Bible. Every story whispers His name. Thanks to the generosity of doners (up to 1000 euros!) we were able to purchase these and many other resources to give away. Online we continued with Bible studies, Lectio Divina and prayer.

It was during this period - I learnt another valuable lesson - Ditch the car ... and walk everywhere! I discovered the value of what Henri Nouwen describes as a 'Ministry of Presence'. He wrote – *"More and more the desire grows in me, simply to walk around and greet people, to enter their homes, sit on their doorsteps, play ball, throw water and be known as someone who wants to live with them. It is a privilege to practice this simple ministry of presence"*.

During covid, going for a take-away tea, became one of life's simple pleasures. Through being on the streets, we came to know many more people, we listened to their stories and helped them to laugh and smile through difficult times. Some people we met randomly and others regularly. Street ministry requires us to go where people are and to engage with people through everyday encounters, just as Jesus did when he went through all the towns and villages. He went, he saw, he was moved with compassion at the plight of the people, and he ministered to them. (Matt 9)

Another facet of our work on the streets during covid was - Chalk Art. Using the pavement as a canvas we wrote scriptures, poetry and inspiring messages of hope for those who loved to walk by the river Moy. A lady called Claire approached me one day as I was on my knees writing with chalk and we began a conversation. Claire had been nowhere near a church for the previous 50 years, she was sceptical of the church, but God was at work in her life. We began a journey together.



The truth is - that we find ourselves in a postmodern, post Christendom, post-pandemic reality. We need to realise that the church is no longer in favour with the culture, we are at the fringes at best and regarded with suspicion and toxicity at worst. And yet there is a real hunger in the human heart for God ... for transcendence.

How should we express our voice and what should that look like?

What should our values system look like?

- Do not be afraid to take a stand in the public square.
- Adopt a posture of humility.
- Journey with people – Invite people - “Come and you will see”.
- Build trust.
- Serve the community.
- Do Good ... Jesus went about doing good, especially to those on the margins of society.
- Care about justice
- Build Community



Postmodernists and sceptics may not trust Christians ... but perhaps the best approach is to open their hearts to love first. It takes time to build trust as we journey with people. As we emerged from covid, there was once again an opportunity to be creative in mission and ministry. Social distancing and lock downs had led to greater isolation. How could we build a community post-covid?



One approach was to invite people to my home and this weekly meeting became known as the ‘The Gathering’. Beginning with ‘Round Table Discussions’ on various topics, we have journeyed together using the following DVD series - the Alpha Course, ‘Hope Explored’, ‘People Who Knew Jesus’ and the ‘24/7 Prayer Lectio Divina Course’. Through meeting together, friendships have grown and deepened, and people have also grown on their faith journeys. Another approach was gathering people for a retreat. What could be a better antidote after such a difficult time for people but to gather at a beautiful place, surrounded by God’s creation for a reflective day, filled with all the elements that give people joy. And so, we began what became series of ten RETREATS. These retreats were held at Holy Hill Hermitage Skreen, at Ballycastle and at Enniscoe House.

What are the important elements of these retreats?

- Gathering people in Community
- Journeying Together in Faith
- Inviting people to bring their gifts – What is it that you have in your hand? What are your gifts?

- Involve everyone, no matter where they are on their faith journey.
- Include everyone in the decision-making process.
- Incorporate the Arts – Music and Singing,
- Visual Arts – Painting, Photography, Needlecraft
- The spoken word – Poetry.
- What is it that makes your soul sing?
- What is it that gives you joy?
- Share stories – they resonate with people.
- Share a meal together – ‘Bring and Share’.
- Laugh a lot - Laughter is good for the Soul.

What other highlights were there?

Alpha Course at St. Mary’s Secondary School – 70 Transition Year students - September 2023

The Community ‘Light Party’ – Halloween 2023 – when over 30 children came from the Traveller Community, Greenhills Estate along with Muslim and immigrant families.

Edenderry Christian Endeavour Team in partnership with Ballina Presbyterian Church – a team of 20 young people who helped us facilitate Childrens Summer

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Clubs in the local Leisure Centre and in Mill View and Greenhills Housing Estates - July '23

Carols by Candlelight Christmas '23 from which a musical group/praise group has been developed by Donncha, along with Richard, Rosemonde, Robson, Aidan, Edward and Hosanna. In February we held an 'Evening of Favourite Hymns and Songs of Worship' at the Craoibhin Centre Ballina and over 40 people attended. Special guests on the night were members of the Ukrainian community.

St. Vincent de Paul – Volunteering in the Charity Shop, Food Bank, Assessing Grants for Third Level Students along with Weekly Visits to those in need. The SVP in Ballina is simply excellent!

Pastoral Visits ... Care for the elderly (medical appointments) and those battling mental health problems and addictions.

All this work was possible - thanks to Ballina Churches Together in partnership with Church Army who are committed to sharing the Christian faith through words and deeds, and for everyone everywhere to encounter GOD'S LOVE ... The story continues and we are all part of it!

Marian Edwards, Church Army Evangelist
May 2024

APPOINTMENT OF MR DAMIAN SHORTEN AS SAFEGUARDING COMPLIANCE OFFICER

"The appointment of Mr Damian Shorten as our TLK Safeguarding compliance officer brings me a measure of pleasure, confidence and relief. Pleasure because we look forward to his company and wisdom as part of the diocesan staff team and realise him to be someone who knows our context well from his firm roots in the Limerick area. Confidence because he brings with him a track record in work of this type, along with significant experience as a pastor and educator. Relief because our excellent volunteer overseers in the area of safeguarding really need a professional member of the diocesan staff to support them, and to ensure that in every place we meet all today's rightly extensive requirements. In this vital aspect of the church's work there should be no chinks in our armour or failures in our duty of care. Damian will be clear in his expectations of us, but also encouraging and creative when it comes to helping parishes deliver the safest possible environment for fruitful ministry with children and vulnerable persons."

Michael, Tuam Limerick & Killaloe

Damian has provided this short Bio by way of introduction:-

"I am married to Amy and we have two children, Arthur (who is 6) and Verity (who is 3). Though living, working, and ministering in the Diocese of Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh since 2015, my home parish is Rathkeale in the Diocese of Limerick. I trained as a second-level teacher and, after graduation, worked for three years in Sligo Grammar School. Having had extensive involvement in youth & children's ministry

since my teenage years (including a period as Chairperson of the United Diocesan Youth Council of Limerick & Killaloe), I was employed as Diocesan Youth & Children's Coordinator for Elphin & Ardagh from 2018 to 2022. I have been (since 2016) and continue to serve in the Riverstown Group of Parishes in Co. Sligo as a Diocesan Reader with day-to-day liturgical and pastoral responsibilities. A long-term enthusiasm of mine is the flourishing of the Church of Ireland in the western part of the island. Therefore, I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to serve the Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe (TLK) in a part-time capacity as Safeguarding Compliance Officer.

I know firsthand from this experience the challenges there are in complying with safeguarding policies, along with all the other demands at parish and diocesan level. I hope to help us all to see safeguarding as not just another burden, but more and more as something to be embraced as an essential part of our discipleship and ministry. I look forward to meeting many of you – indeed, to reconnecting with many of you! – and working together with you over the coming years to achieve the highest standards of care and safety for all those God brings in contact with the Church. Please pray for me as I begin this role, as I will pray for all those across TLK."



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HISTORIC INSTITUTION AT TUAM

The Installation of the Revd Diane Matchett as Dean of Tuam and Incumbent of the Tuam and Omey Group of Parishes took place at the Cathedral Church of St Mary, Tuam on the Second Sunday of Epiphany, the 14th January 2024.



The choir from the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The service was conducted by the Rt Revd Michael Burrows with readings from 1 Samuel 3:1-10, Psalm 139; 1-5, 12-18 and Revelation 5: 1-10. The Gospel of the Epiphany, Matthew 2: 1-12, was read by Revd Suzanne Cousins. We were joined by the choir of the Catholic Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Tuam, led by Dr Mark Keane. The Sermon was delivered by the Revd Canon Paul Hoey the Rector of Faughanvale, in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. Canon Paul took his themes from the Epiphany Gospel reading likening the journey of the Magi and their gifts to the journey of Diane and Mark and the gifts she brings to the parishes.



Alannah Robins, Omey Union, Organist for the Institution



Mr John Nethaway and Mr Mike Mahon



Guests enjoying tea in the Synod Hall



The New Dean, Bishop and Friends gather at St Marys Cathedral Tuam

Canon Paul prayed for discernment to see what God is doing and see best how to join in. He reminded everyone that the church is not just a club for like minded people but should continually push to embrace new ideas and people. This is something he says Diane does well, her heart lies in coming alongside people who think they don't fit in and reaching out to people on the edge of things and simply loving them into the embrace of God's love.



Dr Rachel Pike and Mr Bill Fennell



The Ven John Godfrey and Mr Steve Brickenden

The parishes should not focus on internal things but should allow and encourage Diane to look outside. Lastly Canon Paul prayed for the gift of Courage for Diane. The tide is turning against the church he warned, and he prayed for courage and daring to keep worshipping, keep serving and to keep praying that God will support and encourage new things in Ireland today. Then there followed the formal declarations and Institution of Diane as Dean of Tuam by Bishop Michael. After the Prayers of the People there were words of welcome from Prof Paul Johnston on behalf of the parishes in the Tuam and Omey Group. He expressed relief, hope, joy and gratitude that Diane, Mark and Casper had arrived safe and sound.

Looking back to the 6th century, Jarlath founded the monastic settlement in Tuam. Professor Paul related the story that as Saint Jarlath reached his declining years, he wanted to retire but God, through Brendan, told him that he could retire but he should stop wherever the wheels of his wagon broke. History tells us that a wheel broke as Jarlath tried to leave Tuam. That broken wheel features on the town's crest. Professor Paul hoped that a broken wheel won't be needed to keep Diane in these parishes.

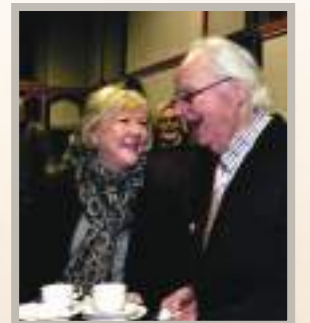
Bishop Michael then welcomed local leaders of other denominations. The Most Reverend Francis Duffy, the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, warmly welcomed Diane on behalf of the archdiocese and looked forward to working with her. The Archbishop explained that though Diane was a blow in like him he assured her of a very warm welcome. The Archbishop understood that Diane was passionate about people and passionate about environmental issues, she shared with Pope Francis. All stem from love of God. Archbishop Duffy welcomed Diane on behalf of people he serves. Helen

Freeburn spoke on behalf of the Methodist and Presbyterian communities in Galway and said it was truly wonderful for her to be in Tuam Cathedral welcoming Diane. She brought warm and loving greetings from the United Methodist and Presbyterian church in Galway. Helen quoted two verses from scripture. From Deuteronomy 31:6 & 8 'Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.' and from Genesis 15, 'I am your shield and your strength'.

Bishop Michael then introduced civic and political leaders and highlighted how we pray for politicians in our services, and both share the word 'minister.' Eamon O'Cuiv, TD for the Galway West constituency, welcomed Diane, Mark and Casper and explained that he was a near neighbour of theirs and he looked forward to getting to know her in the years to come. He wished her a long and worthy ministry.



Prof Paul Johnston & Ms Joanne Wright in the Synod Hall



Sean Canney, TD for the Galway East constituency, then welcomed Diane to Tuam in the historic setting of St Mary's Cathedral. It was a special occasion for the people of Tuam. He looked forward to working with Diane and didn't want them to be strangers. He looked forward to meeting Mark and Casper and working together with Diane to do things to improve people's lives.

Bishop Michael reminded everyone that we were on the cusp of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and thanked the choir from the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary for joining us in worship.

Bishop Michael also thanked all those who had worked behind the scenes to organise the day. He mentioned particularly Bill Fennell working to coordinate all the participants and thanked Professor Paul Johnston for his work project managing the refurbishment of the Deanery in Cong ready for Diane to move in. After the final blessing the congregation were invited to go into the Synod Hall for refreshments and conversation.

Stephen Fletcher,
Diocesan Communications Officer

TLK DIOCESAN ARMS LAUNCHED

History was made in the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe in March this year with the launch of the new Diocesan Arms, further cementing the amalgamation of the former Dioceses of Tuam, Killala & Achonry and Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfert. The Arms, commissioned by Bishop Michael Burrows were beautifully presented by the Chief Herald of Ireland and launched officially at the Tuam and Limerick & Killaloe Diocesan Council meetings. The Arms now encompass the eleven dioceses across TLK which now fall under the care of Bishop Michael. Our thanks to the Chief Herald's Office for producing this stunning document, to Dr Susan Hood of the RCB Library for her advice and care throughout the process and to Kate Williams of the RCB Finance Dept for her assistance.

The accompanying text which appears on the document as *Gaeilge* and in *English* can be found below:-

To all to whom these Presents shall come I, Colette O'Flaherty, Chief Herald of Ireland, send Greeting. Whereas petition hath been made unto me by the Right Reverend, Michael Andrew James Burrows, Bishop of the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe, setting forth that certain Armorial Ensigns long used and borne by the several Dioceses of Tuam, Killala, Achonry, Limerick and Emly, Ardfert, Aghadoe, Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert and Kilmacduagh do not appear to have been recorded in my Office as pertaining unto the present United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe and that he is desirous that the said arms might now be duly marshalled and Confirmed unto the said United Dioceses with such differences as I might find appropriate and that the said differenced arms may be assigned by lawful authority unto the said United Dioceses such as without injury or prejudice to any other the United Dioceses aforesaid may

forever bear and advance and praying that I would confirm, grant and assign unto the said United Dioceses such Armorial Ensigns as aforesaid and that the Armorial Ensigns so granted and assigned may be duly ratified and recorded in the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland to the end that the Officers of Arms there and all others upon occasion may take full notice and have knowledge thereof.

Now I, the said Chief Herald of Ireland, having taken this matter into consideration and enquired into the circumstances am pleased to comply with the said petition and by virtue of the power vested in me in that behalf do by these Presents confirm, grant and assign unto the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe the Arms following, that is to say: 1st for Tuam Azure beneath three Gothic arches conjoined as many figures Or their faces, hands and feet Proper in the middle the Blessed Virgin holding upon the sinister arm the Child their heads circled in glory on her dexter side a bishop pontifically vested his dexter hand raised in benediction the sinister hand holding a crozier bend sinister wise and on her sinister side an angel the head circled of the second the dexter forearm elevated and beneath the sinister arm a lamb all of the last 2nd for Limerick and Emly Azure in the dexter chief the head of a pastoral staff in the sinister a mitre and in base two keys addorsed in saltire wards to the chief and pointed downwards all Or 3rd for Killaloe Argent between four trefoils slipped Vert a cross Gules on a chief Azure a key fesswise ward to the dexter and downwards Or 4th for Killala Gules a pastoral staff debriused by an open book the leaves Proper bound Or 5th for Clonfert Gules two pastoral staffs addorsed in saltire Or 6th for Kilfenora Argent a rose Gules barbed Vert seeded Or on a chief Sable three mullets of the last 7th for Ardfert and Aghadoe Azure two keys in saltire wards to the chief

and pointed downwards surmounted of a pastoral staff Or 8th for Achonry Argent between four trefoils slipped Vert a pastoral staff Gules surmounted of an open book the leaves Proper bound Azure 9th for Kilmacduagh Gules a cross Argent surmounted of two pastoral staffs addorsed in saltire Or suppressed of a mitre of the second garnished of the last the whole depicted in the margin hereof.

To have and to hold the said Arms unto the said United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe and to the successors in law forever of the said United Dioceses and the same to bear, use, shew, set forth and advance in shield or banner or otherwise according to the Laws of Arms and the practice of this Office and without the let, hindrance, molestation, interruption, controlment or challenge of any manner of person or persons whatsoever, excepting always the Authority of this Office.
Chief Herald of Ireland



Dr Susan Hood, RCB Library presents the Arms to Bishop Burrows

Chug gach aon a shroichfidh an scríbhinn seo, cuirim, Colette O'Flaherty, Príomh-Aralt na hÉireann, Beannacht.

De bhrí go ndearna an Fíor-Oirmhinneach Michael Andrew James Burrows, Easpag Deoisí Aontaithe Thuama, Luimnigh agus Chill Dalua iarratas ormsa á rá nár cláraíodh i m'Óifig, de réir dealraimh, Síne Armais áirithe, in úsáid le fada agus iompartha ag na Deoisí ar leith Thuama, Chill Ala, Achadh Conaire, Luimnigh agus Imligh, Ard Fhearta, Achadh Deo, Chill Dalua, Chill Fhionnúrach, Chluain Fearta agus Chill Mhic Dhuach, mar Síne ármáis a bhaineann le Deoisí Aontaithe reatha Thuama, Luimnigh agus Chill Dalua, agus gur mian leis go ndéanfar na Síne Armais áirithe a theachtadh agus a shannadh do na Deoisí Aontaithe sin, le pé deachaire de réir mar is cuí domsa, agus go cuí go sanntar an t-armas deachraithe do na Deoisí Aontaithe sin le húdaráis dleathach i gcaoi is go bhféadfaidh na Deoisí Aontaithe réamhluaite na Síne Armais sin a iompar agus a fhoilsiú go deo gan dochar ná díobháil d'aon duine eile agus á

impí go ndeonóinn agus go sannfainn do na Deoisí Aontaithe sin na Síne Armais sin mar a dúradh agus go ndéanfar na Síne Armais deonaithe agus sannaithe sin a dhaingniú agus a chur ar breacadh in Oifig Phríomh-Aralt na hÉireann chun go dtabharfaidh na hOifigigh Armas ansin agus gach aon eile mar is gá dá n-úidh go hiomlán agus go mbeidh eolas acu orthu.

Anois, tar éis breithniú á dhéanamh agam ar an iarratas sin agus na cúinsí a fhiosrú is maith liomsa, Príomh-Aralt sin na hÉireann, géilleadh don iarratas sin agus de thairbhe an údaráis atá dílisithe domsa chuige sin leis an Scríbhinn seo, deonaím agus sannaim do Dheoisí Aontaithe Thuama, Luimnigh agus Chill Dalua an t-Armas seo leanas, eadhon, sé sin a rá: Iú do Thuaim :- Gorm faoi trí áirsí Gotacha ceangailte as a chéile an oiread sin iomhánna Órga a n-aghaidheanna a lámhá agus a gcosa Dualdaite sa lár an Mhaighdean Bheannaithe in a lámh chlé an Leanbh a gcinn ciorclaithe go niamhrach ar a taobh dheis easpag gléasta go pontáifeach a lámh dheas ardaite le beannacht bachall fiarthar faoi chlé ina lámh tuathal agus ar a taobh chlé aingeal an cloigeann ciorclaithe den dara lí an chuile dheas ardaite agus faoin lámh chlé uan den lí deireanach 2ú do Luimneach agus Imleach :- Gorm thuas ar dheis ceann bachaille ar clé mítear thíos dhá eochair cúl le cúl ar dul sailtire na heanga thuas dírithe anuas Órga uilig 3ú do Chill Dalua :- Airgidí idir ceithre trídhuillí an gas uaine cros Dearg sa bharr Gorm eochair cothrománach an eanga deiseal agus Órga anuas 4ú do Chill Ala :- Dearg caimín Órga leabhar ar oscailt á urú na leathanaigh Dualdaite ceangailte den dara lí 5ú do Chluain Fearta :- Gorm dhá chaimíní cúl le cúl ceannroinnte Órga 6ú do Chill Fhionnúrach :- Airgidí rós Deargna seipil Uaine na síolta Órgasa bharr Dubh trí réalta den lí deireanach 7ú do Ard Fhearta agus Achadh Deo :- Gorm dhá eochair ar dul sailtirena heanga thuas dírithe anuas caimín Órga anuas air 8ú do Achadh Conaire :- Airgidí idir ceithre triufanna na gais uaine caimín Dearg anuas air leabhar as oscailt na duilleoga Dualdaite ceangailte Gorm 9ú do Chill Mhic Dhuach :- Dubh cros Airgidí anuas air dhá chaimíní cúl le cúl crannroinnte Órga ceite ag mítear den dara lí gléasta den lí deireanach a iomlán sin deartha go soiléir ar a imeall seo.

Go sealbhóidh agus go dteachtfaidh na Deoisí Aontaithe Thuama, Luimnigh agus Chill Dalua sin agus comharbaí buan sa dlí na nDeoisí Aontaithe sin an t-Armas sin go deo agus é á iompar, á úsáid, á thaispeáint, á lua agus á fhoilsiú ar sciath nó ar mheirge nó eile agus cách ag comhlíonadh a dheachra díre dílse de réir Dílthe an Armais agus Nós na hOifige seo, gan cosc, gan bac, gan cur isteach, gan coiscríú, gan smacht, gan caidéis ó dhuine ná ó dhaoine ar bith seachas i gcónaí Udarás na hOifige seo. Dá fhianaise sin scríobh mé m'Ainm agus mo Theideal leis seo agus ghreamaigh mé Séala m'Óifige de arna dhátú an lá seo de 2023 PRÍOMH-ARALT NA hÉIREANN

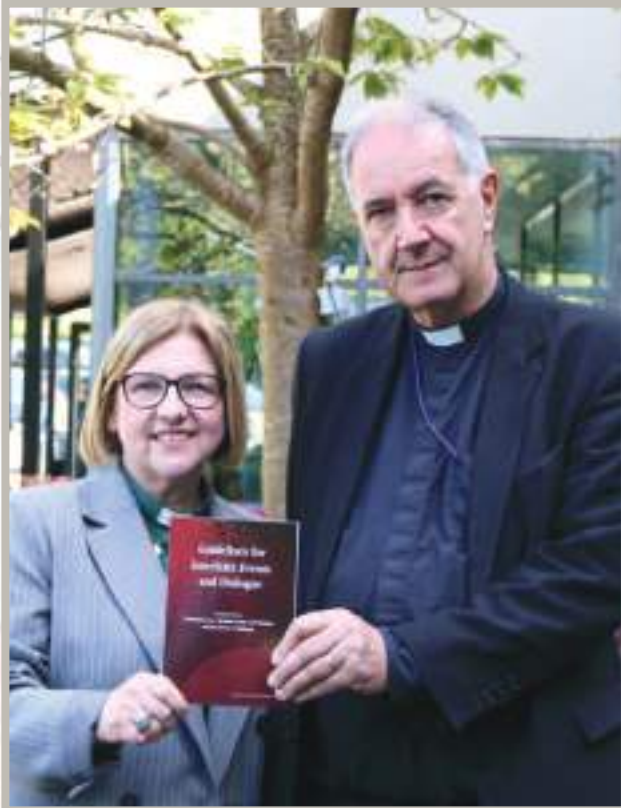
Information on the work of the Chief Herald's Office, part of the National Library of Ireland can be found here:- <https://www.nli.ie/office-chief-herald>



INTER FAITH MATTERS.... IT REALLY DOES!

Launch of refreshed guidelines, for parishes and individuals, for Inter Faith Events and Dialogue

I wonder how confident you feel when it comes to mixing and conversing with people of faiths other than the Christian faith, in everyday life – in the workplace, in school, shops, on the street, town or village, and elsewhere, for example, when travelling?



Rev Suzanne Cousins, convenor of the Inter Faith Working Group, with the Rt Revd Michael Burrows, +TLK, pictured during General Synod 2024 in Armagh.

The aim of Church of Ireland's Guidelines for Interfaith Dialogue and Events which was written in 2007 and recently updated (2024), is to begin to equip and inspire us – COI people and others – to engage with a little more insight and confidence, when it comes to interfaith encounters, formal and informal. This, in an Ireland (north and south) which is markedly and increasingly diverse.

Bishop Michael, writing as Chair of the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue, commenting at the launch of the booklet, says: "Few of us in ministry today can avoid the challenge, the questions, the opportunities and the joys which inter-faith engagement can offer. Some will approach the matter nervously, others with

enthusiasm, and undoubtedly it is an area where our own theological perspectives can be somewhat varied. But upon certain things we can and should agree ... and these principles are rooted in sound concepts such as respect, hospitality, graciousness and attentiveness." (See press release on the Church of Ireland website ireland.anglican.org under Refreshed Guidelines for Interfaith Events.

The refreshed 20-page booklet was prepared by the Church of Ireland Inter-Faith Working Group for the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue ('CCUD'), and approved by the latter and the House of Bishops. It is commended as concise, accessible, and interesting! For example, it offers guidance for occasions when we are invited to participate with people of other faiths and their leaders in public events of local or national importance. It offers some practical guidance in relation to marriage, baptism, funerals, festivals, education, special services, and community events.

Guidelines for Interfaith Events and Dialogue is published by Church of Ireland Publishing and available to download free-of-charge as a pdf from the Church of Ireland website at this link: <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/resources/268/inter-faith-guidelines>.

Alternatively, you can order a hard copy through the COI's online Bookstore (<https://store.ireland.anglican.org/store>).

If you would like to know more about what's going on in the area of Inter Faith and Inter Religious dialogue and events in the Church of Ireland, you can contact the appointed Diocesan Inter-Faith Representative, Revd Alistair Doyle (Curate, St Nicholas', Galway).

Suzanne Cousins
20 May 2024



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK (12-18 MAY 2024)

Refusing to be beaten: overcoming violence and homelessness to run a successful business



Aline with three of her children in front of their new house during construction. Credit: Christian Aid/Armstrong Too

Aline Nibogora is 35 and lives in the small East African country of Burundi. She was married young and when she was 14, she gave birth to the first of her six children. Her husband was violent and beat her regularly. One day, it got so bad that she fled. Forced to leave her children behind, Aline wandered the streets trying to stay close by, asking anyone for a place to sleep. "Those who showed me kindness would let me stay for two or three days, but it was difficult," Aline explained. "People would insult me and treat me with contempt. They forgot I was a human being. It filled me with sorrow."



With the profits she made selling her avocados and peanuts, Aline bought a bicycle to transport her goods further afield. Credit: Christian Aid/Ndabayisaba Epitace

In a patriarchal society where men dominate in almost every aspect, life is particularly challenging for women. But Aline found the strength and determination to push back against the injustices she was facing. She went to a three-day workshop where Christian Aid funded trainers taught people about village savings and loans associations.

"They restored in me a sense of hope and energy to take on initiatives. From then on, I started working hard, so I would not be dependent on anyone." With a small start-up loan, Aline began trading avocados and peanuts locally. With her profits, she bought a bicycle to transport greater quantities of goods to markets further afield. Aline is now a grocery wholesaler. She's been reunited with three of her sons and lives on her own plot of land in a village in Kayogoro, Makamba Province. She is planning to expand the business and is building a home for her family in the hope she'll one day have all her children with her.

"I bought some solar panels," Aline added. "We now have electricity and the children can see to do their homework in the evenings. There's a shortage of food at the moment but I'm doing what I can to get by until it's time to harvest. Aline continued: "I enjoy spending time with my children, who are my favourite people in the world. We make plans for the future and we pray together. We are still alive thanks to God's grace. God comforts you through troubled times and gives you hope for a better future." Aline is now the chairperson of her village savings and loans association and has helped 25 other families.

Aline says the support of Christian Aid has made the whole community feel comforted and empowered. "We can see positive and significant changes in our lives. I really thank you for that from the bottom of my heart." This Christian Aid Week, your donations can help families like Aline's to escape the trap of poverty and fulfil their ambitions. For more information and to donate, please visit caweek.ie or telephone 028 9064 8133 (Belfast) or 01 496 7040 (Dublin).

VOCATIONS:

Vocation means what you are called by God to be and do. For some, this is a specific calling to ministry.

For others, it can mean serving God through faithful discipleship in everyday life. God calls each of us to different tasks.

He gave some to be 'apostles, some to be prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and some teachers.' Ephesians 4: 11.

Vocation isn't just about being ordained – ordination is not for everyone. Indeed, many of the Church's ministers are not ordained. Youth and children's ministers, evangelists, readers and many chaplains are generally not ordained, and are collectively known as lay ministers who serve alongside the ordained.

While the Church is keen to foster vocations to the ordained ministry, there are many ways in which to serve the Church.

If you are wondering what God wants you to do with your life and are keen to explore further the various stages in discerning your call, you will find it helpful to speak with your Rector or local Diocesan Director of

Ordinands. They can encourage you, as you prayerfully discern what area of ministry God is calling you to.

'Gracious God,
You have called me to life and gifted me in many ways.
Through Baptism You have sent me to continue the
mission of Jesus by sharing my love with others.
Strengthen me to respond to Your call each day.
Help me to become all You desire of me.
Inspire me to make a difference in others' lives.
Lead me to choose the way of life
You have planned for me.
Open the hearts of all to listen to Your call.
Fill all with Your Holy Spirit that we may have listening
hearts and the courage to respond to You.
I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.'

More information is available at
<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/vocations>
TLK's Diocesan Director of Ordinands is the
Rev Canon Liz Beasley
Ph 0987 7199750
or email canonlizb@gmail.com



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INSTALLATION OF DEAN OF TUAM TO CHAPTER OF ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL LIMERICK.



On the 3rd March 2024, the Third Sunday of Lent, during Choral Evensong in St. Mary's Cathedral Limerick, the Very Revd Canon Diane Matchett, Dean of Tuam, was installed as the Prebend of Athnett.

Bishop Michael Burrows, the Bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe, is the Ordinary of the Cathedral - that is the person who has the final authority over it. The Bishop has the right of appointment to the Deaneries, Dignities and Prebends (or Canonries).

The Bishop's mandate was presented and read to the Dean of Limerick by the Diocesan Registrar Ms Raylene Downs. The Dean of Limerick then led the Dean of Tuam to her stall as the Prebend of Athnett. In this way the Very Revd Diane Matchett was installed as a member of the Chapter of St. Mary's, which dates back to 1205, and it now has a full complement for the first time in a decade.

The Service of Choral Evensong continued with the Choir, conducted by Peter Barley, leading the singing of hymns. They also sang settings of Psalm 11, the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis finishing with the Anthem 'Like a Hart' by Herbert Howells.

Siobhán Wheeler read the first Lesson of Exodus 5:1 - 6:1 and a visiting priest from Uganda, Revd Jimmy Ogwal, read the second Lesson from St. Matthew 2:29-32.

The sermon was delivered by the Very Revd Dr Richard Marsh the Dean of Killaloe who began by asking, "What does a Canon do?"

He then told the story of Canon Edmé Guillaume of the French Cathedral in Auxerre who was concerned that his cathedral choir needed some help. So, in 1590 he invented a huge musical instrument which was called a Serpent because of its shape. The serpent



reinforced the bass parts for the choir it had gone out of fashion in church and classical music 200 years ago after being replaced by the tuba.

But, the dean said, this story demonstrated three of the important duties of a Canon. The first was obvious, Canon Guillaume invented his musical instrument to support prayer, and almost before anything else a chapter and its canons are to pray for the life of the cathedral church in which they have a stall.



Secondly, Dean Richard continued, Canon Guillaume's invention of the serpent suggested a second function of the Chapter. That was to find innovative and creative solutions to a problem. In order to ensure the business of prayer continued he was prepared to innovate as cathedrals across the Anglican communion have had to think about how their chapters can adapt so that they embody a sense of the wider church which can sometimes mean conceiving their membership a little differently to embrace lay members or even members of other denominations.

The New Dean, Bishop and Others gather at St Mary's Cathedral Tuam

The Dean then came to the third purpose of a chapter and he admitted to being a recovering Serpent player, as the instrument was notoriously difficult and complex to play. It involved complex fingering and breathing techniques which were awkward to master. Chapters and their canons should always look unflinchingly at the complexities that come with cathedrals, especially when those complexities are uncomfortable.

Before giving the blessing at the end of the service, Bishop Michael said it was always a moot point as to whether the bishop should turn up at all to such occasions. But he thought he would attend as he was previously the Prebend of Athnett which had been an Episcopal appointment but now he had put himself out of the chapter by the installation of the Dean of Tuam and so for the first time in a long time in the succession of bishops he would not be part of in St Mary's Cathedral Chapter and he would no longer have any knowledge of the secrets that the chapter discussed in their meetings!

Nevertheless he wished them well and said that this appointment was part of the coming together of the two former dioceses and later in the year it was hoped to have a celebration in St. Mary's Cathedral in Tuam when the Dean of Tuam would install both the Dean of Tuam and the Dean of Limerick and the Archdeacon of Tuam and Limerick and Killaloe to mark the bringing together of the Cathedral Chapters of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe.



After the service refreshments were served in the Consistorial Court of the Cathedral.

*Stephen Fletcher,
Diocesan Communications Officer*



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PARISH NEWS



SKREEN & ACHONRY GROUP

Revd Andy Pierce
The Rectory
Skreen, Co. Sligo
Tel: 086 1705888
E-mail: revandypierce@gmail.com

Service times: Skreen: 11.20am
Kilmacshalgan: 12.30pm 2nd & 4th Sundays; 7.30pm 1st & 3rd Saturdays. **Dromard:** 10.10am. 5th Sunday, united service as announced. **Tubbercurry:** 12.30pm 1st & 3rd Sunday; 7.30pm 2nd & 4th Sunday.
Rathbarron/Killoran: 9am 5th Sunday, united service as announced

Walking between the churches of the Skreen and Achonry Groups of Parishes gives plenty of time to ponder, "What if ...?" These two amazing words have the power to stop us in our tracks or to lead us to realise any number of great and wonderful things. For example, we could ask "What if this is just one more step toward the inevitable ...?" On the other hand, to ask "What if" can inspire us to leave the "what is"

behind and to step off on a journey of possibilities—of realising things as they could be given the right set of circumstances. And, since we have a God who is the Master of Circumstances, we have every right and reason to ask "What if" full of hope and expectation that all of this has brought us together for his purposes.

God has gifted the soon to be united parishes of Skreen and Achonry with more than 10 buildings—three old schools, a hall, a coach house, a bit of glebe land, five working churches, and the remains of at least three more. These buildings and places, handed to us through a long line of parents, grandparents and past parishioners are, in fact, gifts from God. As the inheritors of these gifts, could easily see ourselves as merely caretakers tasked with preserving the remnants of a particular protestant tradition for as long as possible. But there is another "what if" to consider:

What if we take the view that these buildings, along with their accumulated history, were gifted to us for this time; that we, of all generations, might be the one who will use them to greatest effect for the glory of

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Sponsored Walk – from Dromard to Rathbarron

God? What if our children, and our children's children might take their baptism and confirmation to heart? What if we put all our resources to work to lift Christ up right here where we are planted, preaching the forgiveness of sins, making disciples of all people, and, as we've read in the Gospel according to John over Eastertide, helping one another abide in Christ that we all might bear much fruit?

The first disciples received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. For us it is poured out upon us through the water of baptism and strengthened in us in Communion—by it we are called and empowered to be Jesus' voice, hands, and feet amongst family, friends and community, in our turn, calling all people to him. If we accept this task, we should both expect and look for the Holy Spirit to inspire any number of "What if" ideas for using our inherited gifts—our buildings, lands and skills—to accomplish our similarly inherited commission. Since, "with God, all things are possible," who can tell the wild range of "what if's" he will bring to mind, and, in time, bear fruit through us. I can't wait to find out!

St Patrick's Day United Service

As Easter was the fifth Sunday of March we took the opportunity to have our 5th Sunday United Service on St Patrick's Day. Having a 10 a.m. united service in St Mary's (Kilmacshalgan), Dromore West, allowed many parishioners an opportunity to enjoy their pick of the many parades happening across the area. The theme for the day was "Come dressed as your favourite Saint." While most, as expected, came dressed as themselves, St Partick and St Brigid also showed up wearing the green.



St Patricks Day-Kilmacshalgan

Easter in Skreen and Achonry

As the apex of the Christian year, Christians around the world look forward to Holy Week and Easter Sunday for the many varied opportunities to celebrate and worship. This year we introduced a new Monday Service—a celebration of Wholeness and Healing where we welcomed Rev Canon Stella Durand to come and to pray with us and for us. The Wednesday



Easter on Dunmoran

of Holy Week provided an opportunity to join with young people from Killala for a scavenger hunt, pizza, and Tenebrae in St Michaels, Ballina. Other services included Maundy Thursday in Tubbercurry, Good Friday in Skreen and a Watchnight Service in Dromard from 11:30PM on Saturday. On Easter Sunday we were back on the beach in Dunmoran Strand at 7AM where forty or so gathered for a Sunrise Service, then back to Skreen for breakfast before heading on to our other Easter worship services in the several parish churches. With the help of retired clergy, Rev Peter Norman and Rev Canon Doris Clements, we were able to have Easter Services in all five parishes.

Garden Club

The new Skreen and Achonry Garden Club has been keeping busy with looking at ideas for brightening up home and church. Dawn Brett offered insights and expertise on 'upcycling' and revamping tired furniture and household rooms, while local (Beltra) florist



GC-vase



cut flower arranging

centrepiece ideas for both cut and dried flowers. The Garden Club also provided a few ladies with lovely Spring hats for Easter Sunday. While there are no scheduled meetings over the summer the members can keep in touch and informed through the Club WhatsApp Chat. Contact Jackie Pierce at 0861705418 if you would like to be added to the group.

Walking Together Sponsored Walk

Walking together is a fund-raising initiative consisting of a series of walks joining all five churches as well as places of interest in between. All together the full loop walk consists of eight stages, plus a preliminary 11.7k walk from the rectory in Skreen to the beach and back—more than 110km in all. As of the 12th of May we have completed the first three stages: from the Rectory & Skreen Parish Church to Christ Church Dromard, from Christ Church to Rathbarron (Killoran), and from Rathbarron to the Old Achonry Cathedral. Walks still to come are:

Angela Clarke looked at arranging daffodils and other cut flowers. Josephine Lyttle showed members how to create simple but stylish vase and

- From Achonry Cathedral to St. George's, Tubbercurry, Sunday 26th May,
- St George's to old Kilmactigue Church, Aclare, Sunday, 9th June
- Kilmactigue to Lough Easky, Sunday, 30th June
- Lough Easky to St Mary's (Kilmacshalgan), Dromore West, Sunday, 28th July
- Dromore West to Skreen Parish Church, Sunday 11th August

We hope to raise in the region of €8000 by the end of the summer. Please feel free and come join in at any stage, walking, running, cycling, on an electric scooter or even drive along ahead or behind and joining in for refreshments following. For sponsor sheets or to make donations please contact Rev Andy at 0861705888 or revandypierce@gmail.com.



Weston James Barber - Baptism Dec 2023



Loop Walk Rath

Baptism

Weston James Barber, son of Jenna and Richard Barber, Coolaney, was baptised in Rathbarron (Killoran) Parish Church in a public service on 2nd December, 2023. Family members from across the country gathered to welcome Weston into the family of Christ. Richard is the son of Tom and Josephine Barber, also of Coolaney. Weston's godparents are Jenna's sister, Shannan Howley, and Richard's brother, Alec Barber.

Confirmation

Bishop Michael came to Rathbarron (Killoran) on Sunday, April 14th, for the confirmation of Samuel, son of Robert and Fiona Hall, Carrowmurray, Coolaney, Sligo. Sam's godparents are William Hall and Mairead McHugh.



People from across the parishes gathered to support Samuel on this important occasion for him and in the life of the church.

A bit of Fun

The Beetle Drive made a return to Rathbarron Coach house this year bringing a bit of laughter and fun to a dreary winters evening. Once all the beetles were



Beetle drive

drawn there were a few rounds of card bingo in hopes that anyone who was unlucky with the dice might at least see the cards drawn in their favour. Once again there were lots of prizes and plenty of sandwiches and treats for supper after.

Daffodil Day

In March, a few of the ladies from Rathbarron took



Daffodil Day

Rogation Sunday, Blessing of Tractors and Farms





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the opportunity to go “all in against cancer for Daffodil Day” by collecting flowers for distribution as part of local fund-raising events. Daffodil Day is a national fundraising campaign to support cancer research and services in Ireland.

Mark your Calendar for great food!

Rathbarron's annual Fathers' Day Dinner made a return last year, although a little later in the year than usual. This year the dinner will be back on Fathers' Day. Be sure to mark the 16th of June as a day to bring Dad to Dinner at Rathbarron. He'll be very happy, especially when he gets to the dessert tent!



Supper after the World Day of Prayer

Mothers' Union



MU-Sarah Johnston

Achonry Mothers' Union worked with members of Sacred Heart Church, Mullinabreena, Sligo, to provide a local celebration as part of the Worldwide Day of Prayer. Ladies from the churches shared in the reading of the

liturgy and the telling of the stories prepared for this year's event which, coincidentally, were provided by Palestinian Christians. A light supper was enjoyed afterwards in the Knocknashee Community Hub.

Skreen Mothers' Union was pleased to host Mrs Sarah Johnston from, Billis, in the Virginia Group of Parishes, to speak on that Group's Prayer Shawl ministry. The people involved in the ministry there gather twice a month to knit and to pray for people receiving the shawls. Once finished, the shawls are available to be

sent free of charge to anyone who might be comforted by receiving one. Since 2009 the group has distributed 155 shawls around Ireland, to the UK and as far away as Australia.

Funerals



Joe Coulter, Carrownree, Skreen, Sligo, died peacefully at the North West Hospice Sligo on 16th March 2024. Born 6th October 1936, Joe was 87. His passing is deeply regretted by his loving wife June, sons Jason, James, Mark & Simon, his brother Willie, adored grandchildren Lucy, Ryan, Dara, Rory & Alex, daughters in law Caroline & Ruth, James's partner Charlotte, Simon's partner Claudia, and sister-in-law Irene.

A committed member of Skreen parish, he will also be sadly missed by his friends and colleagues in Sligo RFC, IFA and the local community in Skreen of which he was very much a part.



Arthur Golden, Dunmoran, Skreen, Sligo. Arthur died peacefully at home on 10th April 2024. Born on 10th July 1928. Arthur, at 95, was the oldest member of Skreen Parish. Arthur was pre-deceased by his sister Iris and brothers Harold & Richard. His passing is sorely missed by his

loving wife Jenny, daughters Norma & Gillian, son John, son-in-law Mick Duignan, sisters Vivienne & Muriel, and nieces, nephews and extended family.



Gerald Mason, Wallington, London. Born 3rd July 1935 in England, Gerald married Mary Ormsby, Dunneill, Dromore West over 60 years ago. From the time of his retirement, Gerald and Mary would have spent six months a year for over 30 years in Sligo and were faithful

parishioners of St Mary's when here. Gerald died on March 3rd is survived by Mary, their children, Liz and James, and grandchildren, and fondly remembered by parishioners in Kilmacshalgan.

Engagement

Henry and Audrey Moore, Masreagh, Skreen, are pleased to share the news of the engagement of their son, Stephen, to Rosie Grall, daughter of Helen and



Stephen Moore & Rosie Grall,

Norbert Grall. Moylagh, Oldcastle, Co. Meath. The wedding will be in Moylagh on 11th April 2025.

Rogation Sunday, Blessing of Tractors and Farms

Skreen Group of Parishes in conjunction with the Roman Catholic churches from Skreen, Dromard and Templeboy, gathered at 3pm on the afternoon of Sunday, May 5th, in the Skreen-Dromard Community Centre, for an ecumenical service of blessing of farm, home and field, followed by a tractor run and refreshments. The service was led by Rev Andy Pierce, Fr Michael Gilroy and Rev Karen Duignan. The communities gathered to pray together that God would bless the work of the people, the land, livestock and wild animals, tools and equipment, and their homes. Everyone also prayed for health, safety, and happiness in their work and that the fruit of their labour might sustain each one, their families, the community and the world. Blessed with good weather on the day, forty-two tractors took part in a short “fun run” and returned for food and conversation with neighbours. We look forward to making this an annual event alternating between Skreen and Achonry.



AUGHAVAL GROUP

Holy Trinity, Westport.
Christ Church, Castlebar.
Turlough. St Thomas', Dugort
Incumbent: Rev Suzanne Cousins
Rectory: 098 25127
Mobile: 083 800 3233

Email: aughaval@tuam.angican.org
The Rectory, Newport Road, Westport,
Co Mayo, F28 HK31

Service times: Westport/Aughaval Group: 11.30am Sun
Dugort April - Sept 3pm every Sun; Oct-March
fortnightly only 3pm on 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month
Castlebar: 10am Sunday. Turlough: 8pm Saturday

Looking back



Westport Good Friday

Ecumenical Walk of Witness

positive ecumenical relationships and working in the parishes. The Good Friday Ecumenical Walk of Witness in Westport stands out as one such example.



St Thomas's, Dugort, Achill, Good Shepherd Sunday, 21 April

A happy Good Shepherd Sunday with Bishop Michael was rounded off in the parishes with a Celebration of Holy Communion in St Thomas's, Dugort, Achill.

A somewhat experimental service (of Evening Prayer) as gaeilge was held and enjoyed on 7th April, led by Parish Reader Barbara Sheppard, ably assisted by other able Irish speakers and readers.



"Buiochas le dia" for the service "as Gaeilge"



Diocesan Reader, Dr Eamon Smith, Castlebar with Revd John Wesley, originally from the Church in South India and recently approved to assist in ministry, word and sacrament at the Rector's invitation, in the local context.

Serving and Giving



Susie Fry and Caroline Boyle, Castlebar

We are so grateful to everyone serving again this year on select vestries and in other ways, many unseen. There are always emerging needs and opportunities to serve; for example, in youth and children's ministry, prayer, social and community outreach,

administrative support, music and technology, liturgy, flower arranging, cleaning, bio-diversity thinking, planning and gardening, and fundraising. All offers of help continue to be welcome.

An example of one such opportunity is that in Castlebar we are exploring how to better support the pollinators and bio-diversity through our management of the churchyard, with the help of Select Vestry member and botanist, Susie Fry. We are grateful to have the help and advice of Westport Eco Congregation when it comes to this area of our mission.

Making progress: small steps

We are truly grateful for every expression of support that comes our way to help maintain the churches which are important as places of gathering for worship today and historically, and which are centres of ministry and mission, friendship and care, from which the great news of the unending and consistent love of God can be declared and shared.

Westport-Dugort Select Vestry have been pleased to put in place recently an additional facility for parishioners and other supporters, enabling financial giving electronically, to support the parishes in raising essential funds in each of the churches. This new means will run alongside the traditional plate, standing order and envelope systems, but a QR code is now in print on service sheets and other literature and will be displayed around the buildings for scanning from mobile phones. By the time this goes to print similar systems should be in place for each of the other parishes in the Aughaval Group.

Such developments represent small but significant steps, and coupled with the love, support and goodwill of so many people in our communities, and with the blessings of various of grant awards, we have much for which to be thankful.

Fundraising concert

On the May Bank Holiday Monday (6th May) we were truly blessed through an Irish Night concert by James Kilbane and fellow musicians in memory of recently deceased Inishbiggle islander and friend, Christy Henry. The event was held in the Achill Island Hotel, Achill Sound. It was a wonderfully attended and supported evening and the total raised towards repairs of Inishbiggle Church (Holy Trinity, Inishbiggle) of 3,150 euros, was considerably beyond our

expectations. Our warmest thanks go to James and his guest artists - Grainne Madden, Pat Molloy, Michael Mac, Tom McGinty, Rory McGinty and Cian McNamara. Also to the proprietors of the hotel Achill Island Hotel (Óstán Oileán Acla) who so generously provided the venue. And to the small army of parish volunteers who rolled up their sleeves to help on the



Rt Revd Michael Burrows, James Kilbane, Revd Suzanne Cousins and Fr Chris Ginnelly, at Achill Island Hotel, Achill Sound, for the concert in aid of Inishbiggle Church repairs

night! Go raibh maith agat!

Knowing that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), and in light of suffering and global (dire) need, we are looking forward to visits this summer and autumn from representatives from both Tearfund and Christian Aid, to help us think about how we in our churches also can help our brothers and sisters further afield.

Relay for Life

Closer to home and close to so many of our hearts was the Relay for Life weekend in Westport, in aid of the Irish Cancer Society. Many in these parishes were involved in the planning and implementation of the event, which was a huge success socially and financially, and a source of strength and comfort to so many who have lost loved ones to cancer or are battling with the disease.

Baptisms

It was good to be at General Synod in Armagh, in spite of the rather discouraging debate on baptism. I wish here to express my gratitude, and that which has been expressed to me by members of these parishes, to our bishop, for his leadership in the matter and in articulating clearly that the canonical position remains unchanged and that access to God's grace does not require "a ticket". We will continue to baptise those who request baptism, and to welcome them with joy.



Baptism of Finn, pictured with his big brother, and parents David and Lavinia Mckeen, in Christ Church, Castlebar, 18 May 2024.

Funeral

It was with a sense of great sadness that we made our "Farewell in Christ" for Mrs Helen Erskine in Holy Trinity Westport on 18 May, but also with thanksgiving for the person Helen was and the lifelong faith that sustained her. Helen was greatly loved in the Westport parish, as well as in the parish of Clontarf, Dublin, in which she grew up and spent much of her life. We express deepest sympathy to all Helen's family and assure them of our ongoing prayers for their comfort and consolation.

Coming up

Below are just a few of the concerts, services and events that are coming up in the churches. A full list of is published on social media (<https://www.facebook.com/AughavalParishes/>) and in parish communications.

Family and Children's Day

Saturday 22 June, A Family and Children's Day for all the parishes is being planned for the afternoon of 22 June, ending with a special service in Turlough Church at 7pm (- please note the one-off change of time). (Details from Youth and Children's leaders and the Rector.)

Sunday 9 June, Blue Grass Worship in Holy Trinity Westport, 11.30am – launch of this year's festival

Sat 15 June, Service - Remembering Our Local Loved Ones, 8pm in Turlough



Sat 22 June, Families and Children’s Day Out, followed by End-of-Year All-age Service, 8pm in Turlough Church – for all parishes.
Wed 31 July, Scoil Acla Recital in St Thomas’s Dugort, 8.30pm

The Annie Jane Project: A special show, of traditional music, story and dance, from around the world. “The Annie Jane Project is about different nationalities, what we can learn from each other, our shared experiences despite our differences... It is about people travelling to escape conflict or poverty and what they take with

them—not changed much in all the years since Annie Jane left Liverpool in 1853. It is an old story, but relevant today.”
- Fri 9 August – The Annie Jane Project – Holy Trinity Westport, 7.30pm
- Sat 10 August – The Annie Jane Project– Christ Church Castlebar, 7.30pm

Songs for a Summer Night: Two special church fundraising concerts, with Revd David J Bell (Armagh) and accompanying artists, Janet Dowd and Colin Henry. Thurs 22 August, 8pm in Holy Trinity Westport
Fri 23 August, 8pm in Christ Church Castlebar

Holy Trinity National School
Last but far from least, we continue to acknowledge, support and pray for our school, Holy Trinity National School, of which we are rightly proud in light of its esteemed and valued work and standing in the community. The school has featured in local and national media recently following its receiving notification from the Department of Education that its cherished plans for a long-sought-after new school

are being reconsidered. This represents a great blow and potential setback for HTNS, and without going into details here, prayers for a resolution and for everyone involved are appreciated.

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GALWAY & KILCUMMIN GROUP

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Website: www.stnicholas.ie



Revd Carole Reynolds



Rev Alistair Doyle

Service Times
Sundays: 9:00 am Said Eucharist St. Nicholas’ Collegiate Church
11 am Sung Eucharist – St. Nicholas’ Collegiate Church
11 am Service in Kilcummin, Oughterard

10.30 am each Wednesday, Service in St Nicholas’ Collegiate Church.

Holy Week and Easter – As we journeyed through Holy Week we did so in collaboration with Art students from ATU. First year art education students were commissioned to each present a piece of art



Easter light



Easter Paschal candle based on a given scripture from the Passion of Christ. The students’ exhibits exceeded everyone’s



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Christ from the Augustinian Church and the Presbyterian Church. Thank you to everyone who supported these services. Rev.Alistair made the cross which was carried through the church on Good Friday and across Shop Street to the Augustinian Church. A powerful symbolic reminder of all that HolyWeek and Easter signifies.

A special thank you to all our parish family who lovingly and carefully contributed through singing, reading, stewarding, serving, cleaning, decorating, those moving furniture, our AV technicians, acolytes, those who prepared linen, music, instruments, and those who prepared the many orders of services.

Toiletry donations for Lent- As a parish during Lent, we took up the practice of giving, in an effort to help

expectations, and greatly contributed to the theme of worship as they were directly used during our Good Friday Stations of the Cross Service. This was an ecumenical service, and we were joined by our brothers and sisters in

us to become aware of and responsive to the needs of others. We had a very successful toiletry donation drive in aid of COPE Galway's Mode Eile House, which provides a safe space for women and children to rebuild their lives free from domestic abuse. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Clean & Decorate for Easter- We enjoyed a time of fellowship and community in March as we held our annual cleaning and decorating day in preparation for Easter Sunday. Parishioners came out in force to contribute their time and energy and when the day was done, the space was sparkling clean with beautiful arrangements of flowers and Easter eggs on display. Thank you to everyone who came on the day.



Easter Clean



Easter Decorate

Confirmation – Bishop Michael Burrows presided over the Confirmation Service on Sunday 19th May when 6 parishioners were confirmed. We are in prayer with each of those newly confirmed and their families



Easter General Vestry – St Nicholas Easter General vestries took place on Sunday 14th April Nicholas and on Wednesday 10th April in Kilcummin. There was a terrific turnout of parishioners and congratulations to all those who will serve this coming year on the select vestry.



Chatty Crafters egg

The Chatty Crafters – The Chatty Crafters enjoyed a longer craft day with lunch in April as they had a class on traditional Easter Egg making. It was a wonderful success and everyone decorated their own egg which was then used as decoration in the church for Easter Sunday. Thank you to Steffi Delaney who led the class. Grants – We are delighted once again to be the recipients of the Community Monuments Fund grant in St. Nicholas' We also received a grant of 15,000 from the Built Heritage. Such grants require a lot of work behind the scenes and make a huge difference – so well done to all responsible for them on our behalf. Once all the permissions are in place the work will take place in the coming months.

Medieval Church Fete – The 2024 St. Nicholas' Summer Church Fete will take place on Saturday 17th August from 10.30am – 2.30pm, which will coincide with Heritage Week. Join us for Medieval Music and



Dance, Medieval craft, and re-enactments of Sword Fighting and much more! There will be lots of fun and activities for children.

‘Vespers for Lent’ Evening Prayer Meeting - On Monday 6th of March, Reverend Alistair began the Lent and beyond Bible study. He used The Bible Society’s wonderful resource, ‘The Bible Course’ – which is an eight-session course helping to explore the BIG story. It combines video teaching, group discussion, personal reflection, and daily readings. We were delighted to host a dedicated group of participants each Monday during the season of Lent. Story Keepers –We are almost to the end of our last term of Story Keepers before we take a break for summer. We have had a wonderful year thus far learning about Jesus through story, songs, and craft. Thank you to our dedicated group of teachers and assistants: Sally, Maeve, Debbie, Hilary, Maebh, Paritha, and Gillian for the time they have given to help make our church a safe and inviting space for children. We look forward to Story Keepers beginning again in the Autumn term.



Coffee Concerts return for our summer concert series. This is a lovely way to experience local, live music along with delicious baked goods and tea & coffee. All proceeds go toward our own Schola Cantorum. Concerts are at 11am on June 1 and June 15.

Choristers of St. Nicholas’ Schola Cantorum- We have a wonderful and committed group of Choristers this year. They work hard in practice each Wednesday and serve the church by singing during the 11am service once a month. The Choristers recently took a well-deserved day trip to Wildlands where they had a fun afternoon enjoying the Ninja course and finished

the day with pizza. Thank you to Mark Duley and Dottie Knauer for leading our group of students so well, and to our Chorister parents for helping organize the trip. Our choristers will soon have another outing to look forward to as they travel to Mullingar in June to sing with the local choristers at the Cathedral; and a workshop weekend in July as they work on both singing skills and bonding as a group.

Staff Trip- Recently, some of our staff team made a trip to Dublin to see the workings of both Christ Church Cathedral and St. Patrick’s Cathedral. They were warmly welcomed by the staff at each cathedral who spent a considerable amount of time with our team giving a tour and answering questions on how these churches function firstly as a place of worship, but also as a tourist destination. The time was very well spent, and we are grateful to each of these cathedrals for their time and energy.

Mayor’s visit- We recently had the honour of hosting the Mayor of Galway, Cllr. Eddie Hoare for a meeting with the rector and tour of the church. We are grateful for the support given by Mayor Hoare and the Galway City Council and were delighted to be able to provide the mayor a tour of our historic building, teach him to ring the bells and demonstrate how it is integrally connected to the city of Galway.



Guided tours- We now have guided tours daily. There is so much to learn about our historic building from over 700 years of history and we are excited to be able to share this with the public who come through our doors. We also recently welcomed students from St. Nicholas’ Parochial School for a tour and hands-on history lesson.



Deepest Sympathy – It has been a difficult and trying time for some of our parish family. We extend our deepest sympathy at this time to Sandra and Paddy Barrins, and Bob Hackett on the death of Baby Charlie (son of Mark and Kirsten, and twin brother of Harvey), their Grandson and Great Grandson. We extend our deepest sympathy to Matt Wallen on the death of his Mum Kathleen in the USA. We send our deepest sympathy to Ann Deacy on the death of her cousin Peter in the UK.

Funerals

Lily McGroarty- The funeral of Lily McGroarty took place in St. Nicholas’ Church on Friday, the 16th of February. We assure her heartbroken and shocked family of our thoughts and prayers at this testing time, to her parents Lynn and Brian and her sisters Hannah and Sophie, her wider family circle and her friends and school community.

Astrid Hope Hassett – On Monday 29th April we gathered in St. Nicholas’ Church for the funeral service of Astrid Hope Hassett. Our prayers and sympathy to Dagmar and Dean Kelly, and the wider family circle at this difficult time.

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Rev Canon Alex Morahan

KILLALA GROUP

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Killanley Church, Castleconnor
Kilglass, St Anne's Easkey
St Patrick's Cathedral, Killala
St John's, Ballycastle
St Mary's Crossmolina

Rector: The Rev Canon Alex Morahan

T: 085 888 6036

E: killala@tuam.anglican.org



Revd Karen Duignan (OLM)

Revd Karen Duignan (OLM)

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Revd Caroline Morrow (OLM)

Revd Caroline Morrow (OLM)

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Revd Clive Moore (OLM)

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Phone: 087-6563238



Revd Clive Moore (OLM)

Service times:

St Patrick's Cathedral, Killala: 10.00am
(2nd Sunday Holy Communion, 4th
Sunday Morning Prayer)

St Michael's Ballina: 11.30am (1st
and 3rd Sundays.

Morning Prayer, 2nd and 4th Sundays
Holy Communion)

5th Sunday United Worship around
the Union

Killanley Parish Church: 10am (1st Sunday Holy
Communion, Other Sundays Morning Prayer)

Ballycastle (Dunfeeny): 10.00am (1st Sunday Morning
Prayer, 3rd Sunday Holy Communion)

St Mary's, Crossmolina: 12 noon (1st Sunday Family
Service, 3rd Sunday Morning Prayer, 2nd and 4th
Sundays Holy Communion)

St Anne's Easkey: 10am (2nd Sunday Morning Prayer,
4th Sunday Holy Communion)

Kilglass Parish Church: 10am (1st Sunday Holy
Communion, 3rd Sunday Morning Prayer)

I know that this magazine will be in the church for the summer months. And because of that, I expect that many people will be visiting and reading through the notes. So, I would like to welcome every visitor who walks through the door of any of our 7 churches. St. Anne's Easkey, Kilglass Church, Killanley Church, St. John's Ballycastle, St. Mary's Crossmolina, St Patrick's Cathedral in Killala and St. Michael's in Ballina. Whether you are a visitor or a friend or family visiting from home, or even the prodigal son or daughter, we are delighted that you have come to visit, and we wish you a truly happy visit! The few months since our last Tidings has flown and life has been busy and generally good. But having said that we are always aware of the challenges and struggles borne by many. Very often, people carry these burdens without a word. But we are aware of the hard times and sometimes the grief and great pain that many have to live with. Our Christian message is nothing if not full of hope. Our hope and prayer is that you and your family will feel God's love and support, in any way you need it most.

Easter General Vestry

We have recently finished our Easter General Vestry meetings in Killala and Kilmoremoy vestries. I am always struck by the generosity and kindness of so many. I could give a list of names but feel that there are too many to mention. However, I want to thank all who serve on our vestries and who continue to give so much of their time and energy and money to keep our beautiful churches open and alive. Without a doubt, the church is the people of God.



Some of those attending the retreat in Kilglass.

Concerts

We are always aware of the challenges to keep the churches in good repair and also keep them open and celebrating. One initiative we have undertaken in St. Michael's in Ballina, is to use our church as a venue for some musical events. On Friday 13th April we were thrilled to welcome Mr. Frank McNamara to St. Michael's. He performed two concerts for a very appreciative crowd. The music and setting were magical, and it really was fantastic. The first hour was a celebration of all things Disney. The following concert celebrated the music of Chopin, and this too was simply beautiful. On June 15th we are delighted to welcome Billow Wood to St. Michael's. They are a 5-piece group of local musicians with a beautiful mix of trad and folk which will surely bring great joy to so many. We are delighted that they have slotted us into their agenda, as they travel worldwide and are in great demand.

Confirmation

On Saturday 13th April, St. John's Ballycastle was the venue for a bright and wonderful celebration of confirmation. Our three candidates, Ellen, Rosa and Robert, were supported by the Ballycastle community and a great gathering of family and friends. It was a very special occasion for our three new confirmed Christians and the church reflected the sense of vibrancy and hope that the Holy Spirit brings.

Deaths in the Family

We were aware that Betty and Walter Jackson were not with us at our confirmation in Ballycastle, as their family had suffered a great loss. Our love and prayers are with them, always. May their grandson, Andrew Jackson, be at rest and may God be kind to the broken hearted.

Earlier in the year we said a sad goodbye to two very special women in our church. In February, Alma Eakins (nee Wills) was laid to rest in Mullaferry Cemetery, after a beautiful service in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Killala. Alma's life was celebrated by her sons and daughters and a great gathering of grandchildren and close family and friends. We are thinking of her children, Ann Ormsby, Robert, Caroline Kelly, David, Alan, Shirley Rappaport, Joyce Clarke and Noelle. We remember too her loving nieces, nephews, grandchildren, friends and neighbours. We especially think of her many friends and the wonderful staff in Moy Ridge Nursing Home. May God welcome Alma home to be with those who have gone before her.

After a long a wonderful life, we also said a sad farewell to Rosalie Mitchell (nee Campbell), from Kilglass Church. Rosalie was the queen of Ard na Gréine Nursing Home in Enniscrone, in her 101st year. She was greatly loved and will be sadly missed by so many. We offer our prayers and love to her family, Daphne Higgins, Rosemary, Dawn Burrows, Albert and Christian. Rosalie was surrounded by love and kindness, and this was a reflection of who she was herself. She was predeceased by her husband, Rev. Canon Albert (Alfie) Mitchell and her funeral was an indication of the love and respect that was felt for Rosalie and her family. May Rosalie rest in peace and may God also bless the hearts that are sad at her departure.

Burial of Ashes Ceremony. Rev. Caroline Morrow and diocesan reader, Mr. John Gawley lead prayers and a service for the burial of ashes in Killanley Church Cemetery. The ashes were those of a mother and daughter, Shirley Gibson (nee Rolston) died 29th September 2021 and Louise Gibson died 15th June 2020.



GFS members, new and older

May they, and all our departed loved ones, rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.



Our Rev Karen leading the Lady Day Service.

Lady Day Service

Rev. Karen Duignan led a beautiful service in St Michael's for Lady Day on 21st March. There was a great attendance and Rev. Caroline Morrow had us all listening to her wisdom and deep passion as she preached on the day.

Baptism

We are delighted to announce the baptism of little Cillian McShane in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Killala. His mum and dad, Edith and Brendan, along with big sister, Sophie and proud godparents, James Gardiner and Tracey Mullen were joined by a wide circle of family and friends for this beautiful occasion. We are delighted to welcome Cillian and are always happy to see new life join into our Christian family. May Cillian have a long and happy life as a member of our church and his faith family.



Photo Cillian McShane and his happy family along with a happy rector!

Youth gathering in St. Michael's, Ballina

On the Wednesday of Holy Week, we were really happy to have Rev. Suzanne from Aughaval and Rev. Andy from Skreen, along with a small gathering of young people from our parishes. They had a lovely time exploring St Michael's Church and St. Muredach's Cathedral in Ballina in a 'scavenger hunt' prepared by Rev. Andy. Pizza and cold drinks were enjoyed by everyone, and we finished up the evening with an hour of Tenebrae. Rev. Caroline, Rev. Karen, Rev. Clive and our two visitors accompanied us as we weaved our way through the passion and death of Jesus. John Gawley sounded the heartbeat of Jesus as we came to a powerful conclusion. It was a very beautiful service.

Girls Friendly Society

GFS held a Branch Enrolment Service and Prize giving on Sunday 7th April in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Killala. The girls were terrific and led everything possible; readings, singing, prayers, processions and so much more. We had an amazing service and look forward to seeing them all again in September. Our thanks to all the fantastic leaders who work so hard, every week, to make sure these meetings take place and are enjoyed by so many.



Our GFS leaders at the service in Killala

Ballina Churches Together

Marian Edwards has been the driving force behind this wonderful initiative for the past number of years. Like all good things, the time to say goodbye to Marian has arrived and we wish her every happiness and blessing in whatever her future holds. Marian has been supported and encouraged by the engagement of people from all denominations and none to continue to share the love of Jesus on the streets and in the homes of Ballina. We are so grateful to you, Marian



Marian Edwards of Ballina Churches Together addressing our MU.

and will miss your energy and enthusiasm about the place. But for now, we simply want to say, 'Thank you and may God guide you every step of the way ahead'.



Is this a God view of MU



Mother's Union meeting in St. Michael's, Ballina

Mental Health Supports

Rev. Alex has started to introduce a great program to the local area. It is called Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) and it was designed by Mary Ellen

Copeland. She suffered a great deal through her life and designed a program that anyone can use to maintain a healthy balance in mind and body. We hope to offer it as ongoing support for anyone who is interested in learning about it. You can use it for yourself or use it as a support to someone you love, who is experiencing the challenges of mental health. If you google Mary Ellen Copeland you will hear her story. Super woman.

YSPI...Youth Suicide Prevention Ireland.

Rev. Alex has decided to try to raise funds and awareness of the problem of youth suicide. It is such an incredible shame that young people think of suicide as the only solution to the problems they experience in their young lives. I would love any sponsorship that anyone can give for this worthy cause. I will be doing a parachute jump in August to raise funds for YSPI. Feel free to check out their website and donate to my jump...name; Alex Morahan. (Username; Rev) Mile buíochas to you all.

Examination Time

It's that time of year when Leaving cert and Junior cert and many college students are taking major examinations. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. Remember, your results never define who you are as a person. Do your best and you will always do the right thing! Best of luck to each one of you. And special thoughts of the young people who are finishing in national school and moving on to secondary school. Such an exciting and wonderful time.

Rev. Karen Duignan

Rev. Karen has been part of the life and soul of our group of parishes for a good few years now. She was ordained as an OLM in 2020 and since then has mainly served in the parishes of Kilglass and Easkey in Sligo. Karen has decided to take a leap of faith into full-time ministry. For that reason, she will commence training in September 2024. We are so sad to have to say goodbye to Karen. She is such an amazing priest, and she will be missed greatly by many throughout this group of parishes. She will be especially missed by many friends and parishioners in Kilglass and Easkey. We take this opportunity to say 'thank you' to you Karen. May God go with you and bless you and may you feel His guidance, love and support in the years and studies that lie ahead. We will always consider you 'ours' wherever you may find yourself. With our love and prayers; Caroline, Clive and Alex xxx

That's it for now. See you again soon. Please say hello if you are visiting during the summer, or at any time. Rev. Clive. Rev. Karen, Rev. Caroline and Rev. Alex and the people of Killala Group of Parishes.

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Claremorris: 12 noon in McWilliam Park Hotel – 1st Sunday of the month
andrea.wills@gmail.com

Service times: Straid Foxford 10.00 a.m. each Sunday, First Sunday of the month Service in the McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris at 12 noon

There was good support for the Annual General Easter Vestry Meeting in April which gave the chance to thank everyone for their help and support during the year.

Easter Vestry

Mothering Sunday 2024

The churchwardens, and members of the vestry who take their responsibilities seriously; the help with safeguarding and the charity regulations; those who read the lessons, help with refreshments after the service; are there early to open the church; those doing their turn for doing flowers and cleaning. We

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are small but it all makes for a little family gathering together Sunday by Sunday where the scriptures are read and the pattern of worship continues as it has done for over 220 years.

Likewise in Claremorris, the gathering on the first Sunday of the month, is a time of fellowship and worship, where the roof is raised with the singing of hymns, finishing with chat and home-made goodies. Thank you to everyone who supports and makes these things happen.

The birth of a new baby is a time of joy and it was wonderful to welcome Odhran Seamus Mitchell, son of Jennifer (Ryder) and Sean, for baptism, assisted by Fr. Padraig Costello, on 2nd March. It was not Odhran's first visit to the church as he was there on Christmas Day, only weeks old, enhancing the reality of the Christmas story.

The tradition of the blessing of the River Moy at the bridge in Foxford kept up by the fishing community is a pleasure to be part of where prayers are offered for the safety of all who use the river, remembering those who have lost their lives there, and giving thanks for the beauty of creation and prayers for good catches. The casting of a line...

From all perils protect us.
Give us, good Lord,
finest days to land our fish,
sound and big to fill our wish.

Keep our lines from snag and break.
For everyone a goodly take.
Give us, good Lord,
Amen.



Rev Niall Statford and Rev Canon Andrea Wills

I appreciate all the help I can get on Mothering Sunday and thanks to Amelia, Sophia May, Lily and Juliette for making it special.

We are thrilled with the new stairs installed as a gift by Yvonne and Christopher Dempsey.



Odhran Seamus Baptism

We are also grateful to O'Hara's Carpets, Swinford for gifting us a replacement carpet, when the other one faded, and wish them well as they retire from business. We pray especially each Sunday for those who are sick; those whom we name in the silence of our hearts.

We look forward to having Bishop Michael with us for service in McWilliam Park, Claremorris on 2nd June at 12 noon and at 4.00 p.m. in Foxford Church for Confirmation. Please note there will be no service at 10.00 a.m. in Foxford that morning.



TUAM & OMEV GROUP

Incumbent, The Very Revd
Diane Matchett,
The Deanery, Deanery Place,
Cong, Co Mayo.
Ph: 087 1857213
Email tuamandomev@tuam.anglican.org

Service times: Tuam 12 noon

Cong/Aasleagh: 10am

Clifden/Moyard (Omev Group): 11.30am Christ Church Clifden, Sundays 10am July & August Rest of year 10am on 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month in Moyard

Roundstone: Sundays 10am June, July & August, Easter Day; Sunday after Easter & Sunday after Christmas other days announced

Errislannan: As announced during July & August

TUAM AND OMEV GROUP

A little faith will bring your soul to heaven; a great faith will bring heaven to your soul.

Charles H. Spurgeon

Time certainly flies when people are enjoying themselves. I feel a wonderful growing sense of God's purposes in my beautiful Parishes. It is hectic but fruitful—I am looking forward to the many journeys ahead and am so grateful for teams of people who help make this all work so well, to honour and please God. Thank you all so much.

St Mary's Cathedral Tuam

Since writing in the Spring Edition of Tidings, we have had a busy time in and around St Mary's in the city of Tuam. With the Easter Vestries behind us we can focus on the next stages and even plan into the future. It is lovely to welcome various organisations and visitors to the Cathedral and, just recently, to have marked a

On the Day of Pentecost it was good to join Rev. Niall Stratford, Rector, an old friend from Theological College, in St. John's, Ballymore Eustace, for Sunday service which was attended by the family, including his mother Ethel, of the late Stuart Gallagher, whose first anniversary occurred at this time. Stuart is buried in Blessington churchyard.

very special lady's retirement. Dr. Rachel Pike retired from playing the Cathedral Organ some time back and it was lovely to honour her, so after the services on May 12th, our fantastic catering volunteers, under Dorene Allen's leadership, organised a beautiful sit-down lunch in the Synod Hall. Many were able to make it. Our Cathedral Family, Rachel's sister Marion and nephew Ross visiting from Canada, and our



visiting minister, the Very Reverend Patrick Towers, and his wife, Anne all enjoyed a very special occasion. Rachel was presented with a beautiful red climbing rose on the day. We thank Rachel for all the music, and for her deep love for God and His people, leading worship from the organ and inspiring others. Thank you, Rachel, from the bottom of our hearts. (Other photographs will be available on our Tuam and Omev Facebook Page.)

The Annual Schools Service on Thursday May 16th was such a joyful occasion for the children and the Cathedral. The children took part in the service and were absolutely wonderful – very well done to all. Finally, we look forward to welcoming you all to St Mary's for Choral Evensong on Sunday, June 16th, at 5 pm, where we will install new canons to the Cathedral Chapter. All are Welcome to a much-anticipated service of worship with the choirs from St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick and St. Nicholas Collegiate Church, Galway.



St Mary's Cong

We have been busy doing a lot of tidying up, and there has been a fantastic turnout of volunteers from the Church. We achieved so much and enjoyed tasty food along the way.

Thank you so much to our work party, and to thank the folk of Ashford Castle for their support. We were so blessed to have the Ballinrobe Folk Choir bring a concert to St. Mary's in May - an utterly magnificent social occasion that raised money for our lovely Church.

Thank you so much for our work party and for the lovely folk of Glor na Roba Choir. A future note – could you please save the date, Saturday, July 13th, 12–3 pm, a 2 Euro Jumble Sale in Cong Community Hall.



We will post more details on our Facebook Page but would ask that parishioners and friends start doing some de-cluttering, so we have lots of donated items. Proceeds for Church Funds.

Roundstone

My first service in Roundstone was on Easter Day. What a time we had. Our beautiful Church of St Mary's in the heart of this Village was packed. By all accounts, we all went away celebrating in so many ways. We had such a lovely time celebrating our Risen Lord. Our Services in Roundstone will be held at 10 am in July and August. The picturesque Village of Roundstone was founded in the mid-1820s by the celebrated Scottish engineer Alexander Nimmo. Many wonderful events have been organised to celebrate this Bicentenary, including summer lectures that will be held at St Mary's. Please check back to our FB for future details.

Omev

It is a joy travelling across to the Omev grouping. Even when the weather is wet, it is still breathtaking, and that continued as we travelled in Rachel Kenny's lovely new car across to Clifden on May 5th at 8 am to join and officiate at a service for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters as they



celebrated the Orthodox Easter Day. This was so poignant; the love shared together was tangible – thank you for this honour. Once again, I would ask that you keep an eye on our Facebook pages as there are a number of events connected to our churches, including the Clifden Arts Festival and other such festivals throughout the Parish noted there.

As you can see, it is a busy place, and this is only a little taste of what is happening. I look forward to keeping you up to date, but do keep up to date with

us, and if you are out for a drive in the summer months, call us with us at our various services, especially when we return to having Summer Evening Services in Errislannan and Aasleagh. We look forward to having Bishop Michael at our evening services on the bank holiday weekend. Meanwhile, can I wish you a lovely summer season, and as Charles H Spurgeon expressed it you will experience 'a great faith that brings heaven to your soul'.

With love
Diane, Dean of Tuam

Holiday in Kerry?

Kilcolman Union is offering free usage of a luxury mobile home on the banks of the River Laune, Killorglin to Clergy and Diocesan Lay Readers and families in exchange for taking 2 Sunday services each week.

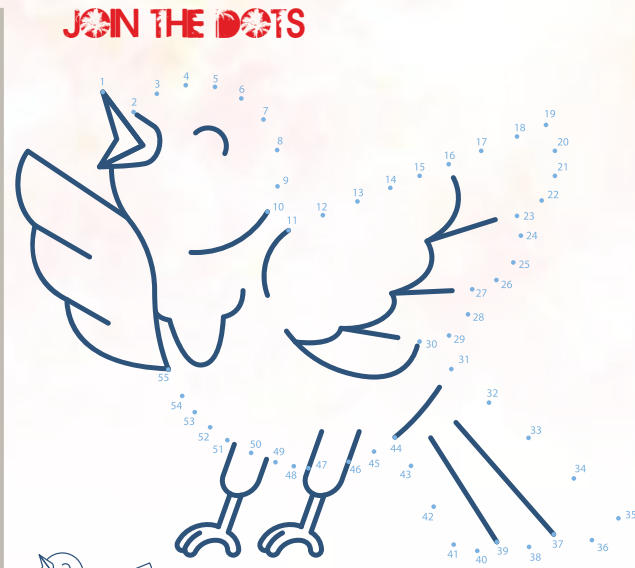
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Dean Diane Matchett at the Blessing of two new boats - with Corrib Mask Search and Rescue - on Lough Corrib at Lisloughrey Pier, Cong on 13th April. The Dean remarked how extremely poignant it was to be part of the Blessing of the Boards and acknowledged with gratitude what is done by so many great people.

Prayers will continue for safety for all on the water and for all those involved in keeping us safe.



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