

ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION CHURCH, KILLYBEGS.



CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2018



Beannachtaí na Nollag agus na Bliana Úire oraibh uilig

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, particular events spring to mind: the Repeal of the Eighth Referendum in May, the World Meeting of Families in Dublin in August culminating with the visit of Pope Francis, the ongoing and worsening crisis in the health sector, the stark reality of homelessness particularly in our capital city and a time of high anxiety regarding the Brexit crisis.

We publish some insightful reflections on the Referendum and the Pope's visit on page five. We all depend on our Health Service. Getting access to facilities can be difficult for many. Overcrowding in our hospitals is at a crisis level. The quality and professionalism of care is outstanding, despite some regrettable and fatal failures. The scandal of homeless families and homeless individuals continues to disturb the conscience of the nation and needs to motivate the powers-that-be into more proactive and effective action. To quote from 'A Room at the Inn?', the Irish Bishops' excellent Pastoral Letter on Housing and Homelessness: '...housing is not just an essential need of every person but a fundamental human right... we ask that the faithful request their political and civic leaders to prioritise action to effectively tackle the issues of homelessness and inadequate housing'.

Brexit could have far-reaching consequences for our country at a time when the North needs stability and security. In economic terms, we hope that the benefits to Tourism in this border-county created by the Wild Atlantic Way may not be undone by a new arrangement. Similar Brexit concerns have been expressed in relation to the Fishing Industry.

On a more practical level, we are inviting those involved as Readers, Ministers of the Eucharist, Collectors and the Parish Choir to renew their commitment and we are encouraging more people to be involved. Perhaps you would read page four and consider filling in the form! Our sincere thanks to everyone who was actively engaged in different ministries and tasks in the parish throughout the year. And we are grateful for all the financial support received for the general administration of the parish and for the Restoration Fund.

Christmas can be a lonely time for many families as the loss of a loved one during the year is sorely felt and many people will be far from home at Christmas-time. We keep them all in mind and in our prayers at this time.

Wishing you a reflective Advent and may the love and joy of Christ be with you and your family, be they at home or away from home, this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Wishing you every blessing this Christmas and throughout 2019

Fr Colm, 2nd December 2018

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS 2018

Christmas Carol Service at St John's Church

Wednesday 5th December 7.30pm

All are welcome to join the Church of Ireland Congregation.

Christmas Carol Service at St Mary's Church

Wednesday 12th December at 7.00pm.

Young people from the local schools join the Parish Choir.

The Collection will go to the Capuchin Day Centre in Dublin

run by Brother Kevin and his team.

Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th December

Masses at 7.00pm (Vigil), 9.00am & 11.00am

Service of Reconciliation

Monday 17th December at 7.00pm

Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd December

Masses at 7.00pm (Vigil), 9.00am & 11.00am

Christmas Masses

Monday 24th December: Christmas Eve

7.00pm: Children's Christmas Mass

11.00pm: Christmas 'Midnight' Mass

Tuesday 25th December: Christmas Day

Masses at **9.00am** and **11.00am**

Practices for Children's Mass (Christmas Eve 7pm):

Monday 17th December 5pm & Tuesday 18th December at 5pm

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

In the Adoration Room every Sunday 6pm to Monday Midnight

(except 23rd & 24th December and 30th & 31st December.

Rosary & Divine Mercy

Every Tuesday in Adoration Room 5.45pm (Summertime 6.45pm)

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on last Tuesday of the month.



Parish Ministries

Reader

Minister of the Eucharist

Collector

Parish Choir

Name:

Tel. No.

- Please tick your Choice of Interest.
- This doesn't involve making a commitment. It's an expression of interest.
- There will be a number of sessions during Lent 2019 (which begins Ash Wednesday 6th March) for Readers and Ministers of the Eucharist, to be attended by all existing Readers & Ministers of the Eucharist and Newcomers, culminating with a Commitment Ceremony on Holy Thursday, 18th April, 7.30pm



The Eighth Amendment and Pope Francis' Visit

What Now?

Following the Repeal of the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution in the May 2018 Referendum and following the visit of Pope Francis in August 2018, we publish a few thoughts from Fr Patrick Hannon, published in The Furrow November 2018.

What now and what next in aid of the sacredness of life are part of a larger question about the future of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and the outcome of the Referendum and aspects of the entire experience have a bearing on the answers.

The Taoiseach... addressed Pope Francis in memorable words:

'I believe that the time has now come for us to build a new relationship between church and state in Ireland – a new covenant for the 21st Century. It is my hope that your visit marks the opening of a new chapter in the relationship between Ireland and the Catholic Church'.

The Church's future is in God's hands – a truth of faith to be kept in mind these days – and in another sense in the hands of all its members. But leadership ultimately is a special ministry of bishops.

Criticised for not proclaiming that every Catholic was bound in conscience to oppose repeal, the fact is that as a matter of Catholic theology it wasn't open to them to do so. They were clear and firm, as they had to be, about the teaching of the Church's *magisterium* on the morality of abortion, and their endorsement of a No vote was unequivocal. Law-making is in the end a matter for the conscience of legislator and citizen.

The response of Bishop Denis Nulty to the result of the Referendum strikes the right note; an eloquent advocate of a No vote himself, he nevertheless declared that the electorate's decision must be respected, whilst encouraging those who worked for retaining the Amendment to play an ongoing role: 'we must work even harder to strengthen a culture that values all life and advocates for all who are in need of protection in our society'.

Catholic leadership needs to listen to the Catholic faithful and some of the necessary listening – to survivors of abuse, to women, to the people we refer to now as LGBTQ – is at this stage urgent.

Commitment to a vision of the sacredness of life from conception to natural death must include a care for the conditions of human living from the cradle to the grave, as Pope Francis repeatedly insists, and the teaching and example of Jesus make plain.

Christmas Gifts from the Parish Office

As well as Christmas items & Christmas cards, there is a range of religious goods of devotion available. Mass Cards also available.

In the spring we will have special items for Confirmation & First Communion.

Money Matters

We are sincerely grateful to everyone who supports the parish financially, contributing to the general administration of the parish and contributing to the Restoration Fund.

- The upkeep and maintenance of the parish, in terms of buildings, programmes and personnel, are carried out in a cost-efficient manner. The restoration work involved obtaining a 10 year bank loan in October 2012 of €950,000. Our current monthly repayments are €9738.

The loan balance on 1st December 2017 was: €483,769

The loan balance on 1st December 2018 was: €375,599.

We are grateful for your ongoing support.

- *Weekly or monthly or annual* contributions are very much appreciated. And a number of fundraising efforts are necessary during the year.
- Many people use the weekly envelopes for their contributions. We are delivering two sets of envelopes (Parish Envelopes and Restoration Envelopes) to each household which has been in receipt of envelopes. If you do not intend to use both, discard what you do not need. It makes it much easier, for administration purposes, to do it this way. It means just one delivery of envelopes, with matching numbers.
- If you wish to receive a set of envelopes or if you have any queries, please contact Fr Colm or Ann at the Parish Office: 074 9731013.

Guidelines for Getting Married

Each partner must complete the **Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form**.

The following documents are required to complete this form:

1. Baptismal Certificate
2. Confirmation Certificate
3. Pre-Marriage Course Certificate. (Pre-Marriage Courses: www.accord.ie)
4. Letter of Freedom (a declaration from a priest or a parent or sibling that you have never been married either civilly or religiously).
Both parties must be free to marry in the Catholic Church.
5. Receipt of three month notification from the Civil Registrar of Marriages. (Stranorlar Registrar: Marie Greene on 074 9191729 / 9191730
Letterkenny Registrar: 074 9123771 / 9123772)

Fr Colm will gladly advise couples on the above.

This is Your **Life.** Find a passion and pursue it.

Fall in love. Dream big.

Drink wine, eat great food and spend quality time with good friends. **Laugh everyday.**

Believe in magic. Tell stories.

Reminisce about the good old days but look with optimism to the future. **Travel often. Learn more.**

Be creative. Love with all your heart.

Spend time with people you admire.

Seize opportunities when they reveal themselves. Never give up.

Do what you love. **Be true to who you are.**

Make time to enjoy the simple things in life.

Spend time with family. Forgive even when it's hard.

Smile often. Be grateful.

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

Follow your dreams. Try new things. Work hard.

Don't count the minutes, count the laughs.

Embrace change. Trust in yourself. Be thankful.

Be nice to everyone. Be happy. Live for today.

And above all..

make every moment count.

The Sacrament of Baptism:

Parents may arrange the baptism of their child with Fr Colm or Ann in the Parish Office. Two members of the Parish Baptism Team will arrange to visit the family, one half-hour visit, to arrange readings, prayers and go through the ceremony. If a home visit doesn't suit, this can be done in the Parish Office. The usual times of Baptism are the 1st & 3rd Sunday of each month at 12.30pm.

Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Raphoe

St Mary's Parish in Killybegs has adopted the Diocese of Raphoe Policy Statement and everyone working with children in the parish is required to comply with it. The two Parish Safeguarding Representatives are: Kathleen O'Donnell, Fintra Rd and Pat McGee, The Glebe.

Dates for 2019

Sacrament of Confirmation: Sunday 24th March at 11.00am

First Holy Communion: Saturday 11th May at 11.00am

Mass at The Drawer Mass Rock: Wednesday 5th June at 7.00pm

Graveyard Mass: Friday 26th July at 7.00pm

Blessing of the Fleet Mass: Saturday 27th July at 7.00pm

Mass at Croaghlin Mass Rock: Thursday 15th August at 7.00pm

Sunday Masses: 7.00pm (Vigil), 9.00am & 11.00am.

Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 10.00am.

Weekday Masses subject to change. Consult weekly Newsletter.

mcnmedia.tv: All Masses and all Church Services from St Mary's are streamed live on the internet. Go to **mcnmedia.tv** and then *St Mary's, Killybegs* or, easier still, go to our website and click on *Live Webcamera* Marriages and Funerals can be recorded, on request, free of charge, and can also be downloaded from our site.

Induction Loop is available for hearing-aid users, switch to T position.

Gluten-free Bread for Holy Communion is available on request.

Website: The Parish Weekly Newsletter is posted every Saturday evening on our website: *killybegsparish.com*

The Parish Office is located on church grounds, opposite main door of the church

Hours of Opening: Monday to Friday 9.15am - 2.45pm. **Tel:** 074 9731013

Email: info@killybegsparish.com

Website: killybegsparish.com

Parish Secretary: Ann O'Donnell

Parish Priest: Fr. Colm Ó Gallchóir: Tel: 074 9731013 (9731030)