

# ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

ENNISKILLEN

LISBELLAW



Volume 1, Issue 13

## NEWSLETTER

December 2018

Thanks for picking up our Parish Newsletter. By reading it, you make our parish stronger. My especial thanks go to the people who contributed to this edition of the Newsletter and to the group of people, the Editor especially, for producing it.

The photos on this page show some significant changes that have happened for our parish since July. Firstly, you'll see Father Kevin Malcolmson along with us. Fr Kevin was appointed as Curate here last September. He had been with us when he was training to be a priest. Now he is back with us full time. I know that many of you have already heard him speaking at Masses. He is very welcome among us. The other photo includes our Bishop-Elect, Monsignor Larry Duffy. Monsignor Larry will be ordained Bishop of Clogher in St Macartan's Cathedral, Monaghan, at 3pm on Sunday 10 February. You will be welcome to attend. Monsignor Larry is a native of Magheracluone Parish at the southern tip of the Diocese. Among his wide experiences are several years in Africa, working with the people of the Kitui Diocese in Kenya, with whom he has maintained strong connections. We can expect to see him here in Enniskillen for Confirmation on 19 May 2019.

When I look back over the year, a few other things stand out. There was the amazing attendance in St Michael's Church on the night of Remembrance Sunday to commemorate the Armistice that marked the end of the 1914 - 1918 World War. There was the wonderful day we had for Deacon Martin Donnelly's Ordination. It was so well done and so well attended. Many of you will have heard Deacon Martin preaching at Mass since then. He has been bringing Holy Communion to the sick and housebound of the parish, as well as taking on other work at Diocesan level. Another thing that stays with me is the emphasis that emerged on Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing at our Parish Gathering last March. You will see more relevant resources in our parish bookstands at the back of St Michael's Church. You may also notice a list of numbers for public services and support groups in our weekly Parish Messenger at this time.



***"A very happy Christmas everyone; may God bless you all." - Deacon Martin, Fr. Raymond, Fr. Joe, Fr. Kevin and Mgr. Peter***



**Bishop-Elect Monsignor Larry Duffy with Deacon Martin Donnelly and Monsignor Peter O'Reilly P.P.**

I heard someone say recently that the best gifts are those that cannot be bought: love, patience, support, kindness, a visit, a call. Our family and parish connections offer great protection against the loneliness and vulnerability that can undermine our emotional wellbeing. I remember the work of our parish schools in that regard. There are few, if any, places, where more parishioners gather than in our schools. Teachers do a lot to help children in the present and into the future, despite the dwindling of educational resources from government. God bless you all this Christmas. May the happiness of heaven warm your heart and strengthen you.

***Monsignor Peter***

# Memories of World War 1

*Sister Peter Ward entered the Convent of Mercy, Enniskillen, on 21 April 1913 and lived there until her death on 13 November 1989.  
Her memories of the war were recorded in her later years.*



**Enniskillen Sisters of Mercy Community in July 1913**

**Back:** Sister Peter Ward (author), Srs Ethna Kelly, Gabriel Conway, Ignatius Mulligan, Michael Young, Magdalene King and Bernadette Maguire. **Middle:** Srs John O'Reilly, Dympna Murray, Olivia Meegan, Ita McDermott, Benignus Brannigan and Anthony Finan. **Front:** Srs Attracta McGovern, Berchmans McHenry, Saint Esprit McHugh, Aloysius O'Beirne, Fanchea Quinn, Laurentia Comerford and Frances McEvoy

I remember the glorious sunny day in 1914 when news of the outbreak of World War 1 reached the town. Sr. Olivia Meegan and I were down visiting families in Wellington Place. To express our sympathy, we visited the soldiers and their families stationed at Castle Barracks. In every house there was fear, fear on the part of the men who were to face danger and death and the fear and anguish in the hearts of the women and children who were soon to be separated from their husbands and fathers. I shall always remember that day.

Having done our best to console the soldiers, we called at a house in which there were two young men who were on the Reserve. They knew they would soon have to say goodbye to their parents, brothers and sisters. One was 24 and he did not seem to take the prospect of going to the trenches in France as seriously as his younger brother of 19 or 20. The latter, Willie, felt he was to die. Sadly, Willie was killed in Gallipoli but the elder brother returned from France and displayed the few French phrases he had learned by saluting everyone in French.

The four years of the war were miserable in this town. Most able-bodied men were at the front. Soon news was arriving of a son or a father being killed or missing and men were returning suffering from the effects of poison gas or with feet and toes frostbitten due to the intense cold of the trenches. Many of these men lived for years but few recovered entirely from life in the trenches.

We nuns knew little about what was going on in France but on visitation and from the schoolchildren we learned some of the facts. One morning a little girl, daughter of an English sergeant stationed in the Castle Barracks, came in with the terrible news of the first air-bombing.

If I remember correctly, a past pupil of the Convent School lost her life in the first ship, The Lusitania, sunk by a German submarine. Her people had owned the shop now called 'The Melvin' and had emigrated to America a few years before the war. She was making a return visit when tragedy struck.

Sugar was very scarce. Before 1914 it was plentiful and cheap. Many a time we used it to light the fire as it was considered safer than paraffin. Other food stuffs were scarce too and the bread was almost black in colour.

Everything comes to an end and one morning, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, at about 8 o'clock all the whistles, which at that time called men to work, began to blow. When I entered the refectory for breakfast, I found something unusual in those days - a buzz of conversation - it was our custom to eat breakfast in silence. I enquired what all the fuss was about and was told that the war was to end at 11 o'clock that day.



## World Meeting of Families



*"But let us also humbly acknowledge that, if we are honest with ourselves, we too can find the teachings of Jesus hard. How difficult it is always to forgive those who hurt us; how challenging always to welcome the migrant and the stranger; how painful joyfully to bear disappointment, rejection or betrayal; how inconvenient to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, the unborn or the elderly, who seem to impinge upon our own sense of freedom.*

*Yet it is precisely at those times that the Lord asks us: "What about you, do you want to go away too?" With the strength of the Spirit to "encourage" us and with the Lord always at our side, we can answer: "We believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God". With the people of Israel, we can repeat: "We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God".*

*Through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, each Christian is sent forth to be a missionary, "a missionary disciple". The Church as a whole is called to "go forth" to bring the words of eternal life to all the peripheries of our world. May our celebration today confirm each of you, parents and grandparents, children and young people, men and women, religious brothers and sisters, contemplatives and missionaries, deacons and priests, to share the joy of the Gospel! Share the Gospel of the family as joy for the world!*





## Ashwoods School Reunion: Friday 28 September 2018

Past pupils of Ashwoods School turned out in great numbers for the school reunion; a quite remarkable response as the school closed in July 1968 and was demolished in 1972. The evening began at The Graan where Fr Charles Cross CP celebrated a special Mass for all past pupils, living and deceased, and delivered an inspirational homily on the theme of remaining in contact and caring and looking after one another as life progresses. There were several complete families present for the reunion with members having travelled from all over Ireland and the UK to attend. All enjoyed a wonderful evening - renewing childhood friendships, reminiscing about their schooldays and the times that have passed since those far-off days. After a fine meal in the Three Way Inn, the celebrations continued well into the small hours.

The first mention of a school at Ashwoods can be found in the Reports from Commissioners: Ireland: Drainage, Ecclesiastical Commission Education: Fisheries. Volume 18 of 1842. The OSNI Historical Second Edition Map (1846-1862) shows the School House, which was built sometime between 1832 and 1846, at the junction of the Sligo Road and the then new Ashwoods Road. In 1874, though there were 40 males and 43 females on the register, average attendance was 26.

The school we attended opened in 1887 when it had had an enrolment of 40 pupils. It was a single storey building with a 'rough-cast' grey exterior finish and quoined corners. The exterior woodwork was painted green and the roof was slated. The ceiling was quite high, maybe 10 feet, above the tongue and groove wooden floor. There was wainscoting around the lower parts of the internal walls to a height of about 4 feet. It and the doors were painted brown with the walls above a shade of cream. The windows were quite large and set high in the walls, the upper halves could be opened by tilting inwards. There was no other form of light in the building and heating was by a solid fuel 'pot-belly' stove. The yard was surrounded by a low stone wall, with a heavy metal gate entrance. Behind the main building was the coalhouse and the toilets, surrounded by high stone walls.



**Pupils at Ashwoods School in 1957**

**Front, left to right:** Gabriel Moohan and Jim Maguire; **Second row:** Bernard Corrigan, Triona Quigley, Mena McTeggart, Caresa Friel, Laura Lilly, Maura Crawford, Valerie Crawford, Martina Nolan, Margaret Friel, Pat Corrigan, Gabriel Magee, and Nora Moohan; **Third row:** Maureen Kelly, Winnie Nolan, Kathleen Kelly, Agnes O'Brien, Ena Moohan, Edie Nolan, Margaret McBrien, Eileen McTeggart, Marie Magee and Joey Kelly; **Fourth row:** Sheila Adams (teacher), John Moohan, Jim McTeggart, Bernard McGurn, John McTeggart, Desi Ward, Eugene Moohan and John Adams (teacher); **Back row:** Gabriel McTernan and Gerald Magee.





Artwork from an original, courtesy of Desi Ward

The first teacher was Miss Flanagan of Townhall St, Enniskillen. She was succeeded by Mrs Blake. During the 1930's Miss Fitzsimmons took over. She was replaced, in 1945, by Miss Dot Smyth, who was appointed by Archdeacon Gannon, P.P.. In 1956 Miss Smyth, was joined by Miss Vera Tummons. In due course Miss Tummons left to follow her vocation as a Carmelite Nun in Blackburn. Miss Smyth was then joined by her niece Mrs Carmel McInerney and latterly by Mrs Maeve Gallagher. They remained as the teachers until the school closed in 1968, when pupils transferred to the schools in Enniskillen. Although the school was located in Enniskillen Parish it also drew some pupils from the Letterbreen/Mullaghduan areas of Cleenish Parish as they could avail of public transport to travel to it.

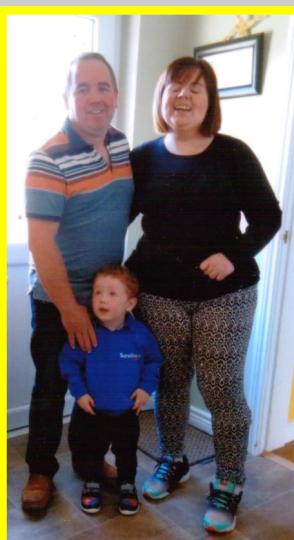
*Jim Maguire*



Ashwoods School Past Pupils after Mass in The Graan, celebrated by Fr Charles Cross CP

The Reunion organisers produced a booklet of reminiscences and photographs "*Ashwoods School 1887 – 1968 A celebration*". Some copies remain available - by contacting [jjmaguire48@gmail.com](mailto:jjmaguire48@gmail.com)

## Parishioner Profile



Ciara, pictured with husband John and son James

My name is Ciara Murray. I was a parishioner in St Michael's until 2012, when I got married. I was actively involved there as a Eucharistic Minister and a Reader. I was also part of the youth group set up by Fr. Jim Moore. We organised youth Masses and in 2001 I was selected to go to The World Youth Day in Rome..

In 2015, I had a major stroke when 37 weeks pregnant. Extremely ill, I spent six months in hospital but, with determination and the power of prayer, I made it! Now, I am again driving and no longer use a wheelchair; my independence is coming back. My wee boy, James, comes everywhere with me; he is always by my side.

I would like to thank my family, especially my husband, John, (and James), and my extended family for their help and support during my illness and all those in the community for their prayers.



## Mary's Meals



Mary's Meals, a voluntary organisation providing meals to 1,361,586 children in sixteen countries each day, was founded by two Scottish brothers, Magnus and Fergus Mac Farlane-Barrow in 1992. Having seen the poverty of poor children and their families when visiting Malawi, they started a charity to feed and educate those children at as low a cost as possible. Mary's Meals is now a global movement of people united by the belief that no child in this world of plenty should endure a day without a meal.



**Members of the Parish's Mary's Meals Committee - John O'Callaghan, Fr. Raymond Donnelly, Ann Curry, Bernie Traynor and Gerry McNamee**

The committee of our local branch of Mary's Meals is a group of people from St Michael's Parish. The Chair, Ann Curry, treasurer Bernie Traynor and spiritual director Fr. Raymond Donnelly are supported by Gerry McNamee, John O'Callaghan and twelve other workers. They are all now part of the global team that offers hope to some of the world's poorest children by providing a daily meal in a place of education for as little as £13.90 for each child for a full year. Ann and her team have raised a staggering £127,443 from street collection, bag packs, sponsored walks to Knock, birthday fun days, porridge mornings, sponsored cycles, school

fund raising events and some very generous donations from our fellow parishioners. All funds raised are used to sponsor two Schools - Masasa Primary School in Northern Malawi, with 2,068 children, and Mana Gbokai Public School in Liberia which has 147 children. Mary's Meals has also donated hundreds of back packs to the children. Bag packs are used school bags containing hygiene items, books, pencils, pens, etc. Ann explains, *"this aspect of our work truly captures the hearts of so many children when they receive a school bag. It is also a great way to recycle old school bags, PE kits, skirts, books and pencils at the end of each school year."*

Mary's Meals strives to provide a nutritional meal daily to every hungry child throughout the world in a place of learning, supporting the education that will free them from poverty. However, with sixty one million children still out of school and millions attending school hungry, there is a long way to go: the work is just beginning. **Ann Curry**

The local group takes this opportunity to thank all of those who have supported or donated to Mary's Meals. *"Your continued support is very much appreciated. if you would like to donate to this great charity or become a support worker, please call 0788543829."*

## Fr Sean's Ordination

Fr Sean Mulligan, who served as a deacon in St. Michael's parish from March to June this year, was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Clogher by Bishop Noel Treanor of Down and Connor in St Macartan's Cathedral, Monaghan, on Sunday 1 July. Aged 47, Fr Mulligan, a native of Knockatallon in the Parish of Tydavnet is the son of the late Michael and Philomena Mulligan. Priests present, from all over the diocese and further afield, included the Diocesan Administrator, Monsignor Joseph McGuinness and Bishops Joseph Duffy and Liam MacDaid, Bishops-Emeritus of Clogher. Deacons Martin Donnelly and Kevin Connolly served at the tables of the Word and Eucharist. Fr Sean is currently a Curate in the Parish of Carrickmacross.



## The Illusion of Happiness

A recent article in The Western People by Fr Brendan Hoban, of the diocese of Killala, made me think and I want to share some of his wisdom. He quotes a Canadian Psychiatrist, Dr Norman Doidge: *"Because we are born human we are guaranteed a good dose of suffering. And chances are, if you or someone you love are not suffering now, they will be within five years, unless you are freakishly lucky"*.

Fr Brendan says, *"The key truth that eventually becomes clear to every sentient adult who has borne the heat of the day is that the most obvious constituent of life is suffering. .... Any parent protecting or over protecting children by keeping under wraps the reality of suffering and imagine they are doing a service to their children are deluded."* Children need to be exposed to the obvious fact that *"life is difficult and that sooner or later some form of suffering has to be faced."* The search for meaning - not seeking Happiness - is what makes life worthwhile and enjoyable. Very early in life you discover that there is suffering and pain in life. Children should not be overprotected from that because they need to learn to be resilient when faced with suffering throughout their lives. *"The most obvious fact of life is that bad stuff happens to everyone. And whatever it is we have to get on with it."*

Young people need to learn the difference between contentment and happiness. Young people also need to know that rules are needed. *"The modern generation is being reared on the idea that morality is relative that there are no rules, that there is nothing absolutely right or absolutely wrong, that tolerance is the great virtue. So morality is a matter of whatever you are having yourself."* But the reality is that human beings need rules and that a morality without boundaries is selling young people short because deep down people cannot live well without a moral compass. Which is why the search for meaning is ultimately more satisfying than the search for happiness, in that the first delivers, the second is a mirage.

Nowadays, the *"Catholic brand is perceived to be devalued in the popular mind so everything Catholicism proposes (even when it makes sense) is airbrushed out of existence."* The older we get the more we realise that dispensing with the wisdom of the past is throwing the baby out with the bathwater and leaving a generation to survive on moral scraps.

Tolerance isn't everything and pretending it is, is selling everyone short. Which is why encouraging young people to take responsibility for their own lives (painful though it may be) is the very beginning of wisdom.

**Fr. Joe**



# Laughter is the Best Medicine

...Just a Thought, by Fr Joe



**Fr. Joe McVeigh**

Jesus is often portrayed in books and films and in most paintings as a very serious and gloomy person - not really much fun to be around. True, there are not many references to his sense of humour in the gospels but from what we can gather about his life, his stories and his ability to be at ease with children, he must have had a good sense of humour. He went to parties and enjoyed the banter. I think he would often have had a good laugh with his friends.

Laughter often helps to defuse difficult or tense situations. We are told that Archbishop Tutu used his sense of humour during the bad times in South Africa to diffuse tension at meetings. Without humour and laughter the world would be a very dull place. Scientists tell us that laughter, humour and joy are an important part of life. Laughing lowers blood pressure, reduces stress hormones and increases muscle flexion. It increases the circulation of antibodies in the blood stream and makes us more resistant to infection.

Jesus did not go around with a gloomy face. If we cannot imagine Jesus laughing we will not see him as fully human. We should learn from him about the need for good humour if we are to be true witnesses to the good news. As the cheerful Pope Francis remarked, "*An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral.*"

## Do This In Memory Programme in St Michael's Parish.

School and parish work very closely with parents and children in preparation for receiving First Confession and First Holy Communion. An important part of this preparation is our parish based catechetical programme entitled: *Do This In Memory*, which is centred in the parish celebration of the Sunday Eucharist and in the home. The programme resources are designed to help parents, families and the parish to become actively involved in preparation for the sacrament. This parish preparation takes place once a month for nine months before First Holy Communion and concludes during the parish celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi. (9.30am Mass in St Mary's Church, Lisbellaw for P.4 children in Tattygar and 10.30am in St Michael's for P.4 children attending schools in the town of Enniskillen)

As a parish, we are keen to offer parents and children every opportunity to live out their baptismal call and to grow in faith together. Attendance at these Masses on the particular preparation Sundays is an important requirement for receiving First Holy Communion. This year, our Enrolment Mass took place on 11 November, when the children for First Holy Communion in May 2019 were formally enrolled in our Parish, each receiving a programme folder, containing the monthly newsletter for faith based learning and activities at home, and the THUMB Book, which is used at all preparation Masses to help explain the prayer of the Mass. We encourage parents and children to participate in the life of our parish by coming to Mass to practise the prayers of faith and the responses to the Mass, all contained in the THUMB Book, as well as following the *Do This In Memory* Programme at home, using the Grapevine Newsletter, filled with scripture texts, prayer ideas for the home and fun activities.



**Fr. Raymond**

### St Michael's Parish ([www.st-michaels.net](http://www.st-michaels.net))

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