

CALLAN PARISH NEWSLETTER

Readers: 6.30 p.m. Marie Murphy 8.30 a.m. Colin Aherne; 11.00 Padhraic Moran

Coming up this Sunday: 1916 Commemoration / War of Independence Committee is marking the 1916 rising with a parade from the parish church to the Town Hall (L'Arche Café) for a reading of the 1916 Proclamation. This will be followed by a parade to Kilbride to the monument dedicated to those who died in the War of Independence. All participants are welcome to come for the 11.00 a.m. Mass in the parish church during which those who died in the struggle for independence will be remembered in prayer.

A large and appreciative crowd attended the memorial Mass for the same cause on Monday night last in the Blessed Edmund Rice Memorial Chapel in Westcourt.

Word of thanks to all who assisted at the Easter Ceremonies – in particular to our readers, Eucharistic ministers, choir members, to all who helped to prepare the church and tidy up after each liturgy. A special word of thanks to all who have already contributed to the Easter Offering Collection for the Support of Priests (active & retired). You can still do so by dropping in your envelope into the basket at weekends or directly into the presbytery.

Divine Mercy Sunday: 3rd April: Devotions to Divine Mercy this Sunday in the parish church, 2.00 – 5.00 p.m.. Devotions will include Mass and the sacrament of reconciliation during this Extraordinary Jubilee year of Mercy, 2016.

Is the religious liberty guaranteed in the 1916 Proclamation being conveniently ignored and subtly undermined in the interests of political populism? Martin Mansergh, former adviser to several Taoisigh and himself latterly a T. D. & Junior Minister, makes some telling observations in this regard in an article in the *Irish Catholic*, 24 March 2016:

“The phrase in the 1916 Easter Proclamation least quoted in this centenary is the guarantee by the Republic of religious and civil liberty”. While this was intended as reassurance to religious minorities it was also applicable to the majority religion which had long been persecuted and denied the freedom to practice their religion during penal times. Mansergh goes on to pose the question: “how does the modern world and modern Ireland measure up, when it comes to guaranteeing religious liberty? The answer is, often not at all too well ... human rights are raised by governments, at high level, usually limply ... twenty years ago most Irish people would have taken the religious liberty in the Proclamation for granted”. Mansergh admits that “in the early years of the State the Church may have exercised an excessive influence on state institutions (e.g. reformatory schools, orphanages etc.) but that has been more than corrected in recent times”. He speculates that the recent spate of terrorism in France and Belgium coming from an alienated second generation youth derives in part at least from “an excessive secular zeal which is one strand in French republicanism. **Ireland’s strong religious**

tradition has helped us accommodate immigrant populations from other non-Christian religious traditions. We are fortunate so far to have escaped having a strident right-wing anti-immigrant political party”. Mansergh goes on to draw attention to the “warning signs of the emergence of a growing secular zeal in this country in the debate about scrapping denominational schools ... and in calls for the repeal of the Eight Amendment and its replacement by the British abortion legislation of 1967”.

In its mad rush to distance itself from a religious ethos in our schools and creaking health services the State often fails to enquire into the ethos of the new partner it is courting. Mansergh goes on to articulate his considered opinion on what is happening around while we pretend not to see. “He writes “I am long of the view that voluntary agencies engaged in caring, counselling (e.g. Catholic Agency Accord), community welfare (Family Life Centres etc.) should be free to contribute on the basis of a religious ethos where in the vast majority of cases from the client’s point of view, who is free to choose another service, the values involved will not in any way diminish the benefit to them. It is sad when the State withdraws financial support for work that has been of public benefit for many years, unless it renounces its original mission or core values. This seems to be what is happening in the case of Tulsa and the Boyle Family Life Centre. **One reason among many that the Government and especially the Labour Party lost in the recent election was that they alienated many of those for whom religion matters in their lives. Speech writers, and those who use them, whose anti-clerical invective may have won applause in the national media, need to reflect on where public attitudes really lie”.**

Return Trocaire Boxes: Over the next few days and weeks we’ll be forever reminded in the media to return our Lenten Trocaire Boxes. This year’s campaign is aimed at helping those suffering the consequences of climate change – the poor impoverished farmer seeing the desert encroaching on his little holding with the crops he needed to ward off hunger failing and due to drought and his animals (a cow and few goats) suffering a similar fate. Please bring in your Lenten Trocaire Boxes as soon as possible **and if at all possible convert smaller coins into larger ones or preferably notes. This makes it convenient for counting and banking etc..**

Callan Heritage Society has organised a talk on the life of **Father Patrick Delahunty** who was a curate in Callan (1916 –’21) and a leading revolutionary figure during the War of Independence in the area. It will be given by his nephew, Noel Delahunty, in the old CBS Primary School, West Street on this coming Wednesday, 6th of April at 8.00 PM. Everyone is welcome.