

CALLAN PARISH NEWSLETTER

Recent death: Ann Gibbons, Ibiza & formerly of Lucan, Dublin – memorial Mass in Callan Parish Church, Mon. 30 Jan. 11.00 a.m..

Ministers of the Eucharist: 6.30 p.m. Brenda O'Brien & Molly Foley; 11.00 a.m Frank & Stanislaus Kania & Olivia Quirke.

Ministers of the Word: 6.30 p.m. Fiona Horkan; 8.30 a.m. Diana Tobin; 11.00 a.m Olive Power.

Blood Transfusion Service will be in Callan Parish Hall on this Tues. 31 Jan. 2017, 4.30-8.00 p.m.. As always it is experiencing difficulty in harvesting sufficient supplies of blood to meet hospital and emergency needs. Please come along and give blood if at all possible.

Wed. 1st February: St. Brigid's Day: Brigid is the secondary patron of Ireland, ranking next to St. Patrick in terms of importance. She was born in Co. Offaly area about 460 and died in Kildare area c. 528. Her mother was a slave girl but her father saw to it that she was brought up by a foster mother. While still a young girl her hand in marriage was sought by an eager suitor but she rejected his proposal on the grounds that she 'had vowed her virginity to the Lord'. She went on to found a church in the Liffey Valley at a place called Kildare. She was ahead of her time in making contact with the Abbot of a local male monastic foundation with a view to sharing the church facilities rather than each building their own. The Abbot's name was Conleth. In time he would be reckoned to be the first Bishop of Kildare. Brigid saw herself as a kind of second St. Patrick, bringing the Good News to places that had not yet been touched by Christianity. Hence, she merits the title 'Mary of the Gael'.

February 1st in our pre-Christian, Celtic Tradition: The Feast of St. Brigid, Feb. 1st coincides with old Celtic Festival of Imbolg (meaning 'in the

belly') was the festival of the springtime, a festival looking forward to fertility – the time for tilling the land and getting things ready for the crops; it was also the time when the first of the spring lambs began to appear and when the fishermen were able to return to the sea after the winter storms. It was a time when the whole of nature was 'pregnant' again and about to give birth provided the gods were on side. Each festival had its own unique rituals aimed at winning favour with the gods. These rituals often took the form of visiting wells or springs, the ultimate source of all fertility being water. Tying a piece of cloth that had been in contact with a wound around a bush was an ancient Celtic tradition - the 'raggedly bush' tradition). It was taken over by Christians and became the blessing of a piece of flannel with water drawn from St. Brigid's Well. This probably explains the proliferation of St. Brigid's Wells. Nearly every parish has one. The first church in Callan was 'the Church of Brigid' or Kilbride. Callan as the town bearing that name did not come into existence until 1208 and could only boast of its first church from c. 1215 onwards. Incidentally it was called the Church of the Assumption also as it still is today.

Thur, 2 Feb.: Candlemas Day: the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. It is the day when we bless candles that we use in our churches through the year and in our homes also, especially at times of bereavement and illness. It is customary for people to present candles for blessing on this day for use in the church over the coming year. People may also like to take home a few blessed candles to keep in their homes to ward off any misfortune, storms or flooding that might come their way. Packets of candles are available from Hackett's in Bridge St. and in Super Valu.

Frid. 3rd February – Feast of St. Blaise – throats will be blessed at the 10.00 a.m. Mass on the day and at the weekend Masses next weekend 4/5 February.

Week of First Friday of February: The sick & housebound will be visited with Holy Communion have their throats blessed during the coming week.

Sr. Eileen Glynn on Mission Appeal: A Sister of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary will be visiting the parish to speak at all Masses next weekend and accept whatever financial support you can give her in support of their missions in different parts of the world.:

Closing date for enrolment applications to Bunscoil McAuley-Rice for September, 2017 is 1st February. Contact 0567725674 or mcauleyrice@gmail.com for forms.

Coming up: Catholic Schools Week : 29 Jan. – 3 Feb.: Last year we celebrated the Jubilee Year of Mercy and attention was focused on the theme of mercy and forgiveness during Catholic Schools Week. This year the focus shifts to caring for our common home – the earth. In May 2015 our Holy Father Pope Francis published an important letter (an encyclical letter) on ‘**Caring for Our Common Home**’ (**Laudato Si**). The letter deals with all issues pertaining to our environment – pollution, climate change and resultant drought and famine. The Pope is appealing to all of us to take greater care of the earth. It is after all our shared home and we must take care to hand it on in good shape to the generations coming after us. The issue of climate-warming is particularly worrying because more and more of the earth’s surface is turning into desert and resulting in starvation and famine for peoples occupying those parts of the world. We have just been told that 2016 was the hottest year on record, continuing a pattern which has been evident since the beginning of the new millennium.

As people living in a land of plenty what is particularly relevant is to wage war on waste. We have just celebrated Christmas and I’m sure we’re embarrassed to admit how much good food went to waste in our households – maybe even 50% of all that food that we purchased in the run-up to Christmas. The earth has been entrusted to us to care for it and ensure that we hand it on to the generations after us in a better state than we even received it.

Other areas we might look at is how we use energy e.g. electricity. We

can save energy by turning off lights and other household appliances when not in use. Every little bit of energy that is wasted amounts up, especially when it is on large scale.

Baptism – a criterion for entry: This issue is in the news again recently. The Department of Educations uses it to cover up its failure to provide sufficient school places for all. In places where there are sufficient school places to meet the local need the issue of being baptised does not arise and this is so in probably 90% of all cases. **Journalist Sarah Carey** writing in the Sunday Independent last Sunday (22 Jan 2017) would seem to confirm this view. She is full of praise for the inclusive nature of church-managed schools. She writes “I’m not going to condemn priests for oppressing anyone when they run the vast majority of schools in a genuinely inclusive manner. .. Catholic national schools have a very high proportion of non-Irish citizens in attendance. The practical reality is that throughout the country, and outside a few very specific areas which have a shortage of overall school places, the priests take in everybody – and they do a very good job. Is it ideal that religion is part of the system? No, but does it work and have the support of the parents? Yes, it does. .. take a look at the 2013 survey by the Department of Education in 44 towns. The outstanding result of the survey was the incredibly low response rate. My conclusion was that people who didn’t respond don’t care, because they’re happy with the status quo.

Mount Carmel Jan 2017 Draw Results: €200 Olive Hawe, Windgap; **€100 each:** Maria Power-Bryan; Olive Phelan, Gowran; **€30 each:** Nora Comerford, Kilbride; Margaret Mackey, Mellows Park; Darren Doheny, Monamaugh; Fr. John Mc’Grath, Mullinahone; Mick Mc’Grath, Kilkenny; William Morris, Screhen; Michael O’Sullivan, Ahenure; Ryan O’Dwyer, Callan; Mary Byrne, Casteltobin; Breda Lyons Clonkil; **Promoters’ Prizes: €15 each:** Goretti Bradshaw; Denis Barry & Eamon O’Shea.