

CALLAN PARISH NEWSLETTER

Ministers of the Word: 6.30 p.m. Colm Keher; 8.30 a.m. Colin Ahern; 11.00 a.m. Mairead Carey.

Ministers of the Eucharist: 6.30 p.m. Brenda Farrell & Bernie Butler; 11.00 a.m. Olivia Quirke & Paul Clarke

Recent death: Patti Stapleton, Clonmel Road – died 14 Oct.; funeral on Tues. last. RIP.; **Jackie Townsend**, U. S.A. and formerly of Ballycloven RIP.

Coming up this weekend: Mission Sunday, 23rd Oct. – **2nd Collection this weekend is for the Missions:** In recent years Callan parishioners have been most generous in supporting the Missions - **€ 1,000 – 1,100 each year.** We appeal to you to continue in this generous spirit of reaching out to the poorest of the poor. Nationally the Mission Collection realises **€1.75m**, and only a minimal amount is gobbled up by administration.

Callan's strong connections with the Missions: Callan has a long and proud tradition of supporting the Missions both in terms of people and financial capital. It is blessed with two of its sons still actively serving the Missionary Church - **Fr. Philip O'Halloran, Mill Hill Missionary, who has recently been appointed the new Regional Superior of Mill Hill, Ireland, and Fr. Jim Greene, White Father of Africa, who is** presently stationed in Jerusalem. I first met him in Malawi, East Africa in early 1990 where he was then working in a remote, rural parish. To these we might add **Fr. Jim O' Halloran**, a member of the Salesian Order, and a native of Scaugh. He is now retired and living in Dublin, having served in many different mission fields throughout his life.

There is scarcely a family in Ireland that does not have a relative or neighbour who has served in some mission field at some time and is now retired e.g. **Sr. Rita Lynch, MMM**, Abbey View, Callan. She spent

36 years of her life working as a nurse in Tanzania and Malawi, two of the poorest countries in the world. On Mission Sunday we salute the heroic work of our brothers and sisters.

Archbishop O'Reilly, Cashel & Emly, speaking recently at a special Mass in Maynooth to mark Mission Sunday thanked all who have made and continue to make the work of the Missions possible. Archbishop O'Reilly, himself a former missionary in Nigeria thanked all who help the Missions. He said "There are many who have worked tirelessly at home in order that missionaries abroad can do their work – a lot of work couldn't have been done without the efforts and support of the ordinary people of Ireland". Today we may have very few missionary vocations but the work of mission must continue in and through our prayer for the Missions and our financial support. Our Mission Appeal People who visit every parish each year are struck by the generosity of the people they meet along the way. During the past year we had a Franciscan Sister of the Missionaries of Mary in our parish who collected something in the region of **€3,600** over the weekend.

How is Mission Sunday Collection is actually spent? It goes towards supporting 1,069 dioceses in 157 countries where the Church is in its infancy and is too poor to be able to support itself. The funds accruing from our Mission Sunday Collection go towards the building of churches, schools, orphanages, health clinics and dispensaries. This collection is taken up in every Catholic diocese throughout the world on this day. A significant amount of the money raised goes towards the education of priests in different African countries and Religious Sisters. The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, located in Rome, distributes the funds directly to the each diocese depending on needs. Some funding goes towards school fees and the provision of transport for priests and sisters. Otherwise they would not be able to carry out their work. All expenditure is carefully monitored and controlled by retired missionaries. The one thing we can be absolutely assured of is that whatever we give will go towards a good cause – including feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Let us try to be as generous as possible.

Mullinavat Bingo in Mullinavat Community Centre on Thursday 20th April at 8.00 p.m. doors open at 7.30 p.m. **€850.00** in prizes. All welcome.

Confirmation 2018: Due to the increasing class sizes in Bunscoil McCauley-Rice it has become necessary to celebrate Confirmation each year for 6th Class. Each 6th class year now has 50-60 pupils and it is no longer feasible to operate on a two-year-cycle as has been the case for the past 20 years or more. In consultation with the school authorities and those directly involved in the preparation and celebration etc. we have penciled in **April 29, 2018** for Confirmations next year. May I stress that this date is provisional and dependent upon a new bishop being in place by that time. He may have other ideas, but if we have agreed on a particular date in advance it is unlikely that he would want to change it. There is still no indication as to when we might have a new bishop – probably before Pope Francis comes for the World Meeting of Families in August 2018. A word of thanks to all who supported the collection for it last weekend.

Congratulations to John Lockes on winning the Junior County Championship last weekend. We wish them well as they in pursuit of the Leinster Junior Club Championship and maybe even further. Remember a few years ago when they made it to the All-Ireland in Croke Park and when we had Confirmation in Callan on the same day. Confirmation went well. There is no danger of colliding with Confirmation this year.

‘Spiritual V Religious’: “I’m spiritual not religious”, this is a refrain we hear all too frequently nowadays! By this people normally mean that they have no time for organised religion such as going to church or subscribing to certain beliefs or living their lives in accordance with given ethical standards. Being ‘spiritual’ is a way of saying that there is more to life than material things, that there is a higher being out there that we ought to be in touch with but would stop short of calling him God. The tag ‘spiritual’ presents one with a licence to create one’s own beliefs and way of life. It thrives on the value of freedom i.e. not being hidebound by any moral or ethical law other than the supreme value of freedom. It can trace its origins back to the 20th century existentialist

French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre. In his book the highest value was to be free. Anything that limits individual freedom is bad or evil.

The worship of freedom as a supreme value feeds into a highly individualistic age and culture. People are intent on protecting their freedom at all costs and are utterly reluctant to give up anything of themselves to a higher authority that might compromise their right to choose and be free. Those calling for the repeal of the 8th Amendment - the pro-choice supporters - would almost certainly describe themselves as ‘spiritual’ rather than religious. The pro-choice movement could be said to have its roots in the philosophy of Jean Paul Sartre also. Its advocates cherish personal freedom as the highest value of all without paying any attention to the corresponding rights of the other person directly affected by their choices. Their starting point is the individual’s right to choose and not the dignity and sacredness of human life. The problem is that when we depart from objective moral / ethical standards e.g. the absolute sacredness of human life at all times we find ourselves on a slippery slope not knowing where to draw the line. This unfortunately is a feature of our age. We run the risk of becoming slaves to the ‘tyranny’ of relativism as Pope John Paul II and his successor Pope Benedict XVI were forever warning us of. The certain recipe for disaster is to vote to repeal the 8th Amendment without knowing what we are going to replace it with. We don’t abandon the security of our home without knowing where we are going to live.