

CALLAN PARISH NEWSLETTER

Recent death: Neville Mullally, Bridge St. – died 24 Jan. 2018; funeral Sat. 27 Jan. 2018.

Months Mind Masses this weekend: Sat. 6.30 p.m. Ignatius Rice, Convent View; Sunday 11.00 a.m. Tess O’Sullivan, The Meadows & Bridge St.;

Readers: 6.30 p.m. Lizzy Keher; 8.30 a.m. Colin Ahern; 11.00 a.m. Ailis Carey.

Ossory Lourdes Pilgrimage 2018: The annual Ossory pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place from Tues, 22 May until Sun. 27 May inclusive. Bookings for all intending to travel may be made by contacting Eleanor (Monday-Friday, except Wednesdays) at Glenmore parish office Glenmore County Kilkenny, telephone **051 880414**, email glenmore@ossory.ie **Price €785 pps or just €10 more than last year.**

Ossory prepares to welcome a new bishop: On 11th March 2018 Bishop-elect Dermot Farrell will be consecrated as our new bishop succeeding Bishop Freeman who retired due to ill-health in July 2016. The first bishop of Ossory to establish his headquarter in Kilkenny was a Felix O’Dulany in the 1190s. Work on the first cathedral in Kilkenny (St. Canice’s) began in the early 1200s and continued for half a century. It was here in St. Canice’s Cathedral that the papal legate Archbishop Rinucinni (after whom the well-known Kilkenny restaurant is named) was received by the Confederation of Kilkenny in November 1645. Five years later, however, Cromwell had plundered Kilkenny, stabled his horses in the Black Abbey and turned over St. Canice’s into Protestant hands.

Catholics were now bereft of a place to worship. They had to settle for a small chapel in St. Mary’s Parish – St. James Chapel, built in 1700 (at the same time as Callan had acquired its first chapel or ‘mass-house’). This chapel served the Catholic community until 1857 when the present St. Mary’s Cathedral was dedicated. Work on the cathedral began in 1843 i.e. in the same year as work was drawing to a close on

Callan Parish Church – see the plaque in the entrance porch in Callan bearing the date of 1843 (the entrance gates would come later). The estimated cost of building St. Mary’s Cathedral was **£25,000** at the time. Architecturally St. Mary’s is described as pure gothic in style, built of chiselled limestone and cruciform in shape. The grand opening took place in October 1857 during the episcopate of Bishop Edward Walsh, the one who would subsequently become embroiled in controversy with Fr. Robert O’Keeffe, the parish priest of Callan in what would become known as the ‘Callan Case’. Further work on the interior of the cathedral was carried out by Bishop Brownrigg in the 1890s. Bishop Birch re-ordered the interior of St. Mary’s in the early 1970s in response to the new liturgical requirements put in place by the Second Vatican Council.

Pilates Classes: Over 50s Pilates class in the Blessed Edmund Rice centre (Callan) 9:30-10:30 starting January 29th. One of the best things about the Pilates method is that it works so well for a wide range of people. All exercises are developed with modifications that can make a workout safe and challenging for a person at any level. It is also a great way to get involved in the local community.

Closing date for enrolment applications to Bunscoil McAuley-Rice for September, 2018 is 1st February. Contact 0567725674 or mcauleyrice@gmail.com for forms.

Thur. 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 old Irish Celtic Year was marked by 4 major festivals – **Imbolg (1st Feb.); Bealtaine (1st May); Lughnasa (1st Aug.) & Samhain (1st Nov.)**. 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 – water. They often contradicted or came into conflict with Christian faith and its particular rituals hatched in an alien environment and culture. Rituals spawned by different beliefs and in different cultures are often unhappy bed-fellows. Early Christian teachers were nothing if not practical and pragmatic. They endeavoured to hang onto what was good in the old Celtic traditions and weave them seamlessly into a new and embryonic Christian culture. The ancient tradition of gathering around a well to appease the gods was common to all festivals. Tying a piece of cloth that had been in contact with a wound around a bush was an ancient Celtic tradition also (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 all around the country. Nearly every parish has a St. Brigid's well. The first church in Callan was at Kilbride or 'the Church of Brigid'. Callan as a town 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 as it still is today.

Friday 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 that might come their way. Packets of candles are available in Super Valu.

Bunscoil McCauley-Rice Pupils will, weather permitting, be coming to the 10.00 a.m. Mass to mark Catholic Schools Week.

Saturday 3rd February – Feast of St. Blaise – throats will be blessed at 6.30 p.m. Mass on the day and at all the weekend Masses.

Confirmation Programme 2017:

Sun. 25 Feb., 11.00 a.m. – Enrolment Sunday;
Confirmation Preparation Programme 26 Feb.; 5 March; 12 March
8-9p.m. in Bunscoil McCauley-Rice School Hall;
Mid April – Confirmation Retreat at St. Mary's Cathedral;
Sun. 22 April, 11.00 a.m.: Ceremony of Light in preparation for
Confirmation;
Sun 29 April, 11.00 a.m. Celebration of Confirmation.
First Confession – Thur. 8 March 2018