

# Callan Parish Newsletter

**Recent death: Sheila O' Connor nee O'Hara, Cappahayden – funeral Mass in Callan on Wed. last.**

**Readers:** 6.30 p.m. Diana Tobin; 8.30 am. Lauri Grace; 11.00 am. First Communion readers.

**Ministers of the Eucharist:** 6.30 p.m. Catherine Lanigan & Nellie Lynch; 11.00 a.m. Mary Horgan & Paul Clarke.

**Sunday, 27 May 2018: First Communion Sunday:** This Sunday 45 children will receive their First Holy Communion. It is the day when our children take a further significant step in joining the Family of God's Holy People, which is of course the parish. The word 'communion' means being part of or belonging to. Hence receiving Holy Communion for the first time has as much to do with **what we become as what we receive.** Our children receive the Body of Christ for the first time and simultaneously become members of the 'Body of Christ' i.e. the family of God's Holy People gathered locally. Until the middle ages the term 'Body of Christ' referred primarily to the community or family of God's holy people and not to the consecrated host as such. New members were admitted into full membership of this family of faith when they received Holy Communion for the first time at about the age of 14 years. (Confirmation had already been celebrated a few years earlier at the age 8-10 years.). **Celebrating First Holy Communion:** We encourage families to celebrate the day by keeping the First Communion Child at the centre of it all the times. Put the First Communion child first – before indulging our own interests while the child runs around bored. It is his/her day – not a day for the pub. Give your child your time and your love instead. This will more than compensate for the gifts that you cannot afford and that the child may have little or no interest in anyway. Bunscoil McCauley-Rice Parents Association will be providing refreshments in the parish hall after the church celebration.

**First Communicants 2018:** Abi Bryan; Jade Brett; James Butler; P. J. Byrne; Valerie Carthy; Lilly Cashin; Robyn Corcoran; Isabelle Doheny; Tyler, Farrell; Kathleen Harty; Sean Henriques; Caoimhe Higon; Rinnah Hope; Michael Jackman; John Keher; Jane Kelly; Mai Kelly; Oisin Kennedy; Jack Kickham; Phoenix Kirwan; Peter Lawlor; Abbie Leahy; Eadaoin Lynch; Patrick Maher; Sean Morrissey; Aaron Murphy; Molly McGuire; Christopher McLawrence; Joe Nolan; Princess O'Reilly; Ruth O'Sullivan; Sarah Power; Ava Roche; Chloe Ryan; Emily Stuart; Darragh Tierney; Keith Tobin; Alex Skocen; Abbi Sweeney; Anna Marie Ventimiglia; Grace Williams; Khia Woodgate; Monika Zychla; Kajus Cerikas.

**Next Sunday, 3 June - Corpus Christi:** Next Sunday is the Feast of Corpus Christi, the day when we carry the Lord, present in the Eucharist in solemn procession through the streets. We welcome the First Communion Children to take part in the 11.00 a.m. Mass and to dress up in their First Communion outfits so as to get at least a second opportunity to wear them.. Hopefully, the nice weather will continue into next week.

We are fortunate to have an ideal venue to process to and a suitable distance to make for a worthwhile procession. We will process from the parish church to the Convent Chapel for Benediction. The altar servers will lead the procession, followed by all the First Communion Children and their families to the Convent Chapel. By participating in the procession we are saying that our faith has a place in the market-place and not just something that we leave inside the walls of the church or outside the wall of our parliament. Our prayer-life should flow out into our world of work and recreation and vice versa. We should be prepared to wear it on our sleeve and not be ashamed to take our faith with us to the market place. By participating in the procession we are making a statement that many in prominent positions would prefer not to hear or take notice of.

**Trinity Sunday:** This Sunday we celebrate Trinity Sunday or that which distinguishes Christianity from all other religions. With Judaism and Islam

we Christians share a common belief in One God (monotheism) but we go further in professing three persons in this One God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Every time we bless ourselves we remind ourselves of this fundamental truth. The Nicene Creed which we recite every Sunday is a summary of our belief in the Three Persons in the One God as well as in the Catholic Church. We believe that all three enjoy the fullness of divinity and are equal in dignity. These matters were highly controversial in the Church's infancy but were gradually resolved.

### **Faith in the Triune God alive and well in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Callan: Trinity**

**Stone:** In the front porch of our parish church we have what is called a 'Trinity Stone' – a sculptural representation of the Mystery of the Trinity – the three Persons of the Trinity hewn into a single piece of stone.

According to the experts this stone dates back to c.1520. It was executed by a master Callan craftsman of the O' Tunney School of stonemasons which flourished in Callan in the 16<sup>th</sup> & early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The stone is one of a very limited number of its kind (12 the experts say) still extant in Ireland. It tells us that the Christian faith was alive and well in Callan in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Trustees of Colaiste Eamon Ris & St. Brigid's College visit**

**Callan:** Last week representatives of both sets of Trustees visited both secondary schools sharing their expertise and concerns with the staffs and parents of both schools. They did so out of a spirit of concern for the future of Catholic education in Callan, given the projected development of the western environs of Kilkenny City. The Department of Education has recently unveiled plans to locate no less than three new schools (2 secondary + 1 primary) on the western environs of the City (i.e. the Callan Road area) to meet the growing needs of the city expanding in this direction. The projected development will heap enormous pressure on Callan as a future locus for second level education. Both schools are struggling for numbers as they are. We know there is an exodus of 2<sup>nd</sup> level pupils from Callan each day for Kilkenny in search of a wider choice of subjects and better facilities – this is what the young parents tell

me. When it comes to education they want the best for their children. Other loyalties are pushed aside.

This trend shows no signs of abating. It will become even more exacerbated as brand new schools begin to emerge. It is unlikely that any of these new schools will have a specifically Catholic ethos given present government policies and attitudes. However, what is certain is that the emergence of these new schools will impact heavily on second level education in Callan. In its present format it will become unsustainable. This would deal a very serious blow to a town once renowned for its focus on education. For these reasons both sets of Trustees are asking for a period of serious reflection and altruism, always keeping in mind the interests of the pupils as paramount. A 2<sup>nd</sup> level school needs 400-500 pupils for viability.

The Trustees were buoyed up by the wonderful success of Bun-Scoil McCauley-Rice Project, now the envy of so many schools in the county and beyond. This project was conceived and born not with little anxiety and fear of the unknown. It has resulted in a new state-of-the-art 16 teacher school and the seamless integration of the staffs of two separate schools each having previously had their own distinct traditions and identities. The individual staffs brought with them their own particular strengths particularly in the area of the arts thereby greatly enriching the life of the new school. This is particularly welcome and evident in the area of faith and preparation for the sacraments. Callan has a long and proud history in the provision of Catholic Education, thanks to the foresight of Mother McCauley and Bl. Edmund Rice. Hopefully we can build together on this rich legacy. I say '**Carpe diem**'.