

Callan Parish Newsletter

Anniversary – Seamus Byrne, Knockbutton – 1st Anniversary, Sat 19 May 6.30 p.m..

Ministers of the Eucharist: 6.30 p.m. Breda Butler & Patricia Corcoran; 11.00 Mary McGrath & Denis O’Leary.

Readers: 6.30 Marie Murphy; 8.30 Lisa O’Neill; 11.00 a.m. Olive Power.

Next Sunday, 27 May 2018: First Communion Sunday: Next 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.). That is why it came to be known as ‘First Communion’. On receiving ‘First Communion’ the recipient entered into full communion with the family of God’s holy people. We ask that people not directly associated with First communion choose another Mass next weekend.

Celebrating First Holy Communion: We encourage families to celebrate the day by keeping the First Communicant 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. Finally beware of photographers that appear on the day and that you do not know. **Do not part with your money until you are happy with the product and have it in your hand.** Bunscoil McCauley-Rice Parents Association will be providing refreshments in the parish hall after the church celebration.

Health and safety and safeguarding issues: One of parents will be **designated Health, Safety and Safeguarding Officer** for the day as the law requires when young people are present. As a parish, a diocese and a Church we are fully committed to implementing best practice in regard to safeguarding our children. Your attention is drawn to the official notices on display in all of our church porches, sacristies and halls. The names of the relevant officers and contact numbers should you have any concerns are to be found there. We invite you to take time to become familiar with this best practice.

Feast of Pentecost: The Feast of Pentecost brings to a close the celebration of Easter i.e. the passion, death, resurrection, & ascension of the Lord or what we call the Paschal Mystery. It reached completion with the coming of the Holy Spirit on that First Pentecost. Pentecost celebrates the birthday of the Church – the disciples going forth empowered by the gifts of the Holy Spirit to preach boldly the Good news and if necessary put their lives on the line. We too received those same gifts of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. We may never have had recourse to them. We may need to call on them in the coming week.

Allow ourselves to be guided by the Spirit of Pentecost when we cast our vote in the Referendum on May 25th: We will need to invoke all the gifts of the Holy Spirit as we wrestle with how to vote in the upcoming the Referendum on May 25. We have been inundated with endless debate and discussion in the media and maybe even confused by the posters. We will all need an abundance of knowledge, understanding, wisdom, right judgment and courage to do what is right at the ballot box.

We are profoundly conscious of the trauma an unwanted pregnancy can present. As a people we are renowned for our kindness and generosity to others in trouble. Our donations to Trocaire and to a multitude of other causes testify to this. We're never slow or dilatory in showing our compassion and in reaching out in very concrete ways to those in need. Could we not do more as a people to support and reach out people in crisis enabling them to continue with their pregnancy rather than terminating it as the proposed legislation clearly states? Human life is a special gift from God. We go to all kinds of extremes to defend it and prolong it. No effort, no expense is spared. We have only to think of how fragile a premature baby is or a very ill or elderly person may be as they approach the end of life. Does it seem something of a contradiction that we would or might be prepared to condone the deliberate destruction of the most defenseless, voiceless and vulnerable form of human life – the baby in the womb?

Consequences of voting 'yes' to repeal the 8th Amendment: This aspect of the whole debate that has received relatively little attention. **By voting 'yes' we are in fact voting for a pretty much unrestricted abortion regime patterned on that currently in force in the U.K.. We cannot be both pro-life and pro-choice at the same time. By voting 'yes' we are in fact voting for abortion. It is not possible to distance ourselves personally from abortion and vote 'yes' for repeal.** We know of course that a certain number travel to England each year to obtain abortions there or have recourse to medication over the internet. **That number is very small compared to what would soon become the norm if abortion were freely available here.** People would still continue to have recourse for medication over the internet. Do you think the liberal abortion regime proposed in government legislation too extreme, too high a price to pay in order to cope with the relatively small number of difficult cases we now encounter? Could not alternative strategies be put in place to assist those with crisis pregnancies? Think of all the couples who would love to have a child and cannot, and those having to go abroad in order to adopt a child because it is practically impossible to find a child for adoption in Ireland.

By voting 'yes' we would be sweeping away all rights for the unborn child. In the words of Pope John Paul II we would be replacing a 'culture of life' with a 'culture of death'. If we deny the unborn the fundamental right to life, mention of any other right would be superfluous. If for instance we were asked to revoke the right to private property or freedom of speech guaranteed in our Constitution (because in some circumstances they are a nuisance or obstacle to progress) there would be an outcry. Abolishing such rights would greatly affect our quality of life as citizens. Ireland would be a changed place to live in. We would not tolerate it. How then could we justify taking human life for convenience sake rather than entrust that little life to adoring and loving parents anxious to adopt it and cherish it!

Callan Active Retirement, Trip to Macroom, Co. Cork – June 24-28. Anyone interested contact Breda Somers 056-7755160 or Brenda Farrell 086-3440867. New and non-members a

Ossory Pilgrimage to Lourdes:22-27 May: On Tuesday next 300+ pilgrims will travel from the diocese to Lourdes, led by Bishop Farrell - 60 assisted pilgrims, 50 are transition year students (3 of them from Callan **Lizzy Keher, Ciara Byrne & Colm Nolan**) as helpers. At the rear of the parish church is a 'petition box' where people might like to **place their petitions before 6 p.m. Monday 21 May.** These will be taken to Lourdes by one of the transition year students and placed at the feet of Our Lady at the Grotto in Lourdes

2nd Collection this weekend for our Holy Father, Pope Francis. He uses these to support most deserving charities. He will be coming to meet us at the World Meeting of Families in late August.