

CALLAN PARISH NEWSLETTER

Readers 11/12 Aug.: 6.30 p.m. Marie Murphy; 8.30am Lauri Grace; 11.00am Mairead Carey; **14/15 Aug. holy day – Feast of the Assumption:** 6.30pm Diana Tobin; 8.30am Bridie Bergin; 11.00am Olive Power.

Months Mind, Sat. 11th Aug. 6.30pm.: Margaret O'Brien, Kilbride. Feast of the Assumption, 15 August: Wednesday next is the Feast of the Assumption and a holy day of obligation: vigil Mass on Tues, 14 August 6.30 p.m. (no morning Mass on Tues.); Wednesday 15 August 8.30 a.m. & 11.00 a.m.. No evening Mass on Wednesday.

THE MEANING OF “ASSUMPTION” & WHY SO MANY CHURCHES IN THE DIOCESE ARE CALLED ‘CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION’: There are more churches in the Diocese of Ossory (and probably in other dioceses too) named after the Assumption of Mary than other event or saint. In all there are 90 parochial churches in the Diocese and 14 of them are entitled ‘Church of the Assumption’. Was Callan Church always known as the Church of the Assumption or was this title conferred on it only from 1950 onwards when the Dogma of the Assumption was officially defined? The first parish church in Callan when the parish was established in 1207 with the town was called the “Church of the Assumption” and that title has remained with the Parish Church of Callan ever since irrespective of location. So the title itself predated the official declaration on the Assumption. On Nov. 1st 1950 Pope Pius XII solemnly defined Mary’s bodily Assumption into heaven as a doctrine of faith to be held by all Catholics. The Pope was careful to use the words “was assumed” i.e. “taken up” into heaven by divine power. Mary did not “ascend” into heaven as the her Son did. The Pope also left open the theological and historical question of whether Mary experienced physical death before being taken up into glory. He made no claim in this regard. According to popular Tradition Mary did undergo death and was probably buried near the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem. Her body did not decompose (a phenomenon not altogether uncommon even today) after her death and

burial but was taken up intact into heaven. This doctrine is not rooted directly in sacred scripture (hence not acceptable to non-Catholics) but originated instead in the common belief of Christians (called the *sensus fidelium*) in the early centuries especially in the East i.e. in Tradition. As early as the 5th century Christians of the East were celebrating the ‘Feast of the Dormition (falling asleep) of Mary’ on Aug. 15th. Rome began celebrating the Feast from the 7th century onwards calling it the “Feast of the Assumption” rather than the “Feast of the Dormition”. Some famous paintings still speak of the Dormition of Mary). The doctrine of the Assumption was officially declared in 1950 and probably many churches hitherto without a well established local saint as their patron simply adopted the title ‘Church of the Assumption’. Today this Marian Feast is still retained as one the major Marian Feasts in the Church Year. It is celebrated as a major feast in southern Germany e.g. in Bavaria, as a public holiday. Catholic Church teaching on the Assumption is a good example of where Catholics and Protestants differ and diverge. Catholic teaching on the Assumption of Mary is not directly rooted in the Scriptures but forms part of Tradition. Since the Reformation Protestants have maintained that the sources of Revelation (the manner in which God discloses himself to his People) is **Scripture alone** while Catholics maintain that God discloses himself both through **Scripture and Tradition**. Tradition is to be found in the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, in the prayers of the Mass that we use each day, in the sentiments and beliefs that inspired early Christian art and number of churches named after the Assumption.

WMOF 2018: Parish Tickets for the Croke Park Concert that Pope Francis will attend have now been printed and distributed. Parking arrangements for said event are similar to match day parking.

Parish tickets for the closing Mass in the Phoenix Park have been available for printing since Aug. 10th. I assume the same applies to those who have booked tickets directly. Please keep checking WMOF2018 website for additional information as it becomes available.

Fr. Bob Raftice celebrates Diamond Jubilee (60 years of priesthood). Each year in mid-August priest past pupils of St. Kieran’s College gather

for their annual reunion and renew old acquaintances. Some might not have met for 50 years or more. This year Fr. Bob Raftice will celebrate his Diamond Jubilee – i.e. 60 years of priesthood. Many will recall Fr. Bob from seeing him going for little afternoon strolls with Moses Roche while resident in Mount Carmel.

Fr. Bob was **ordained in Kilkenny 8 June 1958**. He was one of a class of 25-30 ordained on that day in St. Mary's Cathedral. He had begun his studies earlier in Clonliffe College, Dublin and UCD being in the same class as Bishop Forristal but had to quit the seminary for a short while due to ill-health. On resuming his studies for the priesthood he transferred back to St. Kieran's, even though the Diocese was officially closed to new candidates at the time due to a surplus of priests already in the Diocese. Most of his other classmates are already deceased or incapacitated. Fr. Bob served as priest in the Diocese of Ossory for most of his life apart from one year which he spent in London working with the Simon Community and three years in Kenya working as a missionary with St. Patrick's Missionary Society, Kiltegan. He served in a number of parishes as curate – Dunamaggin for 12 years (1959-'71) & Moneenroe for 9 years (1972-'81), and in Callan for a few months in September 1972 while awaiting an appointment. Fr. Bob always harboured a deep yearning and love for the Missions. In 1983 the opportunity came his way to serve as a priest on the Missions. He did so in Kenya in association with St. Patrick's Missionaries, Kiltegan. After three years on the Missions he returned home. Windgap fell vacant through the death of Fr. Garret Phelan P.P. . Fr. Bob was appointed to succeed him in 1986, a position he held until his retirement from parish life in 2000. On retiring from Windgap Fr. Bob was not yet ready to hang up his boots. He returned to the Missions for a further three year stint until health issues necessitated his return to Ireland. Family was always very important to him. His sister Nellie (O'Brien) lived in Castle Eve and nephews and nieces nearby. He took up residence first in one of the Mount Carmel bungalows and then later in Mt. Carmel House itself where he acted as chaplain to the residents and was always ready to help out with confessions and occasional Masses in the parish etc.. For a while he entertained the hope

of returning to the Missions but this was not to be. With his general health declining he moved from Mount Carmel into full-time nursing care.

Fr. Bob has the unique distinction of having a local authority housing complex in Moneenroe called after him (Fr. Raftice Place) while still alive. When queried how this could be his droll retort was "they thought I was dead".

Due to his advancing years his general mobility is today greatly reduced but his mind and memory are perfect, as indeed are his speech and hearing. Fr. Bob has been a keen follower of Kilkenny hurling all his life and his only regret is that the 2018 Hurling Championship is coming to a close all too soon. He continues to spend many hours in prayer each day for all of us. We wish him 'ad multos annos' or many more years of health and strength.

Coming up: National Heritage Week; Callan Heritage Society Events:
Monday 20th August (Heritage Week event) - Poems & Songs of the area at KCATS 8.00 PM

Tuesday 21st August (Heritage Week event) - The story of Irish sailor Thomas McSweeney who was hanged in Malta 8th June 1837. KCATS at 8.00 PM.

Sunday 2nd of September - Visit to Tullamaine, Newtown, Whitechurch, and Coolagh Cemeteries, and time permitting Old Kilbride Cemetery. Meet at Tullamaine 2.00 PM.

Saturday 15th September - Bus outing to Waterford, visiting the 'Bishops Palace', Medieval Museum, and the Edmund Rice Centre at Mt. Sion. Bus leaves from outside Parish Church, Callan at 9.00 AM.