

FEBRUARY 2015

RATHMICHAEL PARISH

NEWSLETTER

www.rathmichael.dublin.anglican.org



My dear Parishioners and other friends,

Funny how things happen. About two years ago, a small group of us were in Geoffrey Perrin's house for a chat and a sup after some meeting or other. In high spirits, David Elmes did a 'jig' and recited a piece of a song with that 'gravelled' voice of his for just a moment. Caroline Senior said quietly to me *"That's my Dame"*. I didn't understand and didn't ask any further; but over time Caroline set out her plans for a **Parish Pantomime** and had found a friend to write the script for **OLD KING COLE**. As if by grace, a director who was happy to work with panto was found and a cast was commissioned. (The vast majority of whom were or are Church Wardens!) Director William Mansfield also has links with our Musical Director Sandra Ganly through her choir. So it is almost 'Break a Leg' time and we have enjoyed every rehearsal and thoroughly enjoyed each others' company.

Caroline launched the project as part of Rathmichael Parish's 150 anniversary celebrations. A perfect antidote to every gloom that rushes at us day by day. Well done, and more than well done Caroline. It is safe to say that you will see another side or two of this serene woman! Ha ha ha, cackle cackle cackle!. It is also notable how many people have freely volunteered to assist in any way during the 6 performances. That volunteerism is very positive in any community.

"The Word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread,....but the Lamp of God had not yet gone out"

In a recent scripture reading one Sunday, words from First Book of Samuel included *"The Word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread,but the Lamp of God had not yet gone out"*

One amazing project I happened across recently is the **'Tiglin Challenge'** which is based on the principles of the Teen Challenge Christian based organisation which started caring for troubled youth in New York City in 1958 by David Wilkerson Author of *"The Cross and the Switchblade"*. The program now has over 500 Teen Challenge Centres in 90 different countries worldwide. Including just down the road in Co. Wicklow and in the city

Tiglin Challenge strives to help the 'whole person', not just the substance abuse. The Tiglin Challenge approach is to teach a whole new way of living by addressing family relationships, work attitudes, self image, peer pressure, temptation, community relationships and a variety of other life skills.

The Word of God is very much alive and healing in practice right at our door step. Our own Sam Stott is very familiar with the project. The Light of God has far from gone out, but whether in some Christian traditions we would recognise the Light if it shone on us, is a challenge!

As a parish we are indebted to Anne and Peter Markham in so so many ways over the years, and who recently initiated the idea of placing a plaque in the Church Porch with a list of the clergy who served over the last 150 years. Peter and Anne most kindly sourced, and underwrote the supply and installation of the plaque which has the fitting effect of reminding us that we are entering a church and not just a busy community hall. Thank you Anne and Peter. For this and for everything over the years. May you experience the inner peace of God's love and blessing in the year and years ahead.

You can read inside, **"Christmas Essay"** (*Irish Daily Mail, Wednesday 24th December 2014*) written by Paul Drury who is a faithful '7 pm' Rathmichael Worshipper along with his lovely family. Paul, who is vastly experienced and works amidst the real cut and thrust of Journalism, has also battled with major illness, all of which I believe, qualifies him to write authoritatively on real life and on a 'working faith'. One is left with the inner feeling of "Thank God for Rathmichael Parish and its people, and the Word of God over all of those years".

All those Easters and the Easter Story as the anchor for generations to come.

Fred

SUNDAY SERVICES - FEBRUARY 2015

SUNDAY	08.30 HRS	11.00 HRS	19.00 HRS	LECTORS
The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany <div style="text-align: right;">White</div> 1st February 2015	H.C.	HOLY COMMUNION Deuteronomy 18: 15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8: 1-13 Mark 1: 21-28	EVENING PRAYER	Richard Marshall
The Second Sunday before Lent <div style="text-align: right;">Green</div> 8th February 2015	H.C.	FAMILY SERVICE with FAMILY HOLY COMMUNION AND HOLY BAPTISM Please join us for coffee after the service	EVENING SERVICE	Graeme Slattery
The Sunday before Lent <div style="text-align: right;">White</div> 15th February 2015	H.C.	HOLY COMMUNION Transfiguration (White) 2 Kings 2: 1-12 Psalm 50: 1-6 2 Corinthians 4: 3-6 Mark 9: 2-9	COMPLINE	Simon Knowd
The First Sunday in Lent <div style="text-align: right;">Violet</div> 22nd February 2015	H.C.	MORNING PRAYER Genesis 9: 8-17 Psalm 25: 1-9 Mark 1: 9-15 Please join us for Coffee after the service	HOLY COMMUNION	Avril Wardlaw

ASH WEDNESDAY - 18th FEBRUARY 2015

There will be a worship Service at 20.00 hrs

THE EASTER VESTRY

The Easter Vestry will take place on Sunday 22nd March 2015 in the Erck Hall, following a service of Morning Prayer.

If you are a registered member of the Parish then you are entitled to vote. Registered member or not, you are free to address the meeting.

This is the A.G.M. of your church and we look forward to a good attendance.

A Christmas ESSAY

THE can flickered and guttered in the gloaming - just as they had done 150 years ago when this little parish church first opened its doors to worshippers. Back then in 1864, here in rural Rathmichael in the foothills of the Dublin mountains, candles were all they had to illuminate the newly built church.

Today, although it is still surrounded by woods and fields, my parish church has electric light, an amplification system and all the other trappings of modern technology. But, as we gathered the other evening to celebrate its 150th anniversary, we still lit candles - on the altar, in the window embrasures, wherever we wanted to keep darkness at bay.

Of all the symbols of Christianity, only the cross itself is more enduring.

That is especially the case at this time of year, as Christmas approaches and darkness claims dominion over all but a few short hours of the day.

One reason, I suspect, is because a candle flame - so often struggling to remain alight in the face of chance winds and draughts and yet so difficult to entirely extinguish - is a powerful metaphor for what passes, with most of us for faith.

For most of the year, except in times of crisis, it gutters away to almost nothing.

We claim token allegiance to one faith or another; we may or may not attend Mass or some other form of religious service on a Sunday. But, if we are honest with ourselves, for 11 months of the year Christianity has very little place in most of our modern, materialistic lives.

And then, miraculously, as Christmas approaches and despite the howling winds of materialism, that flame suddenly flares up anew - full of brightness and hope.

It is a hope that has sustained mankind for more than 2,000 years - the hope that was born in a stable in Palestine and that has lit up our innermost souls ever since.

The modern Christmas, of course, is about much more than that: it is about eating and drinking to excess, about giving and receiving presents, about family reunions and office parties, about sometimes shameless self-indulgence.

But at its very heart, Christmas is still about one thing only: the birth of Jesus Christ. Down through the years, year after year without fail, Christian men and women have gathered together at Christmastide to celebrate this, the greatest miracle of them all.

Tomorrow, churches up and down our land will once again be packed -- in many cases, for the first and only time this year. For most of us-even those who have not darkened a church door in a year-Christmas Day without some form of worship would be like the dinner without the turkey.

It is, as I have said, exactly 150 years since the parish church where I myself will join in those celebrations was consecrated. It is a simple but truly beautiful building, designed in the Hiberno-Romanesque style by that Victorian architectural team Woodward and Deane. There could be no more magical place in which to mark this most magical of occasions.

So tonight, as the clocks count down the minutes to midnight and the church bell peals out in the still night air, I will walk there through the darkness - as I have done, health permitting, on almost every Christmas Eve for the past two decades. But, of course, Christmas has been celebrated here in the shadow of Carrickgolligan, where the mountains sweep down to meet the sea, for a lot longer than 20 years or even 150 years.

The modern church building replaces another, much older building high up on the hillside that had fallen into disrepair. Its ruins, however, are still there - surrounded by a tiny graveyard where local families still have burial rights.

Today, it is a wild and lonely place where I love to walk, especially at this time of year when the trees are bare, the bracken is tinged a golden brown and the frosty ground crunches reassuringly beneath my feet.

Yet this was the parish church for some 700 years - ever since, under Anglo-Norman rule, the old Celtic monastic church became parochial and the modern parish of Rathmichael came into being.

To this day, older people in the parish know the woodland track that I take up to the hilltop as 'the Mass path' - because this was the route by which their ancestors would have walked to church every Sunday morning.

As we march
to our church
tonight, we
will rekindle
a faith that
flickers...but
still lights the
whole world.



By Paul Drury

Half way up the path, tucked in under the beech trees, there is a 12th century granite cross, as if to remind us that this is no ordinary mountain trail but a route to somewhere more spiritual - a path that is steeped both in history and in faith.

Even that, however, is only half the story. For the old parish church is surrounded not just by a graveyard but by the ruins, including the stump of a round tower, of an ancient Celtic monastery. And this in turn dates back to the time of St. Patrick himself.

Indeed the saint from whom our modern parish is thought to take its name, Bishop MacTáil of Kilcullen, is said to have been a member of St. Patrick's household. His own death is recorded in the Annals at 550AD.

Like so much about the early Church, it is hard to separate fact from legend.

What is certain, however, is that there has been a continuous tradition of worship on this wind-blown hilltop ever since Christianity first arrived on our shores.

Here on the hillside, with its commanding views to the north of Dublin Bay and south right down to Wicklow Head, the monks kept the flame of Christianity alive right through the Dark Ages - when it had been all but extinguished throughout most of Europe.

It is from this unique vantage point that they would have watched the Viking longboats land on nearby Killiney or Bray beach and hastily

hidden away their illuminated manuscripts, their precious chalices and golden candlesticks before taking sanctuary in the round tower.

But all the while year after year, Christmas was celebrated. The flame of hope may have flickered and guttered; but it was never fully extinguished.

Then comes a twist to the tale. For several years before the modern building was constructed, Rathmichael had no church: the old building on the hillside had fallen into disrepair and parishioners had to travel into Bray.

The candle of faith had guttered away to almost nothing...and yet it never entirely died; indeed, as I was reminded the other evening by a fascinating lecture from local historian Martin Bernon, it flared into life again in the most bizarre of circumstances.

For it is only thanks to the munificence of an unsuccessful Victorian property speculator in the Celtic Tiger mould, Sir Charles Domville, that we nowadays have a church here at all.

A Christmas Essay contd..

Domville, who owned large tracts of land in the area, had thought that the opening of the Harcourt Street railway line would make it ripe for development.

The church, built on land he donated, was centre-piece of a new garden suburb that never happened.

But by so doing, Sir Charles once again kept the flame of Christianity - that flame of hope which has sustained us all through two millennia - alive.

God has always believed in moving in mysterious ways.

It is, of course, a story that could be repeated in hundreds of other parishes the length and breadth of the country. Indeed there are parish churches that are much older than Rathmichael. As a nation, Christianity is written into our very DNA.

On Christmas Day however, when I and my fellow parishioners raise our voices in our annual, hearty if in my case more than slightly off-key rendition of O Come All Ye Faithful, we will be doing our own bit to keep alive a tradition of worship and praise that is all of 2,000 years old.

To me, it is that sense of continuity that makes church-going - and the rituals that go with it - so important, above all at this time of year. The candles we light are the same candles that have been lit in most cases in this very spot for hundreds of years.

'And is it true?' the English poet Sir John Betjeman asked in one of his more profound moments.

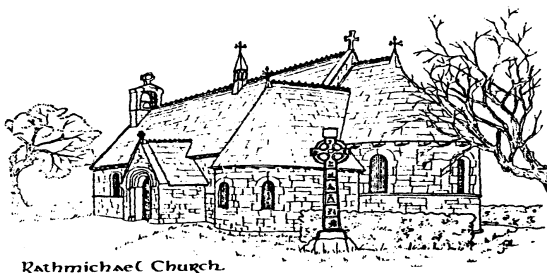
*'For if it is..
No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives to-day in Bread and Wine.'*

On Christmas morning, even those who, like me, struggle with their faith for the rest of the year will once again see those candle flames flare up and drive out the darkness.

Suddenly, if only for a few short hours, there will be no more doubt - no more uncertainty.

We will gaze into those flickering lights on the altar and know with absolute conviction, like all those others who have worshipped here before us, that indeed it is true. The candle flame of hope will once again flicker into life.

And, once again, as it has done for 2,000 years and surely will continue to do for as long as mankind survives, the light that lightens the world will have driven out the darkness.



Celebrating 150 years of Christian Worship

Rathmichael Church's 150th Anniversary Service took place on Friday 12th December. Our lovely little church was dedicated on that date in 1864.

Our previous rector Canon Billy Marshall took part in the service which was well attended and church warden and historian, Martin Bernon, gave a very interesting talk on the background of how the church came to be built.

A wonderful cake in the shape of the church was then cut by wives of previous rectors - Mrs. Nancy Caird, wife of Archbishop Donald, and Margaret, wife of Rev. Dr. Billy Marshall.

A lovely evening and a celebration of 150 years of Christian worship.

On that occasion, in keeping with our Parish Mission Statement, gifts of specimen trees, ground works, 'hard labour', gifts, and a 'Roll of Clergy' plaque were dedicated to the Greater Glory of God. Too many 'thank yous' to mention.

Fred



Mrs. Nancy Caird, wife of Archbishop Donald, and Margaret, wife of Rev. Dr. Billy Marshall cut the 150th Anniversary cake.



United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough Diocesan Youth Council

The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) and the House of Bishops have designated Tuesday 17th February as a day of prayer for the Youth of Ireland. In this diocese there will be a service in Christ Church Cathedral from 7 - 9pm. As well as prayer for the youth; the service (which will be set in the context of the Eucharist) will showcase some examples of alternative and creative ways of praying with and for young people.

FEBRUARY 2015 ROTAS

CHURCH, HALL & BRASS CLEANING

DATE	CHURCH	BRASS	HALL
7th Feb	Clare Pluck	Corinne Hewat	Anne Thornburgh
14th	Clare Pluck	Corinne Hewat	Anne Thornburgh
21st	Frances Marshall		Valerie Martin
28th	Fiona Ashe		Valerie Martin

SUNDAY CRÈCHE



1st Treasa Cox
8th Family Service
15th Danielle Fletcher
22nd Frances Marshall

After many years organising the Crèche Rota - Debbie Duncan is having a well earned break and handing the job over to Danielle Fletcher. Thank you Debbie and thank you to Danielle for taking over.

Mums with young children - we need you to help in the Crèche on a few Sundays in the year so that parents can relax and take part in the Service, knowing that their little ones are being looked after nearby. *"The more hands the less work"* so if you can help, please contact Danielle @ 087 255 8126 and offer your services.

As is the practice in all Church of Ireland parishes it is mandatory to have completed a "Safe Guarding Trust" training course for leaders prior to working with the Sunday School, Crèche and/or other children's/youth groups. It is also essential that a satisfactory Garda Vetting Report is received by us from the Gardai prior to your instalment as a leader/helper.

So if you are intending to volunteer, please get the forms from Anne Thompson @ 086 893 7067.

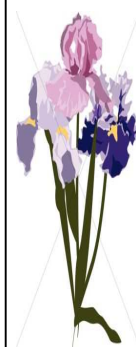
SUNDAY CLUB

	4-6 yrs	7-9 yrs	10-12 yrs
1st Feb	Debbie Duncan	Jane White	Sam Stott
15th Feb	Shirley Farrell	Niamh Ann McCann	Sarah Grimson
1st Mar	Debbie Duncan	Carol Beamish	Sam Stott



The School Choir sang at the German Christmas Market and Santa took orders for "special deliveries".

FLOWERS FOR FEBRUARY



1st & 8th Corinne Hewat

15th & 22nd Margaret Nevin

CHURCH COFFEE

8th Willie and Irene Coulter,
Shirley Farrell & Shirley Garland

22nd Louise Knatchbull, Corinna Dolan,

Mary Went & Heather Maybury



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Rathmichael Women's Group

On 2nd December, a group of women from the parish discussed the rekindling of a Women's Group. Support was enthusiastic.

From many diverse ideas, activities for the next twelve months were decided, and organisers/facilitators for each activity were agreed. Accepting necessary flexibility, events will generally be on the third Tuesday or Friday of each month.

The evening was a great success and many thanks to Sonia for bringing us together and providing delicious nibbles.

Anyone interested in joining this social group for women aged approximately between 20 and 50 can look at the planned activities on our web site:

<https://sites.google.com/site/rathmichaelwomen/home>

Anyone who would like to receive our e-mail Newsletter should send a mail to rath.women@gmail.com

Kate Matthews



Youth Group
Every Saturday
7pm-9pm
1st-4th Years
for more info call
Sam 086 19 13081

THE THURSDAY GROUP



We will meet for coffee on Thursday 19th February at

10.30 a.m. in the home of Mrs. Doreen Orr, Lordello,

Shankill. Please let me know if you require a lift - contact

Anne Thompson @ 2024 202.

THE ALPHA/IN-BETWEEN GROUP

LADIES NITE OUT - FRIDAY 13th FEBRUARY

Please join us at The Ocean Restaurant on Bray Seafront at 7.30 p.m. for our annual get together! (If you don't want to drive, the DART is beside the venue).

Dinner will cost €24.95 each and if you intend to join us - please let me know before Monday 10th February.

Looking forward to seeing you!

Sonia - 087 679 8876

THE ALPHA/IN-BETWEEN BOOK CLUB

The book chosen for February is "The Husband's Secret" by Liane Moriarty and the meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th February, 2015 at 8.00p.m. in the home of Lesley Wallace, The Mews, Old Glebe House, Bridesglen Road, Shankill. Phone: 2822514 or 087-6867988.

Please note change of venue from notice in the December/January Newsletter

The book chosen for March is "The Miniaturist" by Jessie Burton and the meeting will be held on Tuesday 31st March, 2015 at 8.00p.m. in the home of Mandy Nolan, "The Rookery", Ferndale Road, Shankill. Telephone 2822541



Discerning buyers at the German Christmas Market

CONFIRMATION

Christ Church Bray - 8th March 2015



The Confirmation candidates meet each Wednesday as they prepare for their Confirmation which will take place at 11.00 hrs on the 8th March in Christ Church, Bray.

Please keep them in your prayers as they take this important step along their Christian road.

ST. VINCENT de PAUL

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Thank you everyone in the parish and in the school for your tremendously generous response to our appeal this year.

As a result of this we were able to make up 90 food hampers and these were given to St. Vincent de Paul with a number going to Bray Women's Refuge. A cheque for €2,000 was also given to St. Vincent de Paul for their ongoing work with those whose lives are less than comfortable.

Many thanks again, your contributions have made a difference for the best for quite a number of people.

Thank you to the parishioners and the members of GRIP who helped to pack and organise the hampers for distribution.

Geoffrey Perrin and Fiona Ashe

THE BISHOPS' APPEAL

Thank you for your contribution to the Bishops' Appeal.

Part of the reason why Bishops' Appeal exists is to ensure that Church funds are allocated to the most vulnerable people in a way that is most effective and most sustainable.

One of the ways that this is done is by funding through reputable agencies who have developed relationships with local communities, local agencies and local churches. Some of our major partners include Christian Aid, Tearfund, CMS Ireland, United Society, SAMS, Mothers' Union.

There are many ongoing initiatives to help people in very deprived countries to help themselves and your contributions will always be welcome at any time of the year. The Treasurer will pass on donations or they can be given directly to Bishops' Appeal, Church House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6.

On behalf of The Bishops' Appeal

Anne Thompson

SIMON COMMUNITY

Thank-You !!

A big thank-you for all those who supported the Simon Community collection over the Christmas period.

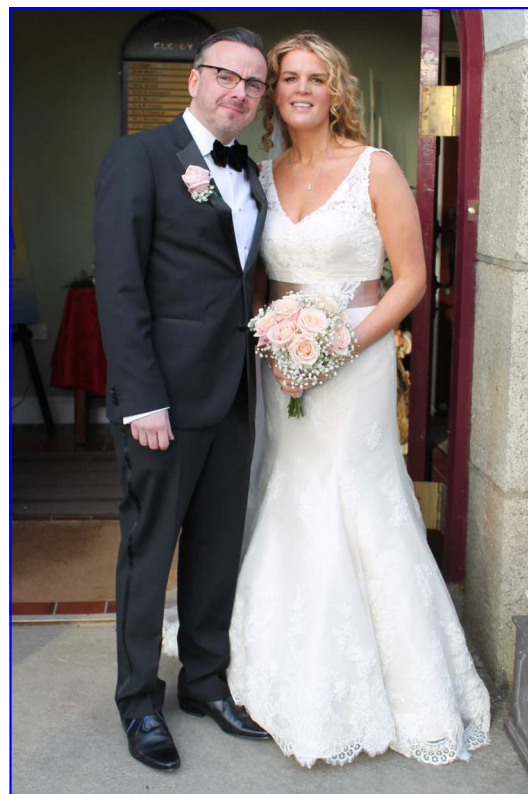
A very full car-load of warm clothes, blankets and toiletries was duly delivered to Simon Community on behalf Rathmichael Parish.

Unloading the car on a very cold morning it felt good to be doing something to support people who face accommodation difficulties.

All cash donations were passed to Michael Malcolmson who has forwarded a cheque to Simon.

Many thanks again,

Emma & Michael



**Kieran O'Donoghue and Jo-Anne Flanagan
who were married on 30th December.**

RATHMICHAEL PARISH NATIONAL SCHOOL

Welcome back everyone to the second term of the school year. On behalf of myself and the staff, I would like to thank you for the many generous Christmas gifts which you gave us. They are much appreciated.

This term we welcome back our Music Teacher, Naomi Clarkson, on a part time basis, who will be teaching 3rd and 6th classes. Hopefully she will return to teach full time in September as she really brings music to life for all the children.

We are engaging in a programme called "Supertroopers", run by Laya Healthcare, which is activity based. So far pupils in 2nd class have participated and are thoroughly enjoying it.

The author, Alan Nolan, came in to 3rd Class to read and discuss his books with the children.

5th and 6th Classes were invited to Rathdown School's Transition Year performance of "Oliver".

3rd and 4th Classes are participating in a soccer programme run by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, during school hours while 5th Class are playing Tag Rugby and 6th Class will play after the mid term break.

The whole school is excited about the upcoming production of "Old King Cole" which has been a sell out!

Caroline Senior

Principal

OLD KING COLE PANTOMIME

Rathmichael Church of Ireland Parish, Celebrating 150 Years



Rathmichael School Hall

Directed by William Mansfield Musical Director Sandra Ganly

Starring - Canon Fred Appelbe, Andrew Ellis, David Elmes, Martin Bernon,
Caroline Senior, Debbie Duncan, Ronnie Whelan, Marian Conboy,
Avril McWilliams, John Bolton, John Donovan, Anthony Murphy

Feb 6th, 7.30 pm, Feb 7th 3.00pm and 7:30pm
Feb 20th 7.30 pm, Feb 21st 3.00pm and 7:30pm

Tickets: Adults €8 Children €5
School Office - 01-2824794

AgeAction

For all older people

Age Action is running one-to-one beginner computer classes for over 55's in

Ballybrack

The classes are for older people who have little or no computer experience (or for the absolutely terrified!). The aim of the Getting Started programme is to introduce people to the basics of computers, internet and email. Classes are taught by trained volunteer tutors on a one to one basis with small groups of learners in a relaxed, non-formal setting.

We train beginners on iPad, Tablets, Laptops.

For more information contact Age Action on **01 475 6989**

Christmas past!!



The Parents, Toddlers and Babies met in the church and sang carols around the crib and this was followed by their Christmas party when a certain gentleman dressed in red came to visit. The innocent joy and excitement was palpable.

As for the afters, they may be only the terrible two's but they know how to party!

RATHMICHAEL LADYBIRDS



Hi all,

My name is Nicola and I am the leader of Rathmichael Ladybirds. I am writing with a plea! I will be finishing up as leader in June 2015 and I am hoping to appeal to someone to come on board with the unit as the main leader in order to keep it open.

Ladybirds are for the youngest age group within the Irish Girl Guides. Our ladybirds join for two years from senior infants to the end of first class. We meet on a Thursday afternoon for one hour, 14.40-15.40, in the church hall. The unit has 14 girls and a waiting list which is already growing for next year. All present parents are involved either as Assistant Leaders or on a parent rota, but due to younger siblings or work commitments, it is hard for them to commit to becoming a full warranted leader and attending every meeting.

If you feel you have a small amount of spare time and would like to see this really great unit stay open, please contact me on 086 6086334 for further information.

Many thanks,

Nicola Ralph