



**First Holy Communion Class**, May 12th, 2018 with their teachers Sharlene Ruane & Ciara Fitzmaurice and Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. Photo Glynn's Photography

### Eucharistic Adoration Mass

On the following evening, the inaugural Mass for Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament took place. Many of those involved in Adoration were present along with the Eucharistic Adoration sub-committee of the PPC. Sr. Ann Marie O'Shaughnessy of the Diocesan Adoration Group was also present and spoke at the end of the Mass. Fr. Stephen gave a beautiful homily on the Eucharist. Sr. Ann Marie, meanwhile, exhorted those present to not only pray for vocations but also to pray for our priests who have a very heavy workload.



**Leaving Cert Class of 2017-2018** celebrate their Graduation Mass at the Friary Ballyhaunis, on 24th May

### Graduation Mass

The Friary was the venue for the Graduation Mass for the Community School Leaving Certificate students on Thursday 24th May. Well done to all involved in organising it.



**The Corpus Christi procession** makes its way up the avenue to the Friary church for benediction, having commenced at the parish church. Photo Janapix

## JUNE

### The Corpus Christi Procession

The Corpus Christi Procession commenced after the Vigil Mass on the first Saturday of the month. There was a palpable sense of reverence and solemnity among those present as Fr. Stephen carried the Blessed Sacrament from the Parish Church, through the town to the Friary where the ceremony concluded with Benediction.

The First Holy Communion children took centre stage as they threw petals on the streets along the route. The cross bearer was Joe Byrne with Mike Griffin leading the prayers and Joe Hosty providing amplification. It was particularly significant that many families were in attendance on this, "Year of the Family" and the imminent visit of Pope Francis to Ireland for the World Meeting of Families on 25th and 26th August. Adults and children alike enjoyed refreshments afterwards in the Friary Field.

The 10 o'clock Mass for Corpus Christi was broadcast on MWR with soloist Kaitlyn Clarke singing an array of beautiful songs.

Mass was celebrated in the Community School early on Wednesday morning for the Leaving and Junior Certificate students about to start their exams. The "Feast of the Sacred Heart" was celebrated at the Friday morning Mass, with a statue of the Sacred Heart being placed in the Sanctuary.

### Papal visit to Knock

There was a great sense of excitement among parishioners when the Vatican announced that Knock Shrine would be on the Pope's itinerary when he visits Ireland for the World Meeting of Families. His Holiness, Pope Francis will arrive at Knock on Sunday morning 26th August when he will visit the National Marian Shrine and lead the estimated 45,000 attendance in the praying of the Angelus.

### Mission Appeal

The final Sunday of the month marked the "Feast of St. John the Baptist". Fr. Terry Smith of the Holy Ghost Missions spoke at all Masses about his own mission experiences, having served in Sierra Leone, Ghana and Johannesburg. He also appealed for funds to enable the missionaries to continue their work around the world.

# Pastoral Council Newsletter

St. Patrick's Church Ballyhaunis

Vol. 11 JANUARY – JUNE 2018

## JANUARY 2018

### Cluster Mass

Ballyhaunis Parish hosted the special "New Year's Day Mass" for all the parishes within the cluster area. The chief celebrant was Fr. Richard Gibbons P.P., Knock. Also, in attendance was Fr. Brendan Mc Guinness, Fr. Nigel Woollen and Fr. John Walsh along with Fr. Stephen who introduced the ceremony, explaining that its theme was "The World Meeting of Families" The combined choirs of the Cluster provided the music and singing.

### Icon of the Holy Family

The Icon of the Holy Family arrived at the church on Thursday 25th. Ballyhaunis Parish was one of nine parishes within the Archdiocese of Tuam selected to have the Icon over two days. A special Holy Hour took place on Thursday evening, while on the Friday morning the children from Scoil Íosa provided music and song for the congregation. Parishioners placed petitions and prayers in a special petition box which accompanied the Icon.

### Pastoral Council

The Parish Pastoral Council had their first meeting of the year on 8th January. The Eucharistic Adoration sub-committee said that they had received very positive feedback on the renovations carried out to the Eucharistic Chapel.

The Inclusion sub-committee reported that significant progress had been made towards the formation of a Faith and Light group within the Parish.

## FEBRUARY

### Feast Days

The month commenced with the feasts of St. Brigid, Candlemas Day and St. Blaise. St. Brigid crosses, candles and throats were blessed on consecutive days.

### Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week ran from 28th January to 3rd February. Its objective is to invite Catholic Schools to reflect on and celebrate the relationship which exists between home, school and parish.

### Lent

Lent commenced on 14th February. As it coincided with St. Valentine's Day a statue of the saint was placed in the church and parishioners were invited to pick up some tokens and cards.

### Pastoral Council

A letter was received from the Secretary of the Diocesan Pastoral Council complimenting Ballyhaunis Parish on the reception accorded to the arrival of the Icon of the Holy Family and the

subsequent high level of participation by parishioners.

Fr. Stephen thanked Kevin Henry and Orla Phillips for their input in having the students from Scoil Íosa and the Community School present for the Friday morning 10 o'clock Mass. Thanks was also expressed to the Eucharistic Adoration Committee for all their work.



**Visit of the World Meeting of Families Icon, January 26th.**  
L-R: Maureen Nolan, Dorothy Durkan, Mary Maguire, Mary Waldron, Eileen Jordan, Orla Phillips

### Children's Liturgies

The Vigil Mass on the second Saturday of the month marked the resumption of the "Do this in Memory" programme for the children making their first communion in May.

The last Sunday of the month saw the Children's Liturgy take place. The children made St. Brigid crosses which were blessed by Fr. Stephen.



**Stations in the home of Patricia O'Connor, Hazel Hill, 16th February**  
Back row, L-R: Alan Blake (partly hidden in doorway), John Nolan, David O'Connor, Sean Warde, Brendan Blake, Martin Blake, Gabriel Murphy. Back rows, seated: Aisling Keogh-O'Connor, Michael Nolan, Evelyn O'Connor, Pat Curley, Helen Biesty, Bridie Biggins, Pat Freeley, Bridie Murphy, Eileen McKermitt, Lorena Freeley, Maureen Nolan, Kathleen Curley, Josie Conway, Frances Blake, Front, L-R: Cormac O'Connor, Deirdre Warde, Cliona Warde, Lauren Warde, Daisy & James O'Connor, Hazel Nolan, Lucy O'Connor, Patricia O'Connor, Carol Freeley, Bridie Kavanagh, Johnny Biesty.

### Station Mass

A station Mass was held at the home of Patricia O'Connor, Hazelhill/ Pattenspark area on 16th February.

## MARCH

### First Confession

On the first Tuesday of the month the aspiring First Communion class made their First Confession. There were two "Do this in Memory" programmes at two vigil masses during the month.

### Pastoral Council Meeting

A meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council took place on Tuesday 13th. Those present along with Fr. Stephen finalised preparations for the Holy Week ceremonies. The Eucharistic Adoration sub group proposed that a "Holy Hour" should be held during Lent for the protection of human life. It was agreed that it would go ahead on the last Sunday of the month. Julia Kelly of the Inclusion sub group gave a comprehensive report on plans to set up a Faith and Light community in Ballyhaunis.

### St. Patrick's Day

There was a great turnout for the 12 o'clock Mass. Fr. Stephen began by introducing the Mass in Irish and the readings were done as Gaeilge by Elizabeth Jordan. The Abbey Male Choir added greatly to the occasion. At the end of the Mass, stickers with the slogan "God is Family, so are we" which were prepared by Scoil Íosa and John Paul II students, were distributed among the congregation.

### Station Masses

Station Masses were hosted by Joan and Kevin Mc Namara for the Knockbrack, Skeghard and Ballinphuill area Mary K and Cathal Phillips hosted the Gurteen stations while the Clare Street stations were held in the home of Pauline and Ann Curley.

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation was administered on Palm Sunday evening followed by a "Holy Hour" consisting of Rosary Scripture Readings, Reflections and Meditation.

### Easter Ceremonies

The Easter Triduum began with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. Twelve people from various organisations throughout the parish participated in the washing of feet while a number of parishioners brought up the gifts. The Community School Folk Choir under the guidance of Grainne Glavey provided the music and song.

On Good Friday the "Stations of the Cross" was well attended. Later that evening the Celebration of the Lord's Passion took place. As in previous years, the students of the Community School took centre stage, being very involved in the liturgy and in the "Veneration of the Cross". The solemn ceremony was enriched by the music and song from the Parish Choir.

Holy Saturday evening is synonymous with the Easter Vigil. The "Paschal Fire" organised by Mike Griffin, was lit by Fr. Stephen and carried through the church, culminating in the lighting of the Paschal Candle which symbolises the light of the risen Christ dispelling the darkness of sin and death.



**Baptism:** Oisín John Kilcourse son of Michel and Geraldine Kilcourse, 14, Station Rise, who was baptised at the Easter Vigil.

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council distributed the flame throughout the church. There were two baptisms at the Vigil Ceremony – Oisín John Kilcourse son of Michel and Geraldine Kilcourse, Station Rise, Ballyhaunis and Thomas Patrick Burke, son of Michael and Lisa Burke, Cheltenham, England. Thomas Patrick's grandparents are Eugene and Alma Carney, Scrigg.

As the ceremony ended and with the Abbey Male Choir in full voice, Fr. Stephen blessed the Polish food at the altar. All the



**Baptism:** Thomas Patrick Burke son of Michael and Lisa Burke, Chelfenham, England, was baptised at the Easter Vigil. Thomas Patrick's grandparents are Eugene and Alma Carney, Scrigg.

Holy Week ceremonies were broadcast on Mid West Radio with Gerry Glennon introducing them, in addition to explaining the different parts of each one.

## APRIL

There were large crowds present at the two Masses on Easter Sunday morning. The 10 o'clock Mass was broadcast on MWR with the Parish Choir, performing under the direction of Moira Delaney. The Scoil Íosa choir under the supervision of Miriam Judge, also put on an excellent performance with a diverse variety of music and song.

Fr. Stephen thanked all, who helped with, and participated in the Easter Ceremonies, particularly the young people who played a major part over the three nights. He extended his gratitude to Margie Phillips and her team for decorating the church and to Enda Caulfield for placing the Easter tableau at the base of the altar with the image of the Risen Lord outside the tomb. Finally, a heartfelt thanks to the choirs, organists and soloists for their excellent contribution to the success of the Easter ceremonies.

The following Sunday was "Divine Mercy Sunday". A picture of the Divine Mercy was placed beside the pulpit to highlight the significance of the occasion.

### Faith and Light Community

The communal house in Clare Court was the venue on the third Sunday for the inaugural meeting to set up a Faith and Light community in Ballyhaunis. Faith and light is an international Christian community movement, bringing together people with a learning disability, their families, carers and friends. Such meetings or "Fiesta's" as they are known, are a time for friendships, fun activities and sharing. The Ballyhaunis "Fiesta" was organised by the Inclusion sub-group of the Pastoral Council. Over 29 people attended it, including Fr. Fergal Cunnane, P.P., Dunmore and Fr. Stephen. Following a very promising start, it is hoped that further "Fiestas" will be held during the year.

(right) **Faith & Light:** Inaugural meeting of the Ballyhaunis "Faith & Light" Community in Clare Court Community Centre on April 15th, 2018

### Parish Pastoral Council

The monthly meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council took place on Monday 16th April. Fr. Stephen said that he was very happy with the success of the Easter ceremonies and particularly with the high level of participation from the people of the parish and the youth. There was very favourable feedback from both parishioners and the listeners to MWR who commended Gerry Glennon on how well he introduced and explained the various parts of the ceremonies. Holly Browne and Vanessa Henry were also praised for how clear and precise they were when doing the readings during the "Celebration of the Lord's Passion".

Fr. Stephen said that more Eucharistic Ministers were needed and that if council members knew of people who were interested to let him know so that he could contact them. Some have already expressed an interest and a training evening would take place by the end of the month in the church.

## MAY

### First Holy Communion

The second Saturday of the month marked a very special day in the lives of 28 children from Scoil Íosa who made their First Holy Communion at the 11am mass. Afterwards Fr. Stephen thanked their teachers Ms. Fitzmaurice and Ms. Ruane for the work they had put in to prepare the children for this important sacrament and to Ms. Judge and the Scoil Íosa choir for the beautiful music and singing, which really enhanced the occasion.

Many of the children along with their parents and guardians proceeded to the Parochial Hall where refreshments were provided. This was organised by members of the PPC members.

### Pentecost Sunday

Pentecost Sunday saw the introduction of the new larger sized Parish Newsletter, which was introduced by the communications sub group. The larger sized newsletter contains more information and is easier to read. Fr. Stephen read a beautiful reflection at the end of the Mass on the influence which the Holy Spirit can have on our lives radiation joy, peace and positivity. He then imparted a special blessing for Pentecost Sunday. The soloist for the Mass was Oliver Jordan.

