

Mass Times – Anniversaries Fri. 19th – Sun. 28th Mch

During the current level 5 Lockdown, all our Masses are celebrated behind closed doors in Mountrath and Ballyfin Churches. Anniversary Masses arranged for the Hollow Church will be celebrated in Mountrath Church

Mountrath Parish

- Fri. 19th Mch. 10.00 am Joe and Sheila Moore, Fr. O'Connor Cresc.
Jim Morrissey, Dillon's Cross, Cork, Mountrath. 1st Anniv
- Sat. 20th Mch. 7.00 pm
- Sun. 21st Mch. 9.00 am No Mass in the Hollow Church today.
11.30 am Pat and Marie Walsh, Roskelton.
- Mon. 22nd Mch. 10.00 am
- Tues. 23rd Mch. 10.00 am
- Wed. 24th Mch. 10.00 am
- Thurs. 25th Mch. 10.00 am
- Fri. 26th Mch. 10.00 am Altar List of the Dead.
- Sat. 27th Mch. 10.00 am Tom and Jo Fitzpatrick, Deerpark
and their son, Fr. John - Fr. John's 1st Anniv.
Michael and Christine Tobin - St. Fintan's Tce.
Christine's 5th Anniv.
And daughter, Kathleen Delaney (Nee Tobin) 3rd Anniv.
- Sun. 28th Mch. 9.00 am No Mass in the Hollow Church today
11.30 am Paddy Sinnott, New Line Close. 9th Anniv
Jack Sinnott, New Line Close. 7th Anniv.
Deceased members of St. Vincent de Paul Society
Mountrath – Ballyfin – Camross Chapter.

Lord, for your faithful
people,
Life is changed, not ended

We pray for Joan Moore who died in Birmingham, England on Sat. 13th Mch. R.I.P. Wife of Stephen Moore. Sister-in-law of Tom Moore, New Line Road. May she rest in Peace

Ballyfin Parish

- Fri. 19th Mch. 5.00 pm Exposition of Blessed Sacrament - Personal Prayer
- Sun. 21st Mch. 10.00 am
- Fri. 26th Mch. 5.00 pm Exposition of Blessed Sacrament - Personal Prayer
- Sun. 28th Mch. 10.00 am Jim Coogan, The Knocks - 18th Anniv.

Martin Lowry, Lower Sconce. R.I.P.

We pray for Martin who died peacefully at Portlaoise Regional Hosp. on Thurs. 11th March. Martin's Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Fintan's Parish Church, Mountrath on Sat. 13th March followed by burial in Mountrath Cemetery. We extend sympathy to brothers Jack and Tim, sisters-in-law Mary, Norah and Deirdre, nephews, nieces, extended family, relatives, neighbours and friends.

Annie Hill (nee Ryan) St. Fintan's Terrace. R.I.P.

We pray for Annie who died peacefully at Portlaoise Regional Hosp. on Fri. 12th March. Annie's Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Fintan's Parish Church, Mountrath on Sun. 14th March followed by burial in Mountrath Cemetery. We extend sympathy to her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and their families, nephews, nieces, extended family, relatives, neighbours and friends.

May Martin and Annie rest in the peace of Christ

Daffodil Day 2021 - Fri. 26th March

A Note from Mountrath "Daffodil Day" Organising Committee

Daffodil Day is on Friday next 26th March. Since the Covid-19 restrictions will not allow any street selling of the daffodils it is hoped that there will be collection boxes in most shops in the town. Silk Daffodils and pins may also be on sale in the shops. If desired, you can give donations to the organisers, Margaret O'Brien or Bernie Phelan or if you wish you may donate by logging into the Irish Cancer Society website and clicking on the "donate" button. All funds raised goes to the Irish Cancer Society to support cancer patients and the loved ones. Your continued and generous support of Daffodil Day in Mountrath is much appreciated and we extend a very special "Thank You" for your unwavering support over the years. Please God, we will be in a better place this time next year, when hopefully things will have returned to some sort of normality – in the meantime we will continue to live in hope of better days ahead.

The Tree of Life

If you experienced the loss of a loved one since February 2020, (beginning of the Pandemic) in either parish (or indeed elsewhere) we invite you to write the name of your loved one on a piece of paper (at home) and place it in a specially designated Box at the altar in the church, or if it is more convenient for you (during these restrictive times.) just send an email or a text message to us. (or a phone call) - We will write these names on ribbon and they will in turn be placed on the Tree of Life. The tree (and ribbons) will be located at front of the church on Holy Sat. for our Easter Ceremonies.

St. Joseph - The Greatest Saint

Fr. P.J. Fitzgerald, S.P.S.

Not many people have devotion to St. Joseph. He is the forgotten saint. Pope Francis is trying to change that. He declared 2021 the Year of St. Joseph - beginning on 8th Decembr 2020 and ending on 8th December 2021. On Friday, 19th March, the feast of St. Joseph, the pope announced that Knock Shrine is now recognised as an "International Marian and Eucharistic Shrine" You may know that St. Joseph appeared in the apparition at Knock with Mary and St. John together with the Lamb of God (Jesus) in 1879.

It is not surprising that St. Joseph has such a low profile. He is present at the birth of Jesus and the incidents surrounding it as well as in the story of the finding of the child Jesus in the temple. He is a silent presence. After that we hear no more of him. Not a word of his is recorded in the Gospels. He was always there when he was needed. He is the rock of the Holy Family.

The Church thinks that after Our Blessed Lady that St. Joseph is the greatest saint, because it was he who was entrusted with the role of father in the rearing of Jesus.

Surely, God chose the best available person for this important role.

Saint Joseph is patron saint of the dying because even though we do not know when he died, it is presumed to be before Jesus began his public ministry and that he died in the arms of Mary and Jesus. He couldn't be given a better send off.

St. Joseph pray for us, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Message from Pope Francis to Knock Shrine on Fri. 19th Mch

Good evening, brothers and sisters,

I gladly take advantage of this means of communication in order to be with you at such an important moment in the life of the Shrine.

Ever since the apparition of August 21, 1879, when the Blessed Virgin Mary, together with Saint Joseph and Saint John the Apostle, appeared to some villagers, the Irish people, wherever they have found themselves, have expressed their faith and devotion to Our Lady of Knock. You have been a missionary people. We cannot forget how many priests left their homeland in order to become missionaries of the Gospel.

Nor can we forget the many lay people who emigrated to far-away lands but still kept their devotion to Our Lady.

Message from Pope Francis to Knock Shrine on Fri. 19th Mch (Continued from page on left)

How many families in the course of almost a century and a half have handed on the faith to their children and gathered their daily labours around the prayer of the Rosary, with the image of Our Lady of Knock at its centre. The arms of the Virgin, out stretched in prayer, continue to show us the importance of prayer as the message of hope which goes out from this Shrine. As you know, in her apparition at Knock, the Virgin says nothing. Yet her silence is a language; indeed, it is the most expressive language we have.

The message which comes from Knock is that of the great value of silence for our faith.

It is this silence in the face of mystery, which does not mean giving up on understanding, but understanding while aided and supported by the love of Jesus who offered himself for all of us as the Lamb, sacrificed for the salvation of humanity. It is this silence in the face of the great mystery of a love which cannot be reciprocated unless in trusting abandonment to the will of the merciful Father. And, finally, it is silence which Jesus asks of us when he teaches: "When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matthew 6:6-8).

My dear brothers and sisters present at Knock, and all of you who may be watching from afar, the elevation of the National Sanctuary of Our Lady of Knock to an International Sanctuary of Special Eucharistic and Marian Devotion is a great responsibility. You accept to always have your arms wide open as a sign of welcome to every pilgrim who may arrive from any part of the world, asking nothing in return but only recognizing him as a brother or a sister who desires to share the same experience of fraternal prayer. May this welcome be joined with charity and become an effective witness to a heart which is open to receiving the Word of God and the grace of the Holy Spirit which gives us strength. May the Eucharistic mystery which unites us in communion with the Risen Lord and with one another always be the rock on which to live out faithfully our vocation to be "missionary disciples", like the Virgin Mary who made herself a pilgrim of the Gospel of her Son. May she protect us and console us with her merciful countenance.

I greet you all as I implore God's blessing upon you and I ask you to pray for me.

Easter Ceremonies 2021

Because of the continued Covid 19 Restrictions and Lockdown, regrettably, all our Easter Ceremonies will be celebrated behind closed doors. We hope you will be able to join us on the Parish Webcam or (in Mountrath) on our Parish Radio. Please God, in spite of the lockdown and restrictions imposed on us at this time, our Easter Ceremonies will be prayerful and meaningful for all of us.

The following are the times for our Easter Ceremonies

Palm (Passion Sunday) 28th March 2021

Vigil Mass 7.00 pm (Sat. 27th) - Via Mountrath Parish Webcam and Radio

Palm Sunday Liturgies

Sun. 28th March 10.00 am - Via Ballyfin Parish Webcam.

Sun. 28th March - 11.30 am - Via Mountrath Parish Webcam and Radio

Special Booklets for Palm Sunday and Holy week – along with small segments of “Palm” will be circulated next week and will also be available in both Churches.

Penitential Service - Via Parish Webcam (And Parish Radio)

Tues. 30th March Mountrath 7.00 pm Ballyfin 8.00 pm

Holy Thurs.

Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7.30 pm - Both Webcams

Adoration of Blessed Sacrament after Mass

Concluding with Night Prayer at 9.45 pm Both Webcams

Good Friday

Liturgy of the Passion 3.00 pm - Both Webcams

Stations of the Cross 7.30 pm - Both Webcams

Holy Saturday

Vigil Liturgy will commence at 8.00 pm - Both Webcams

Easter Sunday

Ballyfin Webcam 10.00 am Mountrath Webcam and Parish Radio 11.30 am

St. Fintan's Parish Mountrath and Ballyfin

Sat. 20th - Sun. 21st March 2021 - 5th Sun. of Lent

Fr. P.J. Fitzgerald C.C. (087) 605 5783 Fr. Joe (087) 2411 594

Visit Home Page of Parish Website for Links to Webcams
Mountrath Parish Radio transmits on FM 104.5

www.mountrathballyfinparish.ie Email jmbrophy2@gmail.com



On Fri. 19th March, Feast of St. Joseph, Pope Francis formally elevated Knock Shrine from a national to an international sanctuary, which he said bestows a “great responsibility” on the Shrine at Knock.
At a virtual Mass on Friday, Pope Francis said this marked an “important moment” in the life of the Marian Shrine at Knock. The shrine will from now be titled
“International Sanctuary of Special Eucharistic and Marian Devotion”

Turning to God for Forgiveness This Lent

As we move closer to Holy Week, our thoughts turn to the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of our Lenten journey and preparation for Easter.

Unfortunately, during this time of restrictions and lockdown we are not in a position to take part fully in this Sacrament.

But, of course, God's Mercy and Forgiveness is always available to us and there are many ways in which we can experience God's mercy, love and forgiveness as we anticipate a future celebration of the Sacrament.

We invite you to join us for an online Penitential Service on Tues. 30th

7.00 pm via Mountrath Parish Webcam

8.00 pm via Ballyfin Parish Webcam.

This will be a time of prayer, readings and reflection with an examination of conscience and concluding with the praying of an Act of Contrition.

This is a non-Sacramental celebration of God's mercy and a rich preparation for a future celebration of the Sacrament with individual confession and absolution.

Already, before Confession, a person on that journey enjoys the forgiveness of God. Alternatively, in our own time, we can spend some time in prayer with God and make what is known as an act of perfect contrition. This involves two things our part – firstly, to pray an act of contrition out of love of God and secondly, to make a firm commitment to go to Confession when that becomes possible.

An Act of Contrition

O my God, I thank you for loving me.

I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving others and not loving you.

Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.

Speaking about this situation during Lent, last year, Pope Francis had this to say,

"The Catechism is very clear – If we do not find a priest to hear our Confession, speak to God. He is our Father and tell him the truth.

Promise him – Later I will confess, but forgive me now.

And immediately we will return to the fullness of God's Grace.

Ballyfin Parish Lotto 16th Mch

Nos. Drawn 16 17 20 22

Jackpot € 18,000 - One Winner

17 Match 3 - Each Rec. € 59

Billy and Ann McCormack

Promoter - Denis Daly

1 Local Winner
Next Week's Jackpot €19,000

Mountrath Parish Lotto 18th Mch

Nos. Drawn 3 20 24 30

1 Jackpot Jackpot of € 20,000

9 Match 3 - Each Rec. € 112

Colm and Noel McGrath - Mgt. McGrath

Sheila Birney - Sarah McDowell

2 Local Winners
Next Week's Jackpot €17,000

An Easter Prayer - An Easter Hope

It is now just over a full year since the outbreak of the Coronavirus – Covid 19 Pandemic and it has truly taken its toll on so many families in the Parish. This past year has been a year full of challenges and has been a very difficult year for so many and so many of us have been so deeply effected by the ravages of the Coronavirus – Covid 19, A vocabulary, unknown to us just a year ago is now part of our lives. Lockdown, restrictions, social distancing, quarantine, hand sanitizing, close contacts, window visits, vaccination, to mention just a few of the words that regrettably are now part and parcel of our daily lives.

Foremost in our thoughts and prayers this Easter time are families directly effected by the Pandemic because of death and illness, separation and loss. So many have had to bear the burden of sickness and death. So many families have had to bear the burden of sickness of someone dear to them, unable to visit them in Hospital or Nursing Home and often when they were in their own homes. So many families have had to bear the burden of the death of someone dear to them, unable to visit them in Hospital or Nursing Home or in their own homes – unable to be with them in their final days and hours of life - unable to hold a hand or offer comfort and reassurance to one of their own at such a sacred and precious time. Unable to attend Funeral Rites of a loved one.

Know that as we conduct our Easter Ceremonies over the coming weeks, Fr. PJ and myself will be holding you and your family in our thoughts and prayers in a very special way, praying that the new life and hope of Easter will seep into your lives and relationships. We pray that the Easter promise of new life and new hope will sustain you and your loved over the coming months, when please God things will get better. We hope you will be able to join us via webcam or Parish Radio (in Mountrath) as we recall and celebrate Christ's journey through the darkness of death to the brightness of new life and new hope - and new beginnings.

