

## Mass Times – Anniversaries Fri. 19<sup>th</sup> – Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> 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 are celebrated in Mountrath Church

### Mountrath Parish

- Fri. 26<sup>th</sup> Mch. 10.00 am Altar List of the Dead.  
Sat. 27<sup>th</sup> Mch. 7.00 pm Tom and Jo Fitzpatrick, Deerpark and their son, Fr. John - Fr. John's 1<sup>st</sup> Anniv.  
Michael and Christine Tobin - St. Fintan's Tce.  
Christine's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniv.  
Kathleen Delaney (Nee Tobin) 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniv.  
Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> Mch. 9.00 am No Mass in the Hollow Church today  
11.30 am Paddy Sinnott, New Line Close. 9<sup>th</sup> Anniv.  
Jack Sinnott, New Line Close. 7<sup>th</sup> Anniv.  
Deceased members of VDP Society  
Mountrath – Ballyfin – Camross Chapter.

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

See the back page of this Newsletter for times of our Easter Ceremonies which will be available live on both our Parish Webcams and Parish Radio (in Mountrath)

- Mon. 29<sup>th</sup> Mch. 10.00 am  
Tues. 30<sup>th</sup> Mch. 10.00 am  
Wed. 31<sup>st</sup> Mch. 10.00 am

We continue to keep in our prayers people who are ill (their families and carers) at home or in Hospital at this time

### The Easter Triduum

- Thurs. 1<sup>st</sup> April 7.30 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper  
Fri. 2<sup>nd</sup> April 3.00 pm Liturgy of the Passion  
Sat. 3<sup>rd</sup> April 8.00 pm Easter Vigil  
Niall Doherty, 15 Cluainin 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniv.  
Sun. 4<sup>th</sup> April 9.00 am No Mass in the Hollow Ch. today.  
11.30 am Mass of the Resurrection  
Tim Keenan, Church St., 4<sup>th</sup> Anniv.

### Ballyfin Parish

- Fri. 26<sup>th</sup> Mch. 5.00 pm Exposition of Blessed Sacrament - Personal Prayer  
Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> Mch. 10.00 am Jim Coogan, The Knocks - 18<sup>th</sup> Anniv.  
Thurs. 1<sup>st</sup> April 7.30 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper.  
Maisie Kilgannon, (Née Dunphy) England and Clonagowan  
Good Fri. 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr 3.00 pm Liturgy of the Passion - 7.30 pm Stations of the Cross  
Holy Sat. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ap. 8.00 pm Vigil Liturgy commences at 8.00 pm

### Divine Mercy Sunday

Novena to God's Divine Mercy begins on Good Friday (2<sup>nd</sup> April) and the Feast will be celebrated on Divine Mercy Sunday - Sun. 11<sup>th</sup> April.  
Leaflets are available in the Church.

### Raphael Patrick Scott, Brindle Lodge, Esker, Ballyfin R.I.P.

We pray for Raphael who died following a tragic accident at his home on Sat. 20<sup>th</sup> March. (Former teacher at Ballyfin College) We extend sympathy to his wife, Bernie, daughter, Joanne and Claire.- brothers and sisters, Michael, Tommy, David, Maura, Kathryn and Brigid and all their families and extended families, aunts, uncle, cousins, nephews, nieces, sisters and brothers in-law. Sadly missed by his neighbours, students and friends.

### Mary Bridget Tynan, Old Forge Crescent, Mountrath, R.I.P.

We pray for Mary Brigid (Bridie) who died peacefully at Ballard Lodge Nursing Home, Portlaoise on Fr. 26<sup>th</sup> March. Bridie's Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Fintan's Church, Mountrath on Sat. 27<sup>th</sup> March followed by burial in Mountrath Cemetery. We extend sympathy to sisters Essie and Lizzie, and families, Fr. O'Connor Cresc. niece, nephews, relatives and their families, neighbours and friends.  
May Raphael and Bridie rest in peace.

### Age Friendly Activity Pack

Laois Co. Co. Library Service (and others) have prepared a beautiful booklet "Entitled "Age Friendly Activity Pack" It is a compendium of good wishes and interviews from prominent people in the County, Claire Byrne, Anna Mai Mc Hugh, Pat Critchley (to mention just a few) - Puzzles, Quizzes, Word searches, Some tasty recipes from Darina Allen and lots more besides. - Lovely to see included also are the Lyrics of "Lovely Laois" - from the pen of our own, Christy Cullen, Clonard. (Christy, best wishes to you and Carmel at this time)

Copies of this fine production are available in both our churches. You are most welcome to collect a copy when you visit the church over the coming days.

### 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.

## The Annunciation - Jesus becomes Man

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

Last Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> March, we celebrated the Feast of the Annunciation. We are familiar with the story of how the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary to inform her that she was to become the mother of God's son, Jesus. Everytime we pray the Angelus we call to mind what happened that day. I think we are inclined to concentrate on Mary's role - her cooperation with God's plan, which made the incarnation possible. She was willing to be the "handmaid" of the Lord. The word "Incarnation" simply means, becoming flesh. The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. That day, Jesus became a member of the human race, like us in every way, but sin. St. Paul, in his letter to the Phillipians puts it this way "Even though he was in the form of God, he did not cling to equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being found in human form .... " It was put another way by the author of the letter to the Hebrews, he says, "In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets, but in our time he has spoken directly to us through his Son" - Jesus shares our human nature and he enables us through Baptism to share in his divine nature.

The Church teaches that Jesus was both man and God - fully human and fully divine - as a human he had to be cared for as a baby, he had to be taught his A, B, C's (yes, he did read from the Bible in the synagogue) and he went through the stages of development just like any ordinary child. He must have been very ordinary growing up because we hear nothing of him except for the time he was lost in Jerusalem. The point I want to make is that Jesus is no stranger to a whole host of human experiences, hunger, thirst, illness, I suppose. He felt pain as we do. So when we have problems we can approach him with confidence because he will know "the feeling" and be sympathetic. This is what the Incarnation means for me - Jesus is one of us, and better still, he also happens to be God and has the power to respond to any of the needs we bring to Him.

## Easter 2021 - Special Holy Week Pack

Because of the lockdown and restrictions imposed on us and in an effort to reach out in a special way, this year, we have prepared a very comprehensive 68 page Booklet, containing all our Easter Liturgies from Palm Sunday to the Easter Vigil. - a "Sprig of Palm" and a votive light for use during the Easter Vigil Mass and an Easter Greeting from Fr. P.J and myself. You are most welcome to collect a copy for yourself - or maybe for a neighbour - available in both our Churches

## Holy Week - An Seachtain Mhór

*"Living a Week of Memories"*

A most special week... A Most Sacred Week. For us as Christians, Holy Week is the most important week of the year. Holy Week lasts from Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday and reaches its highpoint in what we call the Easter Triduum - these three great days from Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper to Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday. Reflecting on the Scriptures and turning to ritual and symbols, we as Christians throughout the world, journey with Jesus through those final days of his life, his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

In the process, we experience God's redemptive presence, our faith is deepened, our hope is renewed and our commitment to living a life of love of God and one another is strengthened. A different way of praying as a community of faith... Again this year, our celebrations will be very different due to the restrictions in place because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. As a Christian Community we cannot gather together in person for our usual religious services but, please God, this will not prevent us from uniting spiritually and taking time to pray, to reflect and to make this Holy Week a truly enriching experience of the presence of God and God's infinite love, in our lives,

## A Prayer on Palm Sunday

Loving Father, with palm branches we recall when Jesus was welcomed by crowds into the city of Jerusalem.

Bless us with your Spirit as we prepare to journey through Holy Week.  
May we find time to listen again to the story of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.

There, may we discover the love of God, which knows no bounds. We bring with us our suffering and pain, our worry and loss and the suffering, pain, worry and loss of those we hold dear at this time.

May we hear proclaimed this coming Easter Day that Jesus is risen!  
May we have our hope renewed in God who brings good out of bad and even life out of death. Amen.

There is a lovely tradition in Ireland where we place (and preserve) the blessed Palm (from Palm Sunday) somewhere prominent in our homes during Holy Week.

## Easter Ceremonies 2021

Because of the continued Covid 19 Restrictions and Lockdown, regretfully, 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) 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021

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

### Palm Sunday Liturgies

Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> March 10.00 am - Via Ballyfin Parish Webcam.

Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> 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. 30<sup>th</sup> 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. 27<sup>th</sup> - Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Palm Sunday

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](http://www.mountrathballyfinparish.ie) Email [jmbrophy2@gmail.com](mailto:jmbrophy2@gmail.com)



The Promise of Resurrection  
Is not written in books alone  
But in very kind word and deed

## 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

0 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 24<sup>th</sup> Mch

Nos. Drawn 10 19 20 24

Jackpot € 10,000

One Winner

Congratulations to William

McNamee Rhode Parish

23 Match 3 - Each Rec. € 44

**Next Week's Jackpot €10,000**

## Mountrath Parish Lotto 25<sup>th</sup> Mch

Nos. Drawn 11 20 24 27

No Jackpot Jackpot of € 17,000

0 Match 3 - Each Rec. € 100

3 Local Winners

Local Winners

Jack Farrell - Jerry Dooley

Mary and Tony Delaney - Heathe Mortimer

Riosin Fitzpatrick - Mai Murphy

**Next Week's Jackpot € 18,000**

## An Easter Prayer - An Easter Hope

It is now 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.

