



The local area has been a place of Christian faith since the days of Saint Patrick. In the years since, many have rightly put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ and have shared that faith. Once again, this Christmas, you are connecting with that faith community even as you read this. For this Newsletter comes to us as an initiative that grew out of this year's parish gatherings, from the consequent Parish Pastoral Council and from ministry groups new and established in our parish. All of this is in the faith-filled service of Jesus Christ and of the people he calls together to be parish and church. We have always had four targets as a parish: paying attention to God's Word; giving energy to building community; celebrating our faith worthily; reaching out to those who are hurting. We also have beautiful churches. I invite you to feel part of the faith community project here throughout the year.



Canon Peter O'Reilly

Welcome to Fr. David Donnelly, appointed here by our Bishop, Liam MacDaid; it will be Fr. David's first Christmas among us. We keep in our prayers Fr. John Skinnader who has returned to the missionary work he loves: his blog is on our parish website. In the coming months, watch out for the World Youth Day initiative that will enable seventeen of our young parishioners to go on a unique journey of faith.



Parish Mission Statement

We are called by our baptism to be disciples of Jesus; to love God and our neighbour. We seek to live our lives as faithful witnesses to Gospel values and to spread the Good News in a joyful, simple way, bringing hope, healing and support to each other along life's journey.

We are a worshipping Christ - centred Community.

We value, respect and promote the dignity of others;

We embrace difference and diversity, rejoicing in the unique giftedness of every human person.

For now, may I, along with my colleagues and our Parish Pastoral Council, wish you the peace that comes in the shelter and kindness we give each other and in God's promise that extends to us even now in the promise of the heavenly home that Christmas brings.



Year of Faith 2012-2013



The Year of Faith was proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI to commence on 11 October 2012 and continue until 24 November 2013. He has set aside this special year for Catholics throughout the world to rediscover and share with others the precious gift of Faith received from God Our Father.

He outlined the purpose of the special year as being to give fresh impetus to the mission of the whole church to lead human beings out of the wilderness, in which they often find themselves, to the place of life and friendship with Christ that gives us fullness. Two significant anniversaries in this Year of Faith are the 50th anniversary of Vatican II and the 20th of the publication of The Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Pope explains that even though it is fifty years since the Vatican Council its reflections and teachings are "a sure compass by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning".

This Year of Faith offers a challenge to us here in St. Michael's Parish.

How can we get to know our faith better?

How can we make it better known through the modern means of communication? Our faith grows when it is lived. It is the hope of the Holy Father that "the credible witness of people enlightened in mind and heart by the word of the Lord" will be "capable of opening the hearts and minds of many to the desire for God and for true life, life without end". (Porta Fidei 15)

Bereavement Support Group



Patricia Donnelly, Maureen Hoy, Bernie Keenan, Pat Illand, Sr. Gertrude Murphy, Sr. Phil Flynn with (inset) Margaret Brewster, Peter Duffy, Patricia Donnelly and Seamus McConnell

St Michael's Bereavement Support Group was formed in response to discussions at the recent parish meetings which were focussed on how we can live more fully as a parish community.

Whilst the death of a loved one is a deep personal loss, it is also a loss to our parish community. In the past year over seventy families have been affected by the death of a beloved member. Just as we are alongside parishioners at times of joy, like Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation and Marriage, it was felt that there is a need to be alongside people in their grief: a need to accompany and support people on their grief journey.

The aim of the group is to provide a listening support service. This is not intended in any way to be a counselling service. Initially, we would hope to provide

the service as a home visiting service with two group visitors visiting the family home some two to three months after a death. Basically, this would be to let the bereaved know that they are being held in mind by their parish community.

We intend to see how this develops, respond to any other needs we encounter and organise a public lecture on grief in Lent.

St Michael's Hospital Ministry Update

Eucharistic Ministry in South West Acute Hospital:

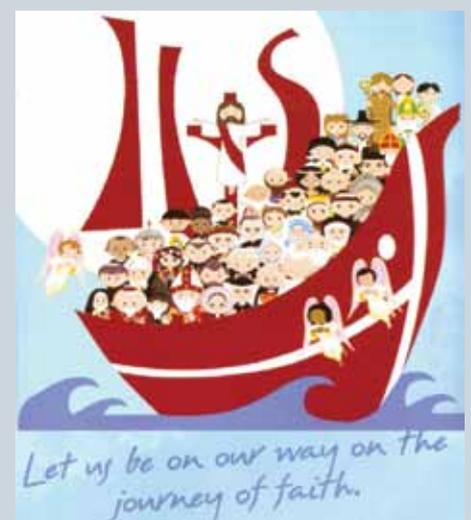
- ◆ Vetting of the 35 volunteers has now been completed and ID's are printed.
- ◆ The core group has visited the hospital and spoken with staff regarding this ministry in bringing Eucharist to the patients.
- ◆ The full Group of Volunteers met on 5 September when we had a talk by Sr. Valerie McNiff (Staff member in the Coronary Care Unit), followed by a discussion. Sr. McNiff clarified a number of relevant issues and emphasised the need for this Ministry.
- ◆ A short prayer leaflet is being prepared and rotas will be completed in December.

Adult Faith Development - *What are we about?*

- ◆ 'Sharing the Good News' with our parishioners in a joyful meaningful way.
- ◆ Led by the Holy Spirit; serving the adults in our parish by enabling them to enrich their faith through ongoing renewal.

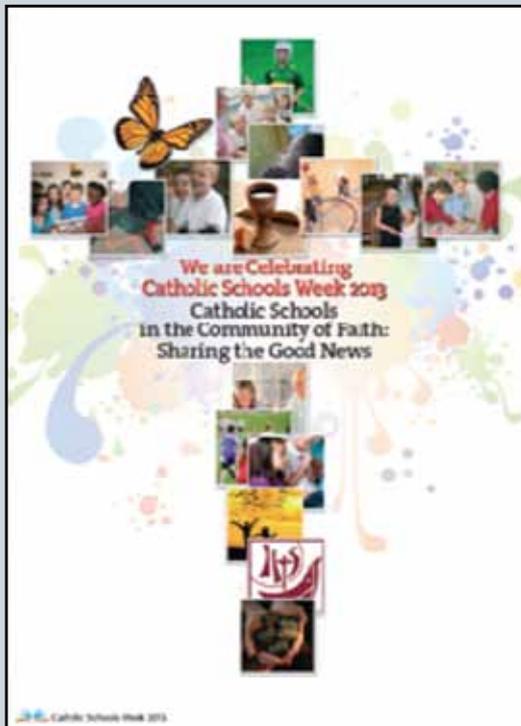
Year of faith Programme

- ◆ Pray in the home, with the family, the prayer on the 'Year of Faith' card.
- ◆ Faith development course in Lent.
- ◆ Short course on PRAYER.
- ◆ Short course based on SCRIPTURE.
- ◆ New Heart, New Spirit course in Enniskillen September 2013.



"Catholic Schools in the Community of Faith: Sharing the Good News."

Catholic Schools Week 2013



This week celebrates the distinctive nature of Catholic Education and gives schools the opportunity to focus on the work that is regularly undertaken in providing an educational experience that is rooted in the Gospel values.

Why Choose Catholic Education?

In Catholic Schools the person and message of Christ find expression in:

- ◆ Communities of Faith, Service, Prayer and Worship.
- ◆ The development of each person's full potential in a climate of joy, freedom, respect, challenge, co-operation and celebration.
- ◆ The enrichment of pupil life - intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral, social and emotional.
- ◆ The promotion of a spirit of charity, social justice, global awareness and concern for others leading to practical outreach and partnerships.
- ◆ A culture of tolerance where people of diverse identities are recognised, welcomed, respected and cherished.

Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry has been a part of church life from the earliest days.

Christ Jesus recognised the importance of youth involvement in every day church life. This is clearly seen in Mark 10:14, 'Let the children come to me; do not prevent them.' Youth Ministry has always been a part of church life; beginning with baptism and receiving of the early sacraments. In our parish we have seen this continue to grow over the years. With the establishment of the Children's Liturgy, altar serving and, in recent years, our young people leading the Prayers of the Faithful and the Second Reading at our weekend Masses. At sixteen they are invited to participate in the Pope John Paul II award which engages them in church based activities while integrating their faith into the extended community. The church activities include the Eucharistic Ministry and collecting and reading at Mass. Social awareness is raised by voluntary community work in, for example, charity shops, Faith and Light, Scouts/Guides, care homes and the South West Acute Hospital.

Our young people inject humour, vitality and enthusiasm into their various ministries and, presented with these challenges, give so much to our church and parish by publicly living their faith. They are an intrinsic part of our living church. It is important to remember; they are not just the church of the future: they are also the church of today.



Mary Magee, Mena Blake, Fr. Martin O'Reilly, Cecelia Burns and Noelle Campbell

St. Michael's Children's Liturgy

The Children's Liturgy Group is involved in a ministry to children during the 12.30pm Mass on Sundays when the gospel message of the day is introduced to them through prayer, discussion, music and art.

It is a fun and informative way of enhancing the faith of the children of our parish community.

"Let the little children come to me for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these"

(The Children's Liturgy Nativity Play will take place at the 9.30am Mass on Christmas Day.)



Society of St Vincent de Paul

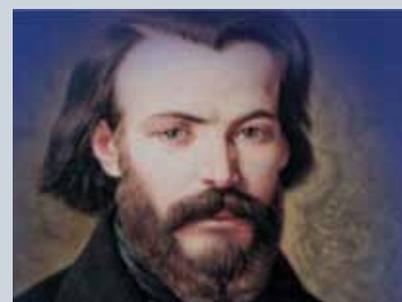
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international voluntary Catholic Christian organisation. Founded in 1833, it has been in Ireland since 1844 and in Enniskillen since 1848. It has extensive experience of working with a diverse range of people who experience poverty and exclusion.

Through a network of over 9,500 volunteers, it is strongly committed to working for social justice and advocates the creation of a more just and caring society.

The Society operates in small groups, called “Conferences”, based on local parishes. These meet regularly and their work is usually concentrated on local visiting. With an annual budget of over €74 million in 2010, funding is raised by corporate and public contributions, internal collections and government support for projects tackling social exclusion. Members make a contribution towards our administration costs at each weekly meeting.

Mission Statement

Inspired by our principal founder, Frederic Ozanam, and our patron, St. Vincent de Paul, we seek to respond to the call every Christian receives to bring the love of Christ to those in need: “I was hungry and you gave me food” (Matthew 25).



Blessed Frederic Ozanam

“The question which is agitating the world today is a social one. It is a struggle between those who have nothing and those who have too much. It is a violent clash of opulence and poverty which is shaking the ground under our feet. Our duty as Christians is to throw ourselves between these two camps in order to accomplish by love what justice alone cannot do”. Frederic Ozanam, 1834

Enniskillen

St Michael’s is one of the few churches where the SVP collection is taken up inside the church. If we couldn’t do this, we would need a permit every week to collect outside. The Sunday Collection is a vital source, providing up to 50% of our income. Most of the larger donations come in December and goes towards the Christmas expenditure.



Joe Maguire and Kevin Rooney

Currently, there are ten members in our Conference (the Blessed Virgin Conference), who meet every Monday night. There is also a vast team of volunteers who work in the shop, help with deliveries of furniture and Christmas hampers and assist with collections and fund-raising events. In Enniskillen last year we raised almost £55,000 through collections and donations. We received almost 900 requests for help and gave out approximately £70,000. Profits from our shop helped to make up the shortfall and to assist other parishes in Fermanagh.

TOWN/LAND OR AREA	CONFERENCE	CONTACT NO.
Belcoo, Belleek, Belnaleck, Boho, Enniskillen, Derrygonnelly, Florencecourt, Garrison, Killesher, Letterbreen, Lisbellaw, Arney,	Enniskillen	028 6634 7788
Clabby, Fivemiletown, Garvary, Tempo	Tempo	07564 091810
Derrylin, Kinawley, Teemore	Derrylin	07979 507718
Ballinamallard, Coa, Irvinestown, Lisnarick, Trillick	Irvinestown	07707 561408
Brookeborough, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge	Lisnaskea	07751 237457
Ederney, Kesh	Ederney	028 6863 1451
Newtownbutler	Newtownbutler	07903 419206
Roslea	Roslea	028 6775 1877

Who do we help?

The aim of the St Vincent de Paul Society is to tackle poverty in all its forms through the provision of practical assistance to those in need. The concept of need is broader than financial hardship, so visiting the sick and the lonely is a large part of the Society's work.

BLESSED VIRGIN CONFERENCE		
ASSISTANCE GIVEN 2011		
	No.	Amount
Cash	42	£5,711.50
Food	502	£24,014.16
Clothing/Furniture	39	£3,515.00
Fuel	142	£13,705.00
Outings/Holidays	2	£600.00
Job Creation	1	£20,000.00
Education	5	£1,669.00
TOTAL	733	£69,214.66

How do we Help?

Home visitation, offering friendship, support, advice and practical help, is the cornerstone of our work. In the Northern Region around 2,500 visits are made to families, pensioners and individuals each week. Over £2.7m was spent during 2011 in assistance to the needy and a further £1.5m on basic essential household furniture.

Support and Friendship

Through person-to-person contact, we are committed to respecting the dignity of those we assist and fostering self-respect. We assure confidentiality at all times and endeavour to establish relationships based on trust and friendship.



Colomba Fitzpatrick, Joe Maguire, Kevin Rooney, Francie McManus, Tom Martin, Nuala Cassidy, Norma McMahon and Martha Smyth

Promoting Self-sufficiency

It is not enough to provide short term material support. Those we assist are also helped to achieve self-sufficiency in the longer term and the sense of self-worth this provides. When problems are beyond our competence, we enlist the support of specialised help.

"Thank you very much for your kind help. Our son has settled down very well in University. We couldn't have done this without your help. Our prayers are with you all in St Vincent de Paul."

"On behalf of the many pensioners who enjoyed a wonderful outing to Bundoran, we thank all at St Vincent de Paul. The company, the craic and the food were brilliant. We really appreciate our trips and visits from SVP, Enniskillen"

"We are so grateful for the supply of oil. We were fearful of being without heat in these cold winter days. We cannot thank you enough."



The St. Vincent de Paul shop at 12 Church St, Enniskillen

The aim of the St Vincent de Paul Society is to tackle poverty in all its forms through the provision of practical assistance to those in need.

Caring Group

The Caring Group was formed at the sixth Parish Group meeting, last May, and acquired further members at the follow up meeting in October. At our first meeting, we tried to define what would come under the group's remit, and have, for now, narrowed it down to:-

- * Supporting and encouraging the growth of the (long established) Nursing Home Eucharistic Visitation group.
- * Supporting the provision of a Mother and Toddler group (for which quality toys have already been collected.)
- * Providing Funeral Teas where necessary/requested, and
- * First Aid provision during Mass.

By the time of our second meeting, we had helped the Nursing Home group gain a couple of extra helpers

(and more are always welcome! Please contact Mary McCaffrey on tel: 028 6632 4205.) Three of our members had investigated possibilities for a Mother and Toddler group. St Michael's Community Centre had been investigated as a possible location for Funeral Teas and other Parish functions.

Maureen McManus, our Convenor, had established that certified First Aid training would be fairly costly, unless we can find funding. However, the group feel that **there must be parishioners who have certification in First Aid, and would like to invite those who do to make themselves known to the Parish Office.** It is vital that we know that there are trained individuals in the Church who can administer basic First Aid. Even if you don't have time to attend meetings, please do get in touch if you could help in this way. Our next meeting is on Monday 14 January in the Parish Centre, after 10am Mass. New members with an interest in any of the above are very welcome. Please contact Maureen (66326826) or Danielle (07770975358) for more details.



Maureen McManus, Marie Carron, Rita Swift, Trina Potter, Mary McCaffrey, Angela Rooney and Brendan McGovern

Sharing with other Christians

There are many ways in which we can share prayer, discussion and social events with other Christians in and around Enniskillen. The Fermanagh Churches Forum, ten years old this year, is always delighted to welcome new members. It is a group of individuals, belonging to any church or none, who come together to promote reconciliation in the community and among the churches, with shared meals, reflections, seminars and visits. The Forum coordinates the annual service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which this year will take place on the evening of Thursday, 24 January at St Macartin's Church of Ireland Cathedral. Many people from St Michael's already belong to the Forum and to the Faith & Friendship group which meets monthly to share Scripture reading, conversation and prayer, based on the reflections of Rev. Ruth Patterson, inspired and supported by Jean Vanier.

For further details, please contact info@fermanaghchurchesforum.org or telephone Tanya on 028 6634 0227.

St Michael's Bible Study Group

The St Michael's Bible Study group is an adult catechetical group, faithful to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and dedicated to the Church's call for a new evangelisation. The Study Group seeks to fulfil its mission by offering education programmes based on the authentic teaching of the church found in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, as articulated by the Magisterium of the Church. In doing so, the group seeks to aid participants' growth towards the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity.

Contacts: Joseph Peake (66 325145 or rosaleenpeake@hotmail.com): Eugene Donaghoe (eugened@talk21.com)



Accord

Accord, based at Ros Erne House, Darling Street, celebrates 40 years of ministry in Enniskillen this year. Our centre has two counsellors and eight facilitators at present. Our counsellors work quietly, caring for those whose marriages are experiencing difficulties, and our facilitators are more publicly known in their work with couples preparing for marriage. Our centre is thriving at the moment, catering for the needs of the surrounding areas and, indeed, further afield.

Our contact number is 028 66325696 and our email is accordekn@btconnect.com

Getting Married?

Civil Law Requirement:

In Northern Ireland, notice must be given to the Civil Registrar in the twelve-month period prior to the date of the marriage. For further advice, contact the Registrar's Office at the Townhall, Enniskillen. Tel (028) 6632 5050 (ask for the registrar's office).

Church Requirements:

Parishioners planning to get married in St Michael's or St Mary's should collect a Wedding Booking Form from the Parish Office. (The same applies to parishioners marrying someone from another faith tradition even in another church.)

Guidance on the Church Paperwork requirements for that couple will be given at that stage. Couples are advised to check with the Parish Office (Tel 028 6632 2075) during office hours to ensure that their date is available. Office Hours are Monday to Friday 10.30am - 2.30pm (except Bank & Church holidays). Couples are asked to return the completed Wedding Booking Form, signed by both parties, within 30 days so that the date will be kept for them.

Parishioners getting married elsewhere should collect a 'Marriage Papers Request' form from the Parish Office and return it at least six months before the date. Further directions will be given when this form is received.

Every couple is required to do Marriage Preparation. They are advised to book a Pre-Marriage Course with Accord as soon as they decide to get married

Plans for the Future

Community Space

The parish needs volunteers to form a group to explore 'Community Space'. We have a Community Centre which could be upgraded and used for parish and community activities. Can you help? Do you have particular expertise? Are you creative? Are you interested in helping in any way? If so, please contact the Parish Centre (028 66322075 or parishcentre@st-michaels.net)

Parents and Toddlers

A number of parents have enquired about the possibility of having a 'Parent and Toddler' group in the parish: a 'drop in' centre, available Mondays to Fridays, for children to play safely and for parents to enjoy social networking. If you are a parent of young children and have time and energy to help start such a group or if you are interested in bringing your toddler to such a facility in the parish, please contact the Parish Centre (028 6632 2075 or parishcentre@st-michaels.net)

Funeral Catering

There are many ministry groups providing community service in the parish and there is a need to support bereaved families and friends on the days of funerals. The parish is keen to establish a team of volunteers to serve tea/coffee and soup/sandwiches after funeral services. The possible use of The Community Centre could be explored and a valuable parish service established. If you are interested in volunteering to start this project, please contact the Parish Centre (028 6632 2075 or parishcentre@st-michaels.net)

Welcoming Group at St Michael's Parish

We are planning to set up a group to welcome those relatively new to the parish or who may not have family links in the area. We hope to make an opportunity for people to meet after Mass on the Sunday before Lent and again at Easter and also to prepare a welcoming leaflet for those new to the parish. We need people to help with this work, both men and women, young and older people.

If you are able to help, by welcoming and talking to newcomers, making tea and coffee, translating a few sentences into another language or in any other way, please phone Bridie Dolan on 028 6632 2805, text her on 0791861839 or email Tanya Jones at tanya@crystalbard.com .

Our first meeting will be on Tuesday 15 January at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre.

Greetings from Fr. John in Wulu, South Sudan

Settling in fine to my new life and environment here. It is a very basic structure that I am sleeping in – made of mud and bamboo canes but, with a little reinforcing with wire netting to keep snakes and scorpions at bay, it is now secure and comfortable to work and sleep in. Of course, the house lizards continue to run around the walls both day and night - but they are like having pets in the house in Africa...

Frs. Nolasco, Sospeter and I continue to get on very well together and face up to the challenges of mission life here. We have Mass and Morning Prayer in a store of the new house as we don't have any other room to convert into a small chapel yet. After prayer we have breakfast, which normally consists of baked pancakes (chapattis) and tinned tuna fish. We have to buy all our drinking water as the borehole is gushing out very brownish water...

...All food items come from Uganda or Kenya and it can take up to 3 days or, indeed, 3 weeks for some of the items to arrive. Sospeter has started his own garden and already we are harvesting some cabbage and small tomatoes. Too hot here to grow potatoes, etc... The local people live on a type of barley maize called sorgum – which is made into a purple porridge-like substance – definitely an acquired taste !!! There is no fruit of any kind - so we intend to plant some fruit trees. In the evenings we walk around the area, visiting neighbouring compounds. Despite the language barrier, people are very welcoming. We have about 100 at Mass on a Sunday but there are no records of baptisms, confirmations or marriages – something else we must tighten up on.

I have never been in a place that is so quiet in the evenings: once it gets dark, not a sound is to be heard. Normally, in Africa, there is the sound of people calling to one another or children dancing under the stars but not here – total darkness and silence. It must have to do with the fact that the past few generations have had to be quiet because of the war and hiding from the enemy. Hopefully this will change now that peace and independence has come to South Sudan. We bought a small generator this week to have some light and to charge up our phones. We are hoping to have solar energy installed.



One of Fr. John's Sunday Services



One of our Out-Stations

There is no Post Office in this whole region – so don't be expecting any Christmas cards this year!

ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

Very Rev. Canon Peter O'Reilly, PP

Telephone : 028 6632 2627

Email: pp@st-michaels.net

Rev. Martin O'Reilly CC

Rev. Noel McGahan CC

Rev. David Donnelly CC

Telephone: 028 6632 2075

Presbytery, 4 Darling Street,

Enniskillen, County Fermanagh

St Michaels Parish Centre

28 Church Street, Enniskillen

Open Monday to Friday

10:30am – 2:30pm

Tel: 028 6632 2075

Email: parishcentre@michaels.net

www.st-michaels.net

The webcam can be accessed at
www.st-michaels.net
(and click on webcam tab)

You can keep up with Fr. John by following his blog on the parish website at www.st-michaels.net



Rev. Noel McGahan



Rev. Martin O'Reilly



Rev. David Donnelly

Please let us know what you think of this first edition of the Parish Newsletter by contacting the Parish Centre (parishcentre@st-michaels.net). Suggestions for future issues will be very welcome.