

BIRR PARISH

Parish Office: 057 9122028 Parish Mobile: 087-3515294
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Email: info@stbrendansbirr.ie
Priest on Duty - Please call Parish Mobile - 087-3515294
Parish Office Opening Hours
Monday - Friday 9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Fr. Tom Hogan—057-9121757

Fr. Antony Sajeesh - 057-9121757

Fr. Pat Gilbert - 057-9121757

Fr. Kieran Blake, Kilcolman - 057-9120812

Fr. Michael O'Meara, Kinnitty - 057-9137021

Catholic Schools Week 2021

Sunday 24 January - Sunday 31 January 2021

'Catholic Schools:

Communities of Faith and Resilience'.

As we live through an unprecedented time of challenge and uncertainty, our faith and our resilience can be tested. We can ask questions like 'Will things ever be the same again?', 'When can we get back to normality?', 'Where is God in all of this?' In response to this, we reflect upon how Catholic schools are communities of faith and resilience. In Catholic schools, we are called to support each other and to have faith in the promise of the Good News. Catholic schools are inspired by the belief that God has created each one of us with a capacity to give love and receive love. This love is bound in faith and is more resilient than any virus.

The Parish Office will **NOT** be open to the public during Level 5 restrictions. Please telephone 057-9122028 to book masses. Mass cards can be ordered by telephone also. We appreciate your understanding at this time.

Thank you for your continued generous financial support to the parish. Donation Envelopes can be left in the green box at the altar rails. We thank you for your generosity.

Notice of Enrolment Mercy Primary School, Birr

Parents who wish to enroll their child for September 2021 the Enrolment Application Form for the 2021-2022 school year is available as follows:

Download at: www.mercypimaryschool.ie under Forms and Policies.

Email: principal@mercypprimaryschool.ie

Phone: 089 2653246 between 9a.m. and 3 p.m.

Monday to Friday.

Please return your application form as soon as possible by email to the above address or by post to Mercy Primary School, Chapel Lane, Birr, Co. Offaly,

Sponsored By

**Birr Town
Football Club**

Remembered in Mass this Week

Sat 23rd	7.30 p.m.	Jack & Madeleine Ryan, Crinkill Carmel Moore
Sun 24th	10.30 a.m.	Bea Irwin (MM) & her husband John Hogan family, Newbridge Street Rita Scully, Fortal Patricia Harding Thomas & Mary T. White & daughter Marettta Joe & Kitty Dooley, Lisheen
	12 noon	Margaret Mongan, Kilcormac Patrick & Josephine Kelly & daughter Gail Sr. Josephine Kelly Pat O'Malley
Sat 30th	10.00 a.m.	Patricia Power (MM)
	7.30 p.m.	Eileen Cahill
Sun 31st	10.30 a.m.	Patrick & Eleanor O'Neill Patrick & Margaret O'Meara Daniel & Bridget Hogan, Mount Palmer
	12 noon	Thomas "Tucker" Pardy

Please pray for the souls of



Philip Brady, Seffin
Kay Curry (nee Maher), Westport & late of
Pound Street, sister of Margaret Connolly,
Hillside & Aidan Maher, Pound Street.

Elmgrove Nursing Home

There was a great sense of sadness and loss with the announcement of the closure of Elmgrove Nursing Home in Syngefield in early January. Elmgrove NH has been a place of care, love and kindness, a "home from home" created by the late Kathleen Gallagher and her husband Joe and its staff for the past 32 years. Families and individuals have experienced it welcome, nursing care, joy and healing at vulnerable times in their lives.

The late Kathleen Gallagher trained as a nurse in Whipps Cross Hospital in London and worked in the English health service for a number of years. It was her dream to return to Ireland and open a nursing home. The opportunity presented itself in 1988 when they purchased Elmgrove House from the Haslam family. Husband Joe, a builder by trade, set about the task of renovation and reconstruction and in September 1988 opened for its first residents. It initially accommodated 35 residents.

Kathleen was blessed over the years with exceptional staff and all helped create a special atmosphere. Fiona Gallagher joined her mother Kathleen on the staff in 2012 as administrator. With Kathleen's death last October after a short illness, a re-assessment followed which resulted in the announcement of its closure in January.

We acknowledge the contribution of Elmgrove NH and the inspirational matron, Kathleen, and her staff over 32 years.

COVID-19 Prayer - A Spiritual Reflection

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and your neighbour as yourself."*

God our Father you constantly call on us to drop our masks and show our true selves. As we put on our face coverings and watch others wear theirs, help us not to see in this action a hiding or covering of our true selves. Help us to see it as an image of who we really are; people called to do things for love of neighbour. As I protect my neighbour by wearing my mask and they protect me by wearing theirs may our masks become symbols of mutual love.

You call us to walk with one another. And yet, in these times we are called to maintain a safe distance from one another. In the safe spaces created by social distancing, may we be enabled to see each other in a new way. May the new perspective it creates enable us to take a second glance and see something new in myself, in others and in life. May we take nothing for granted. May we be surprised and enriched by what we notice from our new view on life. In this sense of space may we all be given the grace to grow in new and creative ways.

You call us to stretch our hands in friendship and love and yet we are encouraged not to touch and to keep our hands sterile. In the washing of our hands help us to be reminded that it is one hand that washes the other. Like our hands we too need the each other, we cannot do this alone. Help us to see that in our hands we hold the potential to do good and to harm. May this realisation enable us to use our hands in loving, caring, gentle and safe ways. While we might not be able to take another's hand, we might be able to help them lift their load.

It is more than a virus that has the potential to grow in these times. Anxiety, suspicion, prejudice, paranoia and loneliness can all thrive under the cloak of this pandemic. In those moments when we feel overwhelmed calm our fear. In those moments when we find it hard to keep a grip on reality help us to be grounded. In those moments when we find it hard to trust and we feel unsure, give us the support we need. And when we feel alone remind us of who those who truly love us and of your promise to be always with us as our friend and companion.

Amen.

Fr. Michael Collins,
St. Patrick's College, Maynooth

Sr. Eileen's Cúinne

Domhnach Bhriathar Dé.

Dhá bhliain ó shin d'fhógair an Pápa Proinsias go mbeadh Domhnach Bhriathar Dé á cheiliúradh go bliantúil ar an tríd Domhnach Saor i mí Eanáir. Thug an Pápa aitheasc mar gheall ar thábhacht Bhriathar De inár saol agus conas mar a chabhraíonn sé linn aithne a chur ar Íosa. Tá iliomad glórtha mórthimpeall orainn agus tá géarghá le Briathar Dé a chlostar aon glór eile, a dúirt an Pápa. Chun cabhrú linn mhol sé dúinn an Bíobla a bheith ar oscailt ar an mbord nó cóip a bheith ar fáil taobh linn.

Daichead bliain ó shin foilsíodh An Bíobla Naofa in Éirinn. Tobar spioradálta ár gcine a bhí sa Bhíobla riamh anall. Rinneadh staidéar ar an mBíobla thar leabhar ar bith eile i Mainistreacha na hÉireann. Tá na samplaí is sine den Ghaeilge scríofa le fáil i lámhscríbhinní an Scrioptúir. Ag tras-scríobh an Bhíobla rinne na manaigh a ndícheall maidir le peannaireacht agus ornáideachas mar a fheictear i Leabhar Cheanannais.

Sna laethanta seo agus sinn faoi dhianghlasáil d'fhéadfaimis am a chaitheamh ar léamh Bhriathar Dé sa Bhíobla.

A Thiarna, iarraidid ort cabhrú linn ár gcreideamh agus naofacht a chleachtadh agus sinn ag machnamh ar Bhriathar Dé.

Sunday of the Word of God.

Two years ago, Pope Francis instituted Sunday of the Word of God to be held every year on the third Sunday in Ordinary Time in January. In his address, he stressed the importance of the Word of God in our lives and how it can help us to get to know Jesus. The Pope stated that we are surrounded by many voices and we need to hear the Word of God more than any other voice. To help us he advised to keep a copy of the Bible close by or to have a copy of it available to us.

Forty years ago the Holy Bible was translated and published in the Irish Language (*An Bíobla Naofa*). The Bible has always been a spiritual fountain for our ancestors. The Bible was studied in Irish monasteries. The oldest examples of written Irish can be found in the Scripture Manuscripts. The monks used highly decorated calligraphy and ornamentation as witnessed in the Book of Kells in writing the Bible. Now that we are in lockdown, we ought to spend time reading the Word of God in the Bible.

Lord we ask you to help us grow in that faith as we meditate on your word, so that we may grow in holiness through Christ our Lord. Amen.