

BIRR PARISH

Parish Office: 057 9122028 Parish Mobile: 087-3515294
 Website: www.stbrendansbirr.ie
 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.

Clergy of Brendan Cluster

Fr. Tom Hogan—057-9121757
 Fr. Antony Sajeesh - 057-9121757
 Fr. Kieran Blake, Kilcolman - 057-9120812
 Fr. Michael O'Meara, Kinnitty - 057-9137021

The excellent book entitled "Graveyards and Churches of Carrig and Loughan" is now available to buy in the Parish Office at a cost of €15. It would make an excellent gift for a loved one at home or abroad. It is also available from SuperValu, Carrig Village Store, Loughnane Centra and Arrabawn Store

Society of St. Vincent de Paul annual collection takes place on December 4th and 5th. Your support is very much appreciated.

Sleeping St. Joseph Fridge Magnets

Pope Francis has promoted devotion to the Sleeping Saint Joseph. Joseph, while he was asleep was visited by the Holy Spirit in his dreams when making difficult decisions in his life. So Pope Francis puts his prayer request under the image of the Sleeping St. Joseph when he is going to sleep in the evening time. The next day he will revisit the presenting issue with fresh insight.

Fridge Magnets of Sleeping St. Joseph are now on sale in the Parish Office. €3.00 each or 2 for €5.00.

St. Nicholas

Few saints have received popular veneration comparable to Saint Nicholas. He was bishop of Mira on the southern coast of Turkey in the early part of the 4th century. Stories of his wonderful generosity have made him a most popular saint. His generosity to a family of a poor father with three daughters was remembered over the centuries. The story goes that Nicholas learnt of the family circumstances, when the eldest daughter was of the age of marriage. He wanted his help to be kept a secret so late one night he climbed up on the roof of the house and dropped a bag of gold down the chimney. He repeated this generosity with the other two daughters. For hundreds of years people in Europe practiced the tradition said to have started with St. Nicholas of giving surprise gifts to friends and family members at Christmas. In Germany the tradition of Christkindl developed. This tradition was brought to the United States by German immigrants and the name was misheard as Kris Kringle. In Holland the tradition of St. Nicholas continues through to the present time on his feast day, December 6th, of exchanging gifts. The Dutch call St. Nicholas Sinter Klaas. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children. The generosity of St. Nicholas continues down to our present time and is often referred to as Father Christmas. St. Nicholas' feast day is December 6th and his relics are venerated in the Italian city of Bari.

Remembered in Mass this Week

Sat 4th	7.30 p.m.	Pauline & John Hoare, Crinkill John & Catherine Lally Christina & Eddie Brewer Paddy & Margaret Guilfoyle William & Josephine Kealey, Clonoghill Lower
Sun 5th	8.30 a.m.	Michael Maher & grand-daughter Amy Kelly Florence & William Cooke, their son Teddy & daughter Margaret
	10.30 a.m.	Cronan Parkinson (MM) Mary, Paddy & John Quigley Chris & Seamus Kennedy Gerard Wynne Mossie & Gretta Grogan Kathleen & Leo Grogan
	12 noon	Seamus & Triona Loughnane & daughter-in-law Gail O'Donnell & Garvey families Eileen Ryan
Carrig	9.30 a.m.	Byrne & Mullaney families Rynagh, Susan & Martin Byrne
Mon 6th	10.00am	Monsignor P.J. Hamell
Thurs 9th	10.00am	Paddy Kearns, Fortal
Sat 11th	10.00am	Margaret Kenny (MM) John & Annie Coolahan, sons Michael & Pascal and daughter Anna
	7.30pm	Nellie, Gerry & Ann Daly Paddy 'Paudge' & Chrissie O'Meara Anne Mulvey Jimmy & Frances Naughton Michael Cleary & brother Jack, Fortal Mary & Michael Haverty
Sun 12th	10.00am	Conor Mc Manus Seán & Angela Ryan & son Emmet, Newbridge Street
	12 noon	Helen Carroll, Whiteford Richard Flanagan, Tullamore Road Ian Smith, Hollypark Patsy Garahy
Carrig	9.30am	Rita O'Brien, her grandson Rían Thomas O'Brien & her sister Maureen O'Brien (London)

Please Pray for the Souls of



Ben, Mellsop, Meadowville,
James Durrant, Nenagh,
Phil Redden, Carrig,
Margaret Barber (nee Cooke), Florida & late of
High St., sister of Liam Cooke & Liz Digan,
Marie Buckley Ryan, Enfield & late of Eden Road.

Each Tuesday of Advent, after 10.00 a.m. Mass, there will be a short reflection held in the Conference Room. All are welcome.

Christmas Mass Bouquets are now available from the Parish Office. €5 each.

Advent

Advent is a time of waiting and preparation. The church evokes the coming of Christ in all its aspects; He has been on earth before and we believe that He will be here again. This season of Advent deepens our awareness of Christ's presence in the church today and heightens our hope and longing for his return.



St. Brendan's Staff

St. Brendan's feast day, 29th November, was marked with a new staff to accompany our patron's statue. The original installation had St. Brendan holding a staff or crozier in his left hand. With the passage of time this staff was misplaced. His birthday gift is made of carved wood in the form of a Tao cross. The Tao cross is a T-shaped cross, sometimes with all three ends of the cross expanded. It is an ancient symbol rooted in both the Greek and Hebrew alphabets and is mentioned in the Book of Ezekiel. The Tao cross is associated with St. Anthony, the desert father (3rd century). It was St. Francis who popularised it in the 13th century and in our time, is the symbol of the Franciscan order. The early Irish monks would have used it, being influenced by their close connections with Coptic monks. The recently unearthed Fadden Psalter is another such confirmation of these close associations. The new staff was carved by Shane Gilmore, well known sculptor. He created the Station of the Cross in the Garden of Tranquillity some years ago. Shane has been influenced by the Tao cross of Kilnaboy in County Clare which has two carved heads on the upper arm. St. Brendan continues to be a source of inspiration and hope for our time. St. Brendan of Birr, intercede for us.

Next Wednesday, 8th December, is the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** and a holy day of obligation. We celebrate Mary, her special place in our faith because of her trust and faith in God. She is our model as we enter into the season of Advent and all that it brings.

Loving God,
We thank you for the example of Mary, whom you chose to be the mother of your only Son, Jesus. She lived her life with love for you and for others. Help us to do the same. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sr. Eileen's Cúinne

An Dara Domhnach den Aidhbhínt.
 Ní fada uainn féasta Bhreith Ár dTiarna. Is léir agus is cinnte gur tréimhse dhian ullmhúcháin saolta í dúinn go léir. Caithimid ullmhúcháin spioradálta a dhéanamh freisin. Sna heaglaisí feicfidh tú Crann leise, crann ginealaigh Íosa Chríost, agus samhail chomhartha na ndaoine a chuaigh roimhe ó Ádhamh agus Éabha go dtí Muire Máthair Íosa.
 Ar an 8 Nollaig ceiliúrtar Giniúint gan Smál na Maighdine Muire. Nuair a tháinig an tAingeal Gabriel le teachtaireacht chuig Muire. d'Inis sé di go raibh sí "lán de ghrásta" agus go raibh sí tofa mar mháthair ár Slánaitheora. D'fhógair an Pápa Pius X An Ghiniúint gan Smál sa bhliain 18 58. Sollúin lán d'áthas is ea an Fhéile seo."Déantar liom d'éir d'fhocal "Is é seo croí lár an tslánaithe. Ghlac Muire go huile is go hiomlán lena gairm.
 Bhí ardmheas ag ár sinsir ar Mhuire toisc gur í Máthair Íosa í. Déarfaidís an paidrín páirteach gach oíche roimh dhul a chodladh, Go dtugaimid ómós di sa phaidir Cheilteach seo agus sinn ag iarraidh uirthi teacht i gcabhair orainn in am an ghátair:

A Máthair glórmhair a chíos ár ndochar agus dí-obháil, go scara tú do bhrat beannaithe tharainn Áiméan.

The Second Sunday of Advent.

Christmas is near. It is a time of feverish preparation and buying for most. We ought to make spiritual preparation also. In the churches you will see the Jesse Tree, the genealogy of Jesus and the symbols of persons from Adam and Eve to Mary the mother of Jesus.

On the 8 December the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is celebrated. When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she was full of grace and chosen to be the mother of our Saviour. Pope Pius X declared the Immaculate Conception of Mary in 1858. It is a feast full of joy. "Let it be done unto me according to thy word" Mary accepted her calling willingly. Our ancestors had great devotion to Our Lady and the rosary was said before retiring. May we honour Our Lady as we say the following Celtic prayers, asking her to be with us always.

Glorious Mother who sees our distress and deprivation; may you go scara tú do bhrat beannaithe tharainn. Áiméan

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