

## Woodford/Looscaun Parish Newsletter

Fr. Kieran O'Rourke, T. 090 9749100, M. 087 2997956,\* E. [woodfordlooscaun@clonfertdiocese.ie](mailto:woodfordlooscaun@clonfertdiocese.ie)  
Newsletter available on [www.clonfertdiocese.ie](http://www.clonfertdiocese.ie), Eircode: H62 AK18  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Woodf4dLooscaun](http://www.facebook.com/Woodf4dLooscaun), **Woodford/Shragh Defibrillator 999 or 112\*\*\*.**

### Pentecost Sunday June 5th 2022

#### St John the Baptist Church, Woodford.

Mass Tue. 9.30am Wed. 9.30am Thur. 9.30am Fri. 8pm Sat 10am & 7pm **Mass will be available on 105.OFM locally & available on Facebook Live on Woodford/Looscaun Facebook Page.** [www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun](http://www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun)

Saturday June 4th 7pm Katie & Tom Page, Slaughty  
Friday June 10th 8pm Michael Minogue, Coose & deceased family members.  
Saturday June 11th 7pm Deceased members of the Tuohy Dan Family, Slaughtee.

**Altar Society: Team 4** Patricia Eames Celia Cox

#### St. Brendan's Church, Looscaun

Mass: Sun. 11am **Mass on 105.OFM locally & available on Woodford/Looscaun Facebook Page.**  
[www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun](http://www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun)

Sunday June 5th 11am Mattie & Joan Geoghegan, Upperforge.  
Sunday June 12th 11am Gerry Gorman, Derryoover

**Altar Society Team 1** Breda Fahy Julia Fahy

**RIP:** Mary Duane (nee Farrell) Ballinlough, Kylebrack, mother of Tom Duane, Clonoon & Joe Duane Abbey. Tessie McNamara (nee Cavanagh) late of England & formerly Martin Street, Gurteeny.

**Date to Note: Corpus Christi Procession** will be after 11am Mass on Sunday June 19th this year.

**First Friday Calls for June** on Fri. June 10th If you would like a call or know someone who would appreciate a call, please contact Fr. Kieran on 090-9749100

**Congratulations** to Noel Gorman, Lowertown & Aisling Hennessy who were married in The Church of the Immaculate Conception, Eadestown, Naas Co. Kildare last Saturday. 'Ad Multos Annos!

**Truly Historic Day for the Shrine of Our Lady of Clonfert** Last Tuesday, 31st May Bishop Michael Duignan blessed the newly renovated Church of Our Lady of Clonfert and consecrated the new Altar. In recognition of the importance of the Shrine as a pilgrimage centre for so many, he also formally approved Statutes for the Shrine and signed a Decree to elevate the Shrine of Our Lady of Clonfert to the status of a recognised Shrine of Diocesan right. In the same act, Father Declan McInerney P.P. was appointed the Shrine's first Rector. We invite you to visit the Shrine in the next while.

**Clonfert Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage – Youth Section** If you are between the ages of 16 and 30 and would like to do something different with other young people this summer, why not come with us on the Clonfert Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> August. For Further information, contact your local Parish Priest or the Diocesan office at [office@clonfertdiocese.ie](mailto:office@clonfertdiocese.ie) or 091841560.

**Interfaith Evening Prayer Service - Pentecost Sunday - June 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 7.00pm**

St. Brendan's, Church of Ireland Cathedral, Clonfert, Preacher: Bishop Michael Duignan  
Everyone Welcome Followed by reception at Emmanuel House.

**Pentecost Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 – Day of Prayer in Thanksgiving for the Diocesan Phase of the Universal Synod.** This Pentecost Sunday offers us all an opportunity to give thanks for the prayerful engagement and listening that has taken place across the country as we journey together synodally. "Holy Spirit, Lord of life, on this great feast of Pentecost, fill your Church throughout the world with the power to transform and change all things, as you renew the face of the earth, renew each one of us too. We ask this through Christ the Lord." For further information visit. [www.synod.ie](http://www.synod.ie)

**Clonfert Pilgrimage To Lourdes** 19 - 24 August: For further information please Tel: Society Travel Ballinasloe at 090 964 5350.

**New synod.ie website launched to support Synodal Pathway** A new website [synod.ie](http://synod.ie) has been launched to support engagement with the national synodal pathway for the Catholic Church in Ireland. The website provides information about the synodal pathway and the timeline for the work, as well as making available a variety of resources to support engagement.

**Legion of Mary:** This is the 100th Anniversary of The Legion of Mary. Frank Duff founded The Legion of Mary in 1921 in Dublin. The Legion spread all over Ireland and to many parts of the world. As this is the 100th Anniversary, we are recruiting new members in our local Legion Group in Woodford/Looscaun Contact Mary Walsh on 086-6685917 for further details.

**Davitt's Camogie**, 50/50 Winner: Kevin Larkin €520. Thanks for your support. Tickets: Local shops & pubs or online [www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts\\_Camogie\\_Club/TicketSales](http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts_Camogie_Club/TicketSales)

**Portumna Lions Club** Memorial Walk for Frances Robinson and Deceased members of Portumna & District Lions Club is having on Sunday 12th June in Portumna Forest Park. The Walk starts at the Square, Portumna at 12 noon

**Lough Derg welcomes Pilgrims again with a full Pilgrimage programme this summer** Three Day Pilgrimage: 1st June - 15th August. Booking advised. Concessions available for students, seniors and groups. One Day Retreats and guided Pilgrim Path experience: dates in May and late August through September. Booking essential. All booking information at [www.loughderg.org](http://www.loughderg.org), email [info@loughderg.org](mailto:info@loughderg.org) or telephone 071 9861518. *Lough Derg, Pettigo, Co Donegal, F94 N289.*

**New synod.ie website launched to support Synodal Pathway** A new website [synod.ie](http://synod.ie) has been launched to support engagement with the national synodal pathway for the Catholic Church in Ireland. The website provides information about the synodal pathway and the timeline for the work, as well as making available a variety of resources to support engagement.

**Esker Novena 2022 to Our Mother of Perpetual Help** will be held in person this year. Regretfully this will be the final novena at Esker as the Redemptorists will be leaving the area in November. The novena will commence on Tuesday May 31st and end on Wednesday June 8th. There will be five sessions per day. 8am, 10am, 4pm, 6pm & 8pm. There will be a special session with anointing of the sick on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 12 noon and on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June blessing of all children at the 10am, 12 noon and 6pm sessions. Everyone is welcome.

**Help for Gamblers:** A support group for Gambler's Anonymous meets every Tuesday evening at 8pm sharp, in Ballinasloe at the Galway East Life Support Rooms, beside the Credit Union, off the Main Street. For information phone 087 6832721

**TLarkin Lotto:** 19-20-23-32 Match 3: Donation to Joe Mullin Support Fund. Next weeks Jackpot 6,800euro

**Sunday Obligation** From Easter Sunday, 17 April, attendance at Sunday Mass will once again be deemed an essential expression of faith for all in our Church in Ireland. As always, those whose health is vulnerable or who are unwell will not be under any obligation to attend Mass, and should keep themselves safe and pray at home until they are better.

**St Brendan's Education Centre, Abbey St., Loughrea H62T262** phone 091 841387: *Courses in Childcare, Healthcare, Hairdressing and Beauty, IT, Business, Culinary Skills and Horticulture.* email [freda.murphy@gretb.ie](mailto:freda.murphy@gretb.ie) or [john.melville@gretb.ie](mailto:john.melville@gretb.ie)

**Do you or somebody you know suffer from an addiction? Yes?** Join us at the Shrine of Matt Talbot in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Sean Mc Dermot Street, Dublin on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 2:00pm-4:30pm, where we will pray for freedom from addiction through Jesus. This will be a day when Ireland unites in prayer to rid our country from the plague of addiction. For more information, visit [www.matttalbotprayersociety.com](http://www.matttalbotprayersociety.com) or contact [vita@matttalbotprayersociety.com](mailto:vita@matttalbotprayersociety.com) ROI (048) 71262894

**Ladies Club Meeting** in Shragh Community Hall on Mon. Jun. 13th at 8.30pm. A Day tour is planned.

*Let us pray*

*O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, grant that we may obtain, through his Virgin Mother, the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen*

**Childcare Manager-Derryoover Childcare Facility** incorporating a Breakfast club/After-school facility (H62 NY53) This is an exciting role and an excellent opportunity to take over an existing and very successful Childcare Facility incorporating a Breakfast club and an After-school facility . The successful candidate will have the following skills:

Relevant childcare/Montessori qualifications e.g Degree, diploma, FETAC preferable.

Some experience in a senior role

Excellent interactions with children, parents and staff teams

Enthusiasm for your role and business

A team player Warm and caring Strong work ethic Able to multitask

Please forward CV and Letter of application to The Principal, Derryoover NS, Woodford, Co Galway H62NY53 before 1.6.22 For further information please contact the Principal at 086 4163722

**St. Ann's Well Rostullis.** Paddy Conway would like to thank Tommy Larkins for their generosity in donating 150 euro to the Grotto at Saint Ann's Well. The donation is much appreciated

*We pray for peace. We pray for those involved in conflict/for our world at this worrying time. Loving God, We pray for the people of Ukraine. For all those suffering/afraid, that you will be close to them/protect them. We pray for world leaders, for compassion/strength/wisdom to guide their choices. We pray for the world; that in this moment of crisis, we may reach out in solidarity to our brothers/sisters in need. May we walk in your ways so that peace/justice become a reality for the people of Ukraine/all the world. Amen.*

**Ministry:** As a degree of normality has resumed those who were involved in Parish Ministry, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Choir Mass Servers are invited to resume their ministry. Existing members are invited to let Fr Kieran know if you are interested in returning and new members are always welcome to join.

### ***The Regina Caeli.***

***The Angelus honours the Incarnation by commemorating the angel's greeting to Mary and her free acceptance of her destined role in the salvation of mankind. It is traditionally said at 6am, noon and 6pm. During Eastertide (Season of Easter) the Regina Caeli replaces the Angelus.***

*Queen of Heaven, rejoice alleluia!*

*For he whom you were worthy alleluia!*

*Has risen as he said alleluia!*

*Pray for us to God alleluia!*


*Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!*

*For the Lord has risen indeed, alleluia!*

tomb of Jesus who were the first to announce this message of hope to the world. They ran to the apostles to tell them: "He is not here! He is risen! He has gone before you to Galilee!" (Mt. 28) All those who are rallying to help our Ukrainian guests in their time of need/indeed all those who at any other time, to any other people/in any other way hold out a helping hand are 21st century beacons of that God-given Easter hope that we celebrate in these days.

Seeing Your Life Through The Lens Of The Gospel; In Some Ways:

This gospel is a difficult one for prayer. It only presents a part of the story/the full unfolding of the good news of the story lies in the next part of the text. However, even with this section there is plenty of material for reflection/for prayer. 1. The disciples are in a state of shock/suffering from a traumatic loss. Jesus, the one in whom they had placed so much hope, has been murdered /buried. Then, before they have time to recover comes another shock – the body of Jesus is missing. Have you had experiences in which one tragedy/ crisis follows quickly after another? Perhaps this happened for you as Covid spread? How did you cope? What/who, sustained you then? 2. Mary/Peter/ possibly others, came/discovered that the tomb was empty. The part of the story we have in this text gives no explanations of what has happened. They are left in a state of bewilderment 'for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.' Have you been in that kind of a situation, faced with events you cannot explain, possibly events which have dashed your hopes in another person/in God? What has that been like for you? Yet in spite of the lack of explanation, the beloved disciple 'saw/believed'.

Thank you, enjoy the sun, Ellen 

**Emigrant Collection** Thank you most sincerely for your contributions to this collection Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

**Trócaire Lenten Collection 2022** The annual Trócaire Lenten Collection is a most important source of funding for Trócaire our Catholic Development Agency, which helps those who are suffering from poverty, a lack of medicine and education in many of the poorest countries in the world. Please pick up a Trócaire Lenten Donation Box from your local church and use it as part of your giving to the less well off this Lent. See [www.trocaire.ie](http://www.trocaire.ie) for information. Trocaire Boxes available at Church Doors.

**Help for Gamblers:** A support group for Gambler's Anonymous meets every Tuesday evening at 8pm sharp, in Ballinasloe at the Galway East Life Support Rooms, beside the Credit Union, off the Main Street. For information phone 087 6832721

**Accord Ballinasloe** Going through a difficult time in your relationship? Maybe we can help...ACCORD Ballinasloe is open for face-to-face counselling in a safe environment. For more information call 09096 43573 or 086 4149033 or email [accordballinasloe@gmail.com](mailto:accordballinasloe@gmail.com)

**Davitt's Camogie** , 50/50 Winner: Martin Kelly(red) Rockill , Woodford €450. Next draw 21st Mar. Thanks for your support. **Tickets: Local shops & pubs or online**

[www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts\\_Camogie\\_Club/TicketSales](http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts_Camogie_Club/TicketSales)

**Shragh Hall '45 Cards** every Monday. Hall open from 7.30 for 8pm Start.

Sun.Mar. 13th Sunrise 6.53am Sunset 6.34pm Full Moon On Fri. Mar. 18th at 7.17am

**Davitt's Camogie** , 50/50 Winner: Martin Kelly(red) Rockill , Woodford €450. Next draw 21st Mar.

Thanks for your support **Tickets: Local shops & pubs or online**

[www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts\\_Camogie\\_Club/TicketSales](http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts_Camogie_Club/TicketSales)

**Shragh Hall '45 Cards every Monday. Hall open from 7.30 for 8pm Start.**

**Davitt's Camogie** , 50/50 Winner: The McCabe family , Woodford €550. Next draw 8<sup>th</sup> Mar. Thanks for your support. Tickets: Local shops & pubs or online

[www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts\\_Camogie\\_Club/TicketSales](http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts_Camogie_Club/TicketSales)

**Shragh Hall '45 Cards** every Monday. Hall open from 7.30 for 8pm Start.

**INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING** - 6 week Course starts at Shragh Community Centre, on Wed 6<sup>th</sup> April (8pm - 9pm). Cost = €40. An enjoyable and exciting insight into basic beekeeping. For more information or to register contact Mary on 087 6152668.

**Meet with Macra** on Fri Apr 1<sup>st</sup> at 8pm in Loughrea YouthSpace. Come along and check out what's on offer - sport, travel, social, agriculture, community, serious craic and so much more! 086 7808987

**Davitt's Camogie** , 50/50 Winner: Ger O'Byrne Woodford €635. Thanks for your support. Next Draw 5<sup>th</sup>

Apr.Tickets: Local shops & pubs or online [www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts\\_Camogie\\_Club/TicketSales](http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts_Camogie_Club/TicketSales)

**Shragh Hall '45 Cards** every Monday. Hall opens from 7.30 for 8pm Start.

Regards and Thanks,

#### **Covid-19 Church Update – April 2022**

People with symptoms of Covid-19 should be encouraged not to attend liturgical services or parish gatherings. Face coverings/masks (over nose and mouth) are highly encouraged for all liturgical services/parish gatherings. Please continue to use the sanitiser provided.

Social distancing has been abolished – however people are encouraged to continue to spread throughout the Church. For the time being Communion in the Hand will continue to be the norm.

Using a handshake as the sign of peace remains suspended for the moment.

**Thank You for Your Parish Donation** A big “Thank You” to all those who have made online donations to assist our parish. Online donations can be made by logging on to [www.clonfertdiocese.ie](http://www.clonfertdiocese.ie) Click on the secure “Donate” button located on the right of the screen and follow the instructions given. At the drop-down menu click on Woodford & Looscaun Parish to ensure that your donation goes to your parish. Once again thank you so much for contributions to the continued upkeep of our Parish. They're very much appreciated in these difficult times. **Online Banking gives** another option to donate to the parish directly by SEPA Transfer or direct debit to BIC BOFIE2Dxxx IBAN IE23 BOFI 9039 4726 8843 26 You may wish to note your name or

envelope number on the remittance note. Thank you to those who have also continued your generous financial support for the Parish in these difficult times by dropping off envelopes in the letter box at the Parochial House, Looscaun. They are very much appreciated in these difficult times  
**Accord Ballinasloe** Going through a difficult time in your relationship? Maybe we can help...ACCORD Ballinasloe is open for face-to-face counseling in a safe environment. For more information call 090 9643573 or 086 4149033 or email [accordballinasloe@gmail.com](mailto:accordballinasloe@gmail.com)

## Woodford

Mass Times: Sat. 7pm **Mass will be available on 105.0FM locally & available on Facebook Live on Woodford/Looscaun Facebook Page. [www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun](https://www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun)**

## Looscaun

**available on Woodford/Looscaun Facebook Live, & on 105.0FM**

**Davitt's Camogie**, 50 / 50 Winner: Berni Finneran Easterfield €530. Next draw 22nd Feb. Thanks for your support. Tickets: Local shops, pubs or online [www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts\\_Camogie\\_Club/TicketSales](http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Davitts_Camogie_Club/TicketSales)

**Shragh Hall** '45 Card's Monday's @8pm from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Feb .

**St. Joseph's NS., Woodford Enrolment** & admission policies for September 2022 are now available in St. Joseph's NS. You can also download these policies on our school website [www.stjosephswoodford.com](http://www.stjosephswoodford.com) If you wish to enrol your child please return completed enrolment form on or before **Friday 29th April 2022**

Sun.Feb. 27th Sunrise 7.40am Sunset 5.54pm Last Quarter On Wed. Feb. 23rd at 10.32pm

**\*\*The Church Envelope Boxes for 2022** can be collected at both Churches in February. The Woodford Boxes are in St. John the Baptist Church, Woodford near crib and the Looscaun Boxes in St. Brendan's Church, Looscaun near crib. Thank you for your generous support this past year.

**Mercy College Woodford** is now welcoming enrolment of First Year students for 2022/23. Admission forms to our vibrant school community are now available on our school website [www.mercollegewoodford.ie](http://www.mercollegewoodford.ie) along with our school promotion video. We are happy to answer any queries on 090 9749076

**Holy Water Dispensers:** Dispensers for Holy Water have been very kindly donated to the Parish. Like the sanitiser dispensers, you place your hand underneath the dispenser to receive Holy Water. The Holy Water Dispensers will be placed near the ambo as well as at the main door of both Churches which for the moment is the door that is used for daily access to the Church.

Sun.Nov. 14th Sunrise 7.55am Sunset 4.39pm Full Moon on Fri. Nov. 19th at 8.57am

Lotto results from this week's draw: 4-5-23-28

👛 No jackpot winner 👛

Match 3 winners were Patricia Minouge and Michael Walsh.

Next weeks jackpot will be €4,300!

**Planning to get married in Church in Woodford and Looscaun** in 2021 and 2022. Please contact Fr. Kieran on 087-2997956 or 090-9749100 at your earliest convenience for update on latest COVID 19 Guidelines in regards Churches.

**St Brendan's Education Centre: 091 841387** Courses commencing from Wednesday January 5th, 2022: Care Support, Care Skills, Challenging Behaviour(new), Safety and Health, Horticulture, Database Methods, Customer Service, Retail Administration(new), Retail Selling(new), Communications Level 5: Horticulture and Spreadsheet Methods Level 4. Also waiting list being compiled for the new Early Childcare certificate commencing in September 2022. Please email [freda.murphy@gretb.ie](mailto:freda.murphy@gretb.ie) or [john.melville@gretb.ie](mailto:john.melville@gretb.ie)

## Leaving Cert. Chem

**grinds available** in person (Loughrea area) or online, by an experienced teacher of 15 years. Phone-0872034099.

**The Foot Clinic** will be attending Hayes pharmacy Portumma on Monday the 15th, 22nd 29th of November and Monday the 6th 13th and 20th of December for general and diabetic foot care. To make an appointment ring 087 3344530 many thanks. We attend Hayes & Hayes pharmacy every Monday except bank holidays

## Renewing Our Commitment to Promoting the Dignity of Human Life

Loving Father!

You are the source of all that is:

our beginning and our end.

Pour out your Spirit upon us.

Form in us the mind of Christ.

Give us a greater appreciation for the precious gift of life.

Renew in us a commitment to building a community where every human life is welcomed and valued

from the moment of conception

to the moment of natural death.

Draw near to those who are sick or dying.

Help those who love them and care for them.

Bless us now and at the hour of our death. Amen

Our Lady of Clonfert! Pray for us!

*Sun. Nov. 14th Sunrise 7.55am Sunset 4.39pm Full Moon on Fri. Nov. 19th at 8.57am*

***On the following day (Sunday Oct 10th), the Coastal Rosary will take place at 2.30pm. Join people from around Ireland to pray the Rosary for Life and Faith at our grottos, churches, at the coasts and other suitable places. We encourage you to gather safely being mindful of COVID 19 regulations. Simply sign up a Rosary location at [www.coastalrosaryireland.ie](http://www.coastalrosaryireland.ie) or text your location to 087 278 6552.***

***Galway Centre for Independent Living*** Galway Centre for Independent living have been supplying Caring/Assisting Services to older persons and persons with disabilities since 1994. Due to an increased demand for our services in Homecare and our Personal Assistance Service to People with disabilities we are now recruiting in your area. Please forward CV to [vacancies@gcil.ie](mailto:vacancies@gcil.ie) or contact Ann on 091-773910

***St Brendan's Education Centre, Abbey St., Loughrea*** Places available for courses in Hairdressing, Fashion Media and Make up, Healthcare, IT, Horticulture and Business and Administration. Please email [freda.murphy@gretb.ie](mailto:freda.murphy@gretb.ie)

***Portumna Further Education, St. Brigid's Road H53 A263*** Part time QQI courses in Healthcare, Horticulture, Tourism and Computers and Full time in Office Admin with Computers Contact: 0860617945 or 0876699169 and enrol [www.fetchcourses.ie](http://www.fetchcourses.ie)

***Guided Pilgrimages on the Lough Derg*** Pilgrim Path will be offered on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September and Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, with Mass outdoors, weather permitting. The full route is a 12km loop, with a shorter 8km option. Advance booking is essential. For further information email [info@loughderg.org](mailto:info@loughderg.org) or telephone 071 9861518 [www.loughderg.org](http://www.loughderg.org) Lough Derg Pilgrim Path, Pettigo, Co Donegal. F94 N289

***Alone*** Manage a national support line and additional support for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Professional staff are available to answer queries and give advice and reassurance where necessary. The support line is open seven days a week, 8am - 8pm, by calling 0818 222 024

***True Devotion to Mary:*** Small study group forming. More info. for interested persons @ [www.creideamh.ie/study-group](http://www.creideamh.ie/study-group). Open to everyone but places are limited.

***A local history course is being run in Portumna Community School*** during the autumn of 2021 and the spring of 2022 [scheduled to begin on Tuesday, 5th October]. For further details, or to book your place, contact John Joe at 087 2963803 or email to [johnjoeconwell@gmail.com](mailto:johnjoeconwell@gmail.com).

*Sun. Sept. 5th Sunrise 6.50am Sunset 8.12pm New Moon on Wed. Sept. 5th at 1.51am*

***This year the Parish will be operating the Tax Relief Scheme for donations*** to eligible charities. The Parish qualifies under this scheme to claim back a percentage of income tax paid on donations of more than €250 in any tax year. For more information in regards to this, please contact Fr. Kieran. Thanks to those who have returned CHY3 forms already. . Every little helps. Thanks again.

***Televised Mass or Mass via Webcam Weekday Mass:*** Broadcast by webcam every day from St Brendan's Cathedral Loughrea at 11am and 8pm and on RTE News channel at 10.30am

***Sunday Mass:*** Mass is available every Saturday evening at 8pm and Sunday at 10am and 12 noon from Loughrea Cathedral via webcam at [www.loughreacathedral.ie](http://www.loughreacathedral.ie) Sunday Mass on TV alternates with Mass at 11am on RTE1 and on the alternate Sunday at 2.15pm on the RTE News Channel.

***Meals4Health*** offers home delivered, affordable, fresh tasty meals that are suited to the nutritional needs of older people and anyone living with illness or disability. Meals4Health supports good health and wellbeing helping you to live well and age well at home. For more information or to order meals call us on 091 354 000

***Keeping Connected*** Why not visit or follow Clonfert Diocese on Facebook or Twitter.

***Farm Waste Collection Points for Galway*** have been announced. Please dispose of your Farm Waste appropriately. Turn your waste into refuse sacks, piping, garden furniture and damp proofing materials. Tue. Jul. 6th Gort Mart, Fri. Jul 9th L'rea Mart. Tue. Jul. 13th Poertumna Mart. See [www.farmplastics.ie/bring-centre-calendar](http://www.farmplastics.ie/bring-centre-calendar) for other locations and for information

**The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Catholic Funeral Rituals and Practices on the island of Ireland: A Pilot Study.** Bereaved families, and those who support and care for them, have had to adjust to dramatically different circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this study, we want to explore the impact of public health measures, which were meant to limit virus transmission, on your experience of dealing with dying, death, and Catholic funerals. We invite you to participate in our study: by taking our survey and/or participating in an interview. Find out more at <https://maynoothcollege.ie/covid-19-and-funeral-rituals-and-practices-a-study>

*Tomorrow Monday June 21st is the longest day of the year with the sunrise time and sunset time almost the same as today, 5.07am and 10.03pm. As we reach the solstice the day length is changing very slowly only by a matter of seconds a day. By contrast the day length will be shortening by over 4 minutes a day in late September, around the autumn equinox (Sept. 22nd this year) The day length on the longest day here in Woodford is 16 hours and 56 minutes in contrast to 7 hours and 33 minutes on December 21st the shortest day of the year. Sunrise on Dec.21st is at 8.45am (9.45am Summer time) and sunset at 4.18pm (5.18pm Summer time) On June 21st the sun reaches a height of 60 degrees above the horizon in contrast to only 14 degrees above the horizon on Dec. 21st. As a note of comparison the sun is at 14 degrees above the horizon approximately 2 hours after sunrise and 2 hours before sunset at this time of the year. To put it another way, the height of the sun in the sky at 7.05am or 8.05pm is how high the sun would reach at noon local time in mid winter. One of the ironies of nature is that in the Northern Hemisphere summer we are furthest from the sun. On June 21st the distance from the earth to the sun is 152 million km in contrast to December 21st when the sun is only a mere 147 million km away!*

**Woodford Parish Development AGM** on Wed. 26th May at 7pm. Contact ? for more information or Hit the hyperlink  
[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_ZGRIZGMzMzYtYjMNS00NmQyLWJhYiYtMTA1MzZmMDC3Mjky%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22tid%22%3a%22e0cd32f3-083b-4c3d-8775-658a3bc084a8%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%22f3dd51a8-c](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZGRIZGMzMzYtYjMNS00NmQyLWJhYiYtMTA1MzZmMDC3Mjky%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22tid%22%3a%22e0cd32f3-083b-4c3d-8775-658a3bc084a8%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%22f3dd51a8-c)

**Pope Francis invites Catholics and Marian Shrines around the world to dedicate the month of May to a marathon of prayer for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic.**

**Accord Ballinasloe** Going through a difficult time in your relationship? Maybe we can help...ACCORD Ballinasloe is open for face-to-face counselling in a safe environment. For more information call 09096 43573 or 086 4149033 or email [accordballinasloe@gmail.com](mailto:accordballinasloe@gmail.com)

**Tommy Larkins Lotto 13-18-22-30** No Jackpot winner. Match 3 Johnny O'Donnell Next week's Jackpot is €2,200. tickets available online and in local outlets  
[https://www.klubfunder.com/.../Tommy\\_Larkins\\_GAA\\_Club/lotto](https://www.klubfunder.com/.../Tommy_Larkins_GAA_Club/lotto). Draw Sun. May 16th.

**Family and Friends of St. Dymphna's Committee, Portumna Branch** are organising a Cash for Clobber collection of unwanted clothes, towels, curtains, bed linen (sheets, pillow cases, duvet covers only) hats, belts, hand bags and shoes. This will take place only on Tue June 1st from 4.30.00pm to 7.00pm outside St. Dymphna's A.D.S. Portumna (besides Marrion Park). All money raised will ONLY benefit St. Dymphna's Portumna A.D.S. Your support is greatly appreciated. Please tell your family, friends and neighbours of this worthy cause. "Cash for Clobber" clothes can be put in strong bin bags. For more info please contact: Sean Page 0872027776, Edith Carter 086 8618559 Ana Maria Burke 087 2136077

Sean Page (Chairperson) at 0872027776.

Edith Carter (Treasurer) at 0868618559.

Ana Maria Burke (Secretary) at 0872136077.

Thank you for your support!

## Our Lady of Clonfert Church

Our Lady of Clonfert Church will be open daily for the month of May from 7.00am to 11.00pm. Daily Mass Monday – Saturday at 8.00pm and Sunday at 10.30am. Mass will be livestreamed on [churchservices.tv](http://churchservices.tv).

Remember all littering and fly tipping can be reported to Galway County Council [environment@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:environment@galwaycoco.ie) or 091 509510

Sun. May 2nd Sunrise 5.58am Sunset 9.02pm Last Quarter on Mon. May 3rd at 8.50pm

Sun. May 9th Sunrise 5.45am Sunset 9.16pm New Moon on Tue. May 11th at 7.59pm

**Please note that under Level 5 restrictions, Mass is behind closed doors and available on the Church Radio on 105.0FM locally & online worldwide! on [www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun](https://www.facebook.com/woodf4dlooscaun)**  
**Increase in Number of Mourners at Funerals** From Monday 10th May, the government has increased the number of mourners allowed at funerals to 50 people.

#### **Our Lady of Clonfert**

**Church** will be open daily for the month of May from 7.00am to 11.00pm. Daily Mass Monday – Saturday at 8.00pm and Sunday at 10.30am. Mass will be livestreamed on [churchservices.tv](https://churchservices.tv)

**Pope urges Catholics to pray in May for end to Covid-19 pandemic** Pope Francis invites Catholics and Marian Shrines around the world to dedicate the month of May to a marathon of prayer for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Cancellation of Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage 2021** Sadly, the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes that was scheduled for 17th to 22nd August 2021 has been cancelled. We will let you know as soon as we get dates for the 2022 pilgrimage.

**Trócaire Lenten Campaign** Please find below a link to a video sent to us by Fr James, thanking you and the people of Ireland for supporting the Lent Campaign this year. <https://vimeo.com/536423075>

**COVID-19 Support Line for Older People** ALONE manage a national support line and additional supports for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Professional staff are available to answer queries and give advice and reassurance where necessary. The support line is open seven days a week, 8am - 8pm, by calling 0818 222 024.

**“We are with you”** The Diocese of Clonfert has launched “We are with you”: a prayer initiative for the deceased and their families in these difficult times. See [www.clonfertdioocese.ie](https://www.clonfertdioocese.ie)

**Keeping Connected** Why not visit Clonfert Diocese Facebook Page or follow on Clonfert Diocese Twitter.

**Synodal Pathway for the Church in Ireland – How to Proceed?** Visit [www.catholicbishops.ie/synod](https://www.catholicbishops.ie/synod) to offer feedback to the following question: What would be your preferred option for engagement in a conversation process about the Synod? The responses will be considered by the task group to be put in place by the bishops this summer to plan and oversee the first steps along the synodal pathway.

**Church Reopening:** Following on from the Announcement from the Department of the Taoiseach on last Thursday April 29th ‘New public health measures announced: The Path Ahead’ people will be free to attend Mass here in Woodford and Looscaun **from the weekend of May 15th/16th**. This is only possible thanks to the generous help of volunteers to sanitise both Churches. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their work, for without their generous help it would not be possible to have Public Mass in the parish. As Churches reopen, I appeal once more for more volunteers to step forward to help in keeping the Church a safe environment in which the Faith Community can gather in prayer together after nearly 5 months being apart. With more volunteers, it will lighten the load on everyone. *Ni Neart go cur le cheile*. Thank God, there is light and we pray that better days lie ahead. However we still have to remain vigilant as we learn to live with the coronavirus. In the meantime let us respond to Pope Francis’ invitation to pray for an ending of the Pandemic.

**Keep Woodford Clean.** A massive thanks to everyone who contributed to our cleaner community as part of the recent National Spring Clean supported by Galway Co Co. Well done Woodford.

**“Renew and Strengthen your People”. A Pastoral Reflection on the Future of the Church in the Diocese of Clonfert.** During the week, Bishop Michael published “Renew and Strengthen your People”. A Pastoral Reflection on the Future of the Church in the Diocese of Clonfert. His hope is that the Pastoral Reflection will provide an opportunity for parish pastoral councils, parish groups or church organisations, those involved in catholic education, groups of priests, religious and interested families and laypeople in the Diocese to discuss the ideas raised. Once the Clonfert diocesan community has had time to reflect on its contents, Bishop Michael is asking for feedback. Copies of the Pastoral Reflection are available in your local church. It is also available for download at [www.clonfertdioocese.ie](https://www.clonfertdioocese.ie)

Hello, I hope this note finds you well. Thank God for the longer days and better weather although perhaps not today. It has been over 4 months since the Churches have been open for Public Worship and for Mass. Christmas Day was the last day we celebrated Mass together. With the longer days, there is light in regards the lockdown lifting and it looks like we will be able to celebrate Mass publicly in May. This will be good news for all who have missed coming together as a community in prayer. Thanks to your help and generosity, people have been able to come to Mass during the pandemic when it has been judged safe to do so. Unfortunately the COVID 19 virus has not gone away and we still have to be vigilant in regards to sanitation in the Church. Hopefully I can count on your help when we have a date to reopen the Churches. Thanks again for your help over the past year. Without it, I would not be able to celebrate Public Mass in Woodford and Looscaun. Kind Regards and God Bless Kieran

#### **Diocese of Clonfert Covid-19 Guidance – Updated May 10<sup>th</sup> 2021**

- (1) The **public celebration** of all Sunday Masses and Weekday Masses resumes on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Each church will have its own maximum capacity depending on its size and the two-metre social distancing rule. No church may ever exceed 50 people except where the size of the premises allows pods of 50 people with separate entrance and exit and no crossing between pods. *In Woodford/Looscaun the public celebration of Mass resumes on Saturday evening May 15th thanks to the generous help of volunteers to help sanitize the churches. It is thanks to their help that the public celebration of Mass can resume.* Please **adhere to all health and safety systems** in place locally **Face coverings** must be worn in places of worship by all over the age of 13, unless there are medical reasons for not doing

so Holy Communion should be **received on the hand** or alternative arrangements made with the Parish Priest **Congregational singing and choir singing** is not permitted **Concelebration** is not permitted The **dispensation from the Sunday / Holyday obligation** is extended for the time being. Those who can do so safely, are encouraged to return to Mass, while those who are unable to come to Mass are reminded of the importance of marking Sunday by participating online.

- (2) The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** continues to be celebrated, taking into account the requirements of physical distance, hygiene and the integrity of the Sacrament. Confessionals will not be used for the time being.
- (3) Attendance at a **Funeral Liturgy** or burial is limited, by government, to 50 mourners regardless of the size of the Church building.
- (4) Celebration of the **Sacrament of Marriage** is limited, by government, to 50 guests regardless of the size of the Church building.
- (5) The **Sacrament of the Sick** may be celebrated as dictated by pastoral need and with appropriate health and safety measures in place. Please contact your priest if a family member or neighbour requires the Sacrament of Anointing.
- (6) **Routine house visits to the sick and elderly** may resume in keeping with public health guidelines for visitors to private homes and while adhering to appropriate health and safety measures. *In Woodford/Looscaun please request a visit from Fr. Kieran at this time*
- (7) The **Sacrament of Baptism** may resume. Details are available from your Parish Priest.
- (8) **Sacraments of Confirmation, First Confession and First Holy Communion 2021 (2020)**. As previously communicated the Sacrament of Confirmation for 2021 will be celebrated at the end of September/ October 2021. The Diocesan Office will publish a full schedule of Confirmation ceremonies in July 2021. This week we have sent enrolment forms to Schools for Confirmation Candidates 2021 with a request to return them to the Parish Priest of the Church where the ceremony is to take place. For 2020 candidates who have yet to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is hoped that their Confirmation ceremony may be scheduled at parish level and celebrated by their local priest as soon as it is considered safe to do so. It is strongly advised that parishes defer the celebration of First Confession and First Holy Communion 2021 until Autumn 2021. For 2020 candidates who have yet to celebrate First Confession and First Holy Communion, it is hoped that this may be scheduled at parish level as soon as it is safe to do so. In early September an online revision course in preparation for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, First Confession and First Holy Communion will be made available.
- (9) For the moment, **outdoor gatherings** for worship are not permitted. This includes graveyard masses, etc.
- (10) The **use of parish premises** for any other purposes/parochial activities/community meetings etc. is not permitted in line with Government restrictions on organised indoor gatherings.
- (11) **Parishes need volunteers to keep our churches open safely** –we would appeal to parishioners for help perhaps as stewards, cleaners, etc.
- (12) Covid-19 is still with us. Remember the **basic steps** we can all take personally to reduce the spread of the virus – washing our hands regularly, keeping our physical distance, reducing our social contacts, practicing good respiratory hygiene.

**Synodal Pathway for the Church in Ireland – How to Proceed?** Visit [www.catholicbishops.ie/synod](http://www.catholicbishops.ie/synod) to offer feedback to the following question: What would be your preferred option for engagement in a conversation process about the Synod? The responses will be considered by the task group to be put in place by the bishops this summer to plan and oversee the first steps along the synodal pathway.

**Trócaire Lenten Collection 2021** Please return your box Thanks for your generous support. who are suffering from poverty, a lack of medicine and education in many of the poorest countries in the world. As some of the poorest people in the world face the prospect of COVID-19, that support is needed now more than ever. If you have not already, you can still pick up a Trócaire Lenten Donation Box from your local church. See [www.trocaire.ie](http://www.trocaire.ie) for more information.

Next weeks jackpot will be €13,700!

Your support is very much appreciated 

[https://www.klubfunder.com/.../Tommy\\_Larkins\\_GAA\\_Club/lotto](https://www.klubfunder.com/.../Tommy_Larkins_GAA_Club/lotto)

**April 8/9: Earthshine Nights** The Waxing and Waning Crescent Moon phases in April and May are the best time to see earthshine, where the unlit part of the Moon becomes visible. It is also known as *Da Vinci Glow*. Five hundred years ago, Leonardo Da Vinci solved an ancient astronomical riddle: the mystery of Earthshine. When you think of Leonardo Da Vinci, you probably think of the Mona Lisa or 16th Century submarines or maybe a certain suspenseful novel. That's old school! From now on think of the moon and the Da Vinci Glow!

**Wishing all in Woodford and Looscaun the blessing and joy of Christ's Resurrection this Easter** When you think of Leonardo Da Vinci, you probably think of the Mona Lisa or 16th-century submarines or, maybe, a certain suspenseful novel. That's old school. From now on, think of the Moon.





Little-known to most, one of Leonardo's finest works is not a painting or an invention, but rather something from astronomy: He solved the ancient riddle of Earthshine.

You can see Earthshine whenever there's a crescent Moon on the horizon at sunset. Thursday, Oct. 6, is a good night: [sky map](#). Look between the horns of the crescent for a ghostly image of the full Moon. That's Earthshine.

#### ***The Da Vinci Glow 10.04.05***

***Five hundred years ago, Leonardo Da Vinci solved an ancient astronomical riddle: the mystery of Earthshine.***

***When you think of Leonardo Da Vinci, you probably think of the Mona Lisa or 16th-century submarines or, maybe, a certain suspenseful novel. That's old school. From now on, think of the Moon.***

***Little-known to most, one of Leonardo's finest works is not a painting or an invention, but rather something from astronomy: He solved the ancient riddle of Earthshine.***

***Holy Places and Priests Easter Collection*** Thank you for your contributions to these special collections that support Holy Places and the payment of your Priest.

***Trócaire Lenten Collection 2021*** The annual Trócaire Lenten Collection is a most important source of funding for Trócaire, our Catholic Development Agency, which helps those who are suffering from poverty, a lack of medicine and education in many of the poorest countries in the world. As some of the poorest people in the world face the prospect of COVID-19, that support is needed now more than ever. Please pick up a Trócaire Lenten Donation Box from your local church and use it as part of your giving to the less well off this Lent. See [www.trocaire.ie](http://www.trocaire.ie) for more information.

***Centenarian Parishioners*** Are you or someone you know aged 100 years or older? Athlone Institute of Technology is currently researching the lives lived by Irish centenarians and is actively looking for participants. Contact Alison via email at [a.fagan@research.ait.ie](mailto:a.fagan@research.ait.ie) for more information on project.

***Tommy Larkins*** 2-7-21-25. No Jackpot Win. Match 3 D O'Connor Draw 13.5keuro on Sun. Mar 28th

*Sun Mar. 28th SR 7.16am Set 8.01pm Full Moon on Sun. Mar. 28th at 7.48pm*

## Thank You for Your Parish Donation it is Greatly Appreciated

A big “Thank You” to all those who have made online donations to assist our parish. Online donations can be made by logging on to [www.clonfertdiocese.ie](http://www.clonfertdiocese.ie) Click on the secure “Donate” button located on the right of the screen and follow the instructions given. At the drop-down menu click on \_\_\_\_\_ Parish to ensure that your donation goes to your local parish. Once again thank you so much for your contributions to the continued upkeep of our Parish. They are very much appreciated in these difficult times.

**Trócaire Lenten Collection 2021** The annual Trócaire Lenten Collection is a most important source of funding for Trócaire our Catholic Development Agency, which helps those who are suffering from poverty, a lack of medicine and education in many of the poorest countries in the world. As some of the poorest people in the world face the prospect of COVID-19, that support is needed now more than ever. Please pick up a Trócaire Lenten Donation Box from your local church and use it as part of your giving to the less well off this Lent. See [www.trocaire.ie](http://www.trocaire.ie) for more information.

**Covid-19 Vaccination Programme** The Irish bishops have encouraged Catholics to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme, “not only for their own good, but for the protection of life and the health of those who are vulnerable and for the common good of humanity.” (Irish Bishops) As vaccination is a medical issue, it is important that people discuss it with their own GP. For further information on the Church’s position with regard to vaccines, see <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2020/12/09/bishops-conference-statement-welcoming-vaccines-for-the-common-good/>

**The Catholic Young Adult Conference** Now, after a year of Covid-19, we are more and more conscious of the weight of the restrictions... and moreover the finishing line seems like a mirage always moving farther and farther away from us! The Catholic Young Adult Conference via Zoom on March 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 - 7:30pm is a chance for young adults (18 – 40) wherever they are to come together online to build up their hope. The theme “Hope Springs Eternal” will be discussed in a great lineup of short talks and testimonies mixed together with music and prayer. The Conference is free to attend just log in to Zoom: ID 847 1984 5205 Passcode: 771328 . Whatever about an injection for Covid-19, come and get a powerful injection of hope! Newcomers especially welcome **Unemployed due to accident or illness** and would like to improve your computer skills to help you return to work? Enrolling now for our free computer course that combines home-based and centre based learning. Call Kevin for further information on 091-773557 or 086 0432801

**There are currently a number of Tús Scheme vacancies** in Woodford & surrounding areas. To qualify you *must be on a Job Seekers Allowance payment*. Get a *top up* on your social welfare payment. Get valuable work experience. Help your local community. Meet new people and make new friends. If you or anyone you know

is interested give Sinéad Cox a call on 087 3792030 for more info.

**Tommy Larkins Lotto:**5-16-19-32. No Jackpot Winner. Match 3 Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland . Draw for 13,400 euro on Sun. Mar 21st

### **Covid- 19 Restrictions on Publish Worship – Message from Irish Bishops**

“We strongly believe that people’s freedom to worship publicly should be restored as soon as the current Level 5 restrictions begin to be eased. It is particularly painful for Christians to be deprived, for the second year running, of the public expression of our faith during the most sacred time of Holy Week and Easter. This is especially true given that it has been clearly demonstrated that church buildings are among the safest places for people to gather. We also re-emphasise that the ongoing severe restrictions on attendance at Funeral Masses (currently limited to ten) are causing untold grief to many families.” For the full statement: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2021/03/09/bishops-statement-on-the-covid-19-restrictions-in-republic-of-ireland/>

**St. Joseph’s NS, Woodford Enrolment** & admission policies for September 2021 are now available in St. Joseph’s NS. You can also download these policies on our school website [www.stjosephswoodford.com](http://www.stjosephswoodford.com) If you wish to enrol your child please return completed enrolment form on or before **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021**.

**Tommy Larkins Lotto:** 12-18-25-32. No Jackpot Winner. Match 3 Tony & Cepta Rourke. Draw for 13.2k euro on Sun. Mar 7th

**Covid-19 Vaccination Programme** The Irish bishops have encouraged Catholics to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme, “not only for their own good, but for the protection of life and the health of those who are vulnerable and for the common good of humanity.” (Irish Bishops) As vaccination is a medical issue, it is important that people discuss it with their own GP. For further information on the Church’s position with regard to vaccines, see <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2020/12/09/bishops-conference-statement-welcoming-vaccines-for-the-common-good/>

## MINI-LENTEN RETREAT IN PREPARATION FOR HOLY WEEK 2021

In preparation for the Easter Triduum, ‘The Hook of Faith’ is happy to offer a ‘Mini-Lenten Retreat in Preparation for Holy Week’ on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March. The retreat will be held on Zoom and will be led by Fr Billy Swan. Each conference begins at 8pm. The three conferences will anticipate the Triduum and will therefore focus on the Eucharist (Tues. 23<sup>rd</sup>); the Cross and the Mystery of Suffering (Wed. 24<sup>th</sup>); the Resurrection, Joy and Hope (Thurs. 25<sup>th</sup>). To take part,

all you need to do is send an email to:  
[thehookoffaith@gmail.com](mailto:thehookoffaith@gmail.com) All are welcome.

***Pastoral Message from the Bishops of the six dioceses of the Province of Tuam***

Dear Parishioners, brother Priests and Deacons, Religious and Friends

***Covid-19: A Year On*** This week we mark the first anniversary of the appearance of the Covid-19 pandemic in Ireland. As we consider how this has touched our parish communities, particularly given the tragic loss of so many lives, we wish to share some thoughts with you, the people of the six Dioceses of the Tuam Province.

***Further to Climb*** Many of us will be familiar with the experience of arriving at what we thought was the top of a mountain only to discover that there is still further to climb. Sometimes the last bit can be the hardest of all. We understand the experience of disappointment and frustration that many people feel, at the news of an indefinite extension of lockdown. We are delighted, however, that children have the opportunity to return to school and we wish them and their teachers every blessing. ***Until we are all "Ok"*** All of us appreciate the efforts and the sacrifices of those in our community who provide essential services. For many people, however, the continued high level of restriction poses practical and emotional challenges. We want to say very clearly that, in the Christian vision of things, every person is essential and no person is more important or necessary than any other. When we pray at the Stations of the Cross, we celebrate people like Veronica, who wiped the face of Jesus and Simon of Cyrene who shared with Him the burden of the cross. None of us can say "I'm ok" until we are all "ok".

***Serving the Common Good and Supporting Restrictions*** As Church leaders, we have consistently supported the public health restrictions on the grounds that they serve the common good. The state has a particular responsibility for the common good and, on that basis, the Church teaches that Catholics must obey the law unless it is manifestly unjust or immoral. That does not mean that we cannot or should not speak out when we believe that something seems unfair or could be done better. We have consistently made representations, not only for the timely reopening of the public pastoral life of the Church, but also for better protection for elderly residents in nursing homes, for equity in the delivery of critical care in our hospitals and for a fair distribution of vaccines both in our own society and in the wider world.

***Difficulties with "Covid-19 Resilience and Recovery 2021: The Path Ahead"*** We recognise the need for prudence and caution at the present time, in the light of the terrible loss of life in January and February, and we accept absolutely that now is not the time for a major reopening of society. We have carefully considered the five stage plan "Covid-19 Resilience and Recovery 2021: The Path Ahead", published by the Government last week. There are two things in this plan which we find very difficult to support. One of those is the fact that at level 5, all **funerals** are still limited to 10 people. We believe that a modest increase to 25 would, without compromising safety, bring much consolation to grieving families.

Our second concern is that **public worship is still excluded even at level 3**. This would suggest that we may not have the opportunity to celebrate Mass together for months to come. It ignores the important contribution of communal worship to the mental and spiritual well-being of people of faith. The fundamental importance of Holy Week and Easter for all Christians, makes the prohibition of public worship particularly painful. While, as Christians, we are obliged to obey these regulations, we believe that it is our responsibility as Church leaders to make the case for change. We will continue to make fair and reasonable representation and we encourage you to do likewise.

***Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation*** In so far as the Government plan currently offers no clarity about when we might expect to return to public Sacramental life, we find it difficult to have any confidence that the Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation can be celebrated before the end of the present school year. As of now, we have decided to defer the Sacrament of Confirmation for the 2021 class until the Autumn, and we encourage our parishes to consider doing the same in relation to First Holy Communion. Should the circumstances change for the better, this decision can be revisited in each diocese. In the meantime, we encourage young people and their parents to continue with their preparation. We have provided online resources to support what is being done through the Religious Education programme with the teachers in the schools.

***Continuing Pastoral and Sacramental Care*** Bearing all of the foregoing in mind, it is also important for us to do as much as we can within the current restrictions to provide pastoral and sacramental care to our parishioners. Experience teaches us that with suitable precautions, the individual celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is possible, as is the sacramental care of the sick. These, together with various other pastoral initiatives, can supplement the various online outreaches that have proved so helpful and successful.

***Towards Easter 2021*** God's love for us is revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, who shared our human condition, with all its joys and sorrows. As his disciples today, we can have confidence in his promise to be with us always, even to the end of time. During this season of Lent, He walks the way of the cross with us and we journey in hope towards the joy of sharing in his Resurrection which, one way or another, we will celebrate together at Easter. Sincerely in Christ, *Michael Neary (Archbishop of Tuam), Brendan Kelly (Bishop of Galway), John Fleming (Bishop of Killala), Kevin Doran (Bishop of Elphin), Michael Duignan (Bishop of Clonfert), Paul Dempsey (Bishop of Achonry)*

***"We are with you"*** The Diocese of Clonfert has launched "We are with you": a prayer initiative for the deceased and their families in these difficult times. See [www.clonfertdiocese.ie](http://www.clonfertdiocese.ie)

***Church Envelope Boxes*** The 2021 Church Envelopes Boxes are available to collect in the Church for half an hour after Sat. Vigil or Sunday Mass and for half an hour after daily Mass. Also the envelopes can be delivered by arrangement by contacting Fr. Kieran  
Thanks to all who have generously supported the Church Collections this past year.

***Trócaire Lenten Collection 2021*** The annual Trócaire Lenten Collection is a most important source of funding for our Catholic Development Agency, which helps those who are suffering from poverty, a lack of medicine and education in many of the poorest countries in the world. As some of the poorest people in the world face the prospect of COVID-19, that support is needed now more than ever. Please pick up a Trócaire Lenten Donation Box from your local church and use it as part of your giving to the less well off this Lent. See [www.trocaire.ie](http://www.trocaire.ie) for more information.

**Sunday Mass:** Mass is available every Saturday evening at 8pm and Sunday at 10am and 12 noon from Loughrea Cathedral via webcam at [www.loughreacathedral.ie](http://www.loughreacathedral.ie) **Mass available on RTE One** at 11am every second Sunday and on RTE News Channel at 2pm on the alternate Sundays.

**Meet a Monk A virtual evening from Our Lady of Bethlehem Abbey, Portglenone 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 7:00 pm** This online information session, followed by an opportunity for Q&A, will provide some insights into this monastic way of living. It is an opportunity to take a first step in exploring a Cistercian vocation. The event is facilitated via Zoom and those who wish to attend should email [bethlehemcistercianfamily@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehemcistercianfamily@gmail.com) in advance of the meeting for details. *Please note that this event is aimed at those in Britain and Ireland considering a vocation to the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance.*

**Tommy Larkins Lotto: 9-16-18-28** Match 3 Mary Conroy Jackpot 13,100 euro Draw in Clubhouse on Sun. Feb. 28th Tickets available with local ticket outlets at QnR Stores & Kearys Woodford , D'Arcy's P.O. Gurteeny & Tuohy's Coose and online on [https://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Tommy\\_Larkins\\_GAA\\_Club/lotto](https://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Tommy_Larkins_GAA_Club/lotto)

*Sun Feb. 28th SR 7.22am Set 6.10pm Full Moon on Sat. Feb. 27th at 8.17am*