

**PORTLAOISE  
PARISH  
link  
up**

**9th February 2020**

# Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

A tradition going back many centuries in the Church is the blessing of throats in association with the Feast of St. Blaise (3rd February). Great numbers once again attended St. Peter & Paul's on that day to receive this blessing

'Through the intercession of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God keep you free from all harm to your throat and from every other harm In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

**The Parish Centre 057 8621142  
E-mail: [info@portlaoiseparish.ie](mailto:info@portlaoiseparish.ie)**

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**Parish and Diocesan Websites: [www.portlaoiseparish.ie](http://www.portlaoiseparish.ie) [www.kandle.ie](http://www.kandle.ie)**

## Portlaoise Parish



## Results for

6th February 2020



### WINNERS

Eileen Ardren  
 Marian Moore  
 Chito McHale  
 Mag Fitzpatrick  
 Leo Kavanagh  
 Brendan Keogh  
 Ann Keane  
 Stephen Maguire  
 Caroline Murphy  
 Donna O'Carroll  
 Jenny Redding  
 Breda Delaney  
 Lisa Gilligan  
 Pat Walsh  
 Matt Brophy  
 Billy Clarke  
 Mark Bartley  
 Lynda Mitchell  
 Bennett Family  
 Phyllis Ashe  
 Jack & Ryan Cuddy  
 Marie Fairbrother  
 Siobhán Mortimer  
 Martina Gosling  
 Hannah Phelan

MATCH 3s €1,000

No €20,000

Jackpot Winner

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Next Week's Jackpot

€20,000

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### PROMOTER

Anne Brennan  
 Lily Moore  
 Marie Heavey  
 Rocky Kehoe  
 Rocky Kehoe  
 Betty Lynch  
 Philip Fagan  
 Mgt. Maguire  
 Tom Colohan  
 Tom Colohan  
 Parish Centre  
 Peggy Kelly  
 On line Lotto  
 Lotto Gift  
 Lotto Gift  
 Paul Dooley  
 Mark Bartley  
 Frank Cullen  
 Joanne Bennett  
 Mary Arthur  
 Eddie Phelan  
 Bernie Tynan  
 Heather Mortimer  
 Rita Watkins  
 Bernie Tynan

## Priests of the Parish



Msgr. John Byrne P.P.V.G.  
Tel: 057 8621142



Fr. Ciprian Matei C.C.  
Tel: 057 8509998



Fr. David Vard C.C.  
Tel: 057 8661139



Fr. Eddie Lalor C.C.  
Tel: 057 8661605



Fr. Tom O'Connor P.E.  
(Parish Chaplain)

To contact the Priest on Duty:  
 Parish Centre during office hours  
 Tel: 057 8621142  
 Outside office hours  
 in emergency only

## Safeguarding

All safeguarding statements and policies can be viewed on our website and in our Church Porches.

Diocesan Designated Liaison Person  
Mick Daly dlp@kandle.ie

## Parish Centre



Office Hours Monday to Friday 9am-5pm  
 Phone: 057-8621142 / 057-8660722  
 E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie  
 Twitter: @portlaoiseparis  
 Facebook: PortlaoiseParishLaois

MANAGER Declan Kelly

Parish Secretaries Michelle Bartley  
Agnieszka Kaczmarek

Accounts Michelle Conroy

Sacristans Parish Church

Sr. Sybil and Sr. Julie

All Masses and services from the Parish Church are live streamed at www.portlaoiseparish.ie



Secretary: Julie Conroy  
 Monday to Thursday  
 11am-1pm & 2.15pm-5pm  
 057-8692154

E-mail: linkup@portlaoiseparish.ie  
Advertising deadline: 12noon Wednesday  
subject to availability of space

PARISH SHOP - 057 8621142

# World Day of the Sick 2020

## Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes

Tuesday 11th February

Celebration of the Eucharist and Anointing of the Sick

After 7.30am and during 10am Masses in our Parish Church

There will also be a special blessing for all who care for the Sick.

All are Welcome.



Those who are sick, the Pope says, attract the eyes and heart of Jesus. He says, "Christ did not give us prescriptions, but through His passion, death and resurrection He frees us from the grip of evil." In this regard, he says, "The Church desires to become more and more the "inn" of the Good Samaritan who is Christ (Lk 10:34), that is, a home where you can encounter His grace, which finds expression in closeness, acceptance and relief."  
 See also Reflection on page 19



# Salt of the Earth

Today Jesus gives his disciples a compliment. If we live by our faith we his disciples will become the salt of the earth and the light of the world. But the compliment comes with a warning! If the salt loses its taste it is worthless, and if we hide the light underneath a bowl it fails to serve its purpose. Sounds silly doesn't it? Why on earth would we go round hiding lights underneath bowls, yet we do it all the time!

We deny the salt and hide the light every time we keep our faith to ourselves. You often hear people claim that their faith is strictly a personal thing .... something just between themselves and God. But what use is a belief that doesn't impact on those around us? What good is a faith that does nothing to make the world a better place? We deny the salt and hide the light every time we keep quiet instead of speaking out. It isn't fashionable to be a Christian nowadays. It's all too easy to keep quiet in the face of uncomfortable issues such as racism or poverty. It's far easier to side with the gossip and turn a blind eye to petty pilfering in the workplace. It's too easy for us to laugh at an unkind joke or let our children watch programmes that promote values contrary to our Christian belief.

Remember today somebody in your life who Jesus might have described as the 'salt of the earth'. Remember how that person inspired, motivated or impressed you. Remember how you admired that person for being true to themselves instead of bending to the fashionable point of view. Somebody once said that Christianity is infectious, when we see a shining example we want to emulate it. Could we too become shining examples of Christianity? Could Jesus give us the same compliment as those original disciples? Light of the world. Salt of the earth.

## Bitesize

A barking dog is often more useful than a sleeping lion.

*Washington Irving, adapted from a verse in the Bible*

## Mass times for the coming week

(Parish Church or otherwise stated)

**Monday – Friday**

7.30am & 10am

**Saturday**

10am

### SUNDAY MASSES

Scoil Bhride, Knockmay (Saturday) 7.30pm

St. Peter & Paul's Parish Church

Vigil (Saturday) 6.30pm

8.30am, 10am, 11.15am & 12.30pm

Church of the Assumption,

The Heath: 9.30am

Church of the Holy Cross,

Rathenskiska: 10am.

### CONFESSIONS

Every Saturday after 10am

& 6.30pm Masses.



We welcome into our  
Parish Community

Sofija Simanskaite,  
Lake Glade

Charlie Gerald Conroy

Marian Avenue

who was baptised last weekend

**Rosary at the Grotto  
on Tuesday at 8pm for the  
Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes**



**Sunday 2nd February 2020**

Offertory Collection €2,778.00

Development Fund €3,246.00

€6,024.00

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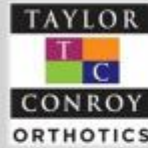
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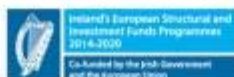
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33 Agh Na Hara,  
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19 Triogue Manor,  
Portlaoise



3 Beds / 3 Baths  
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Rathevan, Portlaoise



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Portlaoise



5 Beds / 3 Baths  
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## The Salt of the Earth



Have you ever been in a supermarket when, as you did your shopping, they offered samples of different food items to try? They do this to entice you to buy those items. If the samples didn't taste good, you probably wouldn't buy any, would you?

Say, they asked you to test taste popcorn. If they had two small bowls of popcorn. The popcorn in one bowl has been salted and the other has not. Which one you like best? In my opinion, I would go with the salted popcorn.

I'm sure you all knew that many foods taste much better with a little salt. It doesn't take much. In fact, when you are cooking, a recipe often calls for "a pinch of salt." Not much, just a pinch, but that little pinch of salt makes a big difference in the flavour.

In the Gospel today, Jesus said to his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth." What do you think that means? I think Jesus means that he wants us to improve the quality of life of those we meet each day. How can we do that? We can do that by introducing them to Jesus and by showing them that having Jesus in our life is like having salt on our food. Everything is better when we have Jesus in our life.

There is a lot of hatred and bitterness in our world today. If you and I will show the love of Jesus in all that we do, we can be the salt of the earth like Jesus called us to be. Just a pinch of salt can do much to reduce bitterness and bring peace to our world.

**Heavenly Father, our prayer is that we may be the salt of the earth by showing the love of Jesus in all that we do.**

**In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

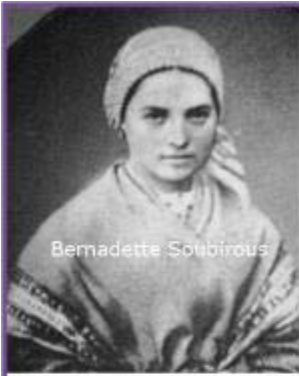
### CEREMONY OF LIGHT FOR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES



Bishop Denis will celebrate the Ceremony of Light for all our Confirmation Candidates, next Wednesday in the Parish Church at 7.30pm.

We look forward to seeing all our confirmation candidates on Wednesday.





Bernadette Soubirous

# *Our Lady of Lourdes*

*Tuesday 11th February*

In Lourdes, France, in 1844 a baby girl named Bernadette Soubirous was born. Bernadette's family was very poor, and Bernadette was responsible for looking after and caring for her brothers and sisters.

Bernadette was a good natured girl with dark eyes and a round face. The only education Bernadette received was the Catholic teachings which she studied faithfully in the evenings.

At the age of 13, Bernadette was preparing for her First Holy Communion. One of Bernadette's chores was to collect wood for the fire. On a cold day in February 1858, Bernadette and 2 companions headed off to the Gave River to collect pieces of wood. The 2 companions ran ahead and left Bernadette struggling to keep up. As Bernadette was taking off her shoes to make her way through the river, she was startled by a peculiar wind and rustling sound.

Bernadette looked up towards the grotto and the caves on the riverbank. Near the opening of the grotto, Bernadette glanced and noticed the cave was suddenly filled with golden light. Lifting up her eyes, she saw a lady of great beauty, dressed in a pure white robe with a blue sash, a veil over her head, a rosary clasped in her hands and yellow roses at her feet. Bernadette rubbed her eyes. What a beautiful lady! But where did she come from? And what was she doing here?

The beautiful lady smiled at Bernadette and asked her to say her rosary. Bernadette said her prayers and when she was finished she looked up, the lady had vanished. Bernadette caught up to her 2 friends and discovered that they were upset with her. What have you been doing? Playing in the river, while we are out here collecting wood? Bernadette told them about the vision she had just witnessed. The girls told Bernadette she was silly and probably just seeing things.

Bernadette felt drawn to the grotto and returned there on the next Sunday. Again Bernadette saw the beautiful lady. The third time Bernadette went to the grotto, the lady spoke to her. The beautiful lady asked Bernadette to come here every day for fifteen days. She said that she wanted Bernadette to tell the priests to build a chapel there. She told her to drink water from the stream. The lady also told Bernadette to pray for the conversion of sinners. Bernadette followed the requests.

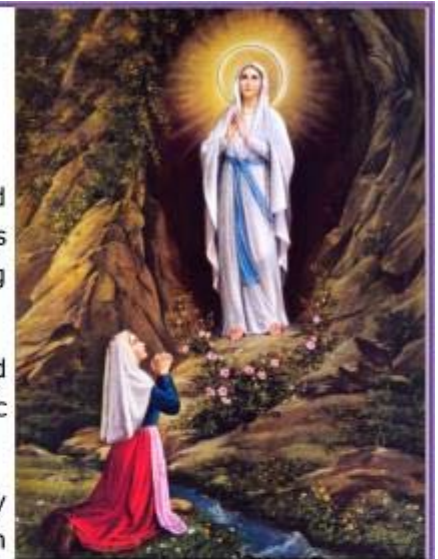
On March 25, the Lady finally told Bernadette that she was Mary, the mother of Jesus, and that her purpose in appearing to Bernadette was to warn her to pray and make sacrifices for sinners. The miracles of body and soul performed at Lourdes are the proof that this message was a true warning from the queen of heaven to her children and that she was deeply interested in their welfare.

Bernadette's daily visits to the grotto caused quite a stir in the countryside. Crowds of people began to gather and watch Bernadette as she examined the cave and obediently did the things the lady asked of her. They watched Bernadette scrape away soil beside the grotto until a spring of water started to trickle out. Would you believe this spring still provides 27,000 gallons of water everyday!

This is the sacred Lourdes water which heals all! At first, the priests, the town's folk, and the families doubted Bernadette's visions and the purpose in her activities. But Bernadette was stubborn and determined to follow Mary's plans for her. Eventually everyone did believe Bernadette and the grotto at Lourdes became a place of worship and the Lourdes holy water was sacred for performing miracles.

At the age of 22, Bernadette became a nun and devoted her life to Mary, to praying for the conversion of sinners and to the service of God. Bernadette died on April 16, 1879, at the age of 36.

She will be remembered for believing in the greater glory of God as she was faithful to her mission, she was humble in glory and she was valiant in her sufferings. Today, Lourdes remains one of the most frequented Christian shrines in the world. More than 3 million visitors, pilgrims and tourists come each year to the Grotto of Massabielle, where the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette 18 times in 1858.





# TIME TO THINK!

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK 2020

This Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> is the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and also World day of Prayer for the sick. Behind many hall-doors in our parish and throughout the length and breadth of our country, there are people who are sick; men and women, young and old; and more children than you might imagine. Some of them are confined to bed or to wheelchairs. Others, in spite of the limitations posed by their sickness, continue to go to work, do the shopping and play an active part in the life of their community. Each person's story is unique, many of them are stories of great courage.

These days, when we think about healthcare, we often think of new technology and new drugs. These are important, but healthcare is first and foremost a relationship of trust. When people are sick, they often discover in a new and more profound way, how much they depend on others. It is a useful lesson for all of us to learn, even if we would hope not to have to become sick in order to do so. Part of the story of every sick person is that relationship of trust with family members, friends, neighbours, carers, nurses, doctors, radiographers, physiotherapists, ambulance crews, priests and ministers of Holy Communion. It is a relationship in which love is expressed in generous service and care.

The Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes; if you are familiar with the story of the apparitions of Our Lady to Bernadette at Lourdes, you might wonder what the connection with healing is. It is true that Bernadette was not a very healthy child and Mary seems to have been very kind to her. Bernadette was not treated as an ignorant child from a poor family might expect to be treated. Mary spoke to her as a child of God. This reminds us – as Pope Francis says in his Message for this World Day of the Sick – that every person is, and always remains, a human being, and is to be treated as such. The sick and those who are disabled, even severely, have their own inalienable dignity and mission in life.

I think, when Mary is present, Jesus is never far away. When she asks his help on our behalf, He listens to her. We see this when Jesus responds to the request of His Mother, to bring some joy back into the lives of the young couple at the Wedding Feast in Cana. The message of Lourdes, essentially, is that God loves us and that he comes to find us wherever we are, but especially in our weakness and in our smallness. The challenge of Lourdes is that we allow ourselves to be small, to be vulnerable and to receive whatever gift God wants to give us.

In the years after the apparitions, Bernadette devoted her own life to prayer and the care of the sick, as a Sister of Charity of Nevers. She was never very healthy herself and she died of tuberculosis while she was still quite young. It may seem surprising that Bernadette never took the opportunity to return to Lourdes seeking a cure for her illness.

I think she realised that she had already been healed. Through her encounter with Mary the Mother of Jesus, her whole life had been changed.

One of the things I have often noticed in Lourdes is that the sick bring healing to the healthy, through their attitude of patience and prayerfulness. Those who come to Lourdes in the whole of their health discover a new humility, and go home with a fresh appreciation of the gift of life. This is the kind of conversion that Mary spoke about to Bernadette. Miracles of physical healing do happen at Lourdes, but they are the "icing on the cake". The healing that comes from the love of God and of Mary His Mother touches people in many different ways. It then overflows to touch the lives of others. It happens in a particular way in Lourdes, but it is not limited to Lourdes. It can happen in your home, in your hospital, or anywhere that people learn to see themselves and one another as the children of God.

I am very conscious that, in spite of all the good people who work in our healthcare system, the system itself is sick and in need of healing. Most people say that, once you get into the system, the care is very good, but getting in is a major problem. Many of you who work in hospitals and nursing homes, operate under enormous pressure and with facilities that don't always measure up to what is required. When the sick have to wait too long for treatment and when those who care for the sick themselves become sick from stress, it is perfectly reasonable to feel angry. But it is important that we don't take our anger out on one another. In this situation too, it is love that heals. Anger is an energy that, with wisdom and love, can be converted into a power which changes structures.

As we pray for those who are sick, and for those who care for the sick, let us pray, especially today, for the wisdom to know how to bring that gift of healing to the healthcare system itself. Now that election 2020, has come to an end, I pray that a more authentic Healthcare system that responds more readily to the sick, will emerge. Our local Hospital in Portlaoise is an essential service and an essential life saving one. This essential service must never be compromised.

### A Prayer for Healing for Sick Family and Friends

Lord Jesus, thank you that you love us.  
I know that you hate what this illness is doing to my loved one. I ask, in the name of Jesus, that you would heal this disease, that you would have compassion and bring healing from all sickness. Help me trust in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen!

**Fr. Paddy invites you to follow him on Twitter @frpaddybyrne, now over 17,000 followers or @AbbeyleixP or leave a comment on his blog on our parish website; [www.portlaoiseparish.ie/articles](http://www.portlaoiseparish.ie/articles)**

**Fr. Paddy's book *"All will be well"* on sale in the Parish Shop or online at [www.portlaoiseparish.ie](http://www.portlaoiseparish.ie)**

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OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR  
THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY ;



*Daniel (Dan) Collier*  
Highfield Meadows



*Elizabeth (Lizzie) Farrell*  
Harpurs Lane



*Kathleen Lanham*  
*(née McCarthy)*  
Upper Sconce, Mountrath  
(Mother of George Lanham)



*Patricia Seery*  
*(née Campion)*  
Swords and Portlaoise  
(Sister of Patsy Campion)

**MAY THEY REST IN PEACE**  
*Our sympathy to their families.*

A message of sympathy may be left for the family by logging on to  
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† *In Loving Memory of* †  
**MARY CONROY**

*18 St. John's Sq. Portlaoise*  
*For a Wonderful Mum*



*Along the road of suffering,  
you found a little lane,  
That took you up to Heaven,  
and ended all your pain,  
You may be out of sight,  
We may be worlds apart,  
But you are always in our  
prayers and forever in our  
hearts.*

**8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in  
Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church on  
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 10am.**

*Love you always Mam, from your loving son  
Michael and daughters Marie, Phil and Josephine.*

*May Mary Rest in Peace*



**BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE**  
**In Loving Memory of**  
**BERNADETTE COYNE**

Boughlone, Portlaoise, whose birthday occurs 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



*Time slips by and life goes on,  
But from our hearts you're never gone,  
We think about you always and talk  
about you too,  
So happy birthday Mother,  
We wish we still had you.*

Happy Birthday to our lovely Mother from all her loving family.

*May Bernadette Rest in Peace*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**MADGE McEVOY**

Capoley, Portlaoise.

2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary occurs Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020.  
Much loved and cherished Mother, Grandmother and Great-grandmother.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in  
Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church, on  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 6:30pm.

*Just a prayer from the family who loved you,  
Just a memory fond and true,  
In our hearts you will live forever,  
Because we thought the world of you.*

Sadly missed and always remembered by;  
Sarahann, Ailish, Mary, Joe, Breda and their families.

*May Madge Rest in Peace*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**My Husband**

**CHARLIE CLARKE**

5 Abbeyleix Rd. Portlaoise.  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary occurs 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020



*We miss your smile, your joking ways,  
We miss the things you use to say.  
Always remembered by his loving wife  
Peggy and his daughter Dorothy.*

*May Charlie Rest in Peace*

**Birthday Remembrance**  
**MARIA LOUISE GREENE**

St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise  
6<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Heaven - 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020



*Of all the gifts in life, however great or small,  
To have you as our daughter was the  
greatest gift of all,  
Remembering you is easy now,  
We do it everyday,  
But there is an ache within our hearts that will  
never go away.*

Happy 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday our Beautiful Daughter Maria  
From Daddy, Mommy, brother Stephen, sister Natalie,  
grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins & friends.

*Maria - Away with the Angels*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**BILL WHELAN**

Corrigreen, Stradbally. 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary occurs 15<sup>th</sup> February.



5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass will be  
celebrated in the Heath Hall  
(beside the Church) on  
Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 9:30am.  
*Never more than a thought away and  
those who have loved you dearly are  
thinking of you today.*

Loved and remembered by his loving wife, family and friends.

*May Bill Rest in Peace*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**JIMMY PRESTON**

St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise.  
20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary occurs 16<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in  
Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church this  
Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 11:15am.

*Just a prayer from the family who  
loved you,  
Just a memory fond and true,  
In our hearts you will stay forever,  
Because we thought the world of you.*

*A life made beautiful by kindly deeds,  
A helping hand for others needs,  
To a beautiful life, comes a happy end,  
He died as he lived, everyone's friend.*

Loved and missed always by all your loving family.

*May Jimmy Rest in Peace*

**In Loving Memory of**  
**CARMEL FITZPATRICK**  
**née Dunne**

Annefield Terrace, Dublin Rd., Portlaoise.  
Months Mind occurs 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



Months Mind Mass will be celebrated  
in Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church on  
Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February at 10am.

*Sadly missed by her sisters Marie and  
Josie and brothers Billy and David  
and extended family.*

*Rest in Peace Carmel*

**In Loving Memory of  
MARY AND JOHN BROPHY**

11 Davin Park, Mountmellick, Co. Laois  
Whose anniversaries occurred 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020.



*Always in our Thoughts  
Forever in our Hearts  
Sadly missed and always  
remembered by all your  
loving family.  
May you both  
Rest in Peace*

**In Loving Memory of  
PETER ALLEN**

Eyne, Portlaoise.  
22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary occurs 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



*Sadly missed along life's way,  
Quietly remembered every day,  
No longer in our lives to share,  
But in our hearts you are always there.  
To hear your voice,  
To see your smile,  
To sit and talk with you awhile,  
To be together in the same old way, would be our  
dearest wish today.*

*Forever loved and remembered by Bridie and all your  
loving family xxx*

*May Peter Rest in Peace*

**In Loving Memory of  
DAN FINGLETON**

The Tocker, Grange, Stradbally.  
1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary occurs 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in  
Holy Cross Church, Ratheniska, on  
Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 10am.

*Our hearts still ache in sadness,  
And secret tears still flow,  
What it meant to lose you,  
No one can ever know.*

*Loved and remembered by his loving wife Catherine, sons,  
daughters and extended family.*

*May Dan Rest in Peace*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**In Loving Memory of  
MARIE HENNESSY**

Clondarrig Court, Portlaoise.  
Died 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019.



Marie's sister Margaret, nieces, nephews and extended family wish to thank most sincerely those who sympathised with us on the death of Marie and all those who attended the rosary, funeral Mass and burial, sent Mass and sympathy cards and supported the family during her illness.

A special word of thanks to Dr. Phelan, Mountrath, the doctors, nurses and staff of the Midland Regional hospital, Portlaoise, Olive in Palliative Care, Betty Patterson in Patterson's Nursing Home, Roscrea and Dr. Charles Murphy for their kindness and exceptional care. Thanks also to Laois Pharmacy for their help and support.

Heartfelt thanks to the Priests from Ballyfin Parish; Fr. Joe Brophy and Fr. Pat Hennessy, who visited Marie in her home and also to Fr. Paddy Byrne and the Priests of Portlaoise Parish who visited her in the hospital and celebrated such a beautiful funeral Mass. Thanks also to the choir, altar servers, readers and sacristan and all who took part in the Mass.

Thank you to the staff of the Parish Centre and to Bosco's catering for the lovely food and refreshments, to Marie's kind neighbours; Carol and Shane and to all who cared for her during her illness. Sincere thanks to Margaret's neighbours and friends and to all who travelled from Roscrea to support her in her sad loss.

Our thanks also to Rankin Undertakers for their professionalism, kindness and support and to the gravediggers for preparing Marie's final resting place with such care.

As it would be impossible to thank everyone individually, please accept this acknowledgement as an expression of our sincere appreciation and deepest gratitude.

*The holy sacrifice of the Mass has been offered for your intentions.*

Marie's Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish church, on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 11:15am.

**Rest in Peace Marie**



**The final deadline for receipt of all  
Anniversaries and Acknowledgements  
is 12 noon Wednesday.**

**YOUR LIGHT WILL  
SHINE LIKE THE DAWN**  
ISAIAH 58:8



## Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes 11<sup>th</sup> February

### A Reflection from Ursuline Sisters, Parnell Crescent

*"Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage".*  
(Psalm 33:12)

A little poor girl of 14 years named Bernadette Soubirous, first of the nine children in the family, lived in extreme poverty and sickness, did not have much to hope for or dream for, had the vision of Blessed Virgin in 1858. She believed in the vision and message said by our Blessed Mother and stood for it even on her death bed. Today the city of Lourdes stands as the sanctuary of miraculous healing, conversion, and a centre for vocation to priesthood and religious life. Even the mystery of Immaculate Conception unfolded to the Catholic Church after this apparition in Lourdes. Saint Bernadette of Lourdes lived only 35 years in this world and attained the glory of sainthood.

God has a dream for each one of us, particular and exclusive, that keeps us special and privileged, no matter who we are and what we are doing. *"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope".* (Jeremiah 29:11). Trust in the Lord He trusts you. The road we travel may be a difficult one, the task we undertake may drain us out, even then the Lord who formed us in the womb of our mother is with us. *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."* (Jeremiah 1:5). It is the Lord who took us out of our mother's womb. *"Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast."* (Psalm 22:9). His love surrounds us always. *"Steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord."* (Psalm 32:10). The God who walked with the Israelites, prophets, saints and St. Bernadette is walking with us, behind us, before us, and ahead of us because His promises never fails. *"Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you."* (Deuteronomy 31:6). Great things happen just with a YES to the Lord. Listen to the Lord He has His eye on you. As we celebrate the feast of our Lady of Lourdes on February 11<sup>th</sup> let us pray with St. Bernadette the faithful servant of the Lord

Inspire us to trust in His promises....

Help us to be filled with the joy that cannot be taken away by the cares of life.....

Guide us to believe nothing can separate me from the love of God.....

Because I proclaim with Psalmist in Psalm 63:7-8 *for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me".* Amen.



### Celebrating the Feast of St. Fintan

This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Christian heritage for the people of Laois. Homily will be given by Mons. Caoimhin O'Neill at St. Fintans Well in Cromogue.

**Sunday February 16<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.**

*All are welcome to what promises to be a wonderful afternoon!*



### **Fatima Candle**

The Fatima Candle will be lit at 10am Mass in the Parish Church on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February** in honour of Our Lady of Fatima and for the intentions of all parishioners.



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*Confirmation in our Parish; 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> February*

*Communion in our Parish; 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> May*





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### RELIGIOUS NOTICES

**Adoration:** Mon. to Fri. after 10am Mass, concluding with Rosary 7pm. Saturday after 10am Mass, concluding with Rosary 6pm. Sunday at 2:30pm, concluding with Rosary 7pm. Sunday, 2:30-3:30pm - special time of prayer for vocations to the Priesthood.

**Rosary:** Please join the Prayer for Ireland team in praying the Rosary daily at 9.30pm on the Parish radio (106.5fm) or web cam.

**Rosary at the Grotto:** First Fridays and all Feast days to Our Lady, 8pm.

**The Rosary** is recited in St. Brigid's Church, Shanahoe every Monday evening at 8pm. All are welcome.

**Legion of Mary:** meeting every Wed. night at 8pm in the Prayer room of the Parish Church.

**Parish Bereavement Support:** If you have lost a loved one, there is a confidential one to one support service available (by appointment), call 087-9878300.

**Divine Mercy Prayer Meeting:** Every Monday 8-9pm in the Prayer room of Portlaoise Parish Church.

**St. Joseph's Young Priest Society:** Please join us for a Holy Hour at 3pm every Friday, as we pray for vocations to the Priesthood and religious life. All are welcome.

**Portlaoise Parish Lourdes Committee** would like to advise that our savings club for our 2020 Pilgrimage has now begun. We will meet weekly in the Parish Centre, every Thursday from 6:30-7:30pm for the next 21 weeks and any money saved is not refundable/transferable. This scheme is to try and help people to save their fare or part off weekly. The deposit of €200 must be paid towards your fare before you begin the savings scheme. Please see poster in the Church for further info. regarding deposit. Thank you.

**Bus to Life in the Holy Spirit Seminars at Emmanuel House.**

**Clonfert:** Starting Sun. 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 2:30pm for 7 consecutive Sundays to 5<sup>th</sup> April. Bishop Michael Duignan will be the chief celebrant. Advance booking for the bus is essential. Phone 059-9151245 / 087-2245193.

**"Meditating... Being Mindful... Seeking God":** In the Parish Church (old sacristy), Thursdays, 11am to 12 noon. New members welcome.

### USEFUL SERVICES

**Accord:** Going through a difficult time in your marriage/relationship? Counselling Services available at Accord, Parish Centre, Portlaoise, call 057-8661581 or e-mail us at; accordportlaoise@hotmail.com

**Sean Doyle Light Engineering, Ballacolla - 087-2068972:** Clothes line poles, wall mounted clothes lines, retractable clothes lines, winders, pulleys for old lines, bicycle stands, saw horses etc.

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### COMMUNITY NOTES

**Portlaoise Active Retirement Association (ARA)**

#### Bowls:

Every Monday in St. Mary's Hall at 3pm - regular and new members are always welcome to come along and take part and become a member of the ARA Bowls team.

#### Whist:

Play or learn Whist at Sue Ryder Centre every Thursday from 2.30pm to 4pm. All are welcome. Absolute beginners and improvers are catered for. Learn an enjoyable past-time and meet new friends.

**12<sup>th</sup> Feb:** We look forward to an enjoyable and entertaining afternoon with Caroline singing some tried and tested songs that we all know and grew up with, as well as some new songs that will stretch our vocal chords. Members are always welcome to entertain with their own favourite melodies.

**Note:** The AGM on 29<sup>th</sup> January had a good turnout of members. We are delighted that Bernie, Trudy and Andy will continue to serve in 2020. Their input over the years have been immeasurable and we thank them for their continued dedication and commitment. We are also delighted that Kathleen McEvoy has been elected Honorary President for 2020. We know she will do an excellent job.

**Portlaoise GROW Group:** GROW Community Mental Health Movement support group meets weekly in Portlaoise Parish Centre at 7.30pm on Wednesdays. If you feel anxious, isolated or are suffering from stress why not come learn a practical psychology of mental health. Contact Michelle 086-4183805 or visit our website; www.grow.ie. [GROW Promoting Positive Mental Health].

### St. Francis Special School New Road, Portlaoise



Enrolment for September 2020 will close at 3pm on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2020. Enquiries to 057-8621847

**The Hat Sale:** Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February 1-4pm in Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise. Stylish headpieces available to purchase. Perfect for ladies day, weddings and special occasions. All proceeds to St. Colmans pitch development fund. Ladies style event on the day also. Two stylish events one exclusive venue!

#### Fitness Sessions:

Emo Rath Athletic Club and Field committee in conjunction with Laois Sports partnership and Operation transformation are delighted to invite you to fitness sessions on Tuesdays at 8pm in Emo Community Centre and walking on Saturdays at 10am, also starting at the Community Centre. Let's get fit together, come along and bring some friends, it is free.

#### Community Well being Vision being developed in Laois:

Laois PPN are delighted to be rolling out a new National Initiative on Community wellbeing. The PPN is bringing together social inclusion, environment and community development voices in our communities to develop a Wellbeing Vision Statement that sets out their shared vision for Co. Laois. Feed into this important vision for your area by starting a conversation and attending a public meeting Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March in the Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise at 7pm. For further information or to register your interest in attending please contact Laois PPN; Tel. 057-8665661 E-mail; ppn@laoiscoco.ie

### ST. JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIEST'S SOCIETY

Monthly meeting will be held Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February in the Parish Centre after 10am Mass. New members are always welcome.

## **ACTIVE PLUMBER**

Central heating, showers,  
taps, blockages.  
New installation or repairs.  
Contact Fergus;  
**087-6542742**  
**087-0959245**

## **LAOIS TV SERVICES**

Repairs to TV and home  
entertainment equipment.  
Also we supply and fit and  
repair Saorview, Aerial and  
Satellite systems. Contact;  
**057-8732998**  
**087-2619426 / 083-3742600**

## **PLUMBER AVAILABLE**

All domestic, solid fuel,  
oil servicing, water  
softener installation.  
Contact Alan;  
**085-1141395**

## **HANDYMAN AVAILABLE**

Tiling incl. Bathrooms,  
Kitchens, Walls and Floors.  
Timber floors, gardening incl.  
hedge cutting & landscaping.  
All jobs considered for a  
reasonable price. Phone Jim;  
**087-6885017**

## **GRINDS**

Junior and Leaving  
Certificate Irish grinds  
available by fluent Irish  
speaker with 14 years  
experience. Contact;  
**085-2330937**

## **A1 CHIMNEY SWEEP & CAMERA SURVEYS**

Brush & Vac, No mess--  
totally clean job. Bird  
guards & cowls fitted.  
Contact Martin on  
**087-9616098**

## **Hugh Thompson MIDLAND HEATING SERVICES**

*For all your Heating & Plumbing needs*  
Service and Repair of Oil Boilers,  
Oil Cookers & Gas Boilers  
Plus Power Flushing of Heating Systems  
Removing all the old sludge and water that has built up in  
your radiators and boilers over the years with clean water  
and Inhibitors to reduce fuel bills and save money.  
**Ballyfin, Portlaoise. Call:**  
**086-3758503**

## **PAINTING AND DECORATING**

**Interior and Exterior**  
Powerwashing and Spray  
Painting, inside and outside,  
new houses etc. 12 years  
experience. Contact;  
**089-4459958**

## **MIDLAND APPLIANCE REPAIRS**

Quick, Cost Effective  
Domestic Appliance  
Repairs. Contact;  
**087-9080211**

## **WINDOWS & DOOR REPAIRS**

- Hinges/Handles  
- Letterboxes  
- Slide Patio Doors Rollers  
- Window & Door draught  
proofing  
**083-3153211**

## **HELP REQUIRED**

To assist with  
homework, one  
day per week. Call;  
**057-8621029**

## **BLOCK/BRICKLAYER AVAILABLE**

Extensions, new builds,  
garden walls etc. Excellent  
work, reasonable rates.  
Contact Paddy;  
**086-3144686**

## **ROOM TO RENT IN MOUNTRATH**

4 bed semi-detached house,  
owner occupied, double  
bedroom ensuite, all amenities,  
only 10 minutes from Portlaoise  
train station. Ideal central  
location. €400 p.m. Contact;  
**087-1169966**

## **CHILDMINDER REQUIRED**

For two school going  
children, 3 days per week.  
Contact Catherine;  
**086-8866545**

## **FOR SALE**

Recliner Couch and two  
recliner armchairs, black  
leather, perfect condition,  
very comfortable, €850.  
Contact;  
**087-9905773**

## **CHILDMINDER REQUIRED**

To mind 1 year old in child's  
own home in Portlaoise area  
from September, two days  
per week. Contact;  
**086-1767745**

## **NEED HELP WITH NEW ONLINE PERSONAL TAX RETURNS???**

- ◆ Registering with Revenue
- ◆ Claiming Health Expenses
- ◆ Returning Rental/Other Income
- ◆ PAYE Modernisation

Chartered Tax Advisor available. Irish Tax Institute.  
Reasonable Rates. **Contact; 087-9888295**





**MOCHUA PRINT & DESIGN**

GET YOURSELF NOTICED

**FROM OUR  
HEARTS TO  
YOURS**

Whatever  
your need,  
let us help  
you succeed.



**HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S DAY**