

**PORTLAOISE
PARISH**
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up**

11th February 2024

**Sixth Sunday
in Ordinary Time**

**Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes
and World Day of the Sick**

God, heal all illnesses that afflict us in body,
mind and soul. Bring comfort to those who suffer.

Bring consolation to those who despair.

Bring strength to those who walk with the sick. Bring
hope to all for whom the path to healing is long or
may not end. Let us never forget your special care for
the sick, that they may also know
they are precious and loved. Amen.



The Parish Centre 057 8621142
E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie

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Parish and Diocesan Websites: www.portlaoiseparish.ie www.kandle.ie



Trócaire Boxes are available in the Church porches or you can pick up a box in the Parish Centre.

Thank You!



SHROVE TUESDAY

This Tuesday is Shrove Tuesday - also known as Pancake Day - is the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. It is celebrated throughout Ireland by the cooking and eating of pancakes - a last feast before the fasting and self-denial of Lent!

LENTEN STATIONS

For the support of our Priests

Envelopes are available in Church porches for those who haven't got Development Boxes and wish to contribute to the Priests Collection. You can drop this envelope in one of the collection boxes provided in our Churches or returning to the Parish Centre during Lent.

Three Things To Do For Lent

Fasting and Abstinence:-

Keep your meals small and simple during Lent. This is not a slimming exercise. The thinking behind fasting and abstinence is that we strengthen our spiritual life by weakening physical pleasures. Fasting means reducing the amount of food that we would normally eat. Abstinence means not eating a particular food (meat). **Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are to be observed as special days of Fasting and Abstinence.**

Almsgiving:-

We are bombarded with requests for money from a huge number of charities. Identify a charity that means something to you ... find out what they do and make a contribution. If you can't afford to give money, give your time.

Prayer:-

Our lives are so hectic that we often forget to set aside a few quiet moments in which to talk to God. During Lent, postpone breakfast television for a few moments and make a short prayer. In the evening encourage your children to say a night time prayer before bed.



Stations of the Cross

Friday evenings during Lent
after 7.30pm Mass in Parish Church.

Mass times for the coming week
(Parish Church or otherwise stated)

Monday & Tuesday

7.30am & 10am

Wednesday (Ash Wednesday)

7.30am, 10am & 7.30pm.

The Heath: 7pm

Ratheniska: 7pm

Ashes will be distributed at all Masses.

Thursday & Friday

7.30am, 10am & 7.30pm.

Saturday: 10am

Sunday

Vigil 6.30pm (Saturday)

8.30am, 10am, 11.15am & 12.30pm

CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION, THE HEATH

Sunday: 9.30am

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, RATHENISKA

Sunday: 10am

CONFESSIONS

Saturday: After 10am Mass & after 6.30pm Mass.

Ash Wednesday is the start of Lent when we are invited for forty days to set aside more time for prayer and fasting in preparation for Easter. The Ashes, made in



the sign of the cross on our foreheads on this day, are an outward sign of our inward sorrow for our sins and of our commitment to Jesus as Our Lord and Saviour.'

Blessed Ashes will be available in the Parish Church and Parish Centre from 11am on Wednesday.

Wednesday (Ash Wednesday)

7.30am, 10am & 7.30pm.

The Heath: 7pm

Ratheniska: 7pm

Ashes will be distributed at all Masses.



We welcome into our Parish Community

Mata Struhak,

De Vesci Court, Fairgreen

Freddie Kenneth Murphy,

Lakeglen

Who were baptised last weekend.

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Wednesday
14th February**



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Thanks as always for your support

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Mark 1:15



Led by

Br. Sebastian Sales
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**Street ministering
Will be followed by
The Bible Conference**

Bible Conference

2nd March 2024

11.00am - 01.30pm

Maryborough Room

Parish Centre

Portlaoise, C15W2KK

☎ Oonagh 086 173 6181

☎ Margaret 086 314 9610



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Mondays

MINDFULNESS PROGRAMME

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12th February

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12th February

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Tuesdays

MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

10.30am-11.30am

Date to be confirmed

MINDFULNESS FOR MEN

11.45am-12.30pm

13th February

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13th February

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Wednesdays

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11.20am-12.20pm

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ART

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(Developed by Stanford
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10am-12 noon

29th February

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MINDFULNESS IN MENOPAUSE

11.30am-12.30pm

8th February

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6 Week Course

CLIMB PROGRAMME

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SEPT 2024

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Dunamase College is holding its open evening on February 21st for students wishing to view the Aonad Lán Gaeilge and February 22nd for those wishing to take a tour of the English stream.

The Principal Dympna Kelly said, due to expansion works taking place last October, we had to postpone our Open Evening. We are very proud of our school and all the fantastic work that is done here, so we wanted to give students and parents the opportunity to view the facilities and find out what we have to offer here in Dunamase College.



Dunamase College has an Aonad Lán Ghaeilge, where subjects are offered through the medium of Irish. Many of these students have previously attended Gaelscoileanna in the area, but the Aonad is open to students from the English medium primary schools also, with additional Irish language supports in place should they be required. The Aonad classes take place in the Railway Street building. Ms Kelly said that “We play a pivotal role in keeping the Irish language alive in our community”.



Digital technology is central to learning in Dunamase College and the school has embraced the opportunities offered by subjects such as Computer Science, Coding and Digital Media Literacy. Being a digital school there is a consciousness around the present and future role technology will play in the lives of their students. They are proud recipients of the European Digital Schools award. Two TY students, along with teachers Tomás Ó Murchú and Colin Waters, collaborated with LOETB schools in developing an action plan that focused on improving digital assessment.

Deputy Principal Claire Fitzgerald said: “By being a digital school the emphasis on collaboration and self-directed learning will be of great benefit to our students when they move on to third level and indeed the world of employment, as they will be ahead of their peers.

Dunamase College is constantly developing and adding to what is being offered to the students. Dympna pointed out that “In a smaller school like ours, we know our students well and we believe in fostering a sense of belonging and wellbeing.” Dunamase College is the first school in Laois to be awarded the status of Champion School of Sanctuary. There is a strong sense of community within the school, and this is helped by the fact that the students are fortunate to have easy access to the facilities in the town. They often visit the Library, the Centre of Excellence and they have daily access to the Leisure Centre and the Astro pitch. This allows the school to offer an impressive array of sports, football, soccer, basketball, camogie, hurling and hockey.

In her role as Principal, Dympna is mindful of the ethos of “care, respect, equality, community and excellence in education” that is very important in the school, as it provides a holistic education for all who attend Dunamase College.



A planning application for a new 1,000-pupil school for *Coláiste Dhún Másc / Dunamase* College in Portlaoise is due to be lodged in the coming weeks.



Dunamase College Coláiste Dhún Másc



Dunamase College / Coláiste Dhún Másc invites 5th and 6th class students and their parents & guardians to our upcoming Open Nights.

Students and parents are welcome to come view what we have to offer, from excellence in education, digital learning and all of our extra curriculum activities.

Open Nights / Oícheanta Oscailte



**Irish
Stream**



**English
Stream**

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The Fatima Candle will be lit at
10am Mass in the Parish Church,
Tuesday 13th February in
honour of Our Lady of Fatima
and for the intentions of all
parishioners. Rosary will be
prayed at the Grotto at 8pm.
All are welcome.

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Portlaoise Active Retirement meet every Wednesday at 3pm in the Parish Centre for an afternoon of friendship, fun and activities, new members always welcome.

Monday 12th February; Bowls in St. Marys Sports hall at 3pm, tuition given, new members always welcome.

Wednesday 14th February; Valentine's pageant - The Rose of Portlaoise

Thursday 15th February; Cards and chat in Sue Ryder Centre Kilminchy at 3pm, new members welcome, tuition given. Please keep 7th April free because we intend to have a meal and celebration of our 20th Anniversary on that day. Our membership is due to be paid by the end of February, it remains at €25.

Wednesday 21st February; Bus to Google head office where we will get one to one instructions on phone and computers free. Anyone interested in going should register with Trudy next Wednesday 14th.

For further information please contact P.R.O. at 087-6204617.

Ballyroan Active Retirement Group; Any new members are welcome. Meeting Tuesday from 2.30pm to 4.30pm in Sue Ryder Centre.

Results of Whist Drive held in the Parish Centre on Tuesday, 6th February:

Top Score: Margaret Flanagan | **1st Lady:** Maureen Fitzpatrick | **1st Gent:** Paraic Dowling and Tom Gowing
2nd Gent: Paul Kavanagh | **1st Half:** Freda Gaynor | **2nd Half:** Mary Gowing | **Raffle:** 1st Veronica Kearns
2nd Frank Keenan | 3rd Kit Farrell | 4th Maureen Fitzpatrick | 5th & 6th Mary J. Dunne | 7th Breda Fitzpatrick
Whist continues every Tuesday evening in the Parish Centre at 7.30pm.

Monster Whist Drive in Clonbullogue Hall 3rd March at 3pm in aid of Clonbullogue NS Parents Association:

Top Score €75, 1st Gent €30, 1st Lady €30, 2nd Gent €20, 2nd Lady €20, First Half €20, Second Half €20, Sitting Prize €10, Student Prize €10, Low Score €10. Refreshments served, raffle for hamper, for details contact 087-9828876.

Graiguecullen Valentines Bingo Tuesday 13th February - St. Fiacc's Hall at 8.30pm;

Jackpot on 50 numbers €2,000, Double number €950, Lotto €500. FREE Pink sheet with every book (2 free with double book), chocolates left and right!

Bostik All-Ireland Confined Drama Finals 2024 18th- 26th April, hosted by Mountmellick Drama Festival:

SEASON TICKETS CLOSING DATE- 17TH FEBRUARY 2024.

There is now a limited number of season tickets left, so make sure you secure yours before they are gone. Please noteSeason Tickets will not be available for sale after 17TH February 2024. Individual NIGHTLY TICKETS will go on sale at a later date, follow us on Facebook, Instagram and mountmellickdramafestival.ie for updates. A Season Ticket guarantees you access to all nine nights of drama. Thank you for your continued support. Online ticket sales - mountmellickdramafestival.ie
Enquiries to info@mountmellickdramafestival.ie or call 087-4121205 / 087-7942994.

Volunteers Required; Jack and Jill, Kea-Lew Portlaoise are currently looking for volunteers willing to give a few hours of their time on Saturdays. If interested contact Martina 087-486817 or e-mail portlaoise@jackandjill.ie or call to our shop and pick up an application form. We are open 10am to 5:30pm Monday to Saturday.

ALONE; Would you be willing to provide companionship or make calls to Older People once a week? ALONE are seeking volunteers in your area. Full training and support provided. If interested please sign up online at www.alone.ie/volunteers. For more information, contact Fiona 086-1366539 or e-mail fiona.boyle@alone.ie.

Newbridge Kildare Samaritans are holding a recruitment information evening in the Midland Park Hotel Portlaoise, on 12th February at 7.30pm. We would welcome anyone interested in joining us in our important work, we will give all the necessary information to help make the decision.

RELIGIOUS NOTES

Divine Mercy Chaplet 3pm every Sunday in the Parish Church.

Rosary in the Church of the Assumption, the Heath; Daily 2pm (Monday-Saturday) and Sunday 3pm (Adoration).

Free Online Reflection and Meditation; Join us for 40 minutes to find healing and hope through the Sunday Gospel. We will do this through input, music, and guided prayer, to help nourish the soul for the week ahead. Sunday evenings 6.45pm, online via Zoom 11th and 18th February. Presented By Martina and The Ruah Team. For further enquiries and bookings e-mail info@ruahrest.com or visit www.ruahrest.com



PORTLAOISE
COMMUNITY
FIRST RESPONDERS

*Having volunteer community
first responders can save lives.*

Public Information Evening at the Portlaoise
Library on Thursday, 7th March, 6-7pm.



Portlaoise Parish
Lourdes Committee
presents

MIRACLES OF MUSIC 2

Saturday 22nd June in the Midlands Park Hotel. Doors 7pm, Show 8pm.
Tickets €20 available from Portlaoise Parish Centre or call Nathan 085-2179253



Hope for the Hopeless

Do you know what a bottle of medicine called calamine lotion is? Calamine is a medicine that is sometimes used to help stop itching. Have you ever had the chicken pox? When you have chicken pox, it starts out like a cold - you feel lousy, have a runny nose, and run a fever. Then, all of a sudden, itchy red bumps start to break out all over your body. The itching drives you crazy, but you can't scratch, because that just makes it worse. It is a very uncomfortable feeling, but it isn't hopeless. Rubbing on some calamine lotion may help to ease the itching. In a few days, the sores go away, the itching stops, and life is back to normal again.



During the time when Jesus lived upon the earth, leprosy was very wide-spread and was a dreaded disease. When someone had leprosy, they were covered with sores all over their bodies. Unlike chicken pox, these sores didn't just go away. When someone had leprosy, it was hopeless, because there was no cure. To make matters worse, other people considered them to be unclean and were not allowed to touch them. Many people believed that people who had leprosy got the disease because of some terrible sin they had committed.

One day a man with leprosy came to Jesus. The man knelt down before Jesus and said, "If you will, you can make me clean." Jesus looked at the man and he felt love and compassion for him. He reached out his hand and touched the man and said, "I am willing, be clean." Immediately, the leprosy left the man and he was cured.

Sometimes, we may find ourselves in a situation where we are uncomfortable, like when we had the chicken pox. But there may come a time in our lives when we find ourselves in a situation that is truly hopeless. When that happens, where can we turn? How do we find hope in a hopeless situation? We can turn to Jesus. When the situation is hopeless, Jesus is our only hope.



OUR PRAYER

Dear Father, you sent your Son to bring hope to the hopeless. When we find ourselves in a hopeless situation, we will put our hope and trust in him. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Lent begins Next Wednesday

Remember these are the three things we are asked to focus on for Lent.

Praying: Spend a little more time with God.

Sacrificing: Giving up something that you really like.

Almsgiving: Giving to those who have very little or sharing what you have with someone who needs it.





The Season of Lent



Facts about Lent:

- Lent is a time when Christian people get ready for Easter.
- Lent is a sacred time within the Church calendar. It is a time of fasting, prayer and almsgiving.
- Lent lasts for forty days reminding us of the forty days that Jesus spent in the desert doing penance and fasting. It begins on **Ash Wednesday (14th February 2024)** and finishes before sunset on Holy Thursday. We don't count Sundays in the forty days because Sundays are days of celebration in the Church calendar.
- Purple vestments are worn by the priest during Lent.
- The Gloria and alleluia are not prayed at Mass during Lent.
- Lent comes from the word "lente" which means springtime.
- Many people promise to do something during Lent to help them to be more like Jesus. Sometimes they give up something they like, they fast from sweets, or television. Other people promise to do something like being kinder, going to Mass, saying prayers or to put money in the Trócaire box to remind them to help others who are not as lucky as they are.
- What we do during Lent helps us to get ready for Easter.



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the First Day of Lent. On Ash Wednesday people are asked to fast. On Ash Wednesday the priest blesses the ashes and uses them to make the sign of the cross on our foreheads. The priest or minister says *'turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel'*, or similar words. Wearing ashes is a sign that a person is going to make an extra special effort during Lent to use his/her gifts for the good of others.



Trócaire
Working for a just world.



Malita's twins, Patrick and Patricia (age 12),
fetch water from the nearest well.

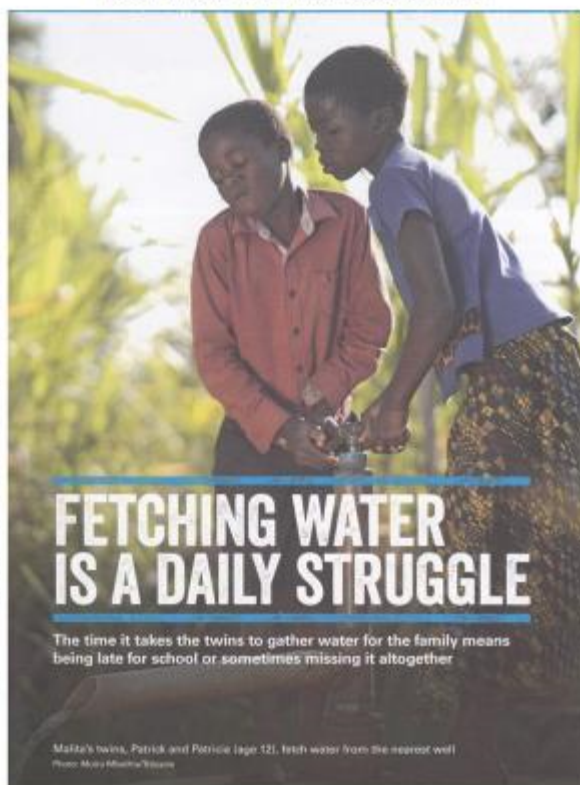
Malita and four of her children live in Malawi, a country with extremely high levels of poverty. Called the 'Warm Heart of Africa', it's a land where life is already a struggle, and where people must contend with limited access to healthcare, clean water and food.

Every day, Malita or her daughters Patricia and Margaret have to walk for hours to fetch water from the nearest well. "We have to go early to try to get water before the animals use it and contaminate it," says Malita. "Even so, every couple of months one of the children will get sick in their stomach".

Malita's family is incredibly strong and resourceful, still determined to walk to fetch water and to walk the long distances to school. And Malita earns a living through farming and gathering firewood. Yet life is becoming harder, "The food I grow is only used for the family and it is not enough," she says.

"There are times we eat twice a day and times we eat only once."

Maybe during Lent, think about Malita and her family.





Time to Think!

Blessings on all who care for the sick

February 11th, 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 deeply vulnerable, 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. Our local Hospital in Portlaoise, Kilkenny and indeed community hospitals are an essential service and an essential lifesaving one, which must never be compromised.

One of the most profound statements made by Jesus, was "I have come not for the healthy but for the sick". Jesus had a powerful empathy and courageous outreach, to those who longed for healing. His love touched the wounds of the leper, his presence, brought Peace of Mind to many overwhelmed by anxiety and mental illness. God's presence, to those who carry burdens physical, spiritual, emotional is truly one that can offer healing and transformation. All of us carry strengths and weakness, we are all marked by the vicissitudes of our life story. Empathy is the ability to reach out and connect with love to others. I pray in a special way for all who care for the sick. Carers in the family context who provide selfless and constant attention to vulnerable people are the true heroes in Irish society.

"Take my hand O Blessed Mother, Hold me firmly lest I fall, I am nervous when I am walking, and to thee I humbly call. Guide me over every crossing, Watch me when I am on my way, Let me know you are beside me, Listen to my frequent prayers. Bring me to my destination, safely every single day, Help me with my understanding, as the hours pass away. And when evening falls upon me, and I fear to be alone, Take my hand O Blessed Mother, and once again guide me home".

Fr. Paddy invites you to follow him on Twitter @frpaddybyrne, now over 31,800 followers or @AbbeyleixP or leave a comment on his blog on our parish website; www.portlaoiseparish.ie/articles



Swim Academy

- Swim provides essential water safety skills
- Boosts self-confidence and discipline in children
- Preparation to progress to the next levels of Swim Academy

Rookie Lifeguard

(Suitable for children between 8-12 years old)

- Learn new Livesaving skills: CPR & First Aid.
- Opportunity to explore water safety
- Independence and confidence while learning vital life skills



Adult Swimming Lessons

- Beginner, Intermediate and Advancend
- Opportunity to learn water safety skills
- Improve confidence while having fun



Parent And Baby Swimming Class

- Gradual exposure to water, with support from parents can help build a baby's confidence.
- Most importantly, baby swimming should be enjoyable for both the baby and the parent



NPLQ National Lifeguard Qualification

(12-16 years old, following for Rookie lifeguard)

- The NPLQ is recognised around the world, so potential to work and travel
- Practical pool assessment
- Theory Assessment for all three sections
- Learn essential life skills, including First Aid and CPR.

**OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR
THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY ;**



Elizabeth Simpson
née Houlihan
Borris Road and formerly
St. John's Square, Portlaoise



Stephen O'Sullivan
St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise



Peggy Hyland
née Whelan
Moses Lane, Dublin Road,
Portlaoise



Paddy Dalton
St. John's Square,
Portlaoise

*Even though I walk through the darkest
valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me;
Your rod and your staff - they comfort me.*

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE
Our sympathy to their families.

A message of sympathy may be left for the family by logging on to
the death notice at www.portlaoiseparish.ie/deathnotices

**In Loving Memory of
Dr. HUGH (Hugo) GATH**

Elm Lawn, Portlaoise and Kilcormac, Offaly
4th Anniversary occurred 8th February 2024.



*Just a thought of sweet remembrance
Just a memory, sad and true
Just the love and sweet devotion
Of the ones who think of you.
Will those who think of Hugh today,
A little prayer to Jesus say.*

*Loved and missed by all his
loving family and friends.*

Rest in Peace Hugh

Also remembering Hugh's wife Josie whose birthday
occurred recently R.I.P.

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

In Loving Memory of our Wonderful Mother

BERNADETTE COYNE

Boughlone, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

Birthday occurs 11th February 2024



*If Roses grow in Heaven Lord
Please pick a bunch for us
Place them in our Mother's arms
And tell her they are from us
Tell her that we love and miss her
And when she turns to smile
Place a kiss upon her cheek
And hold her for a while
Because remembering her is easy
We do it every day*

But there is an ache within our hearts that will never go away

Happy Birthday to our beloved Mother

From all her loving family.

May Bernie's gentle soul

Rest in Peace



BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

In Loving Memory of a Dear Sister

BERNIE COYNE

Boughlone, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

Birthday occurs 11th February 2024



*Your life was a blessing,
Your memory a treasure,
You are loved beyond words and
missed beyond measure.*

Happy Birthday Bernie

*Deeply loved, sadly missed and always
remembered by your sister Kitty,
brother-in-law Donie and your sisters Mary,
Peggy and Trish and brothers-in-law.*

Rest in Peace Bernie

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & FIRST ANNIVERSARY

**In Loving Memory of
BREDA (Birdie) LANGTON**
21 The Glebe, Stradbally



On this her first anniversary, Birdie's husband, Sean and family wish to extend their sincere thanks and gratitude to family, neighbours and friends who visited our home, attended the wake, funeral Mass and burial, as well as those who sent Mass cards and messages of condolence.

A special word of thanks to Fr. Kelly and all the priests who concelebrated in the funeral Mass.

Also to Fr. Paddy Byrne who was a great support to Birdie over the years. Many thanks to John Maher and his daughters for the beautiful singing and Lynch Funeral Directors for their kindness and professionalism.

We are truly grateful to the staff of the oncology units in St. James Hospital and the Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore who looked after Birdie so well during her illness. To the staff of the Cedar Clinic, Hughes' Chemist and the Cuisle Centre, we appreciate the kindness and care shown to Birdie over the years. Heartfelt thanks to the Palliative Care team and Night Nursing Service for the comfort and dignity they brought to Birdie's final days.

Thank you to those who formed Guards of Honour and to Park Ratheniska GAA Club and Stradbally GAA Club who provided great assistance during the wake and funeral.

To all of the local businesses who sent refreshments to the house, thank you.

As it would be impossible to thank everyone individually, please accept this acknowledgment as our token of appreciation.

Birdie's Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in the Church of the Sacred Heart, Stradbally at 11.30am on Sunday 18th February.

Rest in Peace Birdie

In Loving Memory of PETER ALLEN

Eyne, Portlaoise.
26th Anniversary occurs 10th February 2024.



*Softly the leaves of memory fall,
Gently we gather and treasure
them all.*

Thoughts today, Memories forever.

*Lovingly remembered and sadly
missed by Bridie and all your
loving family xxx*

Rest in Peace Peter

In Loving Memory of EILEEN PHELAN

New Road, Portlaoise.
3rd Anniversary occurs 17th February 2024.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated
in Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish
Church, on
Sunday 18th February at 11.15am.

*In God's care you rest above,
In our hearts you rest in love,
Never more than a thought away,
Loved and remembered everyday.*

*In Heaven you rest,
No worries or pain,*

God bless you...until we meet again.

Sadly missed by your loving family and friends.

Rest in Peace Eileen

In Loving Memory of SHEILA HARNAN WHELAN

Doirefea, Ballydavis, Portlaoise.
3rd Anniversary occurs 18th February 2024



3rd Anniversary Mass will be
celebrated in the Church of the
Assumption, the Heath, on
Sunday 18th February at 9.30am.

*Sheila, you are forever in our
thoughts and prayers.*

*Sadly missed by her loving family,
John, Sharon, Seamus, Nicoli,
Siobhan, Fr. Nick, Fr. Jim,
grandchildren, relatives
and friends.*

Rest in Peace Sheila

In Loving Memory of MARY CONROY

18 St. John's Sq. Portlaoise. 12th Anniversary.

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.*



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church on Tuesday 13th February at 10am.

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

Rest in Peace Mary



Note of Thanks and Acknowledgement

In Loving Memory of **Pat Hooban**, Cherrygarth, Portlaoise.
Died 20th February 2023

1st Anniversary Mass for Pat will be celebrated in St Peter & Paul's Parish Church
on Saturday 17th February at 6.30pm.

Póilín and Emma wish to thank everyone who called to Cherrygarth, attended at Pat's rosary, removal, requiem mass and burial, those who sent mass cards, texts and touching messages of condolence, and those who watched the service online, thought of Pat and prayed for him. A particular thanks to the Hooban and Delaney families, neighbours, work colleagues, friends and the people of Portlaoise, Ballyfin and beyond, for their support throughout Pat's illness and indeed through this past year of grief and sadness.

We wish to acknowledge, in a special way, Pat's wonderful friends and loyal customers who were there for him always and supported him with such care and understanding. We are forever deeply grateful.

A most heartfelt thanks to the doctors, nurses and teams in The Cedar Clinic, Tallaght Hospital, Portlaoise Hospital, Tullamore Hospital, Renal Units in Portlaoise and Tullamore, and The Cuisle Centre, who looked after Pat with such dedication. Sincere thanks to Jim and Deirdre Murphy, and their team, in Hughes Pharmacy, for their kind attention over the years.

Thank you to Monsignor John Byrne and Father Joe Brophy for celebrating Pat's Requiem Mass, and for the Monsignor's thoughtful tribute. We extend a special word of thanks to Nuala Kelly for her well-chosen hymns and beautiful music. Further, we are grateful to Michelle, Declan and all of the staff at the Parish Centre for their quiet helpfulness.

Heartfelt thanks to the local Garda Síochána and residents of Cherrygarth who helped control traffic at Pat's wake and on his final journey.

We extend deep gratitude to the guards of honour from Cherrygarth Residents Association, Portlaoise Rugby, Portlaoise GAA and Ballyfin GAA Clubs for their thoughtful and dignified guards of honour.

Sincere thanks to John Moloney, undertakers, for their professionalism and courtesy to us and to Adrian Dunne and his team of gravediggers for preparing Pat's final resting place with such care.

We are conscious that there are others who helped in many ways, and though we have not named you here, please know that your kindness will always be remembered.

The holy sacrifice of the Mass has been offered for all of you.

Sadly missed by Póilín and Emma, Pat's brothers and sisters and all who knew him.

Rest in Peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**In Loving Memory of
DES CARROLL**
Beladd, Portlaoise.



Des' wife Margaret and daughters Gwen, Yvonne, Deirdre and Tracey together with his brothers, sons-in-law, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law and grandchildren, wish to thank all those who sympathised with them on the recent sad loss of Des. We offer our heartfelt thanks to our wonderful Larkin and Carroll family members, friends, neighbours and well wishers who attended the wake, Mass and burial

to give Des the send off he deserved, and for those who provided emotional and practical support for us at this difficult time. For those who travelled long distances, telephoned, sent floral tributes, Mass cards and messages of condolences, or followed the Mass by webcam, we are truly grateful.

Thank you to Monsignor John Byrne for the very personal Mass to celebrate Des' life and to Heather Fogarty for the beautiful music; to Fr. Adriano and Fr. Petru who prayed with Des in the hospital and Fr. Simon who officiated over the Rosary at the wake and the burial prayers. A special thanks to Michelle in the Parish office for her kindness and guidance.

We would like to thank the retired members of An Garda Siochána who formed the lovely guard of honour outside the Church after the funeral Mass. We know Des would have been very proud.

A special word of thanks to the staff on the Dunamais Ward in MRH Portlaoise who attended to and treated Des with such care and dignity; Dr. Simon Honan and the team at Maryborough Clinic and to Marie and Debbie his carers who looked after Des with kindness and good humour.

To Mathew Keegan Funeral Directors for their kindness, compassion and the dignity shown to Des and support to us as a family.

To those who helped in any way, your contribution made our loss more bearable.

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

The Holy Sacrifice of Mass will be offered for your intentions.

*"Anois teacht an earraigh
Beidh an lá ag dul chun síneadh"*

In Loving Memory of BRIDGET FINGLETON

Late of Park, Stradbally
1st Anniversary occurs 14th February 2024.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in the Church of Sacred Heart, Stradbally, Saturday 17th February at 6.30pm.

We also remember Bridget's sister Mary, whose anniversary occurs at this time.

*Lovingly remembered and sadly missed by
your loving family and friends.*

May Bridget & Mary Rest in Peace

In Loving Memory of MARGARET (Peggy) KELLY

1 Mountrath Road, Portlaoise.
2nd Anniversary occurs 16th February 2024.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church, Sunday 18th February at 10am.

*Will those who think of
Peggy today,
A little prayer to Jesus say.*

*Lovingly remembered and sadly missed by
her loving husband and family.*

Rest in Peace Peggy



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**In Loving Memory of
MADGE McEVOY**

Capoley, Portlaoise.

6th Anniversary occurs 13th February 2024.

Much loved and cherished Mother, Grandmother and Great-grandmother.



Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in
Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church, this
Sunday 11th February at 12:30pm.

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
THOMAS ROBINSON**

Beladd, Portlaoise.

12th Anniversary occurs 15th February 2024.



*May the God of love and mercy,
Care for our loved one that is gone,
And bless with consolation,
Those left to carry on.*

*Always remembered by
your loving family.*

Rest in Peace Tom

**In Loving Memory of
LARRY (Laurence) McDONALD**

45 Lakeglen, Portlaoise.

12th Anniversary occurs 13th February 2024

Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish
Church this Sunday 11th February at 11.15am.

*Gone are the days we used to share,
But in our hearts you are always there,
The gates of memory will never close,
We miss you more than anyone knows,
With tender love and deep regret,
We who love you will never forget.*

*Sadly missed by his loving wife
Margaret, sons Maurice, Paul, Gregory,
grandchildren and great-grandchild.*

Rest in Peace Larry



**In Loving Memory of
AIDAN BYRNE**

Borris Little, Portlaoise.

1st Anniversary occurs 13th February 2024.



Anniversary Mass will be
celebrated in Sts. Peter &
Paul's Parish Church, on
**Saturday 10th February
at 6.30pm.**

*Thinking of you every day,
A memory that will never
fade away,
You made our lives so much
better, in our hearts
forever and ever.*

*A blanket of love given by you,
We cherish the memories always.*

*Sadly missed and always remembered by your
loving wife Nellie, sons John and George,
daughter Esther and all his loving family.*

Rest in Peace Aidan

**In Loving Memory of
JOSS ROBINSON**

132 St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise.

2nd Anniversary occurs 12th February 2024



Anniversary Mass will be
celebrated in Sts. Peter & Paul's
Parish Church, this Sunday
11th February at 11.15am.

*We think of you in silence, we often
speak your name, but all we have are
memories and a picture in a frame.*

*Your resting place we visit,
We put flowers there with care, but no one knows
our heartache as we turn and leave you there.*

*Lovingly remembered and sadly missed by
His wife Peg, sons Joseph and Michael, daughters
Jackie and Margaret and granddaughters.*

Rest in Peace Joss

**In Loving Memory of
HELEN PHELAN née Moore**

21st Anniversary occurred 7th February 2024



*We won't forget you,
We won't even try,
We miss you more,
As time goes by.*

*Loved and remembered always
by Pat, Catherine, Teresa, Mary
and families.*

Rest in Peace Helen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & FIRST ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of
SEÁN CLEAR

Late of Farren Cross, Ballacolla, Co. Laois



Tom, Julie, Ella, Grandad Jerry, and Granny Mary, together with the extended Martin and Clear families, wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all who sympathised with us on the sad and sudden loss of our beautiful Seán.

A sincere thank you to all who visited our home, send cards of sympathy or messages of condolences, attended the funeral, and travelled long distances. Equally to those who could not travel but kept us in their thoughts and prayers and who participated online, we are truly grateful.

A special word of thanks to our great friends, neighbours, and the whole community of Ballacolla, Clough and Aghaboe who hugged and cried with us, kept us fed, made tea, and parked cars.

To Clough/Ballacolla GAA Club, Clough Ballacolla Camogie Club and Seán's farming community friends for their guard of honour at the funeral.

To Sheelagh Maher and her team, thank you for all the lovely food provided on the day and to the hall committee for having the hall looking great.

To the emergency services in New Zealand and Abbeylax Garda, especially Mick Carey, thank you for your help and compassion. To Colin Bell and the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust who brought Seán home, we will forever be indebted to you. To Seán's friends who made the long journey home with him, thank you.

To our friends at John Phelan's Funeral Directors and their dedicated team for their kindness, compassion and support and to those who prepared Seán's final resting place we thank you most graciously.

To Fr. Noel Maher P.P. for his support and kindness to our family, Martin Delaney for his beautiful music and Mary Dunphy our great friend and sacristan, thank you.

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

The Holy Sacrifice of Mass will be offered for your intentions.

Seán's 1st Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Ballacolla, on Saturday 10th February at 7pm.

Rest in Peace Seán



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Portlaoise Parish 23rd/24th February. Raheen/Shanahoe 22nd February.



Portlaoise Parish



Results for
8th February 2024

03

18

20

24

No €11,000 Jackpot Winner

WINNERS

Nicole
Goretti & Eddie Whelan
Mary Dunne
Kitty Gowing
Monica Smith
Peter Doolan
Lily Mooney
Noel Dwyer
Veronica Ken & Bridget Byrne
Paul Dunne
Carmel & Sean
Greg & Annette
Paula Ford
Colm & Noel McGrath

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Next Week's Jackpot is €12,000

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leviticus 13:1-2. 44-46 | Psalm 31:1-2. 5. 11
1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1 | Mark 1:40-45

Support for the Parish

We have traditionally depended on the passing of collection baskets at Sunday Masses for support. **Thank you** to the many who have found new ways of continuing to support the Parish. The generosity of so many means we **continue** to be well supported. Please find your way to contribute.

- * Making your offering in the boxes at the entrances
- * Using the Envelope boxes for regular donations - boxes available at Church porches and Parish Centre
 - * Direct payment by cheque or cash
 - * Cashless Point at the back of the Parish Church
 - * Donation facility on our website
- * Standing Order forms available at the Parish Centre
- * Or Transfer directly to our Account

Portlaoise Parish Account: IBAN: IE53AIBK93327916658045

Portlaoise Parish Clergy Fund Account:

IBAN: IE12AIBK93327916658201

(The BIC for both accounts is AIBKIE2D)

THANK YOU

Clergy of the Parish



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



Fr. Ciprian Matei C.C.
Tel: 057 8600122



Fr. Simon Jin
Tel: 057 8661605



Fr. Adriano de Oliveira
Tel: 057 8600121



Fr. Erick Ebot SVD



Deacon Eugene Keyes
Tel: 057 8621142

To contact the Priest on Duty:
Parish Centre during office hours
9am - 5pm Tel: 057 8621142
Outside office hours
in emergency only Tel: 0852134285

Safeguarding

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

Diocesan Designated Liaison Person

Kathleen Sherry safeguarding@kandle.ie

Parish Centre



Office Hours Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Phone: 057-8621142 / 057-8660722

E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie

Twitter: @portlaoiseparish

MANAGER Declan Kelly

Parish Secretaries Michelle Bartley

Agnieszka Kaczmarek

Accounts Michelle Conroy

Sacristans Parish Church

Sr. Sybil and Sr. Julie

(Sacristy phone attended prior to Mass times 057 8600119)

All Masses and services from the Parish Church and the Heath Church are live streamed on our website



Secretary: Julie Conroy

Monday to Thursday

11am to 1pm & 2.15pm to 5pm

057-8692154

Advertising deadline: 12 noon Wednesday

Subject to availability of space

E-mail: linkup@portlaoiseparish.ie

PARISH SHOP

057 8621142 - Claire Scully



Reopening Of Holy Cross Church Ratheniska

At 10am Mass today (Sunday 11th Feb.) Bishop Denis will celebrate Mass and rededicate Holy Cross Church Ratheniska. Dating back to 1800 this Church has served the Ratheniska area of our parish for 224 years. It is the oldest of our three Churches in the parish and the last to be refurbished. Please God the recent works will ensure the future of the building and its service as a Church for decades and even centuries to come. The work included a new roof, new Altar furnishings, new heating system, complete renewal of electrical services, an extension to the Sacristy enabling a space for Altar servers and a more dignified entry to the Church for the celebrant.

We are very grateful to AOCA, and particularly Pamela Weldon, who served as engineers and project managers for the work. To Pat McBride Construction and his team and sub-contractors for the building works; Glen O'Shaughnessy, Portlaoise Gas & Oil for new underfloor air to water, heating system; John Cahill Electrical; James Hackett for sound system: Acton BV for webcam and streaming services: ICS (Irish Contract Seating) for the refurbishing of the pews; Terry Swayne of Portlaoise Stone Centre, for the new floor and the handling and placing of the Altar, Ambo and Reredos (the Altar is over 3 ton weight). Special thanks to the Mercy Sisters for the Sanctuary furnishings (Altar, Ambo, Reredos, Tabernacle and Cross), originally placed in the nun's chapel, Templemore which was being decommissioned. These are works by the late artist Richard Enda King and fit beautifully into Holy Cross Church.

We welcome Bishop Denis who will lead the joyful celebrations today as we thank God for those who gave us this Church and took care of it down through the ages and for all who worshipped here. That it may serve as a little oasis of prayer as well as facilitating our coming together to worship.

Church of the Holy Cross, Ratheniska
Date of Church: 1800
Style: Cruciform
Building Pastor: Fr. James O'Neill PP
Ratheniska (Rath an Uisce,
Fort/Rath of the water)



St. Aonghus, born c.750, studied at the monastery of Clonenagh. He came to live the life of a hermit in Dysart, overlooking Ratheniska. He erected a cell there known as Disert-Aonghusa. At Tallaght he wrote his famous work: the 'Féilire Aonghusa'

The site for the church was given by Lord Castletown. The church is a small building typical of the period.