

Mass Times – Anniversaries Thurs. 8th – Sun. 18th Apr

During the current level 5 Lockdown, all our Masses are celebrated behind closed doors in Mountrath and Ballyfin Churches. Anniversary Masses arranged for the Hollow Church are celebrated in Mountrath Church

Mountrath Parish

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| Thurs. 8 th Apr. 10.0 am | Anastatia (Statia) Phelan (Nee Clooney) 2 nd Anniv. |
| Fri. 9 th April 10.00 am | Altar List of the Dead. |
| Sat. 10 th April 7.00 pm | Anthony Tobin, Woodbrook. 2 nd Anniv. |
| Sun. 11 th April 9.00 am | No Mass in the Hollow Ch. today. |
| 11.30 am | Annie Hill (Nee Ryan) St. Fintan's Tce. Month's Mind. Maura and Michael Moore, Fr. O'Connor Cresc. Matthew and Margaret Harrington, Trumera. And deceased family members. Teresa McHugh and her sisters and brothers (Late of Ballyfin) Paddy and Mai Keogh, St. Fintan's Tce. |

Mon. 12th Apr. 10.00 am

Tues. 13th Apr. 10.00 am

Wed. 14th Apr. 10.00 am

Anthony Tobin, Woodbrook.
2nd Anniv. Today.

*We continue to keep in our
prayers people who are ill
(their families and carers)
at home or in Hospital at
this time*

Thurs. 15th Apr. 10.00 am

Fri. 16th Apr. 10.00 am

Sat. 17th Apr. 8.00 pm

Sun. 18th Apr. 9.00 am

11.30 am

No Mass in the Hollow Church today
Maura and Frank Byrne, Patrick St.,
and their daughter, Paula Byrne, Patrick St.,

Ballyfin Parish

Fri. 9th Apr. 5.00 pm Adoration of Blessed Sacrament – Private prayer

Sun. 11th Apr. 10.00 am

Fri. 16th Apr. 5.00 pm

Sat. 17th Apr. 8.00 pm

Sun. 18th Apr. 10.00 am

Exposition of Blessed Sacrament – Private prayer.

John Downey, Clondarrig. – 3rd Anniv
Paddy and Una Brennan, Barnashroen,

"Lord, for your faithful people - Life is changed, not ended"

2nd Sun. of Easter Divine Mercy Sunday

The Octave, or 8th day of Easter has always been considered special by Christians. Christ, after His Resurrection, revealed Himself to His disciples, but Saint Thomas wasn't with them. He declared that he would never believe that Christ had risen from the dead until he could see Him in the flesh and probe Christ's wounds with his own hands. This earned him the name "Doubting Thomas."

A week after Christ rose from the dead, He appeared once again to His disciples, and this time Thomas was there. His doubt was vanquished, and he professed His belief in Christ.

From the diary of a young Polish nun, a special devotion began spreading throughout the world in the 1930s. The message is nothing new but is a reminder of what the Church has always taught through scripture and tradition: that God is merciful and forgiving and that we too must show mercy and forgiveness. But in the Divine Mercy devotion, the message takes on a powerful new focus, calling us to a deeper understanding that God's love is unlimited and available to everyone — especially the greatest sinners. The message and devotion to Jesus, known as The Divine Mercy, is based on the writings of Saint Faustina, an uneducated Polish nun who, in obedience to her spiritual director, wrote a diary of about 600 pages recording the revelations she received about God's mercy. Even before her death in 1938, the devotion to The Divine Mercy had begun to spread. The message of mercy is that God loves us — all of us — no matter what. He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our failures and shortcomings, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy. Divine Mercy Sunday is a relatively new addition to the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar. It is celebrated on the Octave of Easter (the eighth day of Easter; that is, the Sunday after Easter Sunday). Celebrating the Divine Mercy of Jesus Christ, as revealed by Christ Himself to St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, this feast was extended to the entire Catholic Church by Pope John Paul II on April 30, 2000, the day that he canonized Saint Faustina. Christ's Divine Mercy is the love that He has for humankind, despite our sins that separate us from Him. The nine day Novena in preparation of Divine mercy Sunday begins each year on Good Friday and ends on the Saturday after Easter (Easter Saturday) - the eve of the Octave (the 8th Day) of Easter.

Bishop Denis' Easter Message

The card read " *This is the night in which Christ has destroyed death and from the dead He rises victorious! Happy Easter*". The Easter card tradition is a much quieter one than what we all experience at Christmas. There isn't as large of a number of cards arriving at Easter and yet when we think about it, the celebration is even more profound than what we celebrate at Christmas. We have just celebrated the Easter Triduum behind closed doors for the second year in succession. The most sacred season of the year once again without any physical congregation. This is very hard on people of faith. Once again I thank our priests and parish teams for their creativity and ingenuity in making great use of the webcam, FaceBook live, parish radio etc. to livestream ceremonies into the homes of parishioners. By doing so, the kitchen table in your home has become an extension of the altar in your local church. I thank all of you who have been leading prayer in your homes this past while. The domestic Church has come into its own during this pandemic. While the virtual will remain with us whenever this pandemic passes, we all long for the gathering, we all wish to be back with one another. We can really understand and empathise with the need the disciples had for gathering two thousand years ago.

It's interesting in the Gospel, Resurrection encounters take place not only behind closed doors, but in spite of them " *in the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were*" (Jn.20:19), and despite the closed doors Jesus walks among them. His message then and His message to us this Easter is no different " *Peace be with you*" (Jn.20:19). A tiny, invisible virus, thousands of times smaller than the head of a pin has tested our resilience, has torn apart our economies and has very much tweaked our priorities. Yet in all of this the Risen One walks among us, carrying us, comforting us, consoling us.

Just over a year ago Pope Francis spoke in a deserted St. Peter's Square and reflected on the text from St. Mark about the storm at sea and how Jesus was asleep at the stern.

His message in that rain swept square was and remains that Jesus is very much with us. The Risen One walks by our side. As we celebrate Easter once more in the midst of the suffering the world is enduring because of this pandemic may you experience the new life of resurrection, and from another Easter card I read:

*May the Lord bless you this Easter time:
Bless you with faith, guard you in doubt;
Bless you with hope, uplift you in despair;
Bless you with love, keep you from fear;
Bless you with peace, calm you in trouble;
Bless you with mercy, help you to forgive;
Bless you with joy, comfort you in sorrow;
So your heart may rejoice in Him who is Risen. Amen.*

Bishop Denis Nulty Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin

Love Song by Rainer Maria Rilke 1875-1926

When my soul touches yours a great chord sings!
How shall I tune it then to other things?
O! That some spot in darkness could be found
That does not vibrate when'er your depth sound.
But everything that touches you and me
Welds us as played strings sound one melody.
Where is the instrument whence the sounds flow?
And whose the master-hand that holds the bow?
O! Sweet song —

Easter - *A Reflection by Fr. P.J. Fitzgerald, S.P.S.*

As we celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus last Sunday, in empty churches once again, there was a different Easter celebration taking place in Dublin. The President and members of the Government were commemorating the 105th anniversary of the 1916 Rising. The Rising began on Easter Monday, 24th April, but I, like so many more, didn't know the actual date of the Rising and I had to look it up. St. Patrick's Day is another national celebration which is also linked to our Faith. Faith is one of the defining marks of the 1916 patriots. Nearly all of them were devout Catholics and their faith inspired them to sacrifice their lives to make their country free. For many of them their motto was "For God and for Ireland" - Their self sacrifice is an inspiration to me. Most of them were young men, ranging in age from their mid twenties to their mid thirties. Their idealism came at a cost - they not only gave up their lives but many of them had promising careers and some of them had wives and young children. It must have been harstbreaking all round.

The freedoms we enjoy today cost them dearly. I thought it would be appropriate this Easter as we remember Jesus' sacrifice that gained us salvation that we should also spare a thought for those to whom we owe our country's freedom and perhaps remember them in our prayers. I think that in order to continue to enjoy the freedom of church and state we still need personal sacrifice.

Ballyfin Parish Lotto 7th Apr

Nos. Drawn 5 8 25 28

One Jackpot Winner of € 11,000

Congratulations to Fiona Hayden from
Newbridge Parish

7 Match 3 - Each Rec. € 143

1 Local Winner The Leonard Family

Promoter Mary Hooban

Next Week's Jackpot €10,000

Mountrath Parish Lotto 8th Apr.

Nos. Drawn 5 17 23 29

No Jackpot Winner of €19,000

13 Match 3 - Each Rec. € 77

3 Local Winners

Michelle Duggan David Tobin

Paddy Campion Celine Cripps

Cora Gorman Bernie Rice

Next Week's Jackpot € 20,000

Sincere thanks to everyone involved in Mountrath and Ballyfin Parish Lottos - Organising Committee, Promoters, Shops and others who facilitate the sale of Lotto Tickets and most importantly, you who purchase a Lotto ticket every week.

We extend a very sincere "thank you" for your loyal support and your unending generosity.

St. Fintan's Parish Mountrath and Ballyfin

Sat. 10th - Sun. 11th April 2021 - 2nd Sunday of Easter

Fr. P.J. Fitzgerald C.C. (087) 605 5783 Fr. Joe (087) 2411 594

Visit Home Page of Parish Website for Links to Webcams
Mountrath Parish Radio transmits on FM 104.5

www.mountrathballyfinparish.ie Email jmbrophy2@gmail.com

2nd Sun. of Easter Divine Mercy Sunday

Divine Mercy Sunday, the newest feast in the Catholic calendar, was instigated by Pope John Paul II in 2000. Coming on the first Sunday after Easter every year it reminds us that the face of God is Mercy and that we can always look to the future knowing that our lives and our world are in the hands of a God who governs and acts only with Mercy.



*The Message of Divine Mercy has always been near and dear to me
... which I took with me to the See of Peter and which, in a sense,
forms the image of this Pontificate.*

St. Pope John Paul II

We are an Easter People and Halleluia is our Song

We celebrate Easter as a time of hope, of looking forward - a time of new possibilities - of new beginnings. The great mystery of Easter - letting go - letting go of everything, total abandonment - an emptying, even of life itself, and through that letting go, that emptying, achieving everything. Easter - a time of life - a time of death, indeed, no life without death.

Haven't we so much to learn from nature. - I heard the phrase once, - "Nature has no past except its soil". Nature lets go totally of itself each year, leaving only its soil, soil that produces and reproduces - soil that lets go of the old in order for the new to come to life.

The Gospel stories are so rooted in nature. The powerful image of Christ's body lying in the earth - the grain of wheat, having died, set to produce so much. Not just new life - but the fullness of life, not just for the chosen few - but the fullness of life for all of us. ("Unless the grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains only a single grain, but if it dies it produces a hundred fold" - John 12:24) - One of the key messages of Jesus' teaching - When we love, Life comes from death.

The Easter Sunday Gospel story, where the women who cared for Jesus during his public ministry and the disciples, wondered about the great stone that covered the opening to the tomb where Christ's body lay, we too wonder about the great stone whose weight is very much pressing on us now and indeed has been for the past year.

Don't we look forward so much to rolling back the heavy stone that has kept us entombed in a world of social distance, isolation, restrictions, separation from each other, and forced us to live with a Eucharistic Famine - of Communion with Christ and with each other.

In the suffering of the cross and the mystery of Easter, we realise that as Pope Francis has said, 'No one is saved alone, isolation is not part of our faith' We look forward to a return to public worship, our coming together and praying together. Seeing familiar faces again will be a time of Resurrection for all of us. We don't know when we will be able to attend public worship again, when we will be able to join each other in church to celebrate the Eucharist (Mass) together. I really feel we have been dealt with very harshly when it comes to us being able to attend Mass, but please God, the sacrifices we all have been making over the past year will bear fruit and please God when we get to celebrate the Eucharist again, in person, it will truly be a time of new beginnings for all of us.

*"Do not abandon yourself to despair. We are the Easter People and Hallelujah is our Song"
A quote from St. Pope John Paul II*

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 the outbreak of 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.

A Prayer at Easter

Light a candle and pause for a few moments to become aware of God's presence.

We make the Sign of the Cross, as you pray:

Lord of all life, You are our hope and our joy, Our source of true happiness.

We have journeyed to Easter and in the most difficult of trials

We have renewed our baptism and proclaimed your resurrection.

We embrace with gladness the new life to which you call each one of us.

Bless us, our families and all the world, with your constant presence and protection.

May we give you thanks every day and share the good news of our faith with all we meet.

And may the light of our Easter faith guide our footsteps in your ways of love, peace and truth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In Easter joy we proclaim,

Christ is risen! Alleluia, alleluia!

If you have Holy Water, use it to bless yourself as you make the Sign of the Cross. Place your candle safely somewhere prominent in your home as a reminder of the Light of Christ amongst us.

Linda Fitzpatrick, Coolagarry, Walsh Island, Woodbrook, Mountrath.

We pray for Linda who died suddenly at her home on Mon. 5th April. Linda's Funeral Mass was celebrated at Church of the Immaculate Conception, Walsh Island, followed by burial in adjoining Cemetery. We extend sympathy to her parents, Annette and Johnny, brother Keith, nieces Abbie and Amber, nephew Luke, Keith's partner Jean, aunts, uncles, extended family, neighbours and her many friends.

May Linda rest in the peace of Christ.