

Feast of Epiphany of the Lord.

Sat 5th 6.00pm Ballon

Sun 6th 10.30am Rathoe John McDonald, Graiguealug, His sister May & his parents Jack & Elizabeth McDonald. Josie & Jim Brophy, Garrenleen

Sun 6th 11.30am Ballon Elizabeth & Philip Martin, Ballykealy

Mon 7th Dec 7.30pm Ballon

Wed 9th Jan 10.00am Rathoe

Thurs 10th 10.00am Ballon

Fri 11th Rathoe 7.30pm

Sat 12th 6.00pm Ballon Marina Kelly, Rathrush, First Anniversary & Patrick Kelly

Sun 13th 10.30am Rathoe Jack Hutton, Mary Farrell & Dick Murphy.

Sun 13th 11.30am Ballon

Collections 30th Dec: Offertory €521.90

Weekly Envelopes : €410.50

Thank you for your generosity to the collections

Housebound will be attended during the coming week.

THANKS

Thank you to all who helped out during the Christmas period, Sacristans, choirs, servers, Community Employment workers, people who clean the churches, flowers arrangers, people who pass the baskets and count the money and all those who contribute or help out in any way. *Fr. Whelan, Fr. Howard & myself.*

Walk Towards Unity 2019

In conjunction with the Church of Ireland & Methodist Churches to mark Church Unity Week, I am organising a "Walk Towards Unity" in Carlow. The walk will begin at 2.30pm on Sunday 20th January 2019 at the Methodist Church Athy Road, proceed to St. Mary's Church in Haymarket & from there to the Cathedral of the Assumption. There will be a reading from the scriptures/prayers/hymns at each church. Fr. Tom Lalor coordinator.

**Burren Rangers Juvenile Club
New Year Recycling Drive Fun Raiser.**

Collection day is Friday 25th January 2019

The following items can be included: Clothing, Towels, Soft Toys, Paired shoes, Handbags, Belts.

NO dirty or wet clothing. Mats. Carpets. Pillows. Books. Laptops or Mobiles.

Bags will be collected at training sessions or collection can be arranged.

Contact; Martina Donald—087-0872803116

Caroline O'Toole—086-8584282

Niamh Nolan—086-8723088

Cuchulainn Rounders Winner of this weeks Split the Pot draw was Bernie Mullins winning €95. Next weeks draw will take place on 8th January 2019 Envelopes now on sale, €2 in McAsseys Shop, Siopa Glas, Joe Doyle's & Kavanagh's Pub.

Ballon-Rathoe Parish Office

The Old School, Ballon. Phone No: 087 421 3030

Email: ballonrathoe@parish@gmail.com

Open Tues, Wed & Thurs 10am –1pm

Items for the newsletter must be in by 5 pm each Wed, they can be phoned in, emailed or put through the letter box.

Fr. Jim O'Connell 086 810 2675 / 059-9180641

Fr. E. Whelan 059-9159329

**Whose Birthday is it we Celebrate?
One Solitary Life**

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never travelled two hundred miles from the place He was born.

He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself...

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him.

His friends ran away.

One of them denied Him.

He was turned over to His enemies.

He went through the mockery of a trial.

He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves.

While He was dying His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth – His coat.

When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is a centrepiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched,

all the navies that were ever built;

all the parliaments that ever sat

and all the kings that ever reigned, put together,

have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life. *Author Unknown*

There were three groups of people who reacted to the Epiphany of Christ's birth. The first group, headed by King Herod, tried to eliminate him, the second group, priests and scribes, ignored him, and the third group, represented by the shepherds and the Magi, came to adore him.

Let us make sure that we belong to the third group: a) by actively worshipping Jesus at Mass with the gold of our love, the myrrh of our humility and the frankincense of our adoration; b) by giving a new direction to our lives. Just as the Magi chose another route to return to their homes, let us choose a better way of life, abstaining from proud, unjust and impure thoughts, evil habits and selfish behavior; c) by becoming stars leading others to Jesus, as the star led the Magi to Jesus. Let us remove the darkness of the evil around us by radiating Jesus' love through selfless service, unconditional forgiveness and compassionate care.

Like the Magi, let us offer Jesus our gifts on this feast of Epiphany and every day: (a) Gift of our life by offering it on the altar during the Holy Mass and by offering it to God every morning as soon as we get up, and asking for the strengthening anointing of the Holy Spirit to do good and avoid evil during the course of the day. b) Gift of relationship with God by talking to Him in personal and family prayers and listening to Him through reading the Holy Bible every day.

She's so religious she wears stained-glass spectacles.

He charged nothing for his preaching but it was worth it.

Every day people are straying away from the church and going back to God.