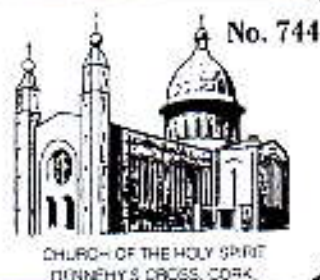




12th January 2003



Ballineaspig Bulletin

The Baptism of the Lord



OUR
**PARISH
PRIEST**
writes

GIFTS FROM AFAR

A happy indicator of how well young Irish people have settled throughout the world was to see them return to Ireland to share Christmas with their parents and, often, bringing their own children with them. Letters and cards from many who did not travel home still brought the same message. When the Irish travel abroad to work and settle down, they usually get the opportunity to do both. Of course, they usually have the necessary skills, passports and visas. Emigration has been a feature of Irish life for centuries. Over the years, emigrants' remittances improved the lot and potential of many Irish families.

Recent years has seen a turnabout. Ireland now has more immigrants than emigrants. Most come here with the requisite skills. Others come undocumented without resources. Exiled, they belong nowhere now. They seek the opportunity to make new beginnings for themselves and their families. In the past, this is the opportunity our Irish ancestors got in many other countries, where their gifts, skills, faith and culture enriched their adopted homelands. It is a heritage we must not forget.

Refugees and asylum seekers could do the same for this country. They could be like the Three Wise Men at Bethlehem, bringing gifts from afar. Will we take the risk of giving them the opportunity? Will we recognise them as brothers and sisters in the human family, the family of God?

Tom Blaney

God's Word

Readings for Sunday 19th January

First Reading:

1 Sam.3:3-10,19. God's call is described in the first reading and Gospel today: here, Samuel learns how to answer God's call.

Psalm 39.

Second Reading:

1 Cor.6:13-20. For the next five Sundays, the second reading is from Paul's first letter to the people of Corinth, which includes guidelines for a young Christian community. In this Sunday's excerpt, Paul gives explicit teaching on sexual morality. He reminds the baptised that their bodies are part of the body of Christ and therefore not meant for fornication.

Gospel:

Jn.1:35-42. The Gospel gives the story of the first few who decided to follow Jesus, as told by St. John.

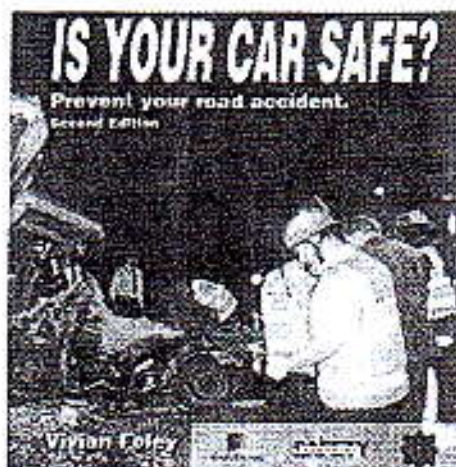
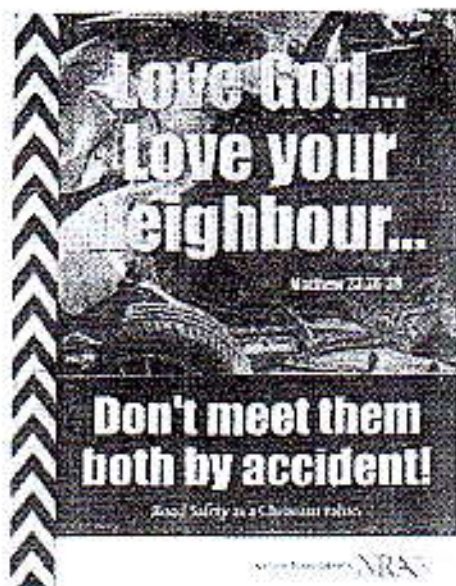
ROAD SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

I was asked to bring to your attention the road safety awareness publication "*Is Your Car Safe? Prevent your road accident*" which was written to prevent road carnage with the help of colleagues in CIT arising from a request from the Garda Síochána.

In the last five years two thousand and seventy six persons were killed on Irish roads and many of those were young people. Apart from the terrible misery inflicted on families as a result of these awful tragedies the valuable contribution these people could have made to society is lost forever. The efforts made by the Gardai, NSC, NRA and others to prevent further tragedies is to be lauded, but as individuals we are morally obligated to go to every last length to prevent road accidents. This means more than being able to drive a motor vehicle and passing a driving test.

A key tool in avoiding and preventing road accidents is some understanding of the educational side of road safety. It is not widely understood that once the left foot leaves the clutch pedal and one is propelled on a journey, without exception the laws of motion which are the laws of God are rigorously applied to every moving person and object. When speeding vehicles are forced to stop in very short distances these laws are enforced... generally with catastrophic results and people die. Understanding the basic laws of motion will sharpen your intellect, increase your alertness and will reduce the risk of you being involved in a road accident or you becoming a road death statistic.

Congratulations to Rev. Fr. Robert McCabe C.F. on the success of his national poster campaign "Love God Love your neighbour" shown in black and white above.



The Government Strategy for Road Safety recognises "*Is Your Car Safe?*" as an important complement to national measures and the NSC has included it in their secondary school Road Safety Resource "*Staying Alive*". The DOE Northern Ireland have just announced they intend to distribute the book to N.I. secondary schools.

I wish you safe and happy motoring.
Vivian Foley.



Bible Corner



Reading so often from Isaiah, it may be helpful to consider the book itself before exploring the prophet's message. The present book of Isaiah has sixty-six chapters but not all come directly from the prophet himself. At a time when it was impossible to publish a book as we know it, the only way to preserve teaching was to entrust it to a circle of followers who faithfully remembered the words of their leader and recorded the tradition for posterity. This tradition included not only Isaiah's own words but also other teachings, which his followers were convinced were in keeping with his teaching.

This weekend's reading comes from this additional material. This does not lessen its importance as an inspired part of the Sacred Scriptures, but it comes from a later time when the Hebrew understanding of God's plan for humankind had developed. Its advice is as relevant today as when it was first written:

"Seek the Lord, while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near".

"Why spend money on what is not bread,
your ways on what fail to satisfy?"



*Whoever drinks the water I
give will never be thirsty*

*With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation*

John the Baptist explained that he baptised with water but that Jesus would baptise with the Holy Spirit. He sent out his followers to baptise in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is the sacrament that marks the new birth of a person as a child of God and heir of the kingdom of heaven.

The story of the woman at the well in Samaria illustrates the personal relationship with Jesus which commences at the well of baptism. Jesus spoke to that lonely foreigner of an inner spring of water to satisfy all thirst. He brought her acceptance and friendship, forgiveness of the past and the invitation to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

*With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.
Shout with joy for great in your
midst is the Holy One of Israel.*

Fr. Silvester O'Flynn, OFM.Cap



NOTICE BOARD

Pastoral Council

Meeting this Monday 13th at 8.00 p.m. in C.P. Centre.

Friendship Club

Re-opens on Monday 13th January at 2.30 p.m. in the C.P. Centre.

Bishopstown Senior Social Centre

Weekly activities resume on Monday 13th January at 2.30 p.m. at Wilton Park House.

Mon: Relaxation & gentle exercises with Hosannah Driver.

Tues: Cards: 45 – beginners welcome. Coached by Jack O'Connell and Haulie Lynch.

Wed: Tai-chi with Patricia Chalmers.

Thurs: Health matters for seniors by Mary Ahern.

New seniors especially welcome. €2 per session, includes cuppa and chat.

Queries anytime to Roger Coughlan at 086 3866975.

Adult Education Courses

(1) At U.C.C. commencing 27th January 2003. Information from Mr. Donal Counihan at 4904717/4704708 or Email: s.bermingham@ucc.ie

(2) Bishopstown Community School. Enrolment and open night for Spring 2003 will take place on Wednesday 15th January from 7.00 to 8.30. Classes will commence on 27th January. Enquiries to Catherine at 4869310.

(3) Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa. Public Meeting on Wednesday 15th January at 11 a.m. No fees. Contact Mary Scriven at 4961020.

Bulletins to Homes

Bulletins will be delivered to all homes in the parish next weekend.

Bishopstown Social Services

The annual dinner for senior citizens will be held at C.I.T., Rossa Avenue, or Sunday 19th January at 6 p.m. A limited number of tickets costing €12 are available from Nora Fitzpatrick at 4546358.

N.B. Please note change of venue.

THANK YOU

We thank the meditation group who composed and read the Prayers of the Faithful during Advent. The meditation group meets every Thursday evening.

Bishopstown ICA Guild

Will resume meetings on Thursday 16th January at 8 p.m. in the S.M.A. Wilton.

Parish e-mail address:

holyspiritparish@eircom.net

EMERGENCY NUMBER

087 - 251 9940