

The Newsletter

December 2025

Rector:

*Canon Victor Fitzpatrick,
Clonenagh Rectory,
Portlaoise Road,
Mountrath.*

Phone: 057-8732146 /086-3974035

Parish office: clonenagh@ossory.anglican.org

Diocesan Reader:

*Mabel Peavoy,
Shannon Road,
Mountrath.*

Phone:057-8732331



**Congratulations to Keely Jackson & Paul Woods
who were married on 30th October in Dublin**

(Image kindly provided by Emily Jackson)

Clonenagh Group of Parishes

Annatrim - Borris-in-Ossory - Lacca - Mountrath - Roskelton - Seir Kieran

The Rector Writes

Light looked down and saw darkness: "I will go there", said light.
Peace looked down and saw war: "I will go there", said peace.
Love looked down and saw hatred: "I will go there", said love.
So he, the Lord of light, the Prince of peace, the King of love,
Came down and crept in beside us.

(Rev'd John Bell)

The Christmas Crib

The popularization of the Christmas crib is attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi. His early biographers have left us vivid accounts of Christmas night at Greccio. According to Thomas of Celano, Francis set out "to bring to life the memory of that babe born in Bethlehem, to see as much as possible with my own bodily eyes the discomfort of his infant needs, now as he lay in a manger, and how, with an ox and an ass standing by, he was laid upon a bed of hay". On Christmas night, the friars and local people arrived with flowers and lights. His friend, John, had arranged an ox, a donkey and a manger full of hay.

"All those present experienced a new and indescribable joy in the presence of the Christmas scene. The priest then solemnly celebrated the Eucharist over the manger, showing the bond between the incarnation of the Son of God and the Eucharist. The nativity scene was enacted and experienced by all who were present" (*Thomas of Celano*).

Everyone went home full of joy. (*Bro. Kevin Crowley*)

A Christmas Prayer

May you experience the singing of the angels rendering glory to God:
the peace of God in your heart and mind,
the joy of the shepherds,
and the worship of the Magi.
Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth. Amen.

~Canon Victor

Requiescant In Pace

Please remember in your prayers:

Arthur Harvey (Roskelton) on the death of his mother, and the **Bennett family** (Mountrath) on the death of their aunt, **Elizabeth (Betty) Harvey** (néé Carter), late of Tullyroe, Abbeyleix, who died on Wednesday 12th November.

May she rest in peace, and rise in glory

Parish Notes

Marriage Course

The Church of Ireland Marriage Council and Alpha Ireland present: The Zoom Marriage Course, on Tuesdays at 8pm beginning on January 6th, 2026.

Contact: tanya@alphaireland.org to book your place.

The Marriage Course is a series of seven sessions, designed to help couples invest in their relationship and build a strong marriage. It offers practical support and is designed to help couples build strong foundations, learn to communicate more effectively and resolve differences well.

Fellowship Service

The Fellowship Service takes place in Lacca Church on the second Thursday of every month at 8pm. All are welcome!

Mothers' Union

Our next meeting will be held on Monday 24th Nov at 8pm in the Parochial Hall, Mountrath. Our guest speaker will be the Rev'd Janet Finlay, and all are very welcome.

Mountrath Badminton Club

2025 - 2026 Season:

Badminton Training is on every Tuesday & Thursday evenings. Juvenile Training (Age 8+ - 16 years old) Juvenile Training sessions will be at 7.00pm to 8.00pm. Entry Fee €3.00 per child/student.

Adult Training sessions will be at 8.00pm to 10.00pm in Mountrath Community School Hall. Eircode: R32AK27. Entry Fee: €5.00 per person.

Please contact Joseph Hargroves (086)3580077 or Wendy Carry (087) 1787245.

Clonenagh National School News

It has been an incredibly busy and exciting few weeks here in Clonenagh NS, and we are delighted to share some of the wonderful activities taking place in our school.

Sports & Wellbeing

Our pupils are currently enjoying a football module with the local GAA club, which has brought great energy and enthusiasm to the yard. We are also completing our dance module this week through the BLAST initiative, and the children are already halfway through a fantastic yoga programme with Edel Casey each Friday. These activities have brought so much joy, confidence, and wellbeing to the boys and girls.

Anti-Bullying Week

We recently finished a very successful Anti-Bullying Week. Highlights included Odd Socks Day, Crazy Hair Day, and a wonderful indoor picnic where children brought along blankets and chose special spots throughout the school to enjoy lunch together.

We rounded off the week with our first ever Multicultural Day - a truly beautiful celebration of the many cultures represented in our school community. The children shared traditions, stories, and delicious foods from around the world. We are extremely grateful to our parents for their support in making this such a meaningful day.

PATH Food & Items Drive

We are currently holding a food and items drive in support of PATH (Portlaoise Action To Homelessness). This week Irene Redmond visited the school to speak with our pupils about homelessness in Ireland, including families in Laois who are facing difficulties. The children learned a great deal, and her visit was powerful and important.

If you are able, we would be very grateful if you could pop something extra into your shopping to donate to our collection. Every contribution makes a real difference. Items that are non-perishable or toiletry items would be excellent. No sprays etc. Things like crisps, chocolate, water and baby wipes are always in high demand. Trolleys are waiting to be filled in our reception area!

Tractor Run – 28th December

Attached is the poster for our upcoming Tractor Run on 28th December, which we are very excited about. Joe Shirley will lead the auction in the evening, and there may even be a very special signed item from a well-known sports figure! More details will follow on our Facebook page.

If you have anything you would like to donate towards our raffle or auction, please contact the school—we would be delighted to accept any items. All funds raised go directly towards enhancing our pupils' learning experiences, from developing outdoor spaces to providing teaching resources, and supporting transport for school activities.

Biodiversity Grant

We are also thrilled to share that we have recently secured a grant to continue developing our biodiversity efforts here in Clonenagh NS. We look forward to updating you on this exciting project very soon.

Carol Service – 11th December

We warmly invite all parishioners to our school Carol Service on Thursday 11th December. The children are already preparing some beautiful musical pieces, and it promises to be a lovely evening. The collection on the night will be donated to PATH to support their vital work.

Services & Readings

December

Sunday 7th <i>The Second Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 11: 1-10 Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19 Romans 15: 4-13 Matthew 3: 1-12</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Holy Communion with Carols	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 10.30am Holy Communion	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Morning Prayer	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion with Carols
Sunday 14th <i>The Third Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 35: 1-10 Psalm 146: 4-10 or Canticle: Magnificat James 5: 7-10 Matthew 11: 2-11</i>	Seir Kieran 9.30am Holy Communion with Carols		Annatrim 11.00am Holy Communion with Carols		Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer
Wednesday 17th		Mountrath 7.00pm School Carol Service				
Saturday 20th		Mountrath 7.00pm Service of Seven Lessons & Carols				
Sunday 21st <i>The Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>	<i>Isaiah 7: 10-16 Psalm 80: 1-8, 18-20 Romans 1: 1-7 Matthew 1: 18-25</i>	Roskelton 9.30am Morning Prayer	Seir Kieran 9.30am Morning Prayer	Borris-in-Ossory 11.00am Holy Communion with Carols	Mountrath 11.30am Morning Prayer	Lacca 4.00pm Carol Service (followed by reception)
Wednesday 24th <i>Christmas Eve</i>	<i>Isaiah 9: 2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2: 11-14 Luke 2: 1-14</i>	Seir Kieran 6.00pm Holy Communion		Borris-in-Ossory 8.00pm Holy Communion		Lacca 9.30pm Holy Communion
Thursday 25th <i>Christmas Day</i>	<i>Isaiah 9: 2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2: 11-14 Luke 2: 1-14</i>	Roskelton 9.00am Holy Communion				
	<i>Isaiah 62: 6-12 Psalm 97 Titus 3: 4-7 Luke 2: 8-20</i>	Annatrim 10.15am Holy Communion				
	<i>Isaiah 52: 7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1: 1-4 John 1: 1-14</i>	Mountrath 11.30am Holy Communion				
Sunday 28th <i>The Holy Innocents</i>	<i>Jeremiah 31: 15-17 Psalm 124 1 Corinthians 1: 26-29 Matthew 2: 13-18</i>	Mountrath 11.00am Holy Communion				

Parish Diary

December

6th Saturday.....Closing date for Diocesan Magazine Notes

11th Thursday.....Lacca Fellowship Service

22nd Monday.....Closing date for January 2026 Newsletter

28th Sunday.....Clononagh N.S. Annual Tractor Run

Multiple System Atrophy Trust (Registered Charity Number 1137652) is the leading organisation supporting people with MSA, a rare neurological disease. Around 3,500 people in the UK and Ireland have MSA and the support MSA Trust provides to persons with the condition and their families is exceptional. For more details, go to www.msatrust.org.uk

Items for the January 2026 Newsletter need to be with the editor by **MONDAY December 22nd AT THE LATEST**, so that the Newsletter can be assembled in time for Christmas Day, Thursday December 25th.

PLEASE make your item as ready for publication as possible, and please ensure that names are spelled correctly.

Ideally, items should be submitted by e-mail to- newsletter@clononagh.com

Otherwise to- Ivor Clegg, Cloncourse, Mountrath, Co. Laois. 057-8621277/087-2522162