



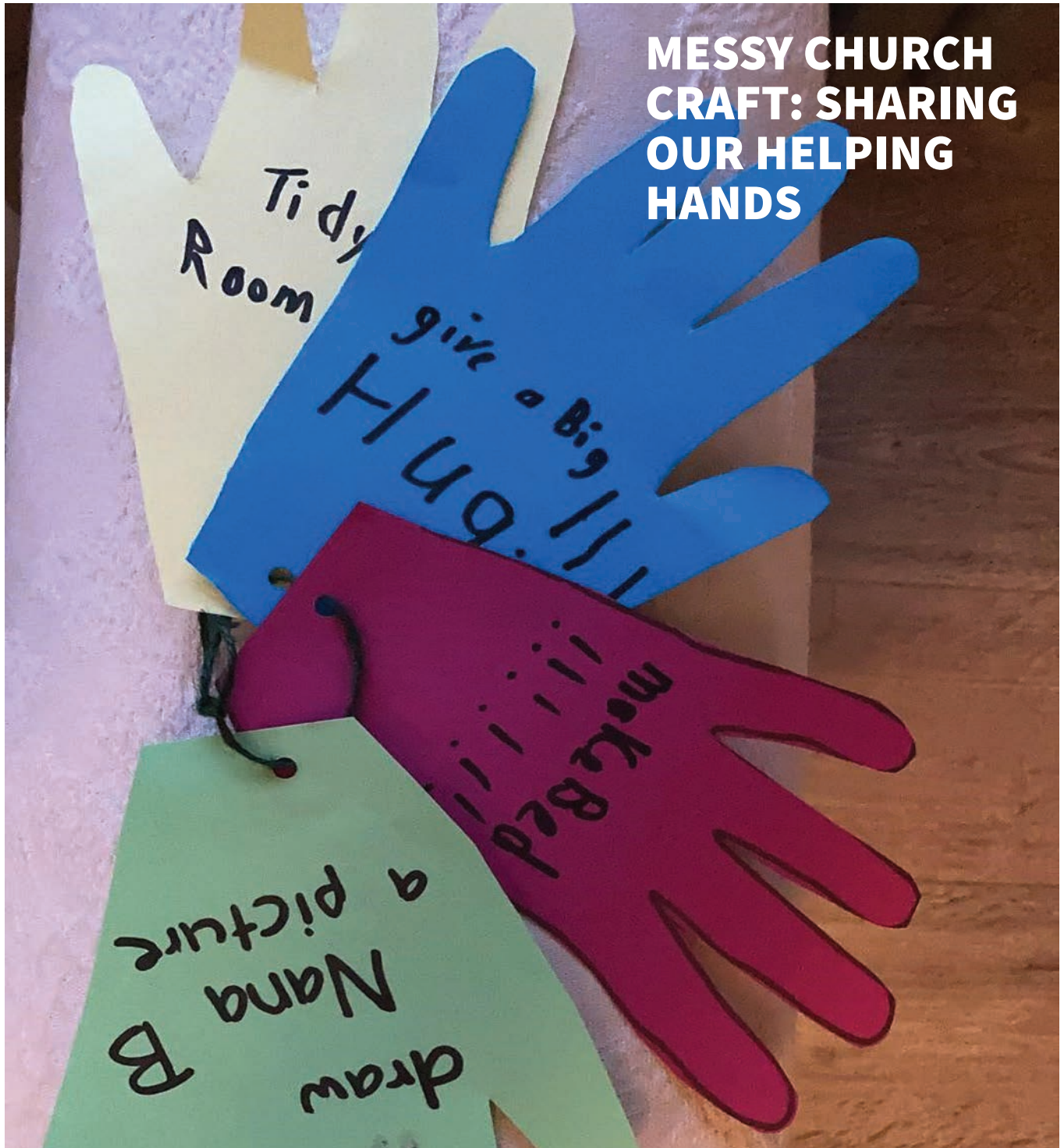
KILTERNAN KLIPS

Building community, strengthening worship, growing in service

The quarterly newsletter of Kilternan Parish, Co. Dublin

Vol. 27 No. 1 Kilternan Klips | Spring 2021

www.kilternan.dublin.anglican.org



MESSY CHURCH CRAFT: SHARING OUR HELPING HANDS

NOTICE BOARD

News and notices from around the parish

WHAT'S ON

Keep up with what is happening in the parish

FEATURES

Articles and features of interest to the church

MINISTRY

Youth, family and liturgy, articles and more



The Buildings May Be **CLOSED** But **CHURCH** Is Still




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The Rector on...

Deep Resilience

The song goes, 'Be bold, be strong, 'cause the Lord your God is with you'. I'm sure you know it; it's taken from Joshua 1:9 and continues, 'I am not afraid, I am not dismayed'. But what about those times when I *am* afraid or dismayed? What about those times when I don't feel bold or strong? Let's be honest: in the current climate, those times are not infrequent for most of us. Those are the times when we need to know that God is with us. Those are the times when we need deep resilience.

When I'm building a new shed and I want it to be resilient, I'm going to pick material that is tough, maybe reinforced steel or iron. Biblical and spiritual resilience is different. Perhaps the way to understand resilience in the Bible is to look at characters who were resilient, such as Moses, Joseph, maybe David. Each of them was flawed, at times riddled with self-doubt, vulnerable. They knew what it was like to be defeated; they were often fearful and dismayed. They were not men of steel yet they were resilient. I take some encouragement from them. We need them to remind us that being resilient does not mean being tough. It's okay to have a bad day. Remember, in the midst of life's storms, that you are more resilient than you think you are.

A few weeks ago I was walking with my two youngest, Micah (5) and Gideon (7). It was windy—we were catching the tail of some stormy weather. Now, it would take quite a bit of wind to blow me over, but the two boys were struggling as the cold wind blew into our faces and took our breath away. So, what did we do? We held hands and we leaned into the wind.

During the storm that many of us find ourselves in right now, we might need a hand to hold on to. Part of being resilient is recognising that we need to draw strength from other people; that is not a weakness—quite the opposite. Resilience does not grant awards for putting on a brave face. We find our resilience not necessarily in our internal resources but in one another. That is what it means to be a church community. Whose hand do you hold on to when the emotional storm comes? When we are overwhelmed, we all need a hand—family, church, friends, or, if you can't find them, reach out to a support service for help. Sometimes, when we are struggling with our own resilience, we need to find someone else's.

And where do we lean? It is sometimes our instinct to run away from life's challenges, but a better response might be to lean into them. Leaning into your difficulties is not something you may readily think of when you experience them. Instinctively we want to push our challenges away, but usually we have to lean into our difficulties, acknowledge them and stay with them. By doing that we might realise that they are not as insurmountable as we first thought, and as we do so we might remember that it is God on Whom we ultimately lean.

We have a Christian prayerfulness or mindfulness group here in the parish. Since March it has been meeting via WhatsApp. One of the first things they do is to check their posture and place their feet flat on the ground. At first I thought that this was simply to stop us fidgeting, and I am a terrible fidgeter. I've realised, however, that there is more to it than that. When we place our feet firmly on the ground, we allow our bodies to tell us a deep spiritual truth. When we pray, we ground ourselves in God. We place our feet upon the rock of our salvation, and in doing so we bring before God our struggles and the needs of the world.

The next time you feel shaken, put your two feet on the ground and let your body tell the story of being grounded in God.

Every blessing, Revd Rob Clements.



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Fintan Keogh (Church Warden)

Bruce Fitzsimons (Glebe Warden)

Christian Kraeft (Glebe Warden)

David Webb (Secretary of the Select Vestry)

Gary Colclough (Treasurer of the Select Vestry)

PASTORAL CARE

In this time of social distancing, clergy are not able to make home or hospital visits, but if you have an urgent pastoral need or would like a prayer, please contact the rector by phone (Tel. 087 149 6605).

PARISH NOTICE BOARD

KILTERNAN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Kilternan Church of Ireland now has a Facebook presence. Search for us at Kilternan Church of Ireland and follow us for updates about what's going on in the parish. You might note that the Gathering Grounds has a busy Facebook presence too. We also send out a weekly email. If you don't receive the email, let us know in the office and we'll get you on the list.

REGISTER

Wedding

It was a pleasure to celebrate the marriage of Sarah Hennessey and Michael Goodliffe on 27 December. Sarah and Michael had to reschedule a number of times, but their day was an absolute joy, and we will continue to pray for them as they begin their married life.

Christian burial

We are mindful of all who grieve at this difficult time. This quarter we mourned the death of Mary Parnes, who died on 11 January. We also remember Louis Walsh who died on 28 February. Our prayers are with all the family.

LENTEN PROGRAMME

Most of our Lenten reflections moved online this year. Nonetheless, there were still plenty of opportunities to engage in Lenten reflections.

Ash Wednesday and Compline

Every Wednesday a growing number from the parish met for prayer via Zoom. We prayed for the needs of the community, usually using the structure of the Late Evening Office. During Lent we used the rite of Compline, with input from the choir.

Pilgrim of Zoom

During Lent, we are using the Pilgrim Course on the

Commandments, meeting on Zoom every Sunday evening for a short time of Bible exploration and fellowship.

Day of prayer and fasting

We set aside the 7th of March as a day of prayer and fasting. You could fast for the whole day, but for many of us that was a step too far. All of us could give up something, however, as we focused our attention on prayer. Parishioners were encouraged to give any money saved from their fast to the Peter McVerry Trust and the Laura Lynn Foundation via the parish.



Lenten Messy Church @ Home

Messy Church has gone on Zoom. While we miss being able to gather and eat together, we continue to create and celebrate online.

Postcards—'Love Yourself During Lent' & 'Together @ Lent Challenge'

Who doesn't love receiving a postcard? 'Love Yourself Through Lent' postcards were sent to our front-line workers, healthcare workers, teachers, childcare workers and carers. Each postcard was handwritten, with words of encouragement and appreciation and 40 simple self-care ideas for this challenging season.

Similar postcards, this time with an invitation to our Lent Messy Church on Zoom, were sent to all our Messy Church families, with 40



short and simple daily challenges to do together as a family during Lent.

Bedtime stories & prayer

From postcards to bedtime stories—who doesn't enjoy being read a bedtime story, whether from the Bible or other picture-books which often link to Christian truths and morals? Each week during Lent we pre-recorded bedtime stories for families to sit together and enjoy at a time that suits them. A different member of the team read a story each week, finishing with some words of encouragement and prayer.

GodVenture Easter Sticker Countdown Calendars



What child doesn't love stickers?

We are delighted that so many of our families received this sticker calendar from GodVenture. The stickers tell the story of Jesus, leading families through some of the events as told in Luke's Gospel, up to Holy Week and through to Easter Sunday. It offered families a short time each day to hear from the Bible.

EASTER 2021

At the time of writing this edition of *Klips*, it is very difficult to make Easter predictions. Will we be back at church or still online? As you read this, you might know the answer to this, but as I write I do not. So, Easter plans will be communicated later through the parish email and social media.

What we can say is that we are currently working on a virtual all-age Easter presentation alongside the Play It By Ear Drama Company, and a musical presentation of the Crucifixion, a couple of wandering and wondering trails and maybe a chalk walk. Keep a lookout for more.

DEFIBRILLATOR

We are delighted to be installing a defibrillator outside the front entrance of the Kilternan Centre. This will be a valuable resource for the parish and wider community. We truly believe that the more

defibrillators there are placed around the local area, the better chance there is that someone's life could be saved in the case of an emergency.

A defibrillator or AED is a device that gives a high-energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. This high-energy shock is called defibrillation, and it's an essential part of trying to save the life of someone who's in cardiac arrest. An AED checks the heart's rhythm and it automatically registers any life-threatening rhythm. If this is detected, the AED delivers a shock to stun the heart, returning it to its normal rhythm. If someone goes into cardiac arrest, starting CPR as soon as possible, and using a defibrillator where one is available, gives the person the best chance of survival.

The Kilternan Centre is normally a hive of activity for people of all ages. We believe it is well placed to provide a defibrillator. We have been able to do this through a generous donation by a parishioner of Kilternan. For this we, along with the local community, are grateful.

In due course we hope to have a focus on CPR and first aid training in 2021 and 2022. We are grateful also to Pat Carey, a parishioner and first responder who has advised throughout this process.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

A note from Gary Colclough, parish treasurer

While as a parish we are fortunate to have built up good reserves, the COVID-19 lockdowns together with the repairs to the church tower are significantly eroding these reserves. Our income in 2020 compared to 2019 has diminished in a number of areas. There is a noticeable reduction of €12,000 in annual collections, from €87,000 in 2019 to €75,000 in 2020, owing mainly to plate collections. The fall in collections through the envelope scheme has been largely offset by an increase in those giving by standing orders—thanks to all

NOTICE BOARD

envelope scheme contributors who have converted to standing order or dropped off envelopes into the parish office.

Not surprisingly, income from the Gathering Grounds and from rental of the Parish Hall has been affected, with a shortfall of almost €25,000 from initial budget forecasts.

Following on from 'Plugging the Leak': the Church Tower Appeal—A Second Bite

This time last year we began a 'Plugging the Leak' appeal to help with necessary repairs in the church tower. Our campaign was cut short, however, owing to the suspension of in-person worship. Plugging the Leak envelopes remained on the church pews all through March and April. Unfortunately, we were not able to cut short the work that needed to be done. In 2019 and 2020, €86,000 was necessarily spent on plugging the leaks. While the major work has been completed, in 2021 we now need to work on the replastering of the walls and the recarpeting of the stairwell.

Even with the campaign cut short, we were still able to raise €15,000 through the generosity of parishioners. This still leaves us with a rather large deficit (another type of leak to plug!). We would like to open this campaign again during spring 2021. If you are in a situation to do so, we would encourage you to consider donating to the Tower Appeal. This

can be sent to the parish office or submitted electronically (remember to note that it is to be directed to the Tower Appeal if you wish to give in this way).

Managing our beautiful church building can be frustrating but it's part of our stewardship. We want to make sure to leave it in good shape for future generations.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

PARISH TABLE QUIZ

The first parish quiz night was held on Saturday 13 February and it was a great success, drawing 33 households together on Zoom over a little healthy competition. What a great night of fun, and well done to the 'Fantastic Fitz's', who came first, the 'Chicken Dinners', who came second, and the 'First Place', who came third!

There were seven rounds in total, covering famous couples, name that song, sports, how good is your English, worst wax museum likeness, local landmarks and body parts. We also had three spot rounds with spot prizes, Rob's Pictionary round, a best joke and a caption competition.

You can see the caption picture below. The winning caption was won by the Smart T's with 'and we thought lockdown was going to be a piece of cake'. If you can think of a funny caption, why not send it to the parish office?

Spot Prize Best Joke winner, the Fantastic Fitz's (Fitzsimons family),

possibly best enjoyed in person ...: *A man walks into a library, goes up to the counter and says, 'Can I have a burger and chips, please?' The lady behind the counter points to a sign saying 'Library' and says in a hushed voice, 'This is a library!' The man whispers: 'Sorry! Can I have a burger and chips, please?'*

The evening was completed by a dramatic finale. The Fantastic Fitz's and the Chicken Dinners ended up even on points, so it went to a tie-breaker. Both failed on the last question, which was to spell the name of the tallest mountain in Ireland (Carrauntoohil or Carrauntoohill—both acceptable). The next question was meant to be the decider: how tall is it (the closest to the actual height of 1,038m would be the winner)? What were the chances—they both guessed 1,014m! In the end, the winner was decided through a game of scissors, paper, stone.

At the end there was great enthusiasm for another quiz in March/April. Keep a lookout.

A VIRTUAL FÊTE, 22-24 APRIL 2021

When we had to cancel the fête in 2020, we would never have imagined having to cancel in 2021 as well, so we are not going to. Well, we are going to have to cancel it as normal (we will save that for a big celebration in 2022), but we are going to have a virtual fête, using the wonderful tools we have learned online during Covid.

The fête is such a great community day. As well as bringing in necessary funds for the parish, it brings us all together in a spirit of hope and togetherness. That is priceless at this time!

We are currently exploring ways to have an online version of the outdoor games, the plant stall, jams and cake stall, the dog/pet show, the brochure, a High Tea on Zoom, a raffle, and maybe even fête bingo. If you have any ideas, recommendations or suggestions, please don't be shy—come and share your thoughts/ideas with us.

In order to make this successful,



...and we thought lockdown was going to be a piece of cake'.

however, we need the parish engaged and involved. The money raised by the fête assists both the school and the parish and makes up the shortfall, which is severe during Covid.

How can you help this year? You could:

- Become a Friend of the Fête (€50)
- Take out an ad in the virtual fête brochure
- Make jams/baked goods for our Order and Collect
- Provide plants for our Order and Collect
- Sponsor a raffle prize
- Sponsor or source a prize for our Bingo night/Games room

For more information contact:
Gráinne Darlington—
grainnedarlington@gmail.com
Olive Walker—
olive.walker@obeeco.ie
Rob Clements—
rector@kiltiernanparish.ie

MUSIC NOTES

The Crucifixion by Stainer
Choir Project

by Kevin O'Sullivan

As I write these notes I'm neck-deep in an incredible project. I started work on a new Virtual Choir after being inspired by both our Community Christmas Carols (more on that later) and a larger Christmas Carol Collaboration led by young Tom Maxwell of St Brigid's, Stillorgan. *The Crucifixion* by John Stainer has been a staple of church choir music for the past century. Kiltiernan Parish Choir performed it only a few years ago during Holy Week. This time I reached out to Church Music Dublin and Tom Maxwell to see whether there was an appetite to perform the work virtually with their help.

To my delight, musicians and choristers were thrilled to put something like this together. Dr David O'Shea of Sandford & St Philip's played the organ for us in Sandford. Revd Jack Kinkead of Wicklow sang tenor, and Brian

Church of Ireland Parish Choirs Online

directed by
Kevin O'Sullivan

The Crucifixion

by **John Stainer**
filmed & edited by
Big Red Box Media Ltd.

featuring


Tenor	Bass
Rev. Jack Kinkead	Brian Hennessey

Organist
Dr. David O'Shea

watch on
[youtube.com/c/KiltiernanParishChurchofIreland](https://www.youtube.com/c/KiltiernanParishChurchofIreland)


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Hennessey, formerly a lay vicar of Christchurch Cathedral, sang bass. The whole project is being edited and partially filmed by Big Red Box Media. With the help of Tom Maxwell, choir coordinator, we've been able to bring together singers from across the country on Zoom to record music and film the choir.

The Crucifixion is a thoughtful hour of music particularly focusing on Jesus's time on the Cross. It reflects on the meaning of Jesus's suffering, why He died for us and what it means for us. You may also recognise some familiar music within the hour, such as the well-known hymn 'Cross of Jesus'.

You won't need to look too far to watch *The Crucifixion*. It will go live on Palm Sunday (28 March) on

Kiltiernan Parish's YouTube channel. You're welcome to join us then or to watch it in your own time later.

Contact Kevin at music@kiltiernanparish.ie if you would like to be involved with the choirs.

LOOKING BACK AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas feels like a long time ago, but I want to thank all involved for a season of creativity and activity, albeit with physical distancing. We had numerous online services, a Christmas Fest, a visit from Santa, a soup and mince pie blitz and much more. Thanks also to Heather, Monique, Carol, Dan and Brian from Kiltiernan

NOTICE BOARD



Pictured left.
Top: Kilternan Parish Choir recording at Christmas.

Middle: Christmas on Zoom (with Santa!).

Below: Rob alongside the Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, the Very Revd William Morton and Kelley Bermingham, Community Officer St Patrick's at the CRiTICALL presentation.



SOURDOUGH FUNDRAISER

The Sourdough Fundraiser was simply born out of a conversation I had with Kim Kavanagh, who was interested in the sourdough starter I had been using at home. During this time, when the Gathering Grounds was closed and no income was coming in, I wondered whether anyone else would be interested in the starter and if they would pay for it in support of the café! Sure enough, there were over twenty takers! This delicious bread has been a success for some and not so much for others (you can see some picture of the success stories so far). If you are still interested in giving it a try, I will always have my 'active' starter at home ready to share! Kim, sorry you didn't get yours for free, but many thanks to you for your original interest!



Parish LTC and Joseph McMahon from Scalp Nurseries for sponsoring the outside Christmas tree.

What a whirlwind of a Christmas the choirs had! They took it in their stride, though. The Junior Choir had a couple of weeks of Level 3 when we could record Christmas Carols for Christmas Day. They were wonderfully festive. The Parish Choir worked together with Glencullen Parish Choir and the Sandyford Parish Folk Group to create an Online Community Carol Service, really bringing the communities together online.

CRiTICALL

In last quarter's edition of *Klips*, we featured an article on CRiTICall, a partnership involving St Patrick's Cathedral supporting people experiencing domestic violence. We felt that this was an initiative worth supporting, particularly during lockdown, when people are vulnerable to violence in the home.

We decided to give a large percentage of our charitable donation to their work. You can see above the rector giving 30 €100 vouchers to the Dean of St Patrick's on behalf of the parish.

A GATHERING GROUNDS NOTE FROM JULIE CLEMENTS

GATHERING GROUNDS STARTING BACK

After three long months of lockdown, the Gathering Grounds opened its doors again on 1 March with great eagerness to see everyone's faces again. What a privilege to have the Gathering Grounds in the parish, a place where I will always seek to find community, belonging, growth and healing, and strive to make it a place for everyone else to do the same. Evidently, our income has taken a great hit over the last while, so please help us get back on our feet by choosing to drink our coffee and donating generously! Blessings, Julie.

COOKBOOK UPDATE

The Gathering Grounds cookbook has been a great success, selling the bulk of the stock before Christmas in the café, Kennedy's and Fleming's. A huge thank-you to everyone who has purchased and shared them as gifts. We were even given a shout-out during a YouTube Mass by the priest in Sutton, who had been gifted a book! There are still books available, so if you are looking for more don't hesitate to ask. If I were to highlight a recipe for you to try, I would say give Rob's Falafel a go (page 29)—favouritism, I know, but I've heard rave reviews about this one and I know it's a favourite in our house!

There were bound to be a few errors in the book and so I will include all of those I wish you to know about below:

Page 57—Messy Church Bread: pre-heat and bake the bread at 165°C.

Page 115—Chocolate and Sea Salt Oatmeal Cookies: pre-heat and bake the cookies at 180°C.

Page 120—Crunchy Iced Lemon Traybake, add 3 eggs to the list of cake ingredients.



SOUP FOR SENIORS

What a treat it has been to organise and deliver soup lunch-bags to people's homes on Thursdays during lockdown. This started as simply a way to offer people a bit of cheer during a tough and lonely season. Over time it has grown from a dozen soups on a Thursday to between 30 and 40 bowls weekly.

At the turn of the year, Rob secured a grant from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council to fund this project from January to March. The grant has enabled us to share a little love and lift the spirits of some of the older and more isolated members of the parish, even at a time when finances are low. Thank

Alistair Doyle and Carol Barry getting ready to deliver. And a view of what's on the menu.

you to Rob Pierce and Avril Kinlan for your work in the kitchen and to Alistair Doyle, Carol Barry, Fintan Keogh and Alistair Jackson for helping with deliveries every week. A shout-out also to Cecelia Doyle, who frequently baked sweet treats to be enjoyed.

PANCAKE FLIP

On Pancake Tuesday, parishioners were invited to join Julie via Zoom in the rectory kitchen as she made pancakes. (See picture page 12.)

MARRIAGE COURSE

Jenny Langley

When Jonny brought one of our cars for its NCT last month, we both assumed that it would pass, so it came as a mild surprise that the certificate was not renewed as expected (there is the matter of its age being in double figures, I suppose). The real surprise was the *reason* it failed: the catch to release the bonnet was too tight for the tester to open it. It took several phone calls, bringing forward its annual service slightly, waiting for parts and finally bringing it to the car-doctor to fix the problem. What seemed a tiny detail caused not insignificant hassle and some expense to resolve.

Yep, it's a relevant metaphor. It's also a horrendous cliché, but if that doesn't bother you, please read on!

When Julie told me a little over a year ago that she and Rob were hoping to bring the Marriage Course to Kiltiernan, I immediately said that we'd sign up to it. *Not* that I felt our marriage to be under any threat, but I quite fancied the idea of obliging Jonny to take me out to dinner in the Gathering Grounds for several weeks in a row and watching him squirm as he was made to 'go deep' with his emotions. It sounded like fun. I'm mean that way.

Then COVID. Blah, blah, blah. We all know what came next ...

The three rounds of lockdown have been difficult for us—as they have been for everybody—but we would frequently remind ourselves how lucky we were: a reliable income, one parent (me, ugh!) available to manage most of the home schooling, a comfortable home, safety, healthy kids ... and a fairly strong marriage. We felt that we were weathering it quite well, all things considered.

When we heard a few weeks ago that the Marriage Course would in



fact go ahead—remotely, via Zoom—I had a mixed response. It came at a time when our household was in the grip of heightened tedium, frustration and isolation, so we welcomed the distraction and having something new to do. We were a little unsure that the Zoom format would work for us (I think it's fair to say that most people are Zoomed out by this point). And in all honesty, getting our children into bed and quiet enough by 8:30 for us to focus on *anything* for more than ten minutes is a monumental challenge!

Firstly, I have to say that the Zoom format is actually quite inspired and absolutely ideal for the content of the course. Whatever about dispatching our kids to bed to get to the iPad on time, we *definitely* would not make it out the door and up to GG by 8:30pm on a Thursday! Secondly, as the content of the course is screen-shared by the moderators (shout-out to Alan and Diane, who are brilliant and lovely), you're not seeing other participants for more than a few seconds at a time. This creates a great sense of privacy, as you're discussing the—at times very personal and sensitive—issues from the comfort and security of your own living room or kitchen. Jonny

in particular is intensely private (he's going to love seeing his name appear here so many times), so this has been a major factor in how successful the course has been for us.

The content of the course is incredibly well thought out and very accessible. Presented primarily in video format, each week covers a different topic, such as communication, conflict resolution and the impact of family. The videos are punctuated with breaks of varying length, during which couples are asked to reflect on specific questions and open up to each other about their reactions to the content.

And this is where the car metaphor comes back into the story. Jonny (there's his name again!) and I knew that we each had areas to work on—that was no surprise. What we didn't anticipate was how deeply some of these issues ran for us, or how profoundly they were affecting our marriage. Even over the course of the week between our first and second sessions we found that we began to take more notice of each other's needs and to communicate more effectively. And that, in turn, has had a hugely positive effect on how we are both coping with the demands of guiding our family through these bizarre times.

It has changed my perspective on the car-bonnet catch, too: it seemed so ridiculous at first, but if you can't lift the lid to get a look at the engine, you won't know whether there are any *real* issues to be concerned about (yes, that's probably taking the metaphor too far, so by all means proceed to eye-rolling).

Our marriage has recently passed into double digits (thank you, COVID, for spoiling our tenth

anniversary plans!), we're now outnumbered by our kids and we're living through unprecedented restrictions and changes to the way in which we live our lives. Marriage is hard work at the best of times and none of that stuff has made it any easier to navigate, so we're intensely grateful that the Marriage Course came along for us when it did.

We've been surprised by some of the issues that have surfaced, but also enormously reassured by how well it transpires we understand each other. We've come to better appreciate the stability of our marriage and better understand the things that might undermine its strength if we don't attend to them properly. And we still have three sessions to go!

While we are active in the Church, I personally have very much liked the fact that religion is not focal in the delivery of the course content; participation in prayer is invited at the end of each session, but otherwise religion comes into it only as much as you and your partner choose it to. This course can be as relevant to non-believers as to the rest of us, which contributes to the credibility of the content and its delivery, in my opinion.

As I understand it, Rob and Julie have great plans to make this course a regular fixture in Kiltiernan. I would highly recommend signing up and getting 'under the bonnet' (cue eye-roll) with your partner—married or not! Jonny would also give it a firm thumbs-up, but he's leaving the words to me. That's how we roll.

In other news, the catch on the bonnet has been replaced and the car got its NCT today.

From Rob and Julie—Sixteen couples have joined together to participate in the first Marriage Course via Zoom that we held in Kiltiernan. There are couples from the parish and couples from further afield, couples who have been married for a long time and couples who are not married. We plan to run another course in the autumn, so let us know if you are interested.

HERE WE GO, HERE WE GO, HERE WE GO

Carol Barry

It was a day full of excitement and anticipation. The balloons were hung from the gates and doors and a steady flow of people, like flies attracted to the light, kept on coming, on walking frames, in wheelchairs and with arms linked with others.

Then the Garda car arrived, not to break up the party but to leave a couple of elderly party-goers off.

So where was this party, you might ask, during Covid restrictions?

Well, it wasn't a party, but it was a celebration: a celebration to mark the roll-out of the first part of the Covid-19 vaccines to men and women over 85 years of age.

Like many of you, I'm sure, I've watched my 95-year-old Mum endure the difficulty of having to isolate in order to keep well. All the things that are important to her have not been possible—the hug, the kiss on the cheek, the reassuring back rub. The simple things that we've always taken for granted no longer allowed.

The few outings that mark the week, like the church services, visiting the post office to collect the pension and the Thursday shopping trip, simple weekly undertakings but nonetheless important, all abandoned to ensure that Covid-19 doesn't come knocking.

Today would mark the beginning of immunisation in preparation for Mum and the elderly population of Monkstown to return to some sort of normality.

We approached the surgery, which was festooned with balloons, and with socially distanced couples standing in the carpark waiting for their call.

'Sorry, you can't come in, I'll look after your Mum; come back and collect her in twenty minutes', I was told by the nurse as my mother disappeared through the surgery doors.

Like a worrying parent, I waited outside, hoping that when the medics spoke to Mum she'd be able to hear them alright and do what they asked her to do. I watched as others were brought to the surgery by nurses, carers and sons and daughters, many receiving the same words of encouragement and comfort that I'd spoken to Mum earlier.

Then around the corner my Mum appeared, linked by a nurse, injection given and ready to go home. I noticed that on her coat she had a sticker with 16.15 on it and asked her what it was. 'This is to tell the nurse when I can leave; they have to watch us all for fifteen minutes after we receive our injection!'

'Did everything go alright? Were you nervous and could you hear the doctor speaking to you?' I asked.

Her reply made me smile: 'Oh it was great, we were singing in the corridor while we waited'.

'What were you singing?' I asked out of curiosity.

'We were singing "Here we go, here we go, here we go".'

As we walked towards the car, I gave her a kiss on the cheek, a hug and a reassuring back rub—well, we're in a bubble together so that's ok!

We often hear about the inefficiency of the HSE, the lack of beds in hospitals, the long waits for appointments and operations. Yes, we hear all about that and I've no doubt that all those comments are valid. But today was a great day for the over-85s. The HSE organised a military-style operation to ensure that those we love, the elderly in our society, are looked after first.

No negative comments from me today. I'm so proud of our Health Service, the doctors and nurses, for the care, attention and respect they gave to these wonderful, resilient and lively 85+-year-old citizens.

KILTERNAN PAR



RISH ACTIVITIES



Clockwise from top left:

Soup for Seniors. What started as simply a way to offer more vulnerable people a bit of cheer during a tough and lonely season has grown from a dozen soups on a Thursday to between 30 and 40 bowls delivered weekly.

Enthusiastic Christmas Messy Church participants.

Pray and love Messy Church craft output.

Impressive Helping Hands craft results.

Julie pictured in the rectory kitchen as she made pancakes.

ONLINE SERVICES AND THE LONG-DISTANCE SMILE

Nick Maxwell on internet worship

One of the endearing (and slightly aspirational) qualities of the Anglican church is its belief that some solution can be found to the ‘problem’ of young people—those who seem to disappear from our midst once they have been confirmed. Nearly twenty years ago I volunteered to survey a representative sample of the young people of Kiltiernan Parish between the ages of 14 and 28, the purpose being to give the parish some insight into why this age group is underrepresented in parish life and to see what response, if any, could be made to meet their needs.

The results were mixed and, to be honest, showed that many were disengaged, but some demonstrated a clear connection with the church and parish. The best part of it (though I say so myself) was the appendix of anonymous comments, many of which gave me, at least, pause for thought. My favourite was the 16-year-old who said, when asked what spirituality meant for her, ‘It’s nice to lie in bed and talk to God’.

Last Sunday, while watching the online service, this comment popped into my head unbidden. I confess that I was lying in bed with a cup of tea and taking in the service, responding (quietly) where indicated. As a choir member who records music once a week for Kevin to expertly blend with my fellow choristers, I was also checking out the quality (or not) of my contribution (it’s scary to hear yourself, since you ask!). But the main thing is that I wondered at the end whether, while I miss the fellowship (fellow-worship?) of other parishioners, I would be able to give this up and make myself presentable for church and to sing live in the choir when all this Covid business is sorted out.

The services are well presented and, between the rector’s inviting style, the familiarity of the liturgy, the friendly jauntiness of Brian, the warmth of Lynn, the clear sincerity of Alistair, the chance to hear properly Kevin’s repertoire of voluntaries and Carol’s lovely readings, they are a pleasure to consume and a thoughtful start to a Sunday. Yes. It’s nice to lie in bed and feel that you are connecting (talking to/with God). But here’s the rub: firstly and obviously, Holy Communion is not an option; secondly, you don’t consume the spiritual, it should consume you; thirdly, as a choir member I am missing out on the praying bit twice, encapsulated in the saying ‘Who sings prays twice’; fourthly, Woody Allen (I think) said that ‘90% of success is turning up’. And turning up whether you feel like it or not is a prayer in itself. Finally, prayer on your own, while a good thing, doesn’t compare to the sort of heaven-storming you get as a congregation and the knowledge that we are doing this thing called prayer together, a collection of individuals bending their minds to a common end.

So, it would seem that I have to get back in the worship saddle when the time comes, but what of my current habit? In the *Guardian* the other day a journalist, Seamas O’Reilly, described his dad, a Derry resident: *dressed in his best church clothes, he’s spent the past 10 months in front of his screen each Sunday morning* [watching the online Mass of his parish], *albeit allowing himself the potentially sacrilegious indulgence of a cup of tea and a small bun*. The da’s priest was asked whether this was a problem: ‘No, I wouldn’t say it was sacrilegious,’ he chuckles, *to the relief of my father’s eternal soul. ‘Sure, one guy has told me he watches me*

from his bed. And I said, “More power to you”.’

And I’m sure our rector would say the same. So, thank you for our online services, prayer meetings, play cafés etc. They can never replace the real thing but in these hard times they are a way of bidding God be present with us. There is a line from a poem (author unknown, although the first six words—a translation of a phrase by Erasmus—are on Carl Jung’s gravestone): ‘Bidden or unbidden, God is present as a people created from the dust who wrestle with reality and tell stories of their struggles. God is present’. And God is present, in or out of church, online or offline.

Finally, there is a song by one Kelly Ray, an American Country/Gospel singer, called *Telephone in heaven* and, echoing that, perhaps those of a more whimsical disposition might imagine us establishing a dial-up connection (if you are under 25, ask your parents what this means) to heaven for our online service via the operator using Ray’s lyrics:

I wish there was a telephone in heaven,
how I’d love to talk to that Lord of mine.
I’d tell Him that I love Him and I’m thankful,
for watching over all these loves of mine.
Well, I know He wouldn’t charge me by the minute,
and I know He wouldn’t charge me by the mile.
I’d call up that ol’ angel operator,
saying thank you for this big, long-distance smile.

So, many thanks to all concerned for providing this big, long-distance smile.

EASTER MUDDY CHURCH: WANDERING AND WONDERING

Muddy Church is connecting with God through nature, a time to intentionally wander and wonder, listening and looking for God in the everyday, whether alone or in conversation with others. It's about communities exploring faith together in the outdoors.

Back in October, families enjoyed a time of 'Wandering and Wondering' around the church grounds, using a 'Muddy Church' QR Code Trail, while at Christmas we had Nativity Trails for different ages. We were encouraged by how much families valued and appreciated the opportunities all these offered to explore faith together.

Muddy Church-inspired trails and walks aren't just for families with young children, they are inter-generational. They are a means of seeing God in the everyday in the environment around us, something many of us need right now. A time of wandering and wondering is an opportunity to see where God is in the midst of what can feel like the darkest of times. Many of us are feeling exhausted and weary right now. Muddy Church trails offer us an opportunity to step out of the busyness and what seem like endless updates on restrictions and speculation about what lies ahead—to be still, to breathe, to restore our energies and find God afresh.

At the time of writing, it's difficult to think too far ahead as to how we may be allowed to gather for Holy Week and Easter. However, we are planning inter-generational Muddy Church trails and walks, whether set up as a trail on the church grounds or as prompt cards to use while out walking alone, as a family or in your 'bubble', or even in your own garden or while sitting in a chair at the window; we will ensure that we keep everyone safe and comply with government and public health guidelines. The trails and walks will be an opportunity for us all to reflect anew on the Easter story.

POP-UP CHALK WALK

Back in September pre-booked spaces for our Chalk Prayer Walk were snapped up. We hope to set up an Easter-themed Prayer Chalk Walk for families to use as they journey through the events of Holy Week from Palm Sunday through to Easter Sunday, with eight chalk activities set out in the grounds of the church. More updates and details nearer the time can be found in the parish weekly email and Facebook page.

CONFIRMATION 2021

It seems a bit surreal that one of the last services I attended with a big group was the Confirmation of our 2020 group. It seems a lifetime ago! With the way things are as I write, we will be moving our Confirmation classes online until it is safe to meet in person. Unfortunately, we do not have a date for the Confirmation service either. We made the decision to proceed with classes, so our young people are prepared anyway.

We are delighted to be joined this year by Alistair, who will help lead some of the sessions. It means that the young people don't have to hear just from Rob and me!

Confirmation is one of my favourite aspects of the work here in Kiltiernan. Preparing the packs to be given out to each participant and adding the personal touch is something I enjoy doing, even if it is very time-consuming! A line that Rob and I hold to concerning Confirmation is that it is the young person's choice. The decision is not one to be made by the parent or grandparent. When we do eventually have our Confirmation service, it is the young person that goes forward, no one else!

Although numbers ultimately aren't important, we are very encouraged by the number who will be taking part in our Confirmation classes this year—nineteen in total, which is the biggest number I have seen in my time here in Kiltiernan, and perhaps even in Rob's time! We thank God for the opportunity to share with

these young people about God.

Confirmation is obviously a time when we try to teach young people what this 'Christianity' thing is all about. We attempt to answer that question over eight sessions, covering topics like prayer, discipleship and the Bible. It is an opportunity for young people to ask the questions they have about certain topics. I have found it helpful even for myself. Because we are not going into topics in depth, it forces us to draw back to what is the important information about our faith. Why do we walk up to a table and drink wine and eat bread? Why do we read the Bible? Does it have any place here and now, over 2,000 years after it was written?

We are excited to begin this journey with these young people. We hope you will join us in prayer as we lead them through the sessions.

DAY OF PRAYER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH MINISTRY

The Church of Ireland, with CIYD (Church of Ireland Youth Department), set aside the Sunday before Lent to support and pray for those involved in youth ministry. This year we in Kiltiernan participated. Our online service was based around praying for young people and youth workers. If I may boast for a second, the prayer that we put together for that service has been one of my biggest highlights in this rough year. There were young people involved whom I hadn't seen in over a year, and seeing their videos coming through really gave me a boost.

Rob also had the idea of having an online prayer evening for youth workers. At a basic level it was a time to pray for people involved in youth ministry, but for me it did a lot more. I helped facilitate an interview with two people who are also youth workers in churches. We were able to candidly discuss the challenges that we face at the moment, how our young people are responding to the challenge of Covid and what we would like

FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY

prayer for. Neil Douglas (Cricken) and Ryan Urquhart (Lucan Presbyterian) are two whom I consider to be among the best youth workers in Dublin. Alongside their longevity in the role, their passion and their care for those who have been given to them are qualities that I aspire to each day.

The conversation we had was important, as we shared the challenges of youth ministry during Covid. I found this most encouraging. It was nice to make others aware of what the general mood of youth ministry is like at the moment. We're tired, hurting, Zoomed out and missing those we worked with. Online youth has been a blessing, but it doesn't get anywhere near the way youth ministry has been done. Neil had a poignant line where he said, 'When our ministry is so relationally focused, it is difficult to recreate it online; it also goes against what I have been teaching them for years about staying off their phones, laptops and being present—now I'm doing the opposite.'

When I was first introduced in Kilternan as the new youth worker, I asked that you pray for me as I entered the role. Those prayers are still needed today. In a time when being anxious, worried and exhausted is considered a normal set of emotions for youth workers, the thing we need most is prayer. I would like to thank CIYD for organising the Youth Day of Prayer; it encouraged me and gave me a little boost moving forward. And thanks to Rob for organising the online prayer gathering for youth workers. Being able to function in my role with the knowledge that my community is backing me with support and prayer makes a world of difference. So I continue to ask for prayer, especially during this tough season.

Brian runs a weekly youth group on Zoom. Reach out if you would like to be involved.



PLAY CAFÉ @ HOME

Play Café continues to gather on Zoom each Wednesday @ 10am for a chat, singing, story and craft idea. Play Café is suitable for parents of babies and pre-schoolers, with lots of fun and interaction. We are always delighted to welcome new members, so, wherever you are, please do make contact if you would like to join any of our sessions—you don't need to commit to every week. We will be putting together Easter Craft Packs which will be available later this month.

Brian and Lynn

Isla and Niamh Graham (top) and Tamina and Luisa Schneider (right) enjoying children's crafts.





WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021

by Carol Barry

Have you ever heard of Vanuatu? I must confess that I'd never heard of the place in my life. So, when I received the service sheet for the annual Women's World Day of Prayer, which had been written by the women of Vanuatu, I searched on Google to see what I could find out.

The Republic of Vanuatu is a South Pacific island nation made up of 82 islands that stretch over 1,300km and are situated 1,750km east of Australia. A volcanic archipelago, Vanuatu is prone to earthquakes and cyclones. In fact, the 2015 World Risk Report, based on the chances of experiencing floods, droughts and sea-level rises, placed Vanuatu at number 1 of 173 countries, with a 36% chance.

The theme of the service was 'Build on a strong foundation', and the gospel reading from Matthew 7 focused on the wise and the foolish builders. The reading challenges us to build our lives on the sure foundation of God's word, and encourages us to build our homes, our nations and the world on the words of Jesus. This is our sure foundation.

We heard the stories of three women, each of them coming from different and difficult social

circumstances: one of poverty, one who lacked education, and another who suffered neglect and abandonment. They told how, through prayer, faith and trust in God, they were able to establish a better life for themselves and for their families.

Our final prayer of commitment sent us out with the words:

'Yes, we will follow Jesus,
Who is our strong
foundation.
He is the one who is the way,
the truth and the life.'

I'd like to thank Brid, Alice and Balally Parish for hosting this year's Women's World Day of Prayer. A special word of thanks to Avril Kinlan and Ann O'Neill for agreeing to participate in the service. We look forward to hosting this very special ecumenical event in Kiltarnan Parish next year, when the service will be written by the women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

POLICE WARN AGAINST VACCINATION SCAMS

Police on both sides of the border are advising members of the public to be aware of potential scams relating to the Covid-19 vaccine. In the Republic, members of the

public have in recent days received fraudulent text messages and calls regarding Covid-19 vaccination. The text messages have made requests for people to confirm private and sensitive information such as their PPS number, date of birth and address. The phone calls have included requests that they make an appointment for a Covid-19 vaccine jab at a random hospital. In most cases, the person receiving the call will say that they are not in a position to travel to the hospital. This allows the caller to extract further personal details. Some individuals might confirm that they live alone or reveal their home address. The caller will then offer to come to their residence to administer a vaccine.

You can protect yourself and your relatives, friends and neighbours by following this advice:

- Do not open attachments or click on links in emails or texts from numbers you don't know.
- Never give out your personal information, banking details or passwords in response to an email, text or phone call without verifying that the caller is who they say they are.
- Block any numbers you find suspicious.
- Always go to a website directly, by typing out the address yourself, when logging into an account. Do not click on links.
- Keep an eye out for spelling mistakes in messages and emails.
- Never disclose who you live with or whether you live alone.
- Remember that the HSE will never request payment for a Covid-19 test or vaccine.
- If you receive a suspicious call, just hang up.
- If you have questions or concerns relating to Covid-19 testing or vaccination, contact your local GP.

Frequently asked questions and answers about scams and other types of fraud are available on An Garda Síochána's website at www.garda.ie/en/crime/fraud.

INTERVIEW WITH VICTORIA JOHNSTON

The singer and broadcaster talks to *Kilternan Klips*

Many Kilternan Klips readers will know you through the parish and from Sunday Nights at the Gathering Grounds, where you and Kevin led us in worship. For those who don't know you, tell us a bit about yourself.

Faith, family and my music are most important to me. My background is as a classically trained musician and composer, which led to my launching my solo singing career last year in 2020. When I'm not working, I enjoy being outdoors, either hiking or being by the sea, and meeting friends for brunch.

My interests include Christian Mission, Media and the Arts, Humanitarian and Aid work and Animal Welfare. (Readers might also recognise me from running Highfield Academy of Music in the Gathering Grounds, and I work at Spirit Radio as producer of the Morning Show.)

In 2020 Hot Press magazine labelled you an artist to watch out for. You certainly have had an eventful year since. Tell us a bit about your musical journey since then.

In 2020 I released my debut singles, which both reached #1 in the TOP 10 charts on iTunes Ireland. Since then, 'Tar Liom' and 'You are the Peace' were short-listed for the 2021 Grammy Awards for Song of the Year and Contemporary Christian Music Song of the Year. They've been receiving airplay on stations, including BBC Radio Ulster, RTÉ Radio 1 and RTÉ RnaG.

I'm a self-managed, self-promoted independent artist and my debut singles were recorded and produced by Denis Woods.

Not everyone reading this may know your musical style. The music press often describes you as 'the next Enya', but maybe you could tell us about your musical style.

Musical influences in my style come from genres including classical, Celtic, traditional, pop, world and worship music.

Has it been difficult being a musician during Covid? How have you managed that?

It's been really challenging as a newly launched solo artist not to have any live music opportunities owing to the pandemic. I'm so thankful for all the radio airplay that my songs have been receiving and also for press opportunities such as recent interviews with the Irish *Tatler*, *Sunday World*, *VOX*, Irish *Daily Mail* and the BBC. I've been writing new music during lockdowns, which has also kept me busy.

Tell us how faith informs your life and music.

I often pray before writing music. I pray that God will put in my heart the lyrics and melodies that will make a positive impact on those who hear them.

In terms of faith and my life, I'm a big believer in the power of prayer and how if we raise our expectations of what God can do for us in our lives, He will gladly meet us there and raise the level of opportunity for us!! God's work cannot be done on earth except through us—Jesus needs us to be advancing His Kingdom, otherwise how else will His work get done or His Good News travel? I think it's important that we work at not just being 'listeners of God's word and

Jesus's example' but to put this into positive action in how we live out our daily lives. Jesus was just one man, Who through God changed the world. You are unique; there is only one of you in the world, so you matter and have purpose. One person can change the world for the better, and that person can be you! Dream big with God!

Your recent single was called 'Land of Hope'. It strikes me that we need a bit of hope at this time. Could you tell us a bit about that song and what inspired you to write it?

I wrote 'Land of Hope' during Ireland's first lockdown. The main message and theme is that even in our darkest hour, when we find ourselves journeying through times of immense uncertainty, loss and grief, there is always hope, peace and a brighter future to be found.

On top of your work as a singer and composer, you also work with Spirit Radio. Could you tell us a bit about what Spirit Radio is and what you do there?

Spirit Radio is Ireland's national Christian radio station where we cater in our content for all church denominations. We are 'Ireland's positive sound' and our ethos is focused on Christian values and good news in terms of the music we play, the lyrical content and the on-air speech content by our presenters.

I am currently Acting Head Producer of our flagship morning chat show, where we run live interviews on weekdays 10am–midday. I'm also head of Social Media and presenter of our new interview series, 'Behind the



Do you have a favourite hymn/spiritual song?

Favourite worship song: 'Your Name is Power' by Rend Collective.
Favourite hymn: 'Here I am, Lord'.

What are your hopes for 2021?

My music hopes for 2021 are that live music concerts can return safely. Right now, I am writing new songs with the hope of recording them in 2021. I would also love to put on some concerts in Ireland and also perhaps take a music trip to the USA.

Generally speaking, my hopes for 2021 are that it will be a year of Good News, that we will see the safe roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines, and that I can hug my family and friends again.

I hope that the pandemic has afforded people the gift of time to grow in their faith, and to reflect on the meaning of their life, and on the role each of us has to positively contribute to society. I hope that there will be a refreshed positive outlook on life and that we will see a transformative revival of Christian faith across the nation.

Music', with leading CCM (Contemporary Christian Music) artists that feature on our radio playlists.

Your music often has an element of worship to it. I think particularly of 'You are the Peace', which feels a bit like a hymn. Is writing worship music something you might like to do in the future?

When I sit down to write music, I don't have an agenda. I don't know where the melodies come from when I sit at the piano to compose, so it must be a God thing! Sometimes words that I'm praying end up inspiring my lyrics, or a melody comes to my mind when I'm grounding myself in the presence of God and the Holy Spirit, which recently when song-writing in lockdown has led to my writing several worship songs.

€12

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SACRAMENTS

At a recent edition of *Anglicanism 101*, we considered what we mean in the Church of Ireland when we talk about ‘sacraments’, in particular the two sacraments ordained by Jesus, Holy Communion and Baptism.

The sixteenth-century Anglican theologian Richard Hooker said that the sacraments are ‘visible signs of invisible grace’—outward manifestations of something that is happening inwardly. In the case of baptism, the outward sign is water; the inward grace is new life, adoption into God’s family. In communion it is bread and wine; the inward grace is salvation, forgiveness, restoration, and the experience of the love of God.

While this is helpful, we need to go a bit further. One of the techniques that I find helpful is to think about the distinction between a symbol and a sign.

A sign usually provides information, while a symbol conveys meaning. For example, when I’m driving and I see a red circular sign

with a white line across it, I know that I shouldn’t go down that road. The sign gives me information. In general, there is a shared understanding of what that sign means, but there is no emotional response or layered response. It simply signifies something else.

A symbol, however, is different. A good example of that is the Irish flag. On the one hand, it is simply a sign that this is Ireland; it represents the reality of a boundary. But tell that to the thousands of people singing and weeping over the flag in Lansdowne Road! It’s much deeper; it speaks to issues of identity and belonging, of history and aspiration. It is a symbol of something much greater than itself. It almost transcends itself. It can also be contested.

Every religion expresses its own truths about God and the deepest reality of human being by language and symbols. We need both. To some extent, symbols allow us to address reality in a deeper way than language ever can. Symbols allow us to explore layers of meaning that simple language



does not do justice to. We need symbolic language in our relationship with God.

The exact nature of sacraments can appear mysterious, and theologians have tried to dissect and describe exactly what is or is not happening. However, their strength is in their mystery. They operate at a level that addresses the deep longings of the human spirit.

Almighty and ever living God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE YEAR OF ST JOSEPH

The 19th of March is the festival of Joseph of Nazareth. Most years it goes unnoticed.

Were we to reflect on the Scripture that day, we would read Matthew 1:18–end, the story of the angel of the Lord who appears to Joseph in a dream. ‘Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife’, the angel says; the son who will be born ‘will save his people from their sins’.

Not a word is put in Joseph’s mouth; in fact, Joseph is mentioned in all four Gospels, but not a word of what he ever said was recorded.

Pope Francis has proclaimed 2021 the ‘Year of St Joseph’. In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *With a Father’s Heart*, Francis describes St Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

Left: Holy Communion a ‘visible sign of invisible grace’.

Above: St Joseph with the Infant Jesus by Guido Reni (1575–1642) (Hermitage Museum).



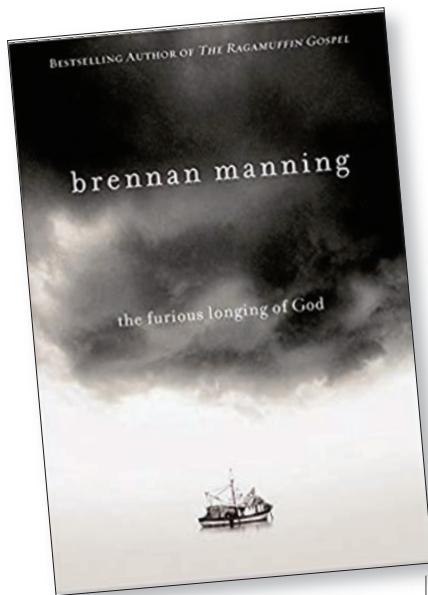
Father’s Day doesn’t have any liturgical place in the church calendar, unlike Mothering Sunday. There are historical reasons why we celebrate Mothering Sunday, but I think it is a shame that we don’t highlight the importance of fathers more. If we were to do so, I think it would be appropriate to focus on Joseph. Joseph is a father in obedience to God: he protects Mary and Jesus and teaches his Son to do the will of God. His love for his wife is unconditional and self-sacrificial. This is an important gesture even today in our world, where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident.

Joseph does not need the limelight to be shone on himself. That is one of the reasons why he is

called the saint in the shadows. It is this that makes Joseph a very apt saint for 2021. During Covid-19, we have been reminded of the many saints who work in the shadows, such as healthcare professionals and essential workers who give of their all to make life possible for all of us. The Covid-19 pandemic helped us see more clearly the importance of ‘ordinary’ people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day.

In this they resemble St Joseph, the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence, who nonetheless played an incomparable role in the history of salvation.

REVIEW



The Furious Longing of God.

Brennan Manning
ISBN 978-1434767509.

€14

Reviewed by Rob Clements

I have spent some time since the 'lock-in' building forts in my front room with the children. We've become quite good at it. A cardboard box is no longer just a cardboard box; it's a potential

bastion or parapet. Last Saturday we excelled ourselves and built a fort so big that we could all hide in it and read. I enjoyed the time so much I read most of my book in one sitting (though it is short!).

It was *The Furious Longing of God* by Brennan Manning. Manning is a recovering alcoholic and a former Franciscan priest. He speaks from the heart about grace. I first encountered Manning in my twenties when I read a book called *The Ragamuffin Gospel: Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up, and Burnt Out*. Most of us believe in God's grace—in theory. But somehow we can't seem to apply it in our daily lives. We continue to see God as a small-minded bookkeeper, tallying our failures and successes on a score sheet.

Manning takes us to the ocean. Imagine a stormy day at sea, your ship yielding to a relentless wind, pummelled by crashing waves, subject to the awesome force of nature. A force that is both fierce and majestic. A power that is nothing short of furious.

Such, he suggests, is God's intense, consuming love for His

children. It's a love that knows no limits and no boundaries. A love that will go to any lengths, and take any risks, to pursue us.

The Furious Longing of God is a love story for the broken-hearted. It is for those who are burdened by heavy religion and for those who feel they can never measure up. Every chapter talks about God's infinite love for His children. Manning calls God's desire for us a 'furious longing' and finds evidence of it in the Song of Songs 7:10: 'I am my Beloved's and his desire is for me'. There is no in-depth theology or insightful exegesis, but there is a core message that we all need to hear and to be reminded of.

One lovely review of this book said that 'Brennan Manning has written a provocative little devotional that will likely comfort the afflicted while afflicting the comfortable'.

As I rested in the duvet-covered fort with my children, I felt something of that furious love, and I gave thanks.



Compline at Lent Online

Each Wednesday during Lent there is an online service of Compline at 8pm available via: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81813978537?pwd=K3NjVnNLazJVREFTSGhBc2hWlWi9ZZz09>

- WORSHIP - REFLECTION - PRAYER -

COMPLINE AT LENT

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One of our favourite hymns is the Compline Hymn (played at the Zoom meeting), which during Lent can be sung as follows:

1 Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
that Thou with wonted love
wouldst keep Thy watch around
us while we sleep.

2 O let no evil dreams be near,
or phantoms of the night
appear;
our ghostly enemy restrain,
lest aught of sin our bodies
stain.

3 Grant, ever-blessed Trinity,
and ever-perfect Unity,
that this, our fast of forty days,
may work our profit and Thy
praise. Amen.

Kevin, our indefatigable Music Director, has put a recording of this sung by the Kilternan Choir on our YouTube Channel, so you can sing along each night should you feel like it. It is Hymn 66 in the *Irish Church Hymnal*.

This is a translation of the traditional office hymn '*Te lucis ante terminum*', by Revd John Mason Neale.

Interestingly, the office of Compline is a relatively recent addition to worship within the Anglican Communion and it was only about 100 years ago that it was proposed as an inclusion in the *Book of Common Prayer*. However, it failed to be approved by the British Parliament at that time!

Luckily for those who love its beauty and rhythms, it is now available in the modern *BCP* in all its traditional glory.

More information is available on this and other hymns in the *Companion to Church Hymnal*.

PLANTING YOUR SPRING GARDEN

(author unknown)

For the garden of your daily living

Plant three rows of Peas:

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

Plant four rows of Squash:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of Lettuce:

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

No garden is complete without Turnips:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for services
3. Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden, we must have Thyme:

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.
There is much fruit in your garden and you will reap what you sow ...





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