

Ennis Parish Link

December 2015

Issue 56



The Sisters of Mercy and The Parish of Ennis



The now blackened-with-age stone cross on the Old Ground side of the Cathedral in Ennis is of great significance for both the Parish and the Sisters of Mercy. The Cross commemorates the Parish Mission of November 1853 preached by Jesuits and bears the names of the Bishop of Killaloe, the priests of Ennis Parish and those of four Jesuit priests. At the end of the mission there was a special meeting of parishioners at which the Bishop presided. A momentous decision was taken at that meeting: to invite the Irish Christian Brothers to return to the town and to invite the Mercy Sisters in Limerick to open a Convent in Ennis for the purpose of providing Catholic education for the children of 'this and adjoining parishes'. By the following May four sisters from Limerick had taken up residence in Arthur's Row and teaching had begun with over 400 1853 Mission Cross pupils. By 1860 a secondary boarding-cum-day school was opened. Over the next decades Convent and schools expanded, an orphanage, a knitting enterprise, a bakery, a centre for the making of Altar Breads for the Diocese of Killaloe and a small commercial laundry were established - all on the original campus off O'Connell Square, but now stretching back to Clonroad through the purchase of land from Edward Gore in 1881. By 1941 the secondary school, now Coláiste Muire,

had moved across town to College Road, leaving more space for the growing primary schools; by 1965 the primary schools, too, were on the move to new buildings on Station Road. Visitation of families in their homes and of the sick in hospitals was a central Mercy ministry from the start – in the time of the founder, Catherine McAuley, the Sisters became known as the 'walking nuns'!

Requests to the Ennis Mercy Community for mission foundations were responded to generously. Between 1872 and 1878 a total of forty five sisters went from Ennis on missions overseas. They went to Meriden and Middletown in Connecticut, USA; to Christchurch, New Zealand and to Singleton, Australia. These sisters put down roots in their new homes from which, in due course, other convents were founded; they did not return to Ireland. Nearer home, they went in 1878 to Ennistymon, in 1885 to the Ennis Workhouse, as St. Joseph's Hospital was then known; in 1899 to St. Cronan's Workhouse, Roscrea; in 1902 to St. Patrick's Workhouse, Corofin. Sisters also responded to invitations to go to Killaloe in 1889; Spanish Point in 1929; Lemoore, California in 1959; Arroyo Grande, California in 1963; to Corofin in 1981 (to 2003); to Nuu, Kenya in 1980 and to Nguutani, Kenya in 1990. Sr. Clare O'Neill ministered in healthcare in Iceland for seven years, 1976 to 1983.

The Ennis Sisters of Mercy were originally an autonomous Mercy group but through processes of renewal, reconfiguring and re-organisation since 1970, they are now part of the worldwide Mercy International Association - the global Mercy family. Its headquarters are in Baggot St., Dublin, in the first Mercy Convent, opened by Catherine McAuley on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 24 September 1827. There are approximately 2,000 sisters in the Irish congregation to-day.

In the 161 years since the Sisters arrived from Limerick more than 350 women have followed the example of the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, The Venerable Catherine McAuley of Dublin, and become Sisters of Mercy in Ennis; they dedicated their lives to prayer and to the compassionate service of others as an expression of Christ's own service to those in need. One cannot but

marvel at the resource that Ennis Parish, through the Sisters of Mercy, has been to education, health care, social work, missionary and other services to people. Dean Kenny and Bishop Vaughan and all who attended that 1853 Parish Mission meeting, could never have imagined its far-reaching outcomes. What an example of leadership and of being proactive in meeting the needs of the time!

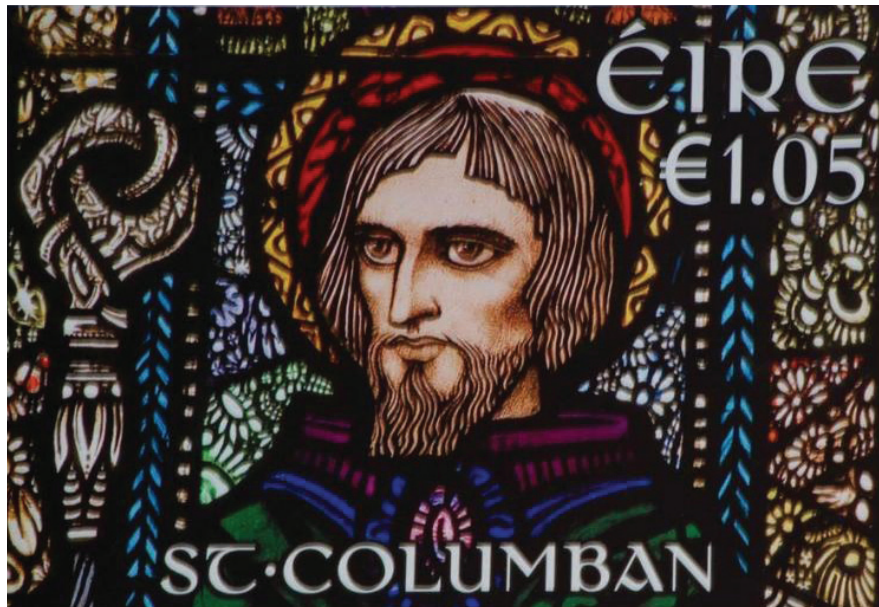
The needs are different to-day. The once vibrant band of young Sisters is facing diminishment: ageing, declining numbers, dwindling resources, in a rapidly changing society. Others are now well equipped to provide the services that they once pioneered. They are, however, full of hope and continue to pray for the needs of those around them, for the needs of the global community and for the Church, trusting in God's Divine Providence. They rejoice in the words of Pope Francis in his letter last year to all consecrated people setting out the aims of the Year of Consecrated Life: 'to look on the past with gratitude ... to live the present with passion and ... to embrace the future with hope'.

As the Year of Consecrated Life draws to a close, the Mercy Sisters who are Ennis parishioners thank God for that original invitation in 1853, for the gift of their own vocations and for the unfailing love and support they experience from the local communities in which they live.

Sr. Canice Hanrahan.



St. Columban Stamp



A new postage stamp commemorating the 1,400th anniversary of the death of St Columban was launched by An Post at St Columbans, Dalgan Park, Navan on 22nd October 2015. The stamp features a photograph of the Harry Clarke stained-glass window in Mount St Joseph's Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.

Message from Poor Clare Sisters

We Franciscan Poor Clares have always believed that the Incarnation was already the Redemption, because in Jesus' birth God was already saying that it was good to be human, and God was on our side. So, humanity has the right to know that it is good to be human, good to live on this earth, good to have a body, because God in Jesus chose and said "yes" to our humanity. In her own words, eight centuries ago, St. Clare said the same: she prayed "Thank you God for having created me". St. Clare knew, despite much suffering in her life, 'the joy that the world cannot give'. St. Clare knew from experience, that joy comes as a gift to those who wait for it, expect it and make room for it inside themselves. You do not catch a butterfly by chasing it. You sit still (contemplate) and it alights on your shoulder. Then it chooses you. That is true joy...true gift... This Christmas let us share the joy of the Gospel, the greatest gift of God. No matter how busy we are, or how weighed down we are by the cares of life, let us count our many blessings and take time to pray in gratitude to God. Let us hold in our

hearts, at prayer, our brothers and sisters all over the world- (refugees, immigrants, and victims of natural disasters and all who have been bereaved)-who have been hit by tragedy, and death. And in this year of Mercy let us tell God how truly grateful we are for the gift of His mercy in sending His Son into the world. Let us join in chorus with St. Clare "Thank you God for having created us". We, the Poor Clare sisters, wish to thank all our many generous friends and benefactors for their never-failing goodness and support. May all of you enjoy many blessings and much joy this Christmas and New Year. We join with Pope Francis who, in a recent 'Tweet' prayed - "Let us keep a place for Christ in our lives, let us care for one another and let us be loving custodians of creation."



MERCIFUL LIKE THE FATHER



Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has called for a year of mercy ... 'I have decided to announce an Extraordinary Jubilee which has at its centre the mercy of God. It will be a Holy Year of Mercy. We want to live in the light of the word of the Lord: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36) The motto, 'Merciful Like Father' is an invitation to follow the merciful example of God, who asks people not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love. The year of Mercy was opened by Pope Francis on December 8th and local celebrations will commence on December 13th. Our own opening of the 'Door of Mercy takes place on the 13th at the 12 noon mass in the Cathedral. This extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy is a great gift for the whole church so let us take advantage of the blessings it will bring...

Explanation of the Logo's Symbolism



The logo for the Jubilee Year of Mercy was designed by Fr. Mark Ivan Rupnik, a Jesuit. To begin with, the motto 'Merciful like the Father' is taken from the Gospel of St Luke (6:36) and it invites us to follow the merciful example of God the Father who asks us not to condemn nor to

judge, but to give love and forgiveness without measure. The image, captured within a mandorla (traditionally, an almond-shaped frame which surrounds Christ or the Virgin Mary) depicts the two natures of Christ: divine and human. The three concentric ovals in the background, with the colours getting progressively lighter, suggest the movement of Christ carrying humanity out of the night of sin. Conversely, the depth of the darker colour suggests the impenetrability of the love of the Father who forgives all. The image it represents is one that was important to the early Church: that of the Son taking upon his shoulders the lost soul and thereby demonstrating that it is the love of Christ which brings about the redemption of Man. The Logo has been designed in such a way as to express the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity with a love which brings the power to change one's life. One interesting feature is that, while the Good Shepherd takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of Man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, their own humanity, contemplating in his gaze the love of the Father.

The Mercy Window in the Cathedral



The corporal works of Mercy have been central to living the Christian way; they mirror the great command of Jesus to bring healing and goodness into the lives of others especially the least, the lost and the last as recorded in Saint Matthews Gospel. The beautiful Mercy window in the Cathedral at the porch, on the Cathedral House side, was a gift of the then Parish Priest of Ennis, Dean John Kenny to the new community of Mercy Sisters that arrived in Ennis in 1854 with the intention of opening a Catholic School. The window was the work of stainglass specialist Mayer & Co of Munich, Germany. The window contained eight panels depicting the seven corporal works of mercy and the eight panel - Our Lady of Mercy. The first Chapel of the Mercy Sisters was in a new building in what is today the Riches of Clare Museum and Tourist Office.

In 1895 a new Convent Chapel was constructed and the window as incorporated in the new Chapel where it remained until 1993 when the building was sold to a developer. The five panels in the Cathedral depict:

- Welcoming the Stranger
- Giving Drink to the Thirsty
- Burying the Dead
- Clothing the Naked
- Visiting the Prisoners

Another panel is in the entrance lobby of Colaiste Mhuire secondary school (feeding the hungry) and the two remaining panels are incorporated into the Mercy Convent of St. Xavier on Friary Walk; "Healing the Sick" and "Our Lady of Mercy". The corporal works of Mercy continue to challenge us as we respond to the call of Jesus to be his witness in the world.

The Forge

One of the sad developments in the modern rural Ireland is the passing of many important social entities which were fundamental to life in the countryside, the Post Office, the Garda Barracks etc. There was one institution which is now virtually gone and that was the Forge. I refer to it as an institution because around the forge people gathered to discuss the match, politics, religion, weather and all other issues relevant to the life of the people. Up to the arrival of the motor car and the use of combustion engine for power, the horse was the main use for energy, power, transport, leisure and many sporting activities. The forge was the fundamental service in every parish in Ireland, apart from the farrier shoeing horses, he was also an expert in the production of iron products, metal gates, repairs to farm machinery and especially the making of the crane which hung over open hearth fires in the rural houses. The crane always intrigued me because as a young boy going on calls with my father the late Dr. P. Moylan I always looked for the special insignia each farrier would use to popularise his work. Out in Kilmaley the local farrier carved in metal the head of a crane to distinguish his work.

I was born in 1935 and grew up during the Second World War when there was little petrol, and everyone had to rely on the horse for farm work and for transport. The forge was vital to the use of the horse because he had to be shod with metal shoes on a regular basis. Trips to the forge were a regular task. You might ask how come I was so familiar with the forge - because my special local one was Pako Malone's forge in Brewery Lane. Growing up in Ennis I was very keen on horses, riding and especially hunting. After school in the evenings and on Saturdays I used to muck out over at Josie Kerins in Steele's Terrace. Josie only died recently and he played a major part in my education on horses and the forge. Josie kept hunting horses and also kept the horses for the collection of garbage during the war years. It is hard to imagine today garbage and bins being collected every day in horse and carts. All this meant regular visits to Brewery Lane and I would be given the job of bringing the horse to the forge. Pako Malone's forge was a very unique place where all facets of life took place. It was a huge yard stretching right down to the River Fergus. It had a slaughter house and rows of cubicles where people parked their pony and traps for the day when they came to town to shop maybe once or twice in a year and where they could get the pony or horse shod before going home. As a youngster you could earn an odd sixpence by helping an old farmer tackle up or hold his horse when it was being shod. Watching the farrier shoeing a horse always fascinated me. The wrenching off of the old shoes, then picking the new shoe, placing it on the hoof and deciding it had to be narrowed or widened a bit. It was then picked up with a scissors like pliers and placed in the fire. I loved to pull the bellows and watch the flame rise and the shoe get red hot then taken red hot in the scissors again and put on the round section of the anvil and hammered into shape and then put into a water trough to cool. A long nail like a spike was hammered into the nail hole and carried to the hoof which was lifted by grabbing the hock and checked for size. If correct the nails were hammered into the hoof and the protruding ends, whisked off by the other end of the hammer and all evened off by a strong rasp. A black oily substance was then painted over the hoof and it looked the perfect job. The farrier would then kick his tool kit under the horse to the other side before starting on the two other hoofs. Once I was holding the reins when the horse took fright and dragged me around the yard but I never let go and eventually got the horse under control. While all this was going on there would be a few people standing around just talking about the match at Cusack Park, the arrival of De Valera in Ennis, which was marked by a flame bonfire parade down the Turnpike to O'Connell Square.

There was a slaughter house next door and I witnessed one incident which I never forgot and which taught me to have the greatest respect for the simple pig. The humane gun was a great invention in the killing of animals. In those days it did not exist and animals were killed with the use of a pick with a pointed edge. You got one quick chance to hit the animal in the centre of the forehead. If you missed you paid the price. On one occasion the shodding was proceeded in a peaceful atmosphere when there was an almighty squeal. The pick missed. In an instant everything was pulled inside the forge and the doors closed. I remember looking out through a hole in the door. I never saw anything in my life as ferocious as that pig chasing two men around the yard with ropes and lassoes dodging and ducking the ferocity of that pig fighting for his life.

I have already mentioned that all facets of life took place in Pako Malone's forge. It was regularly used for the servicing of mares by stallions. I remember on one occasion going home to my lunch and describing in great detail this interesting operation in the procreation of animal life. To a ten year old at the time, who was not aware of the facts of life, it was just a spectacle but did not explain the stony faces of my parents. All my father would say, they were just tickling one another. There was one other regular service provided by Frank Malone Pako's son, which was the shortening of dogs' tails. I don't know if dogs get their tails cut nowadays but in those days it was regular procedure. It was a very simple operation. You tied very tightly a piece of narrow cord around the amount you wished to remove and with a swift movement with a sharp knife like cutting a piece of tobacco, it was flicked clean off. There was the whelp from the poor animal and he ran away with his remaining tail swerving in all directions.

It was marvellous to watch the game of Pitch and Toss. Growing up in Ennis during the 1940's one would see games of Pitch and Toss going on in every corner. It seems to have gone out of fashion altogether. The old Irish Hen Penny was a very useful instrument in Pitch and Toss. I remember practising for hours to balance two pennies on a comb, toss them up in a certain controlled twist to land two hens facing upwards. Never see it now. There was one other game we played at the forge and that was Skittles with horse shoes. Frank made me a special skittle from an old horse shoe, which I carried around, especially during the summer months when we played the Skittles up at the Turret in between swims.

The laneway going into the forge was very slippery and on a frosty morning it was lethal. One morning I came with Josie Kerin to have some horses shod at the forge and we came across a horse lying on the laneway with a heavy cart on him. He had slipped on the frost. The knack used in those days to get a horse to stand up in those circumstances was to twist his tail. They could not get him to rise no matter how much twisting was done. Josie Kerin sent me down to Monahan's Bakery in Parnell Street to get four flour bags. Josie tied one bag around each hoof with sugan rope, gave the tail a twist and up he got. It was a handy trick never to be forgotten.

Finally there was one subject I must mention constantly discussed at the forge and that was fishing. Pako Malone was a wonderful fisherman with a rod and expert skim at casting.

I often watched him in amazement on the river bank. There was a very unique feature about his fishing rod, its length. He lived on the Causeway near the Friary and every time he wanted to go fishing he had to open the front and back door of his house to take out his rod.

These are some of my memories of one of the forges in Ennis during the 1940's, which played a part in my growing up process and educating me to many practical things in ordinary life at a time of great scarcity and austerity. It was an era that will never come again and I hope my few episodes at the forge of Pako Malone will bring memories to the people still alive in Ennis who were around at the time.

Oliver Moylan.



Polish Christmas Message

W miłosierdziu mamy dowód tego, jak Bóg kocha. On daje wszystko z siebie samego, zawsze, za darmo i nie prosząc o nic w zamian. Przychodzi nam z pomocą, kiedy go wzywamy. Dzień za dniem, dotknięci przez Jego współczucie, możemy również i my być współczujący dla wszystkich. (Papież Franciszek) Papież Franciszek zdecydował zwołać nadzwyczajny Jubileusz Roku Miłosierdzia, który w centrum ma Boże miłosierdzie. Miłosierni jak Ojciec, to motto tego Świętego Roku. Chcemy żyć w tym Roku w świetle słów Pana: "Bądźcie miłosierni, jak wasz Ojciec jest miłosierny". Jezus pozostawił nam przykład do naśladowania. Dlatego powinniśmy zawsze uczyć się z Jego życia zawartego w Ewangeliach. Od żłóbka w Betlejem, aż po krzyż na Kalwarii, oddawał swoje życie, jako całkowity dar miłości. Tak właśnie powinniśmy żyć, kochając innych tak, jak Jezus nas umiłował. Z całkowitym oddaniem siebie. Jezus jest największym darem, jaki Bóg kiedykolwiek mógł nam ofiarować. Dlatego pamiętajmy, że Jezus jest największym darem, jaki my możemy także dać innym. W tym nadchodzącym roku starajmy się, z nowym zapalem, dzielić darem miłosiernej miłości Boga zarówno z naszymi bliskimi, jak i w naszym otoczeniu. Modłę się, abyśmy w te Święta Bożego Narodzenia, my wszyscy, stworzyli się na Dar Bożego Miłosierdzia i pozwolili, aby nowy duch wspaniałomyślnej miłości został narodzony w naszych sercach, abyśmy mogli wszyscy cieszyć się Świętami Bożego Narodzenia i błogosławionym Nowym Rokiem.

Ks. Dariusz Plasek

In mercy, we find proof of how God loves us. He gives his entire self, always, freely, asking nothing in return. He comes to our aid whenever we call upon him. Day after day, touched by his compassion, we also can become compassionate towards others. (Pope Francis) Pope Francis has decided to call an extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy that is to have the mercy of God at its center. Merciful like the Father, is the "motto" of this Holy Year. We want to live this Year in the light of the Lord's words: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful". Jesus left us an example to follow. So we always should be learning from his life in the Gospels. From the crib of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary, he gave his life completely as a gift of love. That is how we should live. By loving others as Jesus has loved us. With the gift of our whole self. Jesus is the greatest gift that God could ever give us. So let's remember that Jesus is the greatest gift that we can give to others. In the coming year, let's try with new intensity to share the God's gift of merciful love with our neighbours and in our public life. I pray that this Christmas we will all open ourselves to God's gift of Mercy and allow a new spirit of generous love to be born in our hearts that we might all rejoice in a holy Christmas and a blessed new year.



Fr. Dariusz Plasek

The Friary Christmas Message

"Every time St Francis spoke the name Child of Bethlehem or Jesus, his tongue licked his lips, relishing the sweetness of the words." That's a detail from the description of the night when St. Francis organized the first crib. He really savoured the mystery that the little child lying in a manger hid the greatness of God, and the same God comes in the "little form of bread", at every Mass. As a result, Francis was possessed by an intense love. God comes to us "wherever life pours ordinary plenty", the poet Patrick Kavanagh would say. Around Christmas time pressure can deprive us of the time to relish "ordinary plenty", and our capacity to love suffers. Do we rip open each envelope, quickly cast our eye over the Christmas card or letter, and add it to the pile? It's understandable: generally they arrive when we have least time to enjoy them. Why not resolve to take one on each day of the New Year, re-read it and to enjoy in full the message of love that it has for you? The glitter of all the lights and advertisements, too, can blind us to ordinary plenty. The photographs around your house, the little bits and pieces that make a home — when did you last spend time savouring them, remembering when the photos were taken, or the souvenir given? For the God who lay in a bed of straw has touched us in the friendship and support of so

many friends, so many in our families. Christmas invites us to taste, really taste, the goodness in the "ordinary plenty" of life. From the taste of life's goodness love's intensity is grown.



Bulletin Board



ECUMENICAL CAROL SERVICE

Sunday 20th December
7pm Cathedral
with
Combined Parish Choirs.

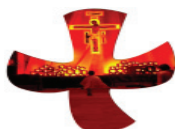
CONFIRMATION 2016

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 26th February | Gaelscoil |
| 4th March | Scoil Christ Ri |
| 5th March | Afterschool Programme |
| 5th March | Ennis National |
| 12th March | CBS |
| 16th April | Holy Family |
| 20th May | St. Anne's |
| 27th May | St. Claire |



TAIZÉ PILGRIMAGE 2016

Sunday 3rd July to Tuesday 12th July.
Contact: Fr. Jerry Carey @ 086 2508444.



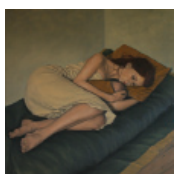
Taizé Prayer:

On 1st Thursday of each month at 7.45pm in Church of Our Lady, Roslevan.

PARISH STATISTICS 2015

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Baptisms: | 214 |
| Weddings: | 35 |
| Confirmations: | 244 |
| Deaths: | 168 |

FRONT COVER



Painting: The Nativity
by Adam Pomeroy.,
Kilbaha, Co. Clare.
Used with permission.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Cathedral of SS Peter & Paul

Christmas Eve: 6pm Children's Mass.
Christmas Eve: 9pm - Vigil Mass.
Midnight Polish Community Mass.
Christmas Day:
9am; 10.30am & 12noon.
10.30am Children's Mass: National School.
Christmas Day: 1.20pm Polish Mass.

St. Joseph's Church

Christmas Eve: 5.30pm - Liturgy of prayer and carols around the crib for families with very young children.

Christmas Eve: 7pm - Vigil Mass
Christmas Day: 8am; 10am & 11.30am.

Cloughleigh Church

Christmas Eve: 9pm - Vigil Mass.
Christmas Day: 9.30am; 11am

Friary

Christmas Eve: 10pm (Carols start 9.30pm).
Christmas Day: 9.30am; 10.30am & 12noon

Poor Clare Monastery

Christmas Eve: 9pm - Vigil Mass
Christmas Day: 7.45am

No Evening Mass Christmas Day in Ennis



Sacrament Of Reconciliation

The Cathedral
Confessions: 24th: 10.30am-1pm & 2pm-5.30pm.
St. Joseph's
Confessions: 24th: 2pm - 4pm.
The Friary
Confessions: 11am - 12.30pm; 3pm - 5.30pm
Wedn 23rd & Thurs 24th
11am - 1pm; 2pm - 5.30pm;

Penitential Services

Cathedral:
Monday 20th December at 7.30pm.
(No evening Mass)
Friary:
Friday 18th December 1.05pm.
(instead of the usual 1.05pm Mass)
Tuesday 22nd December 10.30am.
No Confessions after Christmas until Saturday January 2nd.

Daily Masses Christmas Week

Cathedral: Dec 26th - Jan 2nd.
12noon & 7.30pm Christmas week.
Polish Mass: Dec 26th & Jan 1st: 1.20pm.
St. Joseph's: 11am: Christmas week.
Cloughleigh: 9.30am (weekdays).
Friary: 12noon Christmas week.
Poor Clare Monastery:
8.30am (weekdays).



PRAY OUT THE OLD YEAR PRAY IN THE NEW YEAR

CATHEDRAL

31st December
@ 11.30pm.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2016

| | |
|------------|-----------------------|
| 30th April | Afterschool Programme |
| 7th May | Holy Family |
| 14th May | Ennis National |
| 14th May | CBS |
| 21st May | Gaelscoil |
| 21st May | Scoil Christ Ri |



LENT & EASTER

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Ash Wednesday | 10th February |
| Easter Sunday | 27th March |

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGES:

LOURDES 2016

Summer: June 26th to July 1st.
Autumn: October 2nd to 7th.
Contact: Fr. Tom Ryan at 061-364133.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2016

Krakow 24th-31st July; €895;
Booking information/forms: Deirdre:
0656834461 or Donagh: 0872322140.

HOLY LAND 2016

Flying direct from Shannon to Tel Aviv for 8 days, 23rd - 31st October; €1430, half board, including all taxes, coaches and tips. Booking forms: Fr. Tom Ryan Shannon 061-364133; Fr. Brendan Quinlivan in Ennis Cathedral 065-6824043; or downloaded from website www.killaloediocese.ie

SAMARITANS

People can contact the Samaritans by phoning 116123, email jo@samaritans.org, write to Pat or Mary, Samaritans, Sunville, Kilrush Rd, Ennis.